West Oxfordshire Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2011 – 2031)
Statement of compliance in relation to the Duty to Co-Operate

Contents
1. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 2
2. Background and Context .............................................................................................. 3
   What is the Duty to Co-operate? .................................................................................. 3
   Who does the duty apply to? ....................................................................................... 3
   What sort of issues does the duty relate to? ................................................................. 4
   Why is the duty to co-operate important? .................................................................... 5
3. Strategic Cross-Boundary Issues of Relevance to West Oxfordshire ......................... 6
   Housing ......................................................................................................................... 8
   Economy/employment ................................................................................................. 9
   Transport Infrastructure ............................................................................................ 10
   Other Infrastructure (e.g. education, health, energy, telecommunications and water) .. 10
   Retail, Leisure and Tourism ....................................................................................... 10
   Water Supply, Drainage and Flood Risk .................................................................... 10
   Minerals and Waste .................................................................................................. 11
   Natural and Historic Environment ............................................................................ 11
   Partnership Working ................................................................................................ 13
   Evidence Gathering .................................................................................................. 16
   Preparation of the Local Plan ................................................................................... 17
5. Next Steps .................................................................................................................. 19

Appendices
Appendix 1 Letter sent by WODC to 'prescribed bodies' 11 April 2013
Appendix 2 Responses received from 'prescribed bodies' in relation to letter sent 11 April 2013
Appendix 3 Oxfordshire Statement of Co-Operation
Appendix 4 Terms of Reference for Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership and Oxfordshire Growth Board
1. **Introduction**

1.1 The Localism Act (2011) introduced a ‘duty to co-operate’ which requires local planning authorities, County Councils in England and other prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to strategic, cross-boundary planning matters such as housing, transport and infrastructure provision.

1.2 The purpose of the duty is to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic, cross-boundary matters.

1.3 Importantly, when the West Oxfordshire Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2011 – 2031) is submitted for independent examination, the first key issue the appointed Inspector will consider is whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the duty to co-operate.

1.4 The purpose of this 'statement of compliance’ is to demonstrate that the Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the duty to co-operate with evidence provided as appropriate throughout.

1.5 This statement should be read in conjunction with the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan and other supporting documents including the statement of consultation all of which will be formally published for a statutory period of 6-weeks from 27 March 2015 until 8 May 2015.

1.6 This duty to cooperate statement of compliance may be amended following the statutory 6-week publication period, prior to submission to the Secretary of State.
2. Background and Context

2.1 West Oxfordshire District Council is in the process of introducing a new Local Plan which will replace the existing Local Plan that was adopted in 2006. The new plan will cover the period 2011 – 2031.

2.2 The Local Plan identifies a number of key issues that will need to be addressed in West Oxfordshire in the period up to 2031. Importantly, some of these issues such as housing, jobs, transport and infrastructure have implications not only for West Oxfordshire but also for adjoining areas. As such they must be considered and addressed on a joint-basis with involvement from relevant partners.

2.3 Previously, such cross-boundary issues have been addressed through regional plans and county structure plans but both of these have now been scrapped and to ensure that cross-boundary issues are properly addressed through local plan-making, the Government introduced a new ‘duty to co-operate’ via the Localism Act in 2011.

What is the Duty to Co-operate?

2.4 The duty to co-operate is a legal duty placed on local planning authorities, county councils in England and other prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to matters of strategic, cross-boundary importance.

2.5 Specifically this includes matters that are likely to have an effect on at least two planning areas as well as ‘county matters’ such as minerals and waste development.

2.6 It should be noted that the duty to co-operate is not a duty to agree but instead requires local planning authorities to make every effort to secure the necessary co-operation on strategic cross-boundary matters before they submit their Local Plans for examination.

Who does the duty apply to?

2.7 In addition to local planning authorities and county councils in England, the duty to co-operate applies to a number of other ‘prescribed’ public bodies. These include:

- the Environment Agency
- the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as English Heritage)
- Natural England
- the Mayor of London
- the Civil Aviation Authority
- the Homes and Communities Agency
- each clinical commissioning group established under section 14D of the National Health Service Act 2006
- the National Health Service Commissioning Board
- the Office of Rail Regulation
- Transport for London
• each Integrated Transport Authority
• each highway authority within the meaning of section 1 of the Highways Act 1980 (including the Secretary of State, where the Secretary of State is the highways authority)
• the Marine Management Organisation.

2.8 These organisations are required to cooperate with local planning authorities and county councils as well as with each other in discharging their obligations under the duty.

2.9 It should be noted that although the duty to co-operate does not apply to Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships, local planning authorities and the prescribed bodies listed above must cooperate with them and have regard to relevant activities when they are preparing Local Plans.

What sort of issues does the duty relate to?

2.10 The Localism Act (2011) stipulates that the duty to co-operate relates to:

1. the sustainable development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas; and

2. the sustainable development or use of land in a two-tier area (such as Oxfordshire) if the development or use is a county matter, or would have a significant impact on a county matter (e.g. minerals and waste development).

2.11 Although the specific matters affected by the duty to cooperate will vary from place to place according to local issues and circumstances, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF1) identifies a number of high-level strategic issues that are likely to warrant a collaborative approach through the duty to co-operate.

2.12 These issues include:

• Housing
• Employment
• Retail, leisure and other commercial development
• Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, waste water, flood risk and coastal change management and the provision of minerals and energy
• Health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and
• Climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.

2.13 Not all of these issues will be relevant to all areas and conversely, there may be issues not listed above that are of particular relevance.

2.14 Once the key issues have been identified, Local planning authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans.

**Why is the duty to co-operate important?**

2.15 Important planning issues such as housing, employment and transport do not respect administrative boundaries and can often only be effectively addressed at a ‘larger than local scale’. This is because people and businesses do not confine their activities to one Council area.

2.16 Examples include:

- Someone living in one area but working in another;
- Waste generated in one area being disposed of somewhere else;
- Construction materials for new development being imported from elsewhere;
- Tourist attractions such as Blenheim Palace in West Oxfordshire that attract visitors from far afield;
- People choosing to shop or use leisure facilities in other areas such as Oxford; and
- Drainage and flood risk with rivers and streams often running through several different areas

2.17 Joint working on such matters was previously co-ordinated through County Council Structure Plans and more recently through Regional Strategies. However, with the abolition of county structure plans and regional planning, the Government now expects such strategic matters to be addressed through the duty to co-operate.
3. Strategic Cross-Boundary Issues of Relevance to West Oxfordshire

3.1 The map below shows West Oxfordshire District in relation to its neighbouring authorities.

![Map of West Oxfordshire showing neighboring authorities](image)

3.2 Relevant local authorities adjoining the District or in close proximity include:

- Oxfordshire County Council
- Wiltshire Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Cotswold District Council
- Swindon Borough Council
- Stratford on Avon District Council
- Cherwell District Council
- Oxford City Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Vale of White Horse District Council

3.3 Of the other ‘prescribed bodies’ covered by the duty to co-operate, the following are considered to be of particular relevance to strategic cross-boundary planning matters in West Oxfordshire:

- The Environment Agency
- the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as English Heritage)
- Natural England
• The Civil Aviation Authority
• Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)
• The Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG)
• the National Health Service Commissioning Board
• Office of the Rail Regulator
• The Highways Agency
• The Highway Authority (Oxfordshire County Council)

3.4 Also of relevance are the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP2) and the Oxfordshire Nature Partnership, which is co-ordinated by an organisation called ‘Wild Oxfordshire’3.

3.5 In order to help better understand the strategic, cross-boundary issues of significance to West Oxfordshire, in April 2013, West Oxfordshire District Council wrote to all of the local authorities and other prescribed bodies listed above.

3.6 The letter which is attached at Appendix 1 sought views on whether there were any particular issues of strategic cross-boundary importance that each organisation felt should be addressed through the West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

3.7 Responses were received from nine organisations including:
  • The Environment Agency
  • English Heritage
  • Gloucestershire County Council
  • Oxford City Council
  • South Oxfordshire District Council
  • Stratford on Avon District Council
  • The Vale of White Horse District Council
  • Highways Agency
  • Cotswold District Council

3.8 The responses received are attached at Appendix 2.

3.9 Having regard to those responses and relevant evidence and analysis undertaken in support of the Local Plan including the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoping report and LDF monitoring reports, the following strategic cross-boundary issues have been identified as being of particular relevance to West Oxfordshire in terms of the duty to co-operate:
  • Housing
  • Economy/employment

2 http://www.oxfordshirelep.org.uk/cms/
3 http://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/
Transport infrastructure
Other infrastructure (such as education, health, energy, telecommunications and water)
Retail, leisure and tourism
Water supply, drainage and flood risk
Minerals and waste
The natural and historic environment
Climate change mitigation and adaptation

3.10 Further commentary on these strategically important issues is set out briefly below. Section 4 then provides an explanation of how West Oxfordshire District Council has fulfilled the duty to co-operate in addressing these issues through the preparation of the pre-submission draft Local Plan and supporting evidence base.

