

Bicester Town Council



Policy Committee Meeting

Ref: POL06/2021

**Monday 26th April 2021 - 19:30hrs by Zoom
(please see Agenda for login details)**

Circulation: Town Mayor - Councillor Jason Slaymaker

Members:

Cllr Richard Mould – **Chairman**, Cllr Lynn Pratt – **Vice-Chairman**
Cllr Nick Cotter, Cllr Dan Hallett, Cllr Nick Mawer, Cllr Dan Sames, Cllr Les Sibley,
Cllr Jason Slaymaker, Cllr Alex Thrupp, Cllr Fraser Webster

Other Circulation, Substitute Members:

Cllr Harry Knight, Cllr Zoe McLernon, Cllr James Metcalf, Cllr Robert Nixon

Other Circulation:

Cllr Lawrie Stratford – OCC, Cllr Michael Waine – OCC, Cllr Tom Wallis – CDC,
Cllr Lucinda Wing – CDC



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Monday 19th April 2021

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the **Policy Committee** to be held on **Monday 26th April 2021 at 19:30hrs** on Zoom.

In line with the Coronavirus Act 2020 and subsequent regulations governing local authorities' meetings, the Council will be holding this meeting via the online video conference facility, Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89277438666?pwd=VVU4MUUpBN2pzY0JTV04vU3E4TmVvZz09>

Meeting ID: 892 7743 8666

Password: (to ensure online security it is recommended that meeting passwords are not publicised and are given directly to those intending to attend the meeting. Please therefore email enquiries@bicester.gov.uk for the password at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting date). Telephone number to join by audio only: 0203 051 2874 (you will be prompted to enter the meeting ID and password before joining the meeting).

Phil Evans
Service Manager

Agenda

All Council Meetings are open to the public and press, unless otherwise stated.

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence. Committee members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Chief Officer (enquiries@bicester.gov.uk) prior to the meeting, stating the reason for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors are reminded to declare any interests on any item on this Agenda in accordance with Bicester Town Council's Code of Conduct.

3. Minutes of the Policy Committee

To confirm the **MINUTES** and **RESOLUTIONS** of the following Policy Committee meeting: **2nd March 2021 – POL5/2021.**

4. Public Session

In accordance with Standing Orders 1 d-f, members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.

Time allocated shall not exceed 10 minutes. No member shall speak for more than 2 minutes.

5. Major Town Initiatives

Committee is requested to note and comment as appropriate on the minutes from the following meetings:

5.1 Bicester Vision CIC Executive Board Meeting: 4th March 2021

5.2 Bicester Strategic Delivery Board Meeting: 18th March 2021

6. Town Entrance Signs

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

7. Mayor Making 2021

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

8. Portrait of Sir Tony Baldry

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

9. NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

10. Office Refurbishment

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

11. Nai's House

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

12. Bicester Town Council Meetings

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

13. Forward Plan

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

14. Exclusion of Press and Public

RECOMMENDED

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

15. HR Consultant

The Committee is asked to consider the attached report.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 1st June 2021 – 7pm

Close of meeting:

Minutes of the Bicester Town Council Policy Committee Meeting

A meeting of the **Bicester Town Council Policy Committee** was held on Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at 19:00hrs on Zoom.

Present:

Cllr Richard Mould - Chairman
Cllr Lynn Pratt – Vice-Chairman
Cllr Dan Hallett
Cllr Nick Mawer
Cllr Dan Sames – entered the meeting at 7.29pm
Cllr Les Sibley
Cllr Jason Slaymaker
Cllr Alex Thrupp
Cllr Fraser Webster

In Attendance:

Samantha Shippen – Chief Officer
Julie Trinder – Administration Officer
Donna Ford

1. 334/2021 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED that apologies were recorded from Oxfordshire County Councillor Lawrie Stratford.

2. 335/2021 Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED that Councillor Lynn Pratt declared an interest in item 7 as a member of the Strategic Delivery Board and Cherwell District Council executive member.

3. 336/2021 Minutes of Policy Committee

RESOLVED to confirm the minutes of the Policy Committee meeting **POL4/2021** held on **21st December 2020 to be signed at a later date.**

4. 337/2021 Public Session

RESOLVED that the Committee received no representations.

5. 338/2021 Assets Management Update

5.1 Garth House

Chief Officer informed the Committee weddings will resume as from Easter weekend.

5.2 Garth Stables

Chief Officer informed the Committee that a pre-start meeting had been held with Ridge & Partners LLP and works will commence 6th April 2021.

5.3 Burials Grounds

Chairman of the Committee reported that a meeting has been arranged for NW Bicester's Agent to discuss availability of new burial ground.

Chief Officer and Chairman of the Committee will be hosting a meeting on Monday 8th March with Funeral Directors and Clergy to make sure they understand the issues Bicester Town Council has.

RESOLVED that Committee:

1. **ENDORSED** the actions of the Chief Officer in respect of the planned preventative maintenance project at Garth House;
2. **REVIEWED** the Masterplan Programme received from Ridge & Partners LLP;
3. **APPOINTED** councillors and officers to attend a briefing session with Ridge & Partners LLP and agree dates/times suitable for a meeting;
4. **CONSIDERED** the update on the burial ground.

The Chairman brought forward item 10 on the agenda.

10. 339/2021 Burial Space

RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the update on burial space at the Cemetery and instruct officers in respect of options identified.

6. 340/2021 Major Town Initiatives

RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the minutes from:

6.1 Bicester Strategic Delivery Board: 29th October 2020

6.2 Bicester Vision CIC Executive Board Meeting: 7th January 2021

6.3 Bicester Vision CIC Meeting: 4th February 2021

7. 341/2021 Strategic Delivery Board Review

1. **RESOLVED** that the Committee **ADVISED** the Chairman of Policy of the response to the Strategic Delivery Board Review;
2. **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Council in regard of the two representatives for Bicester Town Council.

The Chairman of the Committee requested that the Chief Officer is elected on to the proposed Board as a Senior Officer in the town.

8. 342/2021 Financial Regulations (GP8) Review

RESOLVED that the Committee **REVIEWED** Financial Regulations (GP8) and recommend they are delayed until June 2021 for approval by Council.

9. 343/2021 Grant Applications Privacy Notice Review

RESOLVED that the Committee **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the revised Grant Applications Privacy Notice.

11. 344/2021 OYPA Agreement

RESOLVED that the Committee:

1. **CONFIRMED** arrangements for financial support to OYAP beyond November 2021;
2. **CONSIDERED** the OYAP proposal;

12. 345/2021 TOWN ENTRANCE SIGNS

RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the design for town entrance signs and await a further report on costings.

13. 346/2021 Photocopier Replacement

RESOLVED that the Committee:

1. **CONFIRMED** supplier number 2 as the preferred option;
2. **AGREED** the Council purchases a photocopier,

14. 347/2021 HR Advice and Support

RESOLVED that the Committee **AGREED** to consider views on options for HR advice/support.

15. 348/2021 Forward Plan

RESOLVED that Committee reviewed the forward plan and **AGREED** to remove the date April 2021 from 'new burial ground and memorial policy'.

16. 349/2021 Exclusion of Press and Public

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

17. 350/2021 Land and Leases Update

RESOLVED that the Committee **ADVISED** Officers of the direction to take in relation to the land matters.

It was **AGREED** that:

1. the Chief Officer continues to advise the Committee on the basis that this is not in the 'open' interest;
2. update on the 'pink' at each Policy Committee meeting
3. it was suggested a meeting be held with Cherwell District Council to establish ownership of land.

**18. 351/2021 358/2021 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 26th April 2021 –
7.30pm**

Meeting close: 8.42pm

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 18 MARCH 2021

MEETING: Bicester Strategic Delivery Board DATE AND TIME: 18 March 2021 at 10:30am VENUE: Virtual Teams meeting		Board Members: Cllr Barry Wood (CDC) (Chairman) Cllr Ian Hudspeth (OCC) Cllr Colin Clarke (CDC) Cllr Richard Mould (BTC) Cllr Lynn Pratt (CDC) Cllr Jason Slaymaker (BTC) Cllr Lawrie Stratford (OCC) Cllr Michael Waine (OCC) David Crook (Homes England) Robert Jolley (Cherwell District Council (CDC)) Graham Perryman (Bicester Chamber of Commerce) Rosie Rowe (NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)) Lyndon Robinson (Bicester Vision) Attendance as required (MHCLG)		
Meeting link:				
	TOPIC	PURPOSE	RESP.	TIME
1.	Apologies	Chairman to update members re apologies from Rosie Rowe, NHS CCG.	Cllr Barry Wood	10:30
2.	Notes of previous meeting and matters arising	To agree the notes of 4 February 2021	Cllr Barry Wood	10:35
Governance				
3.	Recommendations following the review of the SDB	Presentation by Dean Fischer	Dean Fischer	10:40
Development and Investment				
4.	Update on the Bicester Town Centre Task Group work	Verbal update and presentation on progress to date including details of the event happening on 25 March	Robert Jolley / Dean Fischer / Dale Hoyland	11:00
5.	ERDF funding and Oxfordshire Greentech	Report and presentation on the project	Dale Hoyland	11:10
Garden Town				
6.	Programme update	Report and presentation on the progress of the Garden Town Programme	Dean Fischer	11:20