Housing

3.11 West Oxfordshire forms part of a relatively cohesive housing market area covering the County and centred on Oxford. This was identified by an initial housing market assessment undertaken in 2007 which considered factors such as migration, travel to work patterns and house prices.

3.12 A more recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published in April 2014 and confirms the extent of the Oxfordshire HMA which is essentially contiguous with the county boundary. Whilst the SHMA provides housing needs information at the local authority level it places significant emphasis on meeting the housing needs of the HMA as a whole in line with national policy.

3.13 In this regard the NPPF emphasises\(^4\) the importance of meeting full objectively assessed needs for housing within the housing market area and states that local planning authorities should prepare a strategic housing market assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries\(^5\).

3.14 It is important therefore that future housing provision in Oxfordshire is considered on a collective basis as well as by individual authority. This is particularly important in light of the fact that Oxford City Council is unable to accommodate its objectively assessed housing need within its own administrative boundaries and will therefore need to provide this housing elsewhere within the Oxfordshire HMA, including potentially within West Oxfordshire.

3.15 The completion of the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) was co-ordinated by the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) of which West Oxfordshire District Council was an active member. SPIP has now been replaced by the Oxfordshire Growth

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\(^4\) Paragraph 47 - NPPF
\(^5\) Paragraph 159 - NPPF
Board with West Oxfordshire District Council currently taking the lead co-ordinating role for the partnership. Further information is set out in Section 4 below.

3.16 Notably, when the District Council wrote to neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies in April 2013 inviting views on important cross-boundary issues, a number of respondents highlighted housing provision as being a key cross-boundary issue to be addressed through the duty to cooperate (see Appendix 2).

Economy/employment

3.17 Like housing, economic matters cannot be considered on an individual local authority basis as workforces are increasingly mobile. A large number of people for example commute out of West Oxfordshire to work on a daily basis (around 20,000 people) with many heading to Oxford (7,500 people) Cherwell and the Vale of White Horse District. Similarly, there is a flow of commuters into the District from elsewhere (12,000 people).

3.18 The Council’s most recent economic evidence6 confirms that West Oxfordshire forms part of a wider Oxfordshire City Region. The extent of the City Region is reflected in the geographic coverage of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise (OxLEP) and the priorities identified in related initiatives including the Oxfordshire and Oxford City Deal7 and the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan8.

3.19 Whilst West Oxfordshire does not fall within the Oxfordshire ‘knowledge spine’ that forms the basis of the OxLEP priorities, it is closely related to it and presents the opportunity to play a complimentary role, capitalising on the economic growth potential of this core area.

3.20 West Oxfordshire District Council is an active member of OxLEP which was formally launched in March 2011. The District Council also engages with the LEP on strategic economic matters such as the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan through its membership of the Oxfordshire Growth Board (previously the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership – SPIP).

3.21 West Oxfordshire District Council is also a member of the countywide group of economic development officers which meets quarterly to engage on economic matters including those of cross-boundary importance.

3.22 In their written response to West Oxfordshire District Council (see Appendix 2) the Vale of White Horse District Council highlighted the issue of employment land provision as being something that could potentially warrant further collaboration through the duty to co-operate, particularly in order to meet any future demand for employment land in Oxford City that may not be able to addressed within their administrative boundary.

6 West Oxfordshire Economic Snapshot (CAG January 2015)
Transport Infrastructure

3.23 The District’s main transport connections reflect the focus on Oxford and London. Many journeys continue to be made by private car causing congestion on major routes, particularly the A40, A44 and A415 as well as within towns.

3.24 Whilst some transport issues can be addressed at a local level, many cannot. The problems of congestion experienced on the A40 and the other approaches to Oxford is a good example of a transport issue that affects several different local authority areas and any potential solution or package of measures will need to be considered on a cross-boundary basis.

3.25 Effective joint working through initiatives such as the Oxford Science Transit Project (a central element of the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal) is needed in order to resolve such matters.

3.26 West Oxfordshire District Council is an active member of the Oxfordshire Local Transport Board (LTB) an informal partnership, consisting of the local authorities within Oxfordshire and the Oxfordshire and South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnerships. The work of the Local Transport Board will be subsumed into that of the Local Growth Board of which West Oxfordshire District Council is also an active member.

3.27 In their written response to West Oxfordshire District Council (see Appendix 2) Oxford City Council highlighted transport as an important issue of cross-boundary significance particularly in relation to the approaches from West Oxfordshire District into Oxford City.

Other Infrastructure (e.g. education, health, energy, telecommunications and water)

3.28 Whilst transport is perhaps the most obvious form of infrastructure in terms of cross-boundary importance, there are other infrastructure types which must also be considered on a joint basis. Higher and further education facilities or specialist education facilities for example will often serve a large catchment and attract regular movements of people across local authority boundaries.

3.29 Similarly, secondary and tertiary health care facilities will attract patients from a wide area and thus need to be planned taking account of this movement between different local authority areas.

Retail, Leisure and Tourism

3.30 West Oxfordshire is a successful retail, leisure and tourist destination with vibrant town centres and a number of key attractions such as Blenheim Palace. Similarly, Oxford presents a significant retail and leisure offer which draws people from West Oxfordshire and other areas. As such consideration must be given to cross-boundary movements of shoppers and visitors.

Water Supply, Drainage and Flood Risk

3.31 Rivers, streams and other watercourses often cut across administrative boundaries and need to be considered on a strategic, often catchment wide basis through catchment flood management plans and strategic flood risk assessments. The River Windrush runs through
much of the District before joining the Thames which forms the southern boundary of the District.

3.32 In their written response to West Oxfordshire District Council (see Appendix 2) the Vale of White Horse District Council highlighted the importance of the Water Framework Directive and the Thames River Basin Management Plan as a potential cross-boundary issue that requires further consideration.

**Minerals and Waste**

3.33 The Upper Thames Valley and its tributaries, particularly the Lower Windrush Valley, has historically been a major producer of sharp sand and gravel much of which is used for construction purposes elsewhere in the county and beyond. Extensive areas of sand and gravel remain but as a finite resource, they must be used efficiently.

3.34 Waste management must also be considered on a countywide basis with the principal waste streams often being managed across district and county boundaries. Given the strategic nature of minerals and waste planning it is dealt with on a countywide basis by Oxfordshire County Council.

3.35 In their written response to West Oxfordshire District Council (see Appendix 2) Gloucestershire County Council raised the issue of mineral resources as requiring cross-boundary co-operation through the duty to co-operate.

**Natural and Historic Environment**

3.36 West Oxfordshire has a rich natural environment with around one third of the District falling within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and land on the eastern edge of the District forming part of the Oxford Green Belt.

3.37 At Oxford Meadows there is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which straddles the boundary with Oxford City. Because such designations do not respect district boundaries, they must be addressed on a joint, co-ordinated basis.

3.38 In their written response to West Oxfordshire District Council (see Appendix 2) Stratford on Avon District Council requested that consideration be given to the need for consistency in relation to policies relating to the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

3.39 In their written response to West Oxfordshire District Council (see Appendix 2) the Vale of White Horse District Council highlighted Oxford Meadows SAC as a potential cross-boundary issue that warrants further consideration, particularly in light of the potential ‘in-combination’ effects that development across Oxfordshire could have.

3.40 In their written response to West Oxfordshire District Council (see Appendix 2) the Environment Agency stated that they had no issues of strategic, cross-boundary importance that they wished to raise from an environmental perspective.

3.41 In terms of the historic environment, West Oxfordshire District has a rich archaeological and architectural heritage including 3,200 listed buildings, 149 scheduled monuments, 51 conservation areas and 16 parks and gardens of special historic interest. Blenheim Palace at Woodstock has been designated as a World Heritage Site (WHS) and is a key visitor attraction.
3.42 In their response to the District Council (see Appendix 2) English Heritage highlighted the presence of a number of designated heritage assets straddling or in close proximity to the District boundary. Whilst no specific strategic matters were identified, a request was made for continuing engagement with the District Council.
4. Addressing Strategic Cross-Boundary Issues through the Preparation of the Pre-Submission Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2011 – 2031)

4.1 This section of the statement explains how the strategically important cross-boundary issues identified in Section 3 have been addressed through the preparation of the pre-submission draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan in accordance with the duty to co-operate.