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 18 MARCH 2021

Infrastructure				
7.	Update: a) NW Bicester Rail Underbridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane b) Oxford Cambridge Expressway c) London Road Level Crossing d) A41 Scheme e) Misc.	Holistic report on infrastructure projects	Jacqui Cox	11:30
8.	Press release summary and agreed communication messages	(i) To note the press releases and any other articles published by the Bicester Delivery Team that have been issued since the last meeting; and (ii) agree communication messages from the Board Meeting		11:45
	Date of next meetings	2021 date: 29 July, 28 October (under new governance) Venue: Virtual online by MS Teams	All to note	11:55

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

MEETING: Bicester Strategic Delivery Board		Board Members:	
DATE AND TIME: 4 February 2021 at 10:30am		Cllr Barry Wood (CDC) (Chairman)	David Crook (Homes England)
VENUE: Virtual Teams meeting		Cllr Ian Hudspeth (OCC)	Robert Jolley (Cherwell District Council (CDC))
		Cllr Colin Clarke (CDC)	Graham Perryman (Bicester Chamber of Commerce)
		Cllr Richard Mould (BTC)	Rosie Rowe (NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG))
		Cllr Lynn Pratt (CDC)	Lyndon Robinson (Bicester Vision)
		Cllr Jason Slaymaker (BTC)	Attendance as required (MHCLG)
		Cllr Lawrie Stratford (OCC)	
		Cllr Michael Waine (OCC)	
	TOPIC	PURPOSE	Action
1.	Apologies	Received from Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Cllr Ian Corkin attending in place; Cllr Lawrie Stratford, Cllr Les Sibley attending in place; Cllr Jason Slaymaker.	
2.	Notes of previous meeting and matters arising	The notes of 29 July 2020 were agreed with updates in agenda items below.	
Governance			
3.	Recommendations following the review of the SDB	Dean Fischer, interim Bicester Delivery Manager, gave a presentation and presented the circulated report on the Review of the SDB. The purpose of the review is the need for greater scrutiny and control of the Garden Town Programme and the funding received to date. The report summarises the extensive work carried out to date by the Task and Finish Group, including the consultation with Board Members, one to one meetings, and best practice discussions with Aylesbury Garden Town and Harlow & Gilston Garden Town as recommended by Homes England. Recommendations on the way forward and the new governance are also set out in the report including the Board’s name change; for the governance to be split into 3 layers: strategic, operational, and tactical; and that there is a clear delineation across the demand and supply process. Suggested changes to membership include the reduction in the number of councillors on the board and the invitation to OxLEP to sit on the Board for oversight on county wide business issues. Support will continue to be provided by the Bicester	

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

		Delivery Team and OCC officers. Subject to consultation feedback received from Board members by 26 February, the new governance will come into effect from 1 April 2021. Action: All Board members to review the proposed new governance and submit any feedback to Dean.Fischer@cherwell-dc.gov.uk by 26 February 2021.	All Board Members
Development and Investment			
4.	Update on the Bicester Town Centre Task Group work	Robert Jolley, Assistant Director – Growth & Economy, introduced the verbal update and presentation on progress to date on the (i) Grimsey event and town centre work; (ii) Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSS); and (iii) a joint project with OxLEP and other districts on the ‘Meanwhile Uses’ programme Grimsey event and town centre work – following the event on 19 November 2019, six ‘foundation stones’, critical to the delivery of the vision and outline plan, were agreed: single delivery vehicle; investment; strategic spine; community hub; communication and brand identity; and planning policies. To enable the outline plan to happen, seven pledges of action were made by attendees at the event on 19 November and these pledges will be followed up at the next Grimsey event in March along with progressing a detailed plan and plans for engaging with the public. It is proposed that this work will then be fed into the SDB for future reporting. RHSS (Reopening High Streets Safely Fund) – is an HM Government (HMG) COVID-19 national recovery initiative with the aim of delivery additional measures for a safer trading environment for businesses and customers in high streets and CDC has been allocated £133,843 from ERDF funds under the RHSS scheme. Progress to date includes a signed funding agreement from HMG; meetings taking place with stakeholders; and progressing the procurement process for the agreed 5 of 6 projects. The deadline for procurement and payment is end June 2021. Once commissioned from June 2021, the projects will run for a maximum period of 12 months. ‘Meanwhile’ Use project – OxLEP delegated responsibility to Oxford City Council (also the	

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

		accountable body) for an Oxfordshire system-wide operation. A 12 month scheme to take current vacant retail units in town centres and put them to good use on a temporary/meanwhile use. Progress to date includes the procurement of a specialist meanwhile operator contracted to lead on the project; and from 77 units across the district, 16 have been identified for Bicester, with 9 potential occupiers identified within Cherwell to date. Capital funding is only available for 12 months with project delivery to be completed by January 2022. It is expected that the project will continue for at least another two years, until January 2024, in order to realise the benefits of the upfront injection of funds. A discussion was held on the town centre and Cllr Corkin asked if the town was oversubscribed for retail premises. Action: as part of the Economic Recovery Planning (ERP) project with OxLEP, RJ to enquire whether further research into the relationship between retail and market towns (including Bicester) could be commissioned.	RJ
Garden Town			
5.	Programme update	A report and presentation on the progress of the Garden Town (GT) Programme was given by Dean Fischer, interim Bicester Delivery Manager. Good progress is being made on all capital projects. A tighter programme regime has been introduced and Homes England are being kept up to date with progress to ensure the release of additional funds to deliver the schemes at pace. Work is progressing on branding to improve the communication and engagement with the public and stakeholders. The Chairman thanked the team for the ongoing work. Action: due to agenda time constraints, any questions or feedback to be forwarded to Dean.Fischer@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, after the meeting.	All Board Members
Healthy Bicester			

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

6.	Programme update	Rosie Rowe, Healthy Place Shaping Lead, presented the report and Appendices on the progress of the Healthy Bicester Programme. RR indicated very supportive of the proposed restructuring and alignment of the Healthy Place Shaping (HPS) work that contributes to the delivery of the Garden Town objectives to create a healthy and sustainable community. The report updates on current priorities during COVID-19 and the lockdown and acknowledges the great response from the public. Future priorities are also identified from the challenges that the pandemic has highlighted, ie lower physical activity, social isolated and increased mental health problems. Appendix A shows the results of the Bicester Healthy Lives study; Appendix B: Top performing @HealthyBicester Facebook posts (October 2020 to January 2021); and Appendix C is a summary Theory of Change diagram which demonstrates the complexity of improving health and wellbeing by seeking to change the wider determinants of health. The Chairman highlighted that the Health New Town accreditation was not easily awarded or straightforward to retain and there is a lot of good work in this project which contributes to the whole system approach. Action: due to agenda time constraints, any questions or feedback to be forwarded to Rosie.Rowe@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, after the meeting.	All Board Members
Infrastructure			
7.	Update: a) NW Bicester Rail Underbridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane b) Oxford Cambridge Expressway c) London Road Level Crossing	Jacqui Cox, Infrastructure Locality Lead, OCC, presented the report. NW Bicester Rail Underbridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane – on track for Easter 2021 track possession. The aim of this project is to realign the existing A4095 along Howes Lane and the western end of Lords Lane in line with the new underbridge below the railway line near Bucknell Road/A4095 junction. This will provide an important strategic link for the town and sustainable connections through to the North West Bicester strategic development allocation. Funding will be used to deliver an interim scheme ahead of the development sites progressing, to ensure that there is a road in place once the bridge has been completed. Oxford Cambridge Expressway – no updates given.	

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

	d) A41 Scheme e) Misc.	London Road Level Crossing – following the Government announcement for further funding towards the continuation of the East West rail line, this means that at least the Oxford Bletchley section is expected to be up and running by 2025. This year is noted as a critical time to look at mitigation packages for the crossing. East West Rail Company are likely to be starting to engage with members and the communities from Spring 2021 A41 Scheme – OCC have recently commissioned Steer to undertake a study to find at least two preferred options for the Local Plan and OCC connectivity by end May 2021. England’s Economic Heartland (EEH) – have been developing a Transport Strategy for the region. Feedback received from a consultation on the draft strategy, between 14 July – 6 October 2020, will be shared with EEH’s Member-led Strategic Transport Forum on 5th February, with an aim to publish the finalised strategy by the end of February 2021. One area of feedback most notable is that the strategy should be more ambitious on decarbonisation. The final strategy will now include an explicit reference to aim to achieve net-zero by 2040, with an absolute date of no later than 2050. Market Square/town centre - OCC officers are looking to commission an urban design consultancy to consider the options for an enhanced mixed-use space for this key part of the town centre and the transport elements that would feed into this. The project brief is currently being drafted, with the aim to complete this phase of the work by the end of the Summer with a preferred option to take forward into the design process. South West Bicester Active Travel Measures – a route to connect south west Bicester with the town centre for active and healthy travel modes is being funded by the LEP, based on the Government’s Active Travel Fund initiative. A key stakeholder workshop was held during December and the scheme is now out to public consultation to present the package of measures and receive any detailed comments or feedback. The majority of the scheme needs to be delivered by the end of March, which means that the formal Traffic Regulation Order consultations for the proposed 20mph, Causeway restrictions, crossings and footpath conversions are therefore taking place concurrently with the wider consultation, and notices have had to be published to prepare for the construction phase.	
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BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

		Incremental planning permissions and the impact on highways – Member concern was raised prior to the meeting re a number of sites coming forward within close proximity. JC advised that The National Planning Policy Framework requires that development sites are considered on their own merits and there are assessment tests to ensure planning requirements are reasonable. Where there are a number of sites coming forward within close proximity, such as along the A41 corridor, this can result in piecemeal delivery of highway infrastructure. The only ways to combat this are either to have a masterplan and Supplementary Planning Guidance in place to cover a number of neighbouring sites or have a very detailed transport strategy that the developers contribute towards. The Chairman acknowledged and thank Jacqui Cox for the update on the large programme of work coming together at pace and the connectivity between the projects is key. Also noted that the railway project is a real success story and the funding secured to make this happen has been a vindication of the Garden Town programme. Cllr Pratt highlighted that communication will be key with the wider public for the Easter 2021 rail bridge work. Noted that a joint press release between OCC, CDC and Network Rail will be issued shortly. The Board noted the report.	
8.	Press release summary and agreed communication messages	A report of Bicester press releases for October 2020 to January 2020 was previously circulated with the report pack. Action: the Chairman requested the Board to delegate the outcome of this item to himself, Robert Jolley and Victoria Walton, Communication and Marketing Executive to decide on the three communication messages from this meeting.	Cllr Wood/ Robert Jolley/ Victoria Walton
9.	Any Other Business	Due to the time constraint on the agenda, the Chairman moved to end the meeting and this item was not discussed.	
	Date of next meetings	2021 date: 18 March. Venue: Virtual online by MS Teams	

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

Date of meeting: 18 March 2021	AGENDA ITEM NO: 5
Report title: Oxfordshire Greentech - update	
Author: Dale Hoyland, Team Leader (Projects), Bicester Delivery Team Tel: 01295 221640 Email: Dale.Hoyland@cherwell-dc.gov.uk / Info@oxfordshiregreentech.co.uk	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To update and raise awareness of the work of Oxfordshire Greentech, a countywide business network to support and champion a low carbon future, since CDC led on its creation.
- 1.2. To highlight how Oxfordshire Greentech can support Cherwell District Council, for example, assisting towards the target of net-zero carbon district-wide emissions by 2030 as part of CDC's Climate Emergency Declaration.
- 1.3. To explain how Oxfordshire Greentech fits into the wider work of OxFutures, and CDC's role within this for the next two years as a 'delivery partner'.

2. Oxfordshire Greentech - background

- 2.1. Oxfordshire Greentech was originally created by the Bicester Delivery Team and Bioregional (a local sustainability consultancy charity) following a successful collaborative bid to MHCLG in 2017 for European Regional Development Funds (ERDF). Following its launch in February 2019, Oxfordshire Greentech attracted a wide range of members wanting to respond positively to the climate emergency. Its annual "Clean Growth" conference and regular workshops/webinars have enabled delegates access to the latest information on best practice as well as a valuable place to interact and share ideas with like-minded companies.
- 2.2. ERDF funding for CDC's direct delivery against set targets came to an end in March 2020, allowing Oxfordshire Greentech to become a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee. Cherwell District Council joined its growing membership, at Founder-level so as to access ongoing support and continue to have a seat at the steering group to help provide direction and ensure its continued success.
- 2.3. In a press release, published on 27th May 2020, Councillor Lynn Pratt, Cherwell's lead member for Economy, Regeneration and Property was quoted as saying: "Cherwell

District Council has been instrumental in the development of Oxfordshire Greentech from the outset and having declared a climate emergency, it is only right that Cherwell nails its colours to the mast and signs up to projects like these. Whilst it is clearly possible and advantageous to have a thriving economy alongside a responsible approach to climate change, navigating that pathway can be difficult. By becoming a founder member of Oxfordshire Greentech Ltd, we will be able to play a pivotal role in supporting and promoting green innovation in the region, helping businesses to flourish in the low carbon era.”

2.4. Please see attached “Oxfordshire Greentech – a year in review” for an overview of impact delivered in the first year of operation.

3. Synergy with CDC’s strategies

3.1. All members of Oxfordshire Greentech are automatically members of sister company, Cambridge Cleantech, providing strong links at both ‘nodes’ of the [OxCam Arc](#) or ‘Knowledge Spine’. With a long-term investment in the area, the Arc represents unrivalled opportunity for sustainable, innovative growth, building on existing assets of international significance. It is our ambition that Cherwell District benefits from such low-carbon investment and growth, such as via planned developments for Bicester (Arrival being one such example with their contract to build e-delivery vans for UPS: please see the following website for more information: <https://www.electrive.com/2020/03/20/arrival-moves-into-new-bicester-factory/>).

3.2. Having declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019, a Zero Carbon Action Plan has been produced, providing a roadmap to achieve net-zero carbon emissions from both internal operations and district-wide by 2030. Businesses clearly have a key role to play in this, and Oxfordshire Greentech Ltd under the structure of a number of ‘special interest groups’ facilitates action to assist in the transition to a sustainable future where we are able to operate within the available resources available, prompting climate and ecological recovery for future generations to come.

3.3. The Bicester Delivery Team work closely with the Economic Growth Team who are tasked with production of the Cherwell Industrial Strategy (CIS). It is anticipated that this will provide a pathway to action, for which Oxfordshire Greentech would be able to assist. For example, an offer of organising a launch event for the CIS, providing exposure to a wider range of businesses and key stakeholders, facilitated networking opportunities, speaker slots and a launchpad for action has been made.

3.4. Oxfordshire Greentech Ltd operates out of Cherwell’s Eco Business Centre in Bicester, the first non-residential Passivhaus Plus building in the UK offering zero carbon offices and coworking space (a contribution of £350,000 towards this asset was received via another ERDF programme that the Bicester Delivery Team have managed, ending more recently in December 2020). The team assists in the promotion of the development and opportunity afforded to other potential occupiers.

4. Wider work of OxFutures

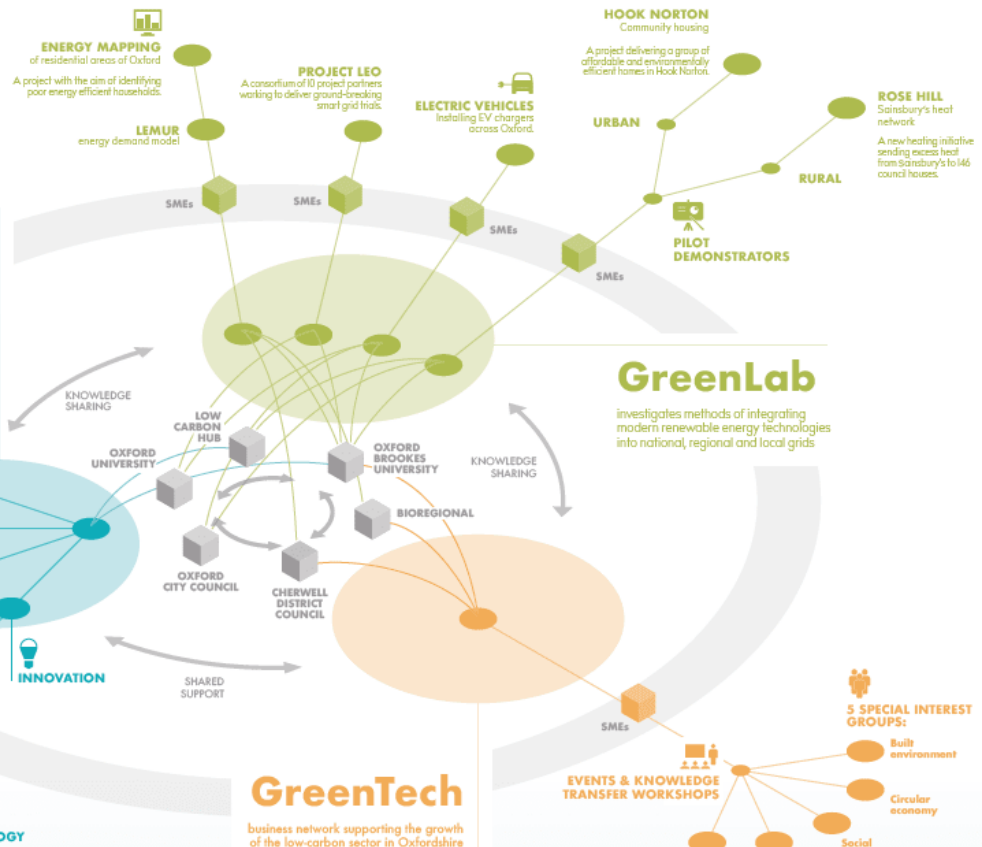
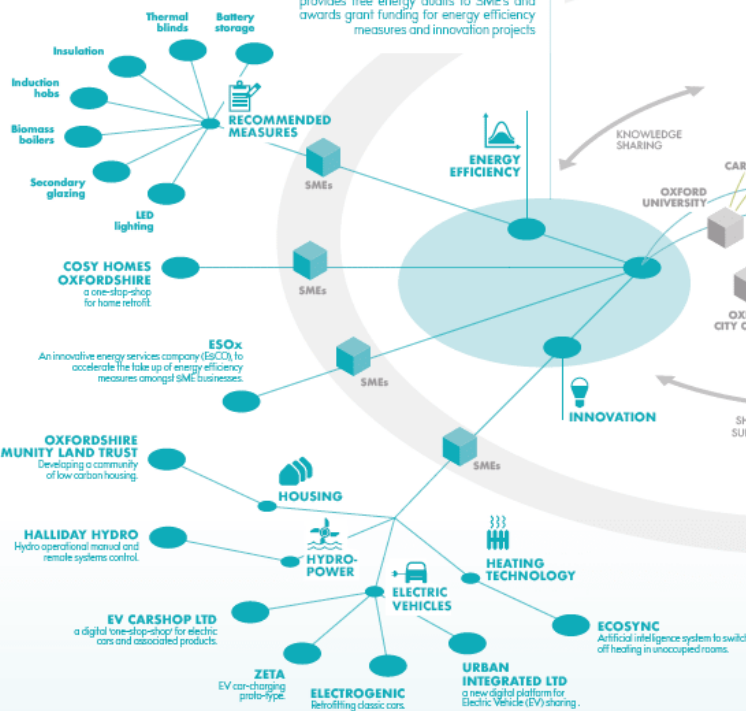
4.1. OxFutures is the £3.2million umbrella programme, comprising of three delivery arms:

- GreenFund – the grant giving side of the programme, providing energy audits and grants to incentivise installation of energy efficiency measures, and funding for innovative low-carbon projects.
- GreenLab – researching methods of integrating modern low-carbon solutions and energy technologies into national, regional and local grids
- GreenTech – the business network for a low-carbon future (as discussed above)



GreenFund

provides free energy audits to SMEs and awards grant funding for energy efficiency measures and innovation projects



4.2. The Bicester Delivery Team continues to have (paid) involvement in Oxfutures, with the Team Leader sitting on both the Oxfutures Board, and the Grant Assessment Panel for GreenFund.

4.3. During the three years of CDC involvement as a 'delivery partner', the following impact has been achieved by the ERDF programme:-

136

FREE ENERGY AUDITS

907

MEASURES RECOMMENDED

£2,500

AVERAGE ANNUAL ENERGY SAVING

£265,617

AWARDED IN GRANT FUNDING

13

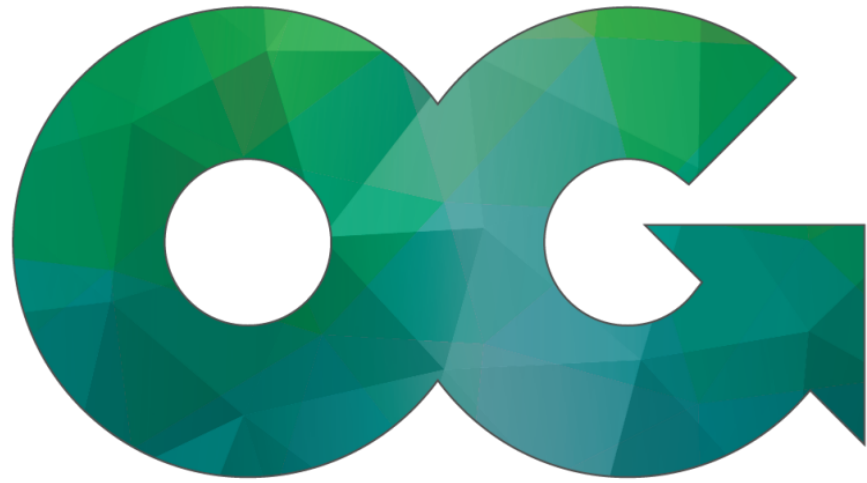
FEASIBILITY GRANTS HAVE BEEN
AWARDED TO FUND INNOVATION
PROJECTS

648

SMALL BUSINESSES SUPPORTED

Dale Hoyland, March 2021

Powering the Clean Growth Era



OXFORDSHIRE
GREENTECH

A year in review



18

EVENTS DELIVERED

Last year, we delivered 18 events around a range of topics: first/last mile delivery, circular economy, sustainability for social enterprises, eBikes, the future of built environment, and much more. We hosted at a range of fabulous venues across Oxfordshire, including the Said Business School, Oxford Town Hall, the University of Oxford, the Eco Business Centre in Bicester and more...

We're proud to have close to 100 members of our network within the first year of operation. We're a broad church, looking to transition all sectors to a low/zero-carbon economy, so we have EV dealers, architects, lawyers, business advisors, printers, estate agents, and even furniture sellers!

100

GREENTECH MEMBERS

250+

DELEGATES AT OUR LAUNCH

Oxfordshire Greentech officially launched in the prestigious Said Business School last February, where we had 250+ delegates in attendance, and 30 new member sign-ups. We heard from Barbara Hammond OBE of the Low Carbon Hub, Cllr Tom Hayes of Oxford City Council, and Ahmed Goga, Director of Strategy & Programmes at OxLEP

To give events focus and members a chance to share their expertise, we have 5 special interest groups (SIGs): Low Carbon Mobility, Built Environment, Access to Finance, Social Enterprise, and Circular Economy. We've delivered high quality events around all of these topics, attracting diverse audiences across Oxfordshire

5

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

15,000

VISITORS TO THE COUNTY'S LARGEST STATIC EV SHOW

We supported Oxford City Council and one of our associate founder members (Go Green Autos) to deliver the county's largest ever static electric vehicle show in the heart of Oxford, recording a footfall of 15,000 people on the day. We had a range of manufacturers and EV owners, and even showcased the world's fastest EV: the Nio EP9 electric supercar...

The Cleantech Venture Day, run by our sister network Cambridge Cleantech and sponsored by Oxfordshire Greentech and others, saw three of our members selected through the highly competitive process to pitch! The day is hosted in the prestigious surrounds of KPMG's Number Twenty in Mayfair, London and takes the form of a Dragons Den-esque event where SMEs pitch to panels of investors

3

MEMBERS SELECTED TO PITCH AT CLEANTECH VENTURE DAY

70%

IDENTIFIED NEW PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

More than two-thirds (70%) of surveyed members cited the networking opportunities offered as having helped identify new partners and collaborators



70%

FELT PART OF A WIDER MOVEMENT

More than two-thirds (70%) of surveyed members said that being part of Oxfordshire Greentech benefits them by making them feel part of a wider movement, with 100% of respondents having joined to network and collaborate with other sustainable businesses

"I'd like Oxfordshire to be the most sustainable place on planet earth. We've got the knowledge, the skills and the passion, so why not?"

Gareth Dinnage, MD at Seacourt Printing and Founder of Oxfordshire Greentech



"I met several inspirational people at the Town Hall event... We've recruited a consultant already through the network and can see ourselves doing a lot more work with her."

Chris Williams, Commercial Manager of Jennings of Garsington Ltd and member of Oxfordshire Greentech



"It's the only one of its kind in Oxfordshire and it has been needed for years. Oxfordshire Greentech is filling a strong demand to bring the sustainable business community together. Nobody else is doing it and they're doing a good job."

Karen David, Co-Founder of TechTribe Oxford and member of Oxfordshire Greentech

"For us, joining was about raising our profile locally. We're very positive about Oxfordshire Greentech and we'll certainly renew our membership."

John O'Brien, Founder and MD of LCMB Building Performance Ltd and Associate Founder of Oxfordshire Greentech



Want to get involved?



Join Oxfordshire's rapidly growing low-carbon business network today for our member benefits:



- Free attendance at our frequent events
- Receive email alerts with grant funding and investment opportunities
- Profile your organisation by exhibiting at one of our events
- Post your news, jobs and events on our website/in our newsletter
- Initiate and champion new Special Interest Groups, or immerse yourself in an existing one
- Enjoy excellent networking opportunities with others in the low-carbon economy

To become a member, email us: info@oxfordshiregreentech.co.uk



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"I believe we're on a groundswell of a fundamental paradigm shift in the role of the environment and climate change going forward. That's the big message, so the local message is, 'I should be investing in networks like Oxfordshire Greentech.'"

Bev Hindle, Director of the Oxfordshire Growth Board and Oxford to Cambridge Arc Leaders and CEX groups

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

Date of meeting: 18 March 2021	AGENDA ITEM NO: 6
Report title: Garden Town Report	
Author: Dean Fischer, Interim Bicester Delivery Manger	
Tel: 01295 221539	
Email: Dean.Fischer@cherwell-dc.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. MHCLG are actively promoting housing growth through the Garden Communities programme. Bicester was one of the first Garden Towns within the programme, identified in 2014, which now comprises a further 49 Garden Towns and Garden Villages.

1.2. Garden Communities are defined by the Government as having the following characteristics:

- a purpose-built new settlement, or large extension to an existing town;
- a community with a clear identity and attractive environment;
- it provides a mix of homes, including affordable and self-build;
- planned by local authorities or private sector in consultation with the local community.

1.3. As well as building new homes, the communities will develop:

- job opportunities
- attractive green space and public realm areas
- transport infrastructure, including roads, buses and cycle routes
- community infrastructure, schools, community and health centres
- a plan for long-term stewardship of community assets

1.4. Garden Communities champion 'best practice', well planned and designed settlements. This work is supported, by MHCLG capacity and revenue funding.

1.5. This report aims to highlight key areas of work that have been progressed since the last SDB update.

2. Garden Town Capital Funding

2.1. As Board members will be aware, during 2014/15 Bicester was identified as a Garden Town by MHCLG. With this, MHCLG provided an allocation of both capital and revenue funding to support the sustained growth of the Town. In total £19m capital

was identified for Bicester, subject to the submission of a business case justifying the spend.