4.2 The engagement that has been undertaken can be broken down into three broad areas including:

- Partnership working;
- Evidence gathering; and
- Preparation of the Local Plan

4.3 Further information on each is provided below.

**Partnership Working**

4.4 There is a strong tradition of effective partnership working in Oxfordshire on strategic planning matters which has underpinned the preparation of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

4.5 The District Council is a member of the Oxfordshire Partnership Board, an over-arching strategic partnership for the County which provides a forum for setting the strategic vision for the county and for capturing the vision in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

4.6 Prior to the recent establishment of the Oxfordshire Growth Board (see below) a considerable amount of partnership working took place under the auspices of the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) – a partnership of local authorities and other key bodies including the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Homes and Communities Agency.

4.7 SPIP provided a liaison forum on spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport, and general infrastructure issues arising at regional and sub-regional level. It was also intended to lead and co-ordinate the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) “single conversation” process on regeneration and housing issues. It was agreed with the HCA that SPIP and its supporting Executive Group would conduct the single conversation on behalf of Oxfordshire. The ‘Terms of Reference’ for the Oxfordshire SPIP are attached at Appendix 4.

4.8 A key role of SPIP was to co-ordinate the preparation of the Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan (LIP) which was published in 2010 and updated in 2013. The LIP was the first formal document resulting from Oxfordshire’s Single Conversation with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

4.9 The LIP sets out a shared vision and priorities for delivering housing growth, economic development, regeneration, and infrastructure. It outlines and integrates the plans of Cherwell, Oxford, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire District Councils, Oxfordshire County Council, the Highways Agency, Network Rail, the Environment Agency and the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust to deliver housing and economic growth and associated strategic infrastructure to 2030.
4.10 Importantly, through the District Council’s involvement, the LIP took account of the housing, economic and infrastructure priorities for growth identified in the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

4.11 Of particular importance to local plan making in Oxfordshire, SPIP was also responsible for commissioning the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) which was published in April 2013 and forms a key part of the evidence base underpinning local plans in Oxfordshire (see ‘evidence gathering’ below).

4.12 Partly in response to the outcomes of the SHMA and also taking account of other strategic planning matters, in accordance with the duty to co-operate, the members of SPIP including West Oxfordshire District Council signed up to a ‘statement of co-operation’ which is attached at Appendix 3. The statement outlines matters on which the six local authorities in Oxfordshire will continue to cooperate in accordance with the duty. The statement is intended to remain in perpetuity.

4.13 The statement explains that each of the parties will engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in any process that involves the following:

- The preparation of development plan documents
- The preparation of other local planning documents
- The planning and prioritisation of infrastructure and investment in Oxfordshire to support economic growth of the area
- Activities that support any of the above so far as they relate to sustainable development or use of land that has or would impact on more than one of the parties.

4.14 The statement clarifies that the parties will use the existing partnership arrangement of SPIP to act as a coordinating body for joint working.

4.15 A key focus of the statement of co-operation is how the parties involved will manage the outcomes of the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) in the event that one of the parties is unable to accommodate their objectively assessed need within their own administrative boundary.

4.16 The outcomes of the Oxfordshire SHMA are now being co-ordinated through the Oxfordshire Growth Board which has superseded the activities of SPIP.

4.17 The Growth Board is a joint statutory committee which has been charged with the delivery, on behalf of the Local Enterprise Partnership, of the projects agreed in the Oxfordshire and Oxford City Deal and the Oxfordshire Local Growth Deal. The Growth Board is supported by an Executive officers Group comprising senior officers from the six member local authorities, the HCA, LEP and other partners. The ‘Terms of Reference for the Growth Board are attached at Appendix 4.

4.18 A key issue currently being addressed and co-ordinated by the Oxfordshire Growth Board is the distribution of unmet housing need arising from Oxford City’s inability to meet its identified needs within its administrative boundaries.

4.19 Although the full extent of Oxford City’s housing capacity has not yet been agreed, there is a general agreement that there will be a significant element of ‘unmet’ housing need that
will need to be accommodated elsewhere within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area (HMA).

4.20 A considerable amount of joint working is currently underway between the local authorities and other relevant partners including the Environment Agency and Homes and Communities Agency in order to determine how this unmet need should be apportioned across the HMA. This will involve a combination of work carried out ‘in-house’ and work externally commissioned. The outcome of this joint work is expected in autumn 2015.

4.21 In recognition of the possibility of additional housing growth being apportioned to West Oxfordshire District Council from Oxford City, the pre-submission draft Local Plan sets out a clear commitment to an early review in order to address this issue. This is the same approach that has been taken in the emerging Cherwell and Vale of White Horse Local Plans.

4.22 In relation to the issue of ‘unmet’ housing need, it should be noted that although the West Oxfordshire Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan is based on a lower housing requirement than is identified in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) the District Council does not consider that there is an element of ‘unmet’ need arising from West Oxfordshire to be accounted for elsewhere in the Oxfordshire HMA. This is because the District Council considers the objectively assessed need set out in the SHMA to be incorrect.

4.23 Having regard to evidence and analysis prepared since the SHMA was published as well as recent best practice, the Council considers that the SHMA over-states the level of housing need in West Oxfordshire at 660 homes per annum and that this should be adjusted downwards to 525 homes per annum. As such, there is no element of ‘unmet’ housing need to account for. This position has been explained to the other Oxfordshire local authorities. Further information on the Oxfordshire Growth Board as well as minutes of meetings can be found on the Oxfordshire Growth Board website https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-growth-board

4.24 In addition to the co-ordinating, partnership role formerly fulfilled by SPIP and now by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, effective partnership working on cross-boundary planning matters in Oxfordshire is also carried out at officer level through the Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officer Group (OPPO).

4.25 OPPO supported SPIP and now supports the Oxfordshire Growth Board helping to deliver technical work required as part of the agreed joint working process.

4.26 West Oxfordshire District Council is currently the lead authority for the Oxfordshire Growth Board and Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officer Group (OPPO).

4.27 The District Council is also actively engaged in a number of other partnerships in accordance with the duty to co-operate including the Oxfordshire Health and Well-Being Board, the Oxfordshire Local Transport Board, the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership.

4.28 Direct engagement with the Homes and Communities Agency on strategic planning and housing matters is achieved via quarterly liaison meetings with the HCA and a number of registered providers.
4.29 In addition, ad-hoc meetings have been arranged throughout the preparation of the local plan with a number of local authorities in relation to the strategic cross-boundary planning matters including Cotswold District Council, Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.

4.30 Meetings have also been held with other prescribed bodies including the Environment Agency, English Heritage, the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Natural England.

Evidence Gathering

4.31 The West Oxfordshire pre-submission draft Local Plan is underpinned by a robust and comprehensive evidence base. In a large number of cases, this evidence has been prepared on a joint basis with relevant partners in accordance with the duty to co-operate.

4.32 This statement has already explained how a joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was prepared for Oxfordshire on behalf of the Oxfordshire local authorities and co-ordinated by the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP).

4.33 The SHMA now forms a key part of the evidence base underpinning local plans in Oxfordshire and an agreed process is underway to address the outcomes of the SHMA in relation to the accommodation of unmet housing need within the HMA.

4.34 Further joint working took place in relation to a separate analysis of future likely economic performance in Oxfordshire which fed into the Oxfordshire SHMA and informed many of its recommendations. The report was jointly commissioned by all Oxfordshire authorities and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and set out various scenarios for potential job growth in Oxfordshire in the period up to 2031.

4.35 A number of other key pieces of evidence underpinning the West Oxfordshire Local Plan have also been the subject of extensive joint working with partners in accordance with the duty to co-operate.

4.36 During the early stages of local plan preparation for example West Oxfordshire District Council jointly commissioned a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) with Cherwell District Council in 2009. The assessment has been a key influence on the evolution of the local plan including the selection and rejection of alternative options.

4.37 More recently in 2013 the District Council jointly commissioned an assessment of gypsy and traveller accommodation requirements in collaboration with Cherwell District Council and also South Northamptonshire Council. Again, the assessment has been a key influence on the local plan helping to inform the level of provision to be planned for and the Council’s position in relation to 5-year housing land supply.

4.38 A key part of the Local Plan evidence base is the Council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which sits alongside the Local Plan and seeks to identify the new and enhanced infrastructure (physical, social and green) needed to support the quantum and distribution of growth identified in the Local Plan.

4.39 The IDP has been prepared on a highly collaborative basis in accordance with the duty to co-operate. The Council has actively engaged with a number of the prescribed bodies covered by the duty in preparing the IDP including Oxfordshire County Council in their role as mineral and waste planning authority as well as education and transport authority.
4.40 The Council has also engaged directly with other parties as appropriate including the Highways Agency, the Environment Agency, English Heritage, Natural England, rail providers and the Oxfordshire clinical commissioning group. A range of other bodies not covered by the duty to co-operate have also been engaged in the preparation of the IDP.

4.41 The IDP is a 'living' document and will be kept up to date by the Council through continuous and active liaison with the parties engaged to date and any other parties considered appropriate. The IDP will form the basis of the Council's CIL regulation 123 list.

4.42 The District Council has worked collaboratively with Oxfordshire County Council in relation to both the IDP and the separate transport evidence that underpins the Local Plan. The County Council has commissioned several transport modelling exercises on behalf of the District Council and remains actively engaged in the preparation of the Local Plan.

4.43 In accordance with regulations, the Local Plan is underpinned by a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) which considers the potential impact of development in West Oxfordshire on sites of European significance including in particular Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The HRA has been prepared following extensive engagement with Oxfordshire County Council and Natural England in accordance with the duty to co-operate.

4.44 In addition to the studies outlined above that have already been completed, West Oxfordshire District Council remains committed to further joint working in relation to the evidence base needed to inform future decisions on the apportionment of unmet housing need from Oxford City across the rest of the HMA.

4.45 A Green Belt review is currently in the process of being commissioned and further evidence is likely to be needed including sustainability appraisal, habitat regulations assessment, transport modelling, deliverability and viability and the consideration of water supply and disposal.

4.46 The District Council will continue to work in partnership with the other Oxfordshire local authorities through the Oxfordshire Growth Board in relation to the development of this evidence base.

4.47 The District Council also remains engaged with the other Oxfordshire local authorities in relation to the preparation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Oxfordshire which will build on the interim GI study produced for West Oxfordshire District in 2011.

Preparation of the Local Plan

4.48 In addition to the involvement of relevant partners in the development of the Local Plan supporting evidence base, the Council has actively engaged with partners in relation to the preparation of the Local Plan itself.

4.49 In accordance with legislative requirements and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) the Council has engaged with the prescribed bodies at various consultation stages through the preparation of the local plan from the initial issues and options stages through to consultation on an initial draft Local Plan in 2012 and further focused consultation on housing matters in 2014.
4.50 The Council has produced a separate statement of consultation setting out who has been engaged in the preparation of the Local Plan to date and how the key issues raised have been taken into account in the pre-submission draft Local Plan.

4.51 In addition to this general process of engagement, West Oxfordshire District Council has sought to actively engage with a number of prescribed bodies in relation to the preparation of the pre-submission draft Local Plan.

4.52 The views of the Environment Agency have been sought for example particularly in relation to the issue of water supply and disposal as well as the flood risk implications of a number of proposed Strategic Development Areas identified in the Local Plan.

4.53 Similarly the views of English Heritage have been sought in relation to the Council’s approach towards the historic environment set out in the Local Plan. Direct engagement has helped to ensure that the policies and proposals set out in the plan are consistent with national policy and English Heritage priorities.

4.54 The views of the County Council have been sought in relation to a number of matters relating to the Local Plan including the transport impacts of new development, transport matters more generally as well as infrastructure provision including education, libraries, open space and so on. Meetings have also been held with the County Council’s mineral and waste planning team.

4.55 A regular officer liaison group meeting with County Council Officers has helped to ensure continuous and active engagement in relation to the preparation of the Local Plan.

4.56 Other elements of the Local Plan have also been the subject of active and continuous engagement with prescribed bodies in accordance with the duty to co-operate. The views and input of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) on emerging local plan proposals including the approach towards affordable housing provision have for example been sought through regular liaison meetings that also involve local registered providers.

4.57 Natural England has also been actively engaged in relation to the environmental elements of the Local Plan as well as the underpinning evidence base including the supporting Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).
5. **Next Steps**

5.1 The Council intends to formally publish the pre-submission draft Local Plan for a period of 6-weeks commencing in March 2015.

5.2 In accordance with the duty to co-operate, the prescribed bodies identified in the regulations will be engaged along with other specific and general consultees and invited to provide formal representations.

5.3 All representations will be carefully considered by the Council before a decision is made on whether to submit the Local Plan for independent examination. If any significant issues arise that warrant further direct engagement with relevant parties in relation to cross-boundary issues of strategic importance, further dialogue will take place prior to submission of the local plan for examination and this statement will be updated accordingly to provide an accurate record.

5.4 In short, the District Council remains committed to continuous and active engagement with relevant parties through the preparation of the Local Plan up until and beyond the point of adoption.
Appendix I Letter sent by WODC to ‘prescribed bodies’ 11 April 2013
Dear

**West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011 – 2029)**

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with a brief update on the Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan and to ask whether there are any issues of strategic cross-boundary importance that you believe require further consideration before the plan is finalised.

**Progress of the West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan**

The West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011 – 2029) was published for a 6-week period of consultation in November 2012. In response to the consultation, over 2,000 comments were received from around 1,200 respondents. A copy of the draft plan and a summary of the responses submitted can be viewed online at:

http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning/CoreStrategy.cfm

Officers are currently in the process of considering the responses and undertaking the further research and analysis needed to take the plan forward. It is anticipated that the pre-submission draft Local Plan will be formally published in June 2013.

**Strategic Issues**

Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 introduced a new ‘duty to co-operate’ which applies to all local planning authorities, county council and national park authorities in England as well as a number of other public bodies. The duty requires these bodies to work together to ensure that issues of strategic, cross-boundary importance are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans.

Whilst the issues will vary from place to place, they are likely to include ‘larger than local’ matters such as housing and employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development, infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation and conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment.

Importantly, when its Local Plan is submitted for examination, West Oxfordshire District Council will be expected to provide evidence of effective joint working on such matters. As such, the intention is to produce a ‘statement of compliance’ setting out in detail how the Council has sought to work collaboratively with partners in relation to the preparation of the Local Plan and supporting evidence base.
In summary, this has included (but is not limited to) the following activities:

- Ongoing engagement with partners through the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP)
- Collaborative working with partners in relation to the Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan (LIP)
- Joint commissioning of shared evidence including the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment
- Ongoing engagement with various parties in relation to the preparation of the West Oxfordshire Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)
- Collaborative working with partners in relation to the recent Oxfordshire ‘City Deal’ bid
- Regular engagement with statutory bodies including the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England in relation to the content of the Local Plan and supporting evidence base; and
- Ongoing engagement with other Oxfordshire authorities through the Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officers Group

This brief summary provides a flavour of the joint working undertaken to date. So that we have as complete a picture as possible, if there are any cross boundary issues and priorities that you consider require further dialogue, I would be grateful if you could identify these so that we may initiate any necessary actions before the West Oxfordshire Local Plan is formally published.

I would be grateful for a response by 30th April 2013. If I do not receive a response by then I will assume there are no additional matters which you consider require further attention at this time.

Yours faithfully

Chris Hargraves
Planning Policy Manager
Dear Mr Hargraves

West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011-2029)

Thank you for your consultation, which we received on 11 April 2013.

We have considered the issues raised in the consultation and we conclude that there are no issues of strategic cross-boundary importance that we would wish to raise.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Cathy Harrison
Planning Advisor

Direct dial 01491 828515
Direct e-mail planning-wallingford@environment-agency.gov.uk
Mr Chris Hargraves  
Planning Policy Manager  
West Oxfordshire District Council  
Elmfield  
New Yatt Road  
Witney  
Oxfordshire, OX28 1PB  

Dear Chris,

**Duty to Co-operate**

Thank you for your letter of 11th April regarding the West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011 – 2029) and the duty to co-operate.

As you are aware the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission (English Heritage) is a “prescribed body” by virtue of Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and is therefore required to co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development with local planning authorities and other prescribed bodies by Section 33A of Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Act (as inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011).

The activities on which the prescribed bodies are required to co-operate include the preparation of development plan and other local development documents so far as relating to a strategic matter i.e. sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas.

English Heritage confines its involvement in planning issues to matters that involve or otherwise affect the historic environment. English Heritage’s duty to co-operate is therefore appropriate in respect of strategic matters that would involve or otherwise affect a heritage asset.

According to our records, there are a number of designated heritage assets straddling or in close proximity to the District boundary, including Chastleton House Grade II* registered historic park and garden, Rousham Grade I registered historic park and garden and Blenheim Palace Grade I registered historic park and garden and World Heritage Site. However, I am not aware of any proposed developments that would significantly impact on these assets.

Cont’d
Although there may be no strategic matters where our obligations under the duty to co-operate would arise, we welcome ongoing engagement with the Council. I therefore look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Martin Small
Historic Environment Planning Adviser
(Bucks, Oxon, Berks, Hants, IoW, South Downs and Chichester)

E-mail: martin.small@english-heritage.org.uk
Dear Chris,

West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011 – 2029): Cross boundary issues

Thank you for your letter of 11 April. The City Council are keen to work with West Oxfordshire District Council on matters of cross-boundary importance.

I can confirm that the City Council have been working with West Oxfordshire:

- through the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP)
- on the Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan (LIP)
- on the joint commissioning of shared evidence including the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)
- in relation to the recent Oxfordshire ‘City Deal’ bid
- through the Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officers Group on a regular basis.