- 2.2. In 2017 agreement was reached with MHCLG to pay £4.25m to Cherwell to pay Network Rail part of a 'shared value' payment to enable the rail bridge to be built at NW Bicester. This funding is no longer required for the 'shared value' payment and subsequently negotiations between CDC, OCC and MHCLG are ongoing to agree if this money could now be reallocated elsewhere in Bicester.
- 2.3. As will be reported during this SDB, the NW Bicester Railway bridge and underpass scheme remain on programme to be delivered during 2021.
- 2.4. During April 2018 a business case was submitted to undertaking three further highway schemes:
 - Pioneer Roundabout;
 - Ploughley Road junction;
 - Banbury Road roundabout.
- 2.5. The delivery of these schemes will enable the acceleration of housing delivery within Bicester.
- 2.6. Despite the impact of COVID-19 restriction during 2020 / 21, progress has been made on all three schemes.
- 2.7. MHCLG is working in partnership with CDC to ensure the delivery of the second tranche of funding in a timely manner and discussions continue to facilitate this.
- 2.8. The Board will recall that OCC will deliver both Ploughley Road junction and Banbury Road roundabout and that the Graven Hill Village Development Company (GHVDC) will deliver Pioneer Roundabout.
- 2.9. Grant agreements have now been finalised with OCC (Banbury Road and Ploughley Road) and with GHVDC (Pioneer Roundabout) to ensure CDC can transfer funds for the delivery of the infrastructure.
- 2.10. Good progress is being made on all capital projects however tighter programme regime have been introduced.
- 2.11. As a critical part this, the SDB Review has been concluded which will, subject to Board approval on 18 March 2021, provide greater scrutiny and programme discipline moving forward.
- 2.12. Finally, the Board will recall that a further bid for Capacity funding was submitted to MHCLG during September 2020, to enable further work by the BDT which will help set the conditions for the delivery of new homes within Bicester. MHCLG has confirmed that the result of this bid will be officially announced on 25 March 2021.

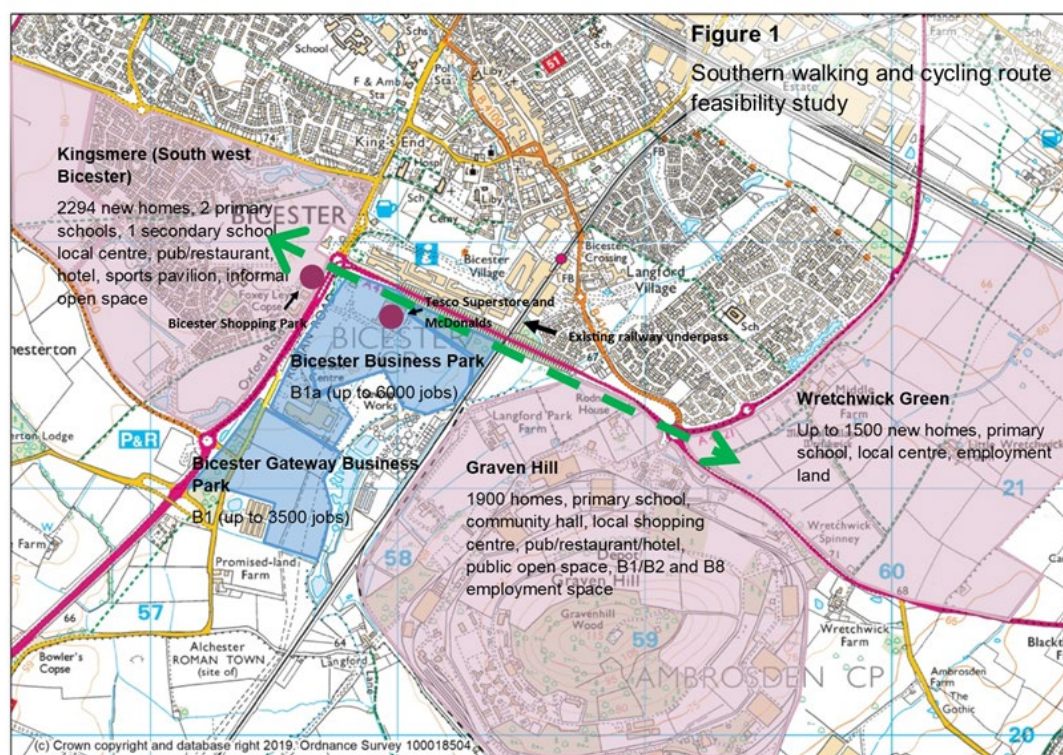
3. Bicester Air Quality Management Area

- 3.1. Funding was secured through the Healthy New Town programme to undertake an innovation project to design and implement a planting scheme to reduce the impacts of poor air quality in the town's Air Quality Management Area.
- 3.2. The first phase of this project has been to appoint Landscape Architects to develop options for the area. After a formal procurement process local firm Applied Landscape Design, a local company, were successful.
- 3.3. Applied Landscape Design have prepared a planting design scheme which has been circulated to key stakeholders for initial comments. The design includes a planting scheme the King's End/Middleton Stoney Road junction where deficiencies in pavement width and current provision for pedestrian desire lines have been identified.
- 3.4. A wider improvement scheme has been proposed and developed with OCC which would address these issues alongside the provision of continuous cycle route connectivity with the existing Queen's Avenue cycle route. Funding has been sought by the County Council as part of the Tranche 2 Active Travel Fund the outcome of which is imminent.
- 3.5. Should funding be secured the environmental planting scheme will integrate with these improvements. Whilst the project has been delayed by the footpath issues as well as Covid 19, issues should be resolved in the near future. Final draft schemes are currently being prepared.
- 3.6. BBOWT have indicated that they will be available to assist with this project to work in partnership within the local community (primarily the West Bicester area), either as part of Wild Bicester or as a separate piece of work, in terms of long term maintenance or custodianship of the newly planted areas.

4. Southern Connectivity in the Town for Walking and Cycling

- 4.1. Consultants EAS were appointed in April to undertake a detailed feasibility study to understand the available options for the creation of a new pedestrian and cycle route to address the gap in the network that exists on the A41 between the roundabout junction with London Road and the roundabout junction with Oxford Road.
- 4.2. There is an overgrown segregated route to the north of the carriageway from Oxford Road ending at the railway bridge and a further existing section of route running roughly east-west from the Talisman road roundabout.
- 4.3. The railway represents a key barrier to overcome to join these routes together and to connect to London Road where a S106 funded route is being progressed by OCC.

4.4. A business clearance process is currently being progressed with Network Rail and once the outcome of this is known, EAS will be able to complete their work and carry out a safety audit, to enable the work with Network Rail to continue to the next stage.



5. Access to the Countryside Project

5.1. The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan sets out the following policy commitment:

“Policy Bicester 7: Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation As part of measures to address current and future deficiencies in open space, sport and recreation provision in the town we will:

“Seek to establish an urban edge park around the outskirts of the town, by protecting the existing network of green spaces and securing new open space and linear route provision linked with public footpaths/cycleways, to create a circular route with connections to the town centre and the countryside beyond”

5.2. With respect to this policy objective and the wider need to achieve modal shift to active modes this project identifies the following aims:

“To provide safe and attractive walking and cycling routes between Bicester and the villages within the immediately surrounding area to provide for both leisure and utility trips by these modes.”

- 5.3. To enhance opportunities for recreation and exercise with the creation of circular walking and cycling routes which readily connects with the Bicester urban area negating the need for an initial journey by motorised means.
- 5.4. The consultant, EAS, has completed all site work now having walked/cycled each potential route, making additional visits where required.
- 5.5. EAS currently preparing betterment drawings and proposals for the scoped areas for CDC feedback ahead of the final options report.

6. Town Centre and Market Square

- 6.1. A “Town Centre Task Group” formed following an event with retail guru Bill Grimsey in June 2019. The group reported back on its work in November 2020, presenting an outline plan for reimagining Bicester’s town centre for the 21st century. Feedback received from this meeting has highlighted the importance of Market Square in providing connectivity with Sheep Street, Crown Walk, Deans Court and also as a focal point when accessing the town centre from the south, Bicester Village and Bicester Gateway (being large visitor attractors). It also has the potential to provide space for events and activities.
- 6.2. CDC officers and OCC have been working closely together to produce an options appraisal. An invite-to-tender (ITT) is currently live, for pre-design stage work with an external supplier, and will close on 18th March.
- 6.3. Some funding is held by OCC to implement a scheme, but it is unlikely to be sufficient on its own to fulfil all aspirations. Garden Town funding provides the opportunity to work with the winning tenderer to the ITT as discussed in 6.2, to review the previous design to alter market square and explore the opportunities to create a destination space within the town centre, bringing in the views, aspirations and expertise of the Town Centre Task Group that CDC are also a part of.
- 6.4. The town centre work has good synergy with a number of other programmes of work, such as the ‘*Meanwhile in Oxfordshire*’ project (utilising Renaissance Funding) to transition empty retail units back into use, ‘*Reopening High Streets Safely Fund*’ which will deliver up to five projects for Bicester, and the ‘*Contain Outbreak Management Funding*’, for which project ideas are currently being progressed.