In addition, we have been working together through:

- the Economic Development Officer Group
- joint work and discussions on the A40 highway improvements related to the Northern Gateway site

I appreciate that the bullet point list of joint working areas mentioned in your letter covers more than just your involvement with the City Council but for clarification I am not aware that the City Council have been involved in your Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), your Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment or the West Oxfordshire Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

Housing delivery
The Oxfordshire Authorities have jointly commissioned a Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The outcome of this work will need to flow into detailed work to assess where the required housing will be located within Oxfordshire, which may involve a Green Belt review. The City Council consider it extremely important for the Oxfordshire Authorities to work together to progress this work and so we raised this in our response to your Local Plan consultation.

South Oxfordshire District Council’s Core Strategy includes an important reference to this approach: “If (following the planned updating of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Oxfordshire) joint work were to be initiated to address how the study findings should be evaluated...”
and met, the Council would fulfil its statutory ‘duty to cooperate’ in partnership with all the other necessary participating authorities.” (Paragraph 7.8).

To ensure that the duty to co-operate can be fulfilled County-wide, the City Council consider that this commitment should also be reflected in West Oxfordshire’s Local Plan.

Transport improvements
The City Council also made a comment in response to your Local Plan consultation on the draft policy on transport improvements on the approaches to Oxford. We supported the general approach but felt that it wasn’t strong enough as drafted. We consider it important to work jointly on this particular matter going forward.

General comments
In relation to the Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officers (OPPO) meetings, the Economic Development Officer Group and the duty to cooperate in general, the City Council made some suggestions to improve joint working arrangements at the last OPPO meeting. We look forward to receiving comments from West Oxfordshire on these suggested improvements.

In summary, I consider that West Oxfordshire have fulfilled their duty to co-operate with the City Council.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Goddard
Team Leader Planning Policy
19 April 2013

Dear Chris

RE: West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011 – 2029)

Thank you for your letter dated 11 April 2013 asking South Oxfordshire District Council whether it has any cross boundary issues and priorities that require further dialogue with West Oxfordshire District Council relating to its draft local plan (2011 – 2029).

South Oxfordshire does not share a boundary with West Oxfordshire so there are no cross boundary issues and priorities as such between the two authorities.

However, some issues are of such strategic importance that they affect all districts in Oxfordshire, such as the housing need. In the event that the forthcoming joint SHMA identifies such a need, and strategic working results in a proposal for some of Oxford's housing to be accommodated outside Oxford, West Oxfordshire’s Local Plan should keep the door open for this work, should it happen, in the same way our adopted South Oxfordshire Core Strategy does at para 7.7 and 7.8:

‘7.7. The South East Plan proposed a ‘South of Oxford Strategic Development Area’ of 4,000 dwellings within this District, adjoining the City boundary. The Treasury Solicitor conceded a legal challenge to this as insufficient sustainability appraisal had been undertaken of possible alternative locations for meeting the wider housing needs of the City. Any provision of development on that scale would need to have been preceded by joint work and sustainability appraisal of reasonable alternative options involving the City and all of its adjoining authorities’.

‘7.8. The current Oxford Core Strategy provides for 8,000 dwellings within the City 2006-2026. It also states that ‘Some needs that cannot be met within the City may be met elsewhere within the Central Oxfordshire sub-region’. If (following the planned updating of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Oxfordshire) joint work were to be initiated to address how the study findings should be evaluated and met, the Council would fulfil its statutory ‘duty to co-operate’ in partnership with all the other necessary participating authorities’.

www.southoxon.gov.uk
I hope this helps. If you have any questions please get back to me.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Motuel – Team Leader (Planning Policy)
Chris Hargraves  
Planning Policy Manager  
West Oxfordshire District Council  
Elmfield  
New Yatt Road  
Witney  
OX28 1PB  

Dear Mr Hargraves

**West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan**

Thank you for your letter dated 11 April asking for confirmation as to whether there are any strategic cross boundary issues between our respective local authority areas that need to be addressed.

The only significant issue that Stratford District Council would wish to raise is the need for consistency in our planning policies relating to the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and how these are applied to the determination of planning applications for development that would have an impact on the natural beauty and enjoyment of the AONB.

I trust this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Dave Nash  
Planning & Housing Policy Manager
Dear Chris

West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011-2029): cross boundary issues and priorities

Thank you for your letter dated 11 April 2013 in which you asked whether there are any issues of strategic cross-boundary importance that we believe require further consideration before the West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011-2029) is finalised.

We have recently published a review of cross boundary issues to accompany the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1) Consultation Draft. This review is set out in Topic Paper 1 (Duty to cooperate and cross boundary issues).

The topic paper identifies four potential cross boundary issues which are particularly relevant to West Oxfordshire: these relate to housing provision, employment provision, Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and the Water Framework Directive and Thames River Basin Management Plan. Housing provision is addressed below. In the case of the other cross boundary issues, we do not have specific concerns about the Draft Local Plan, but consider that it will be appropriate to work together on these issues as and when appropriate on an ongoing basis. Further detail is provided about each issue in turn below.

Housing provision

We are committed to ongoing joint working with the other Oxfordshire districts to ensure a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of Oxfordshire. In particular, we will seek to work with West Oxfordshire District Council and the other district councils to evaluate the findings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and how best to respond to these findings.
As highlighted in our response to the West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan consultation in December 2012, we consider that robust and up to date evidence is needed to demonstrate that the housing requirement in the Draft Local Plan (which relies on the requirement in the South East Plan) meets the National Planning Policy Framework’s requirement to meet objectively assessed housing need in full, if consistent with other policies in the Framework. The Framework says (paragraph 159/1) that local authorities should prepare a SHMA to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.

**Employment provision**

The evidence base for Oxford City Council’s Core Strategy suggests that future demand for employment land in Oxford may need to be met outside the city’s boundary. We will seek to work with the other Oxfordshire authorities to appropriately address this issue if it becomes apparent that there is a need for Oxford’s demand for employment land to be met outside the city.

**Oxford Meadows SAC**

We have published a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as part of the supporting material to the Vale of White Horse LPP1 Consultation Draft, and this concludes that likely significant effects on the Oxford Meadows SAC will not occur as a result of development under the proposed LPP1, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

We will continue working with partners, including Natural England, to ensure that any development pressures at Oxford Meadows SAC are adequately addressed.


The Vale of White Horse LPP1 consultation document includes proposed policies relating to sustainable design and construction (core policy 30), green infrastructure (core policy 35) and conservation and improvement of biodiversity (core policy 36) which will help achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive by ensuring that surface water run-off is appropriately controlled.

We are also proposing to save policy DC12 (water quality and resources) of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 which indicates that development will not be permitted if it would adversely affect the quality of water resources.

It is also worth noting that we have commissioned an update to the 2009 Joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire districts, and this update will form part of the evidence base for the Vale of White Horse LPP1.
We will continue to work with the Environment Agency and other partners in helping to deliver the objectives of the Water Framework Directive and the Thames River Basin Management Plan.

I hope this response is helpful in terms of identifying those cross boundary issues which we consider to be relevant to West Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.

Yours sincerely

Anna Lee
Senior Planning Policy Officer
From: Gonet, Teresa (non CS) <Teresa.Gonet@highways.gsi.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 April 2013 15:44
To: Chris Hargraves
Cc: Blake, Patrick
Subject: West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011 - 2029)- response to consultation

Dear Chris

Thank you for your letter dated 11 April 2013 inviting the Highways Agency (HA) to comment on the West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (2011-2029).

The HA is an executive agency of the Department for Transport (DfT). We are responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's strategic road network (SRN) on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport.

The HA will be concerned with proposals that have the potential to impact the safe and efficient operation of the SRN.

We have reviewed the consultations and do not have any comment at this time.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Teresa Gonet
Highways Agency | Federated House | London Road | Dorking | RH4 1SZ
Tel: +44 (0) 1306 878633
Web: http://www.highways.gov.uk
GTN: 3904 8633

Safe roads, reliable journeys, informed travellers
Highways Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Transport.

The original of this email was scanned for viruses by the Government Secure Intranet virus scanning service supplied by Vodafone in partnership with Symantec. (CCTM Certificate Number 2009/09/0052.) On leaving the GSi this email was certified virus free. Communications via the GSi may be automatically logged, monitored and/or recorded for legal purposes.
From: Joanne Billingham <joanne.billingham@cotswold.gov.uk>  
Sent: 25 April 2013 16:29  
To: Chris Hargraves  
Cc: Lesley A. Davies; Chris Vickery  
Subject: FW: West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan and Duty to Co-Operate  
Attachments: Duty to co-operate letter 11 April 2013.pdf  

Chris,  
As of this time, I can confirm that there are no outstanding spatial planning issues to be discussed between our two authorities. I would also like to add that CDC wish to continue the ad hoc meeting arrangements to discuss issues as and when they arise.  
Jo  

Joanne Billingham  
Principal Planning Policy Officer  
Forward Planning  
Cotswold District Council  
Trinity Road  
Cirencester  
GL1 7PX  
Tel: 01285 623000  
Fax: 01285 623900  

From: Chris Vickery  
Sent: 11 April 2013 15:58  
To: Joanne Billingham  
Cc: Lesley A. Davies; Georgina Wood  
Subject: FW: West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan and Duty to Co-Operate  

Jo,  

Please see email below and attached letter.  

As a resident of West Ox, you may be best placed to know what cross border issues night be worth raising.  

Thanks  

Chris  

From: Chris Hargraves [mailto:Chris.Hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk]  
Sent: 11 April 2013 12:28  
To: Chris Vickery  
Subject: West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan and Duty to Co-Operate  

Chris  

Please see attached letter which has been sent to all adjoining authorities and other relevant bodies.  

Kind regards  

Chris Hargraves  
Planning Policy Manager  
West Oxfordshire District Council
Dear Chris

Thank you for consulting Gloucestershire County Council on this matter. I have consulted internally, at officer level, as to whether there are any outstanding strategic cross boundary issues. The only comments I have received are from colleagues in our Minerals and Waste section:

“The County Council is Minerals & Waste Planning Authority being a ‘two-tier’ is as the case for planning in Oxfordshire. The Council has recently adopted its Waste Core Strategy (November 2012) and is currently in the process of reactivating its minerals development plan preparation process. We are currently revisiting our evidence base with a view to producing a consultation package for a revised Minerals Local Plan towards the end of 2013/early 2014. In the run-up to that process we will be undertaking targeted engagement. This is already happening with key stakeholders. The Council is very mindful of the need to fulfil its duty under S33A of the Act. It has been and will be in working proactively with Oxfordshire County Council in the preparation of minerals and waste policy in both counties. Hopefully this should go someway towards fulfilling the requirements for both areas in relation to the strategic issue of minerals planning in both areas. As part of the Councils ongoing requirements in the preparation of its Minerals Local Plan it will also be soon consulting adjacent local planning authorities to ascertain if there are any issues which fall within the duty to co-operate. It might be useful if West Oxfordshire District Council could start to consider whether there are issues which it needs to bring to the attention of Gloucestershire County Council in the preparation of its Minerals Local Plan. Alternatively the District might be content to rely on the dialogue between the County Councils.”

I am not aware of any other issues being raised with regard to the West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you

Rob Niblett
Planning Officer
Appendix 3  Oxfordshire Statement of Co-Operation
Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation

INTRODUCTION
1.1. This Statement of Cooperation outlines the matters on which the six Oxfordshire local authorities will continue to cooperate. In particular, it sets out how the Parties will manage the outcomes of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, should any of the Local Planning Authorities in Oxfordshire not be able to meet their full objectively assessed housing need.

PARTIES TO THE STATEMENT
2.1. The Statement of Cooperation is agreed by council Leaders from the following local authorities:
- Cherwell District Council
- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Vale of White Horse District Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council

PURPOSE OF THE STATEMENT OF COOPERATION
3.1 The purpose of this Statement of Cooperation is to set out the scope and structure of cooperation between the Parties on a range of issues. In particular, it outlines the process and arrangements for cooperation between local authorities should one of the Parties be unable to accommodate their objectively assessed need identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

BACKGROUND
4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the national policy requirements in relation to planning across administrative boundaries at paragraphs 178-181. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated. The NPPF also outlines that joint working should enable local planning authorities to work together to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own areas – for instance, because of a lack of physical capacity or because to do so would cause significant harm to the principles and policies of the NPPF.

4.2 For example in relation to housing the NPPF requires LPAs to use a valid evidence base to use a valid evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area. The NPPF states that housing need should be established by conducting a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The SHMA will also identify the extent of the housing market area. The NPPF also requires that Local Plans seek to meet objectively assessed development requirements including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities.

4.3 The requirements of the NPPF are reinforced by the legal Duty to Cooperate introduced by the Localism Act. The duty to cooperate; requires councils and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to planning of sustainable development; requires councils to consider whether to enter into agreements on joint approaches or prepare joint local plans (if a LPA); and
applies to planning for strategic matters in relation to the preparation of Local Plans, and other activities that prepare the way for these activities.

4.4 The Duty to Cooperate is a legal requirement of the plan preparation process and non-compliance cannot be fixed at Examination by the Planning Inspectorate – the plan cannot be adopted. In addition policies developed through the duty must also be found sound (i.e. evidence based and deliverable).

SCOPE OF COOPERATION

5.1 Each of the Parties will engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in any process that involves the following:
- The preparation of development plan documents
- The preparation of other local planning documents
- The planning and prioritisation of infrastructure and investment in Oxfordshire to support economic growth of the area
- Activities that support any of the above so far as they relate to sustainable development or use of land that has or would impact on more than one of the Parties.

5.2 The engagement required of Parties includes, in particular considering whether to consult on and prepare, and enter into and publish, agreements on joint approaches to the undertaking of activities paragraph 5.1 where there are cross border issues and for LPAs considering whether to prepare joint local development documents. Parties have also agreed that they will act expediently when undertaking joint work related to the activities in paragraph 5.1 to avoid unreasonable delay.

5.3 A current example of implementing the requirements of this Statement is the joint work being undertaken in relation to accommodating housing need identified for Oxfordshire. The new Oxfordshire SHMA has been jointly commissioned by the Parties. The SHMA work will take place over the summer 2013. Once this technical work has established the scale of housing required across the housing market area each Local Planning Authority (LPA) must assess the implications for their own area. If we assume that an increase in housing is required, in some or all authorities, those which see an increase in need will have to assess potential new locations for housing sites. Should any of the Oxfordshire LPAs be unable to accommodate their objectively assessed need identified in the SHMA, the remaining Oxfordshire authorities must seek to accommodate this unmet need. As part of ongoing cooperation between the Parties on this issue to ensure that any unmet need is accommodated in accordance with national policy a process has been agreed and is included in Appendix One of this Statement.

COOPERATION STRUCTURE

6.1 The Parties will use the existing partnership arrangement of SPIP to act as a co-ordinating body for this joint working. An outline of the Duty to Cooperate structure in Oxfordshire is shown in Appendix 2.

6.2 The SPIP Executive meets every 6 weeks and the SPIP Board every 3 months. Additional meetings may be required to facilitate timely progression of work and this will be accommodated. SPIP will reports its discussions and agreed actions back to the officers group via their Programme Manager as necessary. In addition SPIP will report its discussions and agreed actions to any or all of the following as it is deemed necessary:
- Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
6.3 SPIP will be supported by an Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officer group (OPPO) to help deliver the technical work required as part of the agreed process. This group will meet every six weeks or more often as required. OPPO will provide progress updates to SPIP via the SPIP Programme Manager.

6.4 As part of this the Parties will ensure that the scope of cooperation identified in section 7 is applied to other bodies covered by the Duty to Cooperate. These bodies include:

- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Office of the Rail Regulator
- Highways Agency
- Integrated Transport Authorities
- Highway Authorities
- Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities outside Oxfordshire

RESOURCES

7.1 Each of the Parties will contribute at least one experienced planning officer to be on the OPPO group.

7.2 If consultants are used on a joint basis to complete work associated with this Statement their costs will be apportioned equally among the Parties. The SPIP Programme Manager will be responsible for co-ordinating authorisation from SPIP of any joint work required to complete the process.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

8.1 Subject to the rights of third parties, the Parties will share equally the intellectual property rights to all data, reports, drawings, specifications, designs, inventions or other material produced or acquired including copyrights in the course of their joint work. The Parties agree that any proposal by one of them to permit a third party to utilise the documents and materials produced by the partnership shall be subject to the agreement of all other Parties. Any changes, amendments or updates made to the documents and materials, if made under the terms of the Statement of Cooperation, shall be jointly owned by the Parties.

REQUESTS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

9.1 Each of the Parties will deal with Freedom of Information requests in accordance with the requirements of the Act. To ensure that all relevant information is issued, if any of the Parties receives a Freedom of Information request in respect of joint work associated with the Statement of Cooperation the request will be shared with the other Parties via the SPIP Programme Manager at the earliest opportunity.

DURATION

10.1 This Statement of Cooperation will remain in perpetuity. The content of this Statement will be reviewed annually or at the request in writing of one of the Parties. Amendments will require the agreement of all the Parties.
LIMITATIONS

11.1 The Statement of Cooperation is an operational document. It is not a formally binding legal agreement and the partnership is not a legal entity. This Statement does not fetter the discretion of any of the Parties in the exercise of any of their statutory powers and duties.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND TERMINATION

12.1 In the event of a dispute at OPPO that cannot be resolved these will be escalated to SPIP Executive via the SPIP Programme Manager. If the matter cannot be resolved by SPIP Executive then the matter concerned will be referred to the SPIP Board. If the matter is not able to be satisfactorily resolved, the Parties should put it in writing and keep it on file.