7. Wild Bicester Project

7.1. Wild Bicester is a new partnership project between Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust and CDC. Bicester Town Council is also a key partner - as they own much of the land which the projects will take part on.

7.2. Good progress has now been made.

7.3. Funded through Cherwell's Community Nature Project, Healthy Place Shaping and Bicester Garden Town. It is an 18 month programme, costing £31,500. After 18 months, it is hoped a sustainable model is established so the project can run on its own (as with Wild Banbury).

7.4. Wild Bicester is designed to improve the overall biodiversity in Bicester as well as promoting the health and wellbeing of those involved through participation in the events/activities.

7.5. BBOWT will work with the local community to enable residents to improve spaces for wildlife whilst highlighting to local people the impact that nature-based interventions can have on their lives and wellbeing. BBOWT empowers local communities to improve space for wildlife and help people connect with local wildlife on a hyper local scale which in turn has a positive impact on the wellbeing of the individuals and the community.

7.6. Outcomes

- Increased skills, knowledge and confidence of local people about wildlife
- Increased nature connectedness for Bicester residents
- More spaces for nature in Bicester
- Improved wellbeing for Bicester community

7.7. Ed Munday, the Community Wildlife Officer will work in Bicester for two and a half days per week for 18 months and will be responsible for working with the wider community to promote the Wild Streets and Neighbourhoods, events and activities and work with BTC and CDC as part of the Wilder Spaces part of the project. Kate Sheard, Community Wildlife Manager (Volunteering) is responsible for the community group network and upskilling, and will work with groups to create bespoke training and support system as required by Bicester groups

7.8. Wild Bicester now has a portal on the BBOWT website:

<https://www.bbowt.org.uk/wild-bicester>.

7.9. Early engagement with a number of organisations has been encouraging, and a comms plan with ideas for the public to learn more and engage with nature will launch in the Spring. It will highlight national campaigns and offer practical solutions for people to try in their own gardens.

8. SPARK Funding/Community Engagement

8.1. SPARK funding is provided for community groups in Bicester jointly funded by Garden Town and Healthy Bicester. Grants are available up to £1,000 to support programmes of work in Bicester and surrounding villages that satisfy one or more of the SPARK funding priorities. The budget remaining is currently just over £10,00.00.

8.2. Priorities:

- Bringing new uses to or improving the town centre as the vibrant heart of Bicester
- Supporting the greater understanding of Bicester's heritage
- Improving opportunities for walking and cycling within Bicester
- Improving access to green spaces and opportunities for food growing or enhancing green spaces or bio-diversity
- Increasing opportunities for participation and reducing social isolation
- Improved health and wellbeing for residents

8.3. Successful applications have included gardening projects, arts and music projects and bike projects. Further promotion of the funding will be publicised at the next Healthy Bicester Stakeholders' Meeting in April and through the Bicester Voluntary Forum which will meet in May. Ongoing officer support to community groups in Bicester is facilitated on a regular basis through the Bicester Forum and wider Cherwell Voluntary Forum network, in association with colleagues in Community Services.

9. Conclusion

9.1. In conclusion, despite the difficulties of COVID-19 pandemic upon the team and the pressure that has put on the Garden Town programme, work continues at pace, to support the delivery of the Garden Town objectives. The BDT is working on a full spectrum delivery of the Garden Town programme providing an exceptional environment to work, live and play.

9.2. The BDT has proven to be agile and innovative, remaining focused on the delivery of the Garden Town commitments and helping to set the conditions for the delivery of new homes within Bicester

9.3. The significant provision of capital funding for infrastructure is supporting the delivery of strategic objectives, whilst capacity funding is helping deliver place shaping initiatives including active travel initiatives.

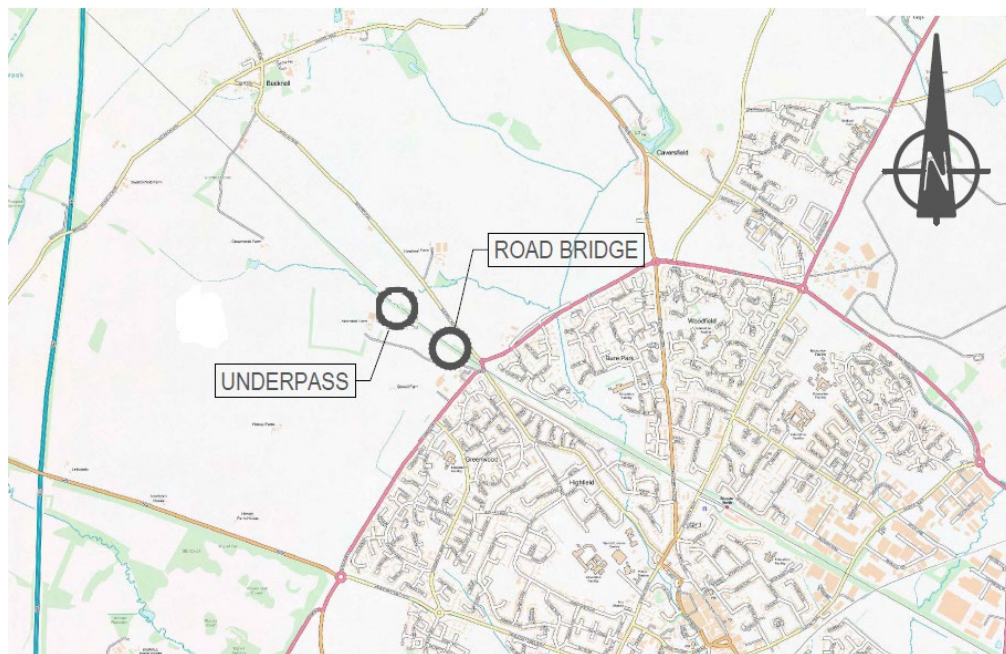
9.4. The BDT is working with a variety of critical stakeholders and partners to ensure successful outcomes for our communities within Bicester.

9.5. Moving forward there will be Greater focus on the delivery of the Garden Town programme to ensure timely delivery, as set out within the SDB Review and we will ensure that Bicester remains a national exemplar for Garden Communities.

Date of meeting: 18 March 2021	AGENDA ITEM NO: 7
Report title: Holistic report on infrastructure projects	
Author: Jacqui Cox, Infrastructure Locality Lead, Oxfordshire County Council	
Email: Jacqui.cox@oxfordshire.gov.uk	

a) NW Bicester rail under-bridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane

1. The prefabrication of the new road bridge and pedestrian underpass in the field just to the south of the railway are both complete and the structures are now ready to be transported into their final position within the railway embankment during the upcoming four-day track closure planned for this Easter. In the period between now and then, trackway and self-propelled modular transport units which will lift and move the structures into position will be delivered to site, assembled and tested. Additionally, a claim to draw down the first £2.5m of £6.7M of available Homes England HIFmv funding has now been successfully made.



2. The scheme to realign the A4095 away from Howes Lane to run under the new bridge is progressing. The consultants, Stantec, have carried out a review of the consented scheme and the recommendations made by PJA Consultancy to consider ways of reducing the cost of the proposals. The current work has also included a review of the compliance of the scheme against the DfT's LTN 1/20 cycle Infrastructure Design guidance.

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

3. The consultants have shared a draft design and options statement with officers for review and consideration. Once these have been considered and recommendations accepted this report will be shared. This has included consideration of the junction designs, whether a reduced carriageway width would be appropriate, the footway/cycleway provision and signalised crossings. In order to be compliant with LTN 1/20 it is recommended that the eastern footway/cycleway is widened to allow for suitable segregation. The width and gradient as the highway passes under the new bridge requires further design consideration.
4. The current work is expected to recommend an interim scheme that delivers the basic road and footways/cycleways but leaves some elements of the scheme, including some of the signalised junctions and the northern link to be delivered as a later phase.
5. It is intended that a s73 planning application will be submitted to Cherwell District Council to make amendments to the existing consent. The expected programme for delivery at this stage is:

A4095 Realignment Scheme Programme:

- Bridge Completion-July '21
- Realignment Feasibility-Mar '21
- s73 Planning Application-Jun '21
- Preliminary Design-Jun '21
- Construction start-Jun '22
- Construction completion-May '24

b) EEH Strategy Work and OxCam Arc Spatial Framework announcement

6. England's Economic Heartland (EEH) has published their finalised [Regional Transport Strategy](#) on 26 February 2021, accompanied by a useful [Summary Report](#). As previously shared with this Board, EEH consulted on the draft strategy between 14 July – 6 October 2020 and both Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Growth Board, on behalf of all Oxfordshire Local Authorities, submitted responses* to this.
7. The EEH Member-led [Strategic Transport Forum](#) approved the strategy at their meeting on 5 February. It is important to note that, while the EEH Transport Strategy is non-statutory and does not override or supersede any local Transport Strategy approved by its individual constituent Highway Authorities, it does provide an important sub-national framework for strategic transport planning in Oxfordshire. A paper is going to [Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet on 16 March 2021](#) to seek their endorsement.
8. In summary, the EEH Transport Strategy sets out how the region will:

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

- a. Focus on decarbonising our transport system by harnessing innovation and supporting solutions which in themselves create green economic opportunities
 - b. Promote investment in digital infrastructure as a means of improving connectivity
 - c. Use the delivery of strategic public transport schemes – such as East West Rail, the Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro and Milton Keynes Mass Rapid Transit - as the catalyst for a shift towards lower carbon modes of travel
 - d. Champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport to improve local connectivity to ensure that everyone can realise their potential
 - e. Continue to ensure the needs of the freight and logistics sector are met whilst lowering its environmental impact.
9. MHCLG have released a paper on 18 February 2021 that sets out the government's plan for developing a [long-term spatial framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc](#). The paper sets out the government's planned approach to developing the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework, including a timeline for delivery, its high-level scope, and how they will work with local partners. Whilst there is a strong emphasis in the report on working collaboratively with communities, we await further details on how Local Authorities will be able to get involved. It is worth noting in the interim that the paper states that there will be 3 stages of consultation in development of the framework; on a **Vision** in summer 2021, on a **Towards a Spatial Framework** document in Spring 2022, and on a draft **Spatial Framework** in Autumn 2022.

* Links to consultation responses from [Oxfordshire County Council 13 Oct 2020 Cabinet paper – Annex 2](#) and [Oxfordshire Growth Board 22 Sept 2020 Meeting paper – Annex 2](#)

c) London Road Level Crossing

10. The need to find a longer-term solution to the London Road, Bicester issue is becoming more important, as the plans for the next stage of East West Rail (Milton Keynes to Cambridge) come forward. In particular, it is understood that East West Rail Company are currently working towards submission of a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the next section and want to be sure that impacts of train service increases on the already consented/operational part of the route are appropriately mitigated. This includes London Road, Bicester.
11. An Options Appraisal Report was funded through the East West Rail Consortium Work Programme, with the work undertaken by the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Innovation Team (iHub), in association with transport modelling undertaken by consultants WYG using the Bicester model. This work sets out and appraises options for interventions that will help enable continued access to and from Bicester town centre as level crossing down-time increases in line with train service frequencies.

12. The options assessment tool that is used for transport schemes requires analysis of individual measures – in this case a direct highway intervention at London Road, investment in alternative highway measures in the town (south east perimeter road and eastern peripheral road improvements), and a package to strongly deliver on walking and cycling measures within the town. For this work, the assessment was undertaken using the Bicester model, and other relevant evidence, allowing for each option to be appraised using the Department for Transport Early Assessment Sifting Tool (EAST).
13. The outcome of the OAR assessment work indicates that the sustainable transport package options generally perform better than the highway options assessed. However, it is recognised that a package of transport measures will be needed to provide a longer-term solution to severance and connectivity issues to the south east of the town.
14. Given that plans to progress East West Rail to the next stage are now being taken forward in more detail, the next year is seen as crucial in determining the required mitigation package associated with London Road. In particular, it will be important to agree whether there is a package of measures that could provide positive connectivity for the town and form part of the wider transport strategy, as an alternative to a direct highway intervention at London Road.

d) A41 Corridor Study

15. Consultants working on the A41 Corridor Study have undertaken a review of past work and existing and emerging policies/strategies, to establish a consolidated evidence base of current and future issues, challenges and opportunities along the Corridor. A draft report for this first stage of work has been received and will inform an Options and Objectives' Workshop to be held on Friday 26th March.
16. The Workshop will be attended by a range of stakeholders including Town, District and County Councillors, Parish Council representatives and other key businesses and groups. The aim of the workshop is to establish a 'long list' of schemes/ measures to be considered as part of the A41 Corridor Study, and to agree the objectives against which these will be assessed. Information will be circulated in advance of the Workshop including draft objectives for consideration.
17. Following the workshop, the schemes/ measures will be judged against the agreed objectives and supporting assessment criteria, to establish two preferred potential packages of schemes/measures. There will be further stakeholder engagement in May to agree the final composition of the preferred packages before they are taken to wider consultation over the Summer.

e) Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

18. Following the OCC Cabinet approval of the Bicester LCWIP in November, officers have been developing a rolling programme to get the various schemes assessed, designed, funded and delivered on the ground. The DfT have funded Sustrans to support officers until the end of March to assess outline designs drawn up over recent years against current guidance and to propose schemes along some key corridors in the town.
19. There are some held s106 pots specifically for cycle schemes and the approval of the LCWIP puts Bicester in a strong position to bid for Government funding to assist with the development and delivery of schemes.
20. The first phase of delivery is focussing on the radial routes into the town centre and Quietways within residential areas. Building on the current active travel measures that are being delivered, one of the priority corridors is the Middleton Stoney Road.

f) Misc.

Scheme Name	Progress made to date	Future planned activity
Active Travel Scheme – Tranche 2 Provision of cycle connectivity measures between south west Bicester and the town centre, together with community activation to support people to use the new facilities	The proposed 20mph speed limit, toucan crossing and shared use footway/cycle tracks have been approved at OCC Cabinet Member Decisions, as well as Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders for waiting restrictions at Loddon Close and Villiers Road and width and loading restrictions on Causeway. A decision on proposals for a contraflow cycle lane on Causeway have been deferred to enable further consideration of the options and stakeholder discussion.	The delivery team are now on site on Middleton Stoney Road. There are a number of detailed matters to resolve along each section because of the speed at which these measures are having to be delivered to meet the funding requirements. The report on the options for Causeway is being drawn up to enable stakeholder discussions.
Market Square urban design and transport scheme	A project brief went out to urban design consultants and responses are due back on the 15 th March.	Once the consultants are commissioned, they will initially consider the options. This will entail engagement with stakeholders. This will feed into the town centre re-imagining work and into the review of the area transport strategy.
Banbury Road roundabout improvements	This scheme is out for consultation currently and a stakeholder workshop is being arranged to consider the options.	This is on a fast track delivery with a planning application due for submission this Summer to meet funding deadlines.



Bicester Press Releases Feb to early March 2021

Please see below headlines of all the media releases which were issued to the press, relating to Bicester, during the period Jan 25th to 5th March.

CDC Website

Published	Article (titles are hyperlinks)
12 th February	New project launches to make Bicester wilder A new 18-month project has been launched, bringing people and nature together creating a greener, healthier and wilder Bicester.
12 th February	New rail bridge coming to connect communities and support active travel in Bicester Residents of Bicester will soon benefit from the installation of a new bridge under the railway in a project led by Oxfordshire County Council, Cherwell District Council and delivered by Network Rail.
1 st March	Work on new cycling and walking improvements starts in Bicester Residents of Bicester will see work begin this week on a series of exciting new measures to improve...

Newspaper articles where Bicester has been mentioned

19/02/2021 13:33	24/02/2021 13:34	Oxford Mail Online	Bicester water park plans slammed as 'fanciful'
18/02/2021 13:29	24/02/2021 13:30	Bicester Advertiser	Ecologist says Bicester water park resort's hedge plan is 'fanciful'
17/02/2021 13:22	24/02/2021 13:23	Bicester Advertiser	Wild Bicester on mission to boost wildlife in town
17/02/2021 13:21	24/02/2021 13:22	Oxford Mail Online	Wild Bicester on mission to boost wildlife in town
16/02/2021 10:48	24/02/2021 10:49	Oxford Mail Online	Bicester railway line to close for construction of new bridge in Easter
15/02/2021 10:47	24/02/2021 10:48	Bicester Advertiser	Bicester railway line to close for construction of new bridge in Easter
15/02/2021 10:46	24/02/2021 10:47	Bicester Advertiser	Flats could 'bring more life' to 'dying' Bicester town centre
12/02/2021 10:37	24/02/2021 10:44	Oxford Mail Online	Flats could 'bring more life' to 'dying' Bicester town centre
11/02/2021 10:36	24/02/2021 10:37	Oxford Mail Online	Bicester resort's bus shuttle plan is 'really vague', planning Inspector told
08/02/2021 10:34	24/02/2021 10:35	Oxford Mail Online	Cash available for community groups in Bicester
08/02/2021 10:33	24/02/2021 10:34	Oxford Mail Online	Empty space above former Peacocks could be converted into flats in Bices
08/02/2021 10:29	24/02/2021 10:30	Bicester Advertiser	Empty space above former Peacocks could be converted into flats in Bices
12/01/2021 15:50	04/02/2021 15:50	Bicester Advertiser	Bicester says third lockdown is necessary, but rules aren't tough enough
11/01/2021 15:46	04/02/2021 15:47	Bicester Advertiser	Bicester town council still waiting for new cemetery site
25/01/2021 10:59	28/01/2021 11:00	Buckinghamshire Advertiser	Give your views on cycle scheme for Bicester.
20/01/2021 10:50	28/01/2021 10:50	Bicester Advertiser	Businesses set to occupy new controversial warehouses in Bicester.

Please note, due to a lag in timings between publishing and correlating data by the communications team, items after 19th Feb are not included.