12.2 Those decisions in respect of agreement and dispute will be clearly logged and submitted, if necessary, as part of the evidence to each respective LPAs Local Plan examination to demonstrate how the Duty to Cooperate has been complied with.

12.3 Parties can terminate their involvement at any time. If the Statement of Cooperation is terminated, the Parties agree that any reports, studies or any other information which has jointly been prepared can be used by each of the Parties separately.
APPENDIX 1: PROPOSED DUTY TO COOPERATE PROCESS FOR MANAGING SHMA OUTCOMES

Notes:
1. The process below assumes that additional housing needs will be identified in the SHMA.
2. The process below recognises that SPIP is not a formal decision-making body but that it provides an effective mechanism by which the partner authorities can demonstrate they are applying the statutory Duty to Cooperate in an effective way.
3. Steps are not necessarily sequential and flexibility can be applied to ensure the process is implemented in the most effective and efficient way. Examples provided within the steps are not exhaustive and additional options may emerge for testing as work is progressed.
APPENDIX 2: OXFORDSHIRE DUTY TO COOPERATE OUTLINE STRUCTURE

Oxfordshire LEP

Local Transport Board

Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) Board

City Deal Bid Team

Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) Executive

Health and Well Being Board

Theme based working groups for example:
- Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officers group (OPPO)
- Economic Development Officers group

Other Duty to Cooperate bodies

Oxfordshire local authorities:
- Cherwell District Council
- Oxford City
- Oxfordshire County Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Vale of White Horse District Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council
Appendix 4  Terms of Reference for Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership and Oxfordshire Growth Board
SPIP Terms of Reference

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To provide a forum for partnership working and collaboration on spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport, and general infrastructure across Oxfordshire.

To lead and co-ordinate liaison with the Local Enterprise Partnership on Oxfordshire wide issues and support the LEP in the identification of priorities and development of investment strategies and economic plans for Oxfordshire.

To lead and co-ordinate liaison with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to develop plans to enhance Oxfordshire share of HCA development programmes and contribute to any related interaction with Government agencies.

To lead on production of joint work on cross border issues to ensure partners meet the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate and wider national policy.

To advise partners on matters of collective interest in the fields of activity listed above.

To seek agreement on local priorities and targets in the fields of activity listed above and ensure that agreed priorities are applied in other joint work and projects across Oxfordshire.

To seek agreement on alignment between national and LEP funding streams in the fields of activity listed above.

To assist in the establishment of detailed arrangements for integration between spatial, infrastructure and public service planning activity in appropriately defined localities.

To provide a forum to share information and analysis on spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport, and general infrastructure issues including in areas adjoining the county boundary.

PURPOSE

More specifically the partnership will seek to:

- develop and communicate consensus views that seek to inform, assist and influence Government, Government agency, Local Enterprise Partnerships in and adjoining Oxfordshire and other statutory bodies including the Local Transport Board in their policy formulation and decision making roles;
- develop and communicate consensus views that seek to inform, assist and influence organisations and agencies that operate across local authority administrative boundaries;
- provide advice on economic development, housing, transport, general infrastructure and funding to ensure appropriate research, policy and resource input to facilitate economic growth in Oxfordshire;
- make links with other partnerships and working groups and commission delivery work that assists partnership working in the areas defined above.

To facilitate this the Partnership will engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in any process that involves the following:

- The preparation of development plan documents
- The preparation of other local planning documents
- The planning and prioritisation of infrastructure and investment in Oxfordshire to support economic growth of the area
- Activities that support any of the above so far as they relate to sustainable development or use of land that has or would impact on more than one of the partners.

The engagement required of partners includes, in particular considering whether to consult on and prepare, and enter into and publish, agreements on joint approaches to the undertaking of activities.
listed above where there are cross border issues and for LPAs considering whether to prepare joint local development documents. Partners have also agreed that they will act expeditiously when undertaking joint work related to the activities listed above to avoid unreasonable delay.

**PARTNERSHIP WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership operates by Member consensus. SPIP will report its discussions and agreed actions to any or all of the following as it is deemed necessary:

- Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Oxfordshire City Deal Bid Team
- Oxfordshire Local Transport Board
- Neighbouring Local Enterprise Partnerships

SPIP will be supported by an officer working groups in a number of key areas including planning, housing and economic development to help deliver the technical work required as part of the agreed process. SPIP will report its discussions and agreed actions back to relevant officer groups via their Programme Manager as necessary.

As part of this the partners will also ensure that SPIP other bodies covered by the Duty to Cooperate. These bodies include:

- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Office of the Rail Regulator
- Highways Agency
- Integrated Transport Authorities
- Highway Authorities
- Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities outside Oxfordshire

**PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES**

The Partnership is constituted as a “thematic partnership” under the *Oxfordshire Partnership Governance Arrangements*. It is committed to working to the general principles and procedures established by Oxfordshire Partnership (summarised below with specific reference to the role of this Partnership):

Visible commitment and 'ownership' by the various member organisations and individual representatives

- Mutual trust and respect
- Openness and transparency
- Effective communication and accountability
- Removal of barriers to equality of access and opportunity
- Effective decision making

The Partnership is a forum for liaison and information sharing and the development of consensus views on matters of mutual interest. Consensus views will be used to advise and influence the relevant decision making bodies including:

- Government and its agents
- National agencies particularly Homes and Communities Agency and Highways Agency
- Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and neighbouring Local Enterprise Partnerships
- The District Councils as Local Planning Authorities
- The District Councils as Housing Authorities
- The County Council as Highway Authority
• The County and district councils as general service providers
• The Oxfordshire Local Transport Board
• The District LSPs (as the primary locality based co-ordinating partnership)
• Other infrastructure and service providing bodies and partnerships that are affected by, and can influence, local economic development, housing, transport, general infrastructure and spatial planning activity

The Partnership will work closely with other Oxfordshire based partnerships where there are cross over issues. It will work with District LSPs and other locality based partnerships where it is appropriate that a more detailed level of partnership working is undertaken on areas covered by the terms of reference.

**MEMBERSHIP/ CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

**Partnership Lead and Chairman**

Local authorities will take the roles of Chairman and Vice Chairman on an annual rotation is shown in the table below.

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
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**Core Members**

- Leader or other Cabinet / Executive Member from each council (with named substitute giving potential to substitute in the Cabinet Member with most appropriate portfolio for items under discussion at any particular time). There is full discretion to member councils in terms of review or length of membership of their representative.
- Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)
- Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

**Invitees:**

- Highways Agency (HA)
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Natural England (NE)
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG)
- Thames Valley Police (TVP): Area representative for Oxfordshire

**Supporting officers:**

- OCC – 1 nominated senior officer
- District Councils – 1 nominated senior officer
- Programme Manager and support staff (see Secretariat below)
- Specialist officers as required by business on agenda
Roles and Responsibilities of Partnership Members

Roles and responsibilities are indicated below:

**Core Members**: will be responsible for sharing information from and the views of the body they represent and for reaching and acting on any consensus agreements or decisions.

**Invitees**: are asked to assist the core members in their deliberations by invitation, offer advice to them and communicate the views of the Partnership back to their organisations.

**Senior Officers**: will prepare and present appropriate reports and offer direct advice to core Members.

**Programme Manager and Support Staff**: the Programme Manager will develop the objectives and work plan for the Partnership, lead on partnership projects, co-ordinate officer working groups to support the partnership, prepare and present appropriate reports and offer direct advice to core Members. Other support staff will be responsible for meeting administration including preparation / co ordination of agenda and minutes.

**Specialist Officers**: will only be required to assist with specific items on the agenda where additional depth of support is required in the meeting.

**MEETINGS**

The SPIP Board will meet every 2 months supported by an Executive that will meet approximately once a month. Additional meetings may be required to facilitate timely progression of work and this will be accommodated.

Partnership information will be published on the Oxfordshire Partnership website. This will include:

- Information about the Partnership including its terms of reference and any agreed plans, programmes, projects and targets
- Links and contacts
- Meeting agendas and papers

The Council responsible for leadership of the Partnership will provide information for the website. Maintenance of the website and publication of information on the site is the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council.

**EQUALITIES AND INCLUSION**

The Partnership gives high priority to equalities issues. It will rely on the equalities impact work and publications of its constituent bodies to provide awareness and analysis of relevant issues. Senior officer participants in meetings are responsible for flagging any specific issues that arise and that require detailed consideration by the Partnership itself.

**SECRETARIAT**

Secretariat support will be the responsibility of the lead council. A jointly resourced Partnership Programme Manager is managed by the lead Council.

The Partnership is also be supported informally by established local authority officer and partner liaison arrangements. The SPIP Programme Manage will ensure the linkages are made between inter-related policy initiatives and the activities of relevant bodies and partnerships. The Programme Manager will undertake a co-ordinating role in responding to matters raised by the Partnership.

**DETERMINATION OF AND TERMINATION OF PARTNERSHIP INVOLVEMENT**

Membership of the partnership and representation at meetings is as listed above, or is by additional special invitation from the Chairman as needs dictate. Membership can be terminated by notice to the Chairman and Secretariat.
Oxfordshire Growth Board Joint Statutory Committee

Draft Terms of Reference

1.0 Governance

1.1 The Oxfordshire Growth Board (the joint committee) includes the local authorities within the Oxfordshire LEP 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.

1.2 It will also include co-opted non-voting named members from those organisations listed at 4.4 below. In addition, when considering matters that sit under the purview of the Local Transport Board then Network Rail and the Highways Agency will have the right to attend the Growth Board as non-voting investment partners.

1.3 The Oxfordshire Economic Growth Board is a Joint Committee under s101 (5), 102 Local Government Act 1972 and s9EB Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

1.4 The Committee will be hosted under local government arrangements and this will be rotated in accordance with the arrangements for the Chairman (see Section 8.1).

2.0 Accountable Body

2.1 The Accountable Body for the Growth Board is Oxfordshire County Council which will provide Section 151 and Monitoring Officer roles to the Committee.

2.2 The County Council’s Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) in conjunction with the LEP Chief Executive will provide the Growth Board with a quarterly financial report. This report will provide the Board with an overview of the funds spent, funds committed against funds allocated

2.3 Programme management will be provided by the Growth Board Programme Manager and will include milestones and outcomes achieved and where necessary, ensure that action plans are put in place to address any concerns.

2.4 For those programmes and funding streams where another local authority is the Accountable Body, e.g. the Enterprise Zone, the relevant Section 151 Officer will provide the financial and programme performance information to the County Council’s Chief Finance Officer to enable a complete picture to be presented to the Growth Board.

2.5 The Local Transport Board Assurance Framework will be the basis on which the appraisal, assessment and prioritisation for proposed Local Growth Fund projects and future growth programmes will be undertaken, which may be revised by the Growth Board as wished, subject to approval by the DfT.
3.0 **Purpose of the Oxfordshire Growth Board**

3.1 To facilitate and enable collaboration between local authorities on economic development, strategic planning and growth.

3.2 To deliver cross-boundary programmes of work including City Deal, Growth Deal, Strategic Economic Plan and Local Transport Board programmes, within government timescales, including agreeing the detailed contents of specific priorities, plans, projects and programmes.

3.3 To approve and monitor the implementation of a detailed work programme as laid out in the City Deal, Strategic Economic Plan and Local Transport Board programmes together with any future Growth Deals or other programmes as agreed.

3.4 To bid for the allocation of resources to support the above purposes. For the avoidance of doubt these terms of reference are not to be read as incorporating any non-Executive functions and each constituent Authority shall retain the capability to exercise all executive functions generally and specifically in relation to economic development, strategic spatial planning and strategic transport planning. Further, these terms of reference are not to be read as entitling the Board to bind, either financially or contractually, any constituent Authority."

4.0 **Membership**

4.1 As the Joint Committee is discharging executive functions then the appointed person must be from the Executive. There should be one member from each constituent authority.

4.2 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.

4.3 Subject to the legal right of the Joint Committee to appoint a Chairman and Vice Chairman of its choice each year the proposed protocol is that there will be a rotating Chairman and Vice Chairman as set out in table 8.2 below.

4.4 Other non-voting members as required for good linkages with the Local Enterprise Partnership shall be a single named-position representative from the bodies as detailed below:

- LEP : Chairman
- Oxford University
- Skills Board
- Harwell/Diamond Light Source
- LEP Business Rep
- LEP Oxford City Business Rep
- Homes and Communities Agency

4.5 When considering matters that sit under the purview of the Local Transport Board then a single representative of Network Rail and the Highways Agency
will have the right to attend the Growth Board as non-voting investment partners

5.0 **Voting**

5.1 One member one vote for each constituent authority member although members intend to agree matters on a unanimous basis where possible.

5.2 Normal rules as to declarations of interest to be applied to local authority members in accordance with the respective Council’s Code of Conduct.

6.0 **Quorum & Safeguard**

6.1 The quorum for a meeting shall be four voting members.

6.2 Where the effect of a particular proposition, if adopted by the Committee, would be to give rise to contractual or financial implications for any constituent authority, then a protocol will be established where the expectation would be that the vote of the member appointed by that constituent authority, in favour of the proposition, would be required. In respect of other matters, all other voting will be on a normal majority basis.

6.3 When considering matters that sit under the purview of the Local Transport Board, this protocol will apply to the vote of the member appointed by the County Council.

7.0 **Functions**

7.1.1 The opportunity provided by establishing the Growth Board and aligning the strategic meetings including SPIP and the LTB is to streamline the governance arrangements and incorporate the combined terms of reference under a single governing body:

**From the Spatial Planning & Infrastructure Partnership**

- To provide a forum for partnership working and collaboration on spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport, and general infrastructure issues arising at regional and sub-regional level;

- To lead and co-ordinate liaison with the Local Enterprise Partnership on Oxfordshire wide issues and support the LEP in the identification of priorities and development of investment strategies and economic plans for Oxfordshire;

- To lead and co-ordinate liaison with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to develop plans to enhance Oxfordshire share of HCA development programmes and contribute to any related interaction with Government agencies;

- To lead on production of joint work on cross border issues to ensure partners meet the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate and wider national policy;
To lead and coordinate the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) process on regeneration and housing issues leading to the production of the Local Investment Plan (LIP) and contribute to any related interaction with Government agencies;

To seek agreement on local priorities and targets and advise partners on matters of collective interest in the fields of activity listed above;

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;

To assess whether spatial planning, infrastructure and public services are integrated and make recommendations to encourage this.

From the Local Transport Board

To have the role of prioritising transport schemes to be funded from devolved funding sources, 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;

To have the ability to comment on wider consultations, such as the Local Transport Plan, and funding investment decisions from national agencies, e.g. Network Rail, Highways Agency, where these have a strategic impact on the local transport network;

From the City Deal and Growth Board

To oversee the delivery of all of the local government aspects of City Deal, Growth Deal (where local authorities are the delivery partners) and to have oversight of the LEP Work Programme;

Prioritisation of the investment in the Escalator Hubs, the allocation of funding from City Deal and the accountable body for each project;

Establishing the City and relevant Growth Deal projects infrastructure programme and agreement of the contribution level from either retained business rates or the proposed funding streams;

Responsible for prioritising the delivery of schemes to be funded through the City Deal infrastructure fund, for transport, housing or economic development schemes;

Agreement to the work programme for the City Deal, relevant Growth Deal projects and in support of the Strategic Economic Plan..

8.0 Meetings

8.1 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Growth Board will be elected at the first meeting but are expected to follow the arrangements as set out in paragraph 8.2.
8.2 The lead authority for convening meetings will be that of the elected Chairman and it will provide Secretary/Clerk support to the Board. Meetings shall be held on a bi-monthly basis, meetings may be called as and when required to ensure that critical timescales are met.

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9.0 Secretariat and Support

9.1 The secretariat and support will be provided by the existing SPIP Executive Officer Group, now known as the Growth Board Executive. Other investment partners will be involved as appropriate, e.g. Homes and Communities Agency, Environment Agency, Highways Agency, Network Rail; to advise on the investment and work programme.

9.2 The Group will be chaired by the lead authority (as in previous SPIP arrangements). In the first instance this will be West Oxfordshire.

10.0 Scrutiny Arrangements

10.1 Decisions made by the Committee shall be subject to the scrutiny arrangements of each constituent authority.
Annex

Protocol

This protocol has been incorporated into the Terms of Reference for Oxfordshire Growth Board, a statutory Joint Committee.

The Parties to this Protocol are those referred to in the Terms of Reference.

The Parties wish to record the basis on which they propose to undertake their decision making function as a Joint Committee.

General principles

The Parties 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

Voting arrangements

1. Only Joint Committee 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.
2. Every question shall be determined by the voices of those Voting Members present, provided that if there is a Voting Member who indicates dissent to this procedure than a vote by show of hands shall take place. A simple majority shall be required.
3. In the event there being an equal number of votes for and against a particular proposition, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
4. Where the effect of the particular proposition, if adopted by the Joint Committee, would be to give rise to contractual or financial implications for any part of one of the Parties, then in addition to the normal requirement for a simple majority of votes, the Parties will seek to ensure that the vote of the Member of the effected Party, in favour of the proposition, will be obtained.

Status

This protocol is not intended to be legally binding, and no legal obligations or rights shall arise between the Parties from this protocol.