BICESTER VISION

Meeting	BICESTER VISION CIC EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING	
Directors/Members Present	James Hill (Adalta Real) Graeme Laws (Business Manager) (Director only) Miranda Markham (Value Retail/Bicester Village) Cllr Richard Mould (Bicester Town Council) Graham Perryman (Bicester Chamber) Cllr Lynn Pratt (Cherwell District Council) Cllr Lawrie Stratford (Oxfordshire County Council)	(JH) (GL) (MM) (RM) (GP) (LP) (LS)
Observers Present	Lt Col Lyndon Robinson RLC (Chair) Richard Byard (OxLEP) Peter Cox (Bicester Chamber) Sarah-Jane Curtis (Bicester Motion/Bicester Heritage) Jacqui Cox (Oxfordshire County Council) (Part meeting) Amrik Manku (Oxfordshire County Council)	(LR) (RB) (PC) (SJC) (JC) (AM)
Apologies	Shaun Jardine (Brethertons), William Knighton (Chiltern Railway), Sam Shippen (Bicester Town Council), John Liggins (Ziran Land Limited), Phil Shadbolt (Zeta), Robert Jolley (Cherwell District Council), Cllr Michael Waine (Oxfordshire County Council)	
In attendance	Sarah Fraser	(SF)
Date of meeting	Thursday 4 March 2021	
Venue	Via Zoom	
Circulation	All Supporters	
Dates of next meetings	Executive Board – Thursday 8 April 2021, 10am-12pm, via Zoom Full Partnership – Thursday, 13 May 2021, 12-2pm , via Zoom	

MINUTES

ACTION

1 WELCOME

LR welcomed those on the call, particularly Amrik Manku, Growth Manager at Oxfordshire County Council, attending his first Bicester Vision CIC meeting.

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record. The Board noted the significant time and energy that has been expended on negotiating the Grant Funding Agreement with Cherwell District Council.

3 BUSINESS MANAGER'S UPDATE (Presentation attached)

Further to the presentation shared, the Board noted:

- **Finances** - The surplus in the year end accounts has arisen largely due to not having face to face Partnership meetings in the last year. It was hoped to return to live events in the coming months, not least as supporters value the networking opportunities offered.

- **Business Plan** – The Board considered key functions for the organisation are:
 - to share intelligence on the business environment in and around Bicester;
 - to ensure the business voice is heard by those making decisions on policy;
 - to develop the voice of those working in social enterprise/community groups, ensuring this voice is also heard by those in Government; and
 - to be a source of information, signposting all businesses (paid members or not) to relevant support available.
- **Business Plan** – It was suggested the business plan should, where possible, reflect and be aligned to the objectives contained within the Cherwell Industrial Strategy (CIS), the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), and the aims of the Town Centre Task Group; but also recognised that the Business Plan is a living document that will evolve over time.
- **Forward Plan** – The Board endorsed the intention to provide Bicester Vision supporters with volunteering opportunities with a view to the nominal fee charged being ‘paid forward’ to support enrichment opportunities for students.
- **CDC Grant Agreement** – Once finalised, SMART objectives will be built into a project plan.
- **Strategic Delivery Board** – The Board considered it is important that Bicester Vision CIC contributes to strategic discussions around Bicester’s future, particularly as the organisation is tasked with delivery of parts of the agenda being discussed and brings the business voice to these discussions. However, it was also noted any Strategic Board needs to be of an appropriate size to enable effective discussion.

It was agreed:

- **LP will speak to Robert Jolley re targets/objectives within the CIS and will feedback at the next Board meeting.** LP
- **To prepare a 3 year forward budget to share with Cherwell District Council to support the Grant Funding Agreement.** GL
- **There is no requirement for a Memorandum of Understanding between Cherwell District Council and Bicester Vision to run alongside the Grant Funding Agreement, once finalised.**
- **LR will write to Robert Jolley regarding his formally taking on the role of ‘Observer’ on the Bicester Vision CIC Board, noting that it is important that whomever takes on this role has the requisite availability to attend meetings.** LR

4 OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (OCC) TRANSPORT PROJECTS (Presentation attached)

JC provided an update on OCC transport projects and the review/engagement work currently in progress, which will include wider policy considerations, look at different modes of travel and ensure stakeholder views are taken into account.

With regards to the proposed stakeholder event on 25 March 2021, it was suggested that an alternative date be considered for this meeting to avoid a potential clash for attendees with the Town Centre Group engagement session taking place on the same day. JC

The Board noted the next stage of work on the East West Rail project and the requirement in the next phase to include mitigation for the London Road level crossing; an important year for Bicester in the life of this project.

It was reported the scope of work being considered within the transport projects will reflect developments with the Oxford to Cambridge Arc spatial framework. Timescales to progress actions arising from the consultations will be dependent upon the outcome of the relevant consultation and what measures are agreed upon.

In considering whether to decouple work on the Town Centre from the mitigation to be put in place for the London Road crossing, it was confirmed the Council is seeking to develop a holistic transport strategy for Bicester as a whole, considering routes into town from all sides and considering the town centre in a multi- functional context.

It was confirmed stakeholder consultation will take place on all transport projects listed and details of these consultations will be shared with Bicester Vision CIC.

JC

5 **OXLEP UPDATE** (Presentation attached)

RB provided an update on the LEP's work, reporting that OxLEP is in the process of developing its business plan, setting out the strategic priorities that will be the organisation's focus in the coming few years.

Following recent announcements in terms of spatial planning and the proposed Arc-wide Growth Body, Emran Mian, Director General for Decentralisation and Growth at MHCLG, will attend the next OxLEP Board meeting to gain an understanding of some of the challenges and practicalities associated with this agenda.

With regards to the Budget announcements on 3 March, the Board noted the launch of the Levelling Up Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, recognising that Oxfordshire will struggle to benefit in bidding to these funds.

The Board noted the slow progress with the Kickstart programme, the difficulties for employers in completing paperwork, and that DWP is attempting to rectify this situation, with further support for apprenticeships being announced in the Budget.

6 **STANDING AGENDA ITEMS UPDATES**

6.1 Development

It was reported:

- Albion Land has submitted an application to change smaller units on Stony Road into B8 units; the Council's decision being to limit any changes made to the original application.
- The Great Wolf Resorts appeal is now online, should any Bicester Vision supporters wish to follow this.
- An application has been made to convert two of the larger units in the town centre to residential premises. In converting employment space to residential dwellings, the Board suggested there is a need to maintain High Street frontages and small spaces for SMEs/micro businesses (at sensible rental values), particularly as those living within the town centre will expect to be able to shop locally.

6.2 Town Centre Task Group

- Webinar invitations for 25 March have been sent out to bring together the wider Town Centre stakeholder group.
- The meeting will review progress to date and will consider the most appropriate delivery vehicle for the Town Centre work.
- Clarification is being sought on what work can be undertaken in short order and what funding is available to support this.

6.3 Recruitment

- It was reported recruitment has stalled in the last year but it was anticipated this will recover once face to face Partnership meetings are, once more, permitted to take place.

7 BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

7.1 Cherwell Business Awards

- PC reported it was hoped to hold some form of “get together” in September 2021, with the grand finale of the Awards to be held in 2022, venue tbc.

7.2 Bicester Sports Association (BSA)

- JH reported BSA has submitted a planning application to provide a replacement indoor rifle range at Chesterton for the Rifle Club moving out of the town centre, should any Bicester Vision supporters wish to offer their support for this application.
<https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/Planning/Display/20/02512/F>

7.3 Bicester Chamber

- GP reported Bicester Chamber has been awarded some funding to create a town centre website.
- Board members were asked to forward content/case studies for this new website, looking particularly at how to engender confidence to come back to the High Street as restrictions are lifted, before extending to a wider town centre function.

ALL

7.4 Bicester Motion

- LP offered her thanks for the superb organisation in place at Bicester Motion with regards to Covid-19 vaccinations.

8 3 OUTPUTS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE WEBSITE

- Bicester Vision is keen to have a seat at the Strategic Delivery Board table in order to bring the community voice to strategic local discussions.
- Bicester Vision is embracing social responsibility and, to this end, is delighted to be working with Bicester’s Chiltern Rangers during 2021.
- Bicester Vision has been challenged with finding innovative ways to help young people, displaced by Covid-19, back into the local labour market.

9 2020/21 MEETINGS

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 8 April 2021, 10am-12pm, via Zoom | Board
P/Ship
Board
Board |
| ➤ Full Partnership & AGM – Thursday 13 May 2021 12-2pm, venue tbc | |
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 10 June 2021, 10am-12pm, venue tbc | |
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 22 July 2021, 10am-12pm, venue tbc | |
| ➤ NO MEETING IN AUGUST | |
| ➤ Full Partnership – Thursday 16 September 2021 12-2pm, venue tbc | P/Ship
Board
Board
P/Ship |
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 7 October 2021, 10am-12pm, venue tbc | |
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 4 November 2021, 10am-12pm, venue tbc | |
| ➤ Full Partnership – Thursday 2 December 2021 12-2pm, venue tbc | |

The meeting closed at 12.01pm

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE

Monday 26th April 2021

Town Entrance Signs

Chairman: Councillor Richard Mould

Telephone: 01869 245917 richard.mould@bicester.gov.uk

Phil Evans – Service Manager

Telephone: 01869 252915 phil.evans@bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Background

- 1.1. Oxfordshire County Council have been provided with the new wording for Les Essarts on these signs and are awaiting final costings.

2. Recommendation

Members are recommended to **NOTE** the above.



Council Offices, The Garth,
Launton Road,
Bicester,
Oxon. OX2 6PS
Telephone: 01869 252915
Email: enquiries@bicester.gov.uk
www.bicester.gov.uk

Tuesday 11th May 2021

Sir/ Madam

All members of Bicester Town Council are summoned to attend the Annual Meeting of the Council on **Tuesday 18th May 2021** at the **John Paul II Centre, Webb Court, Causeway, Bicester OX26 6AW** to commence at **7pm** for the transaction of the following business.

Phil Evans
Service Manager

Agenda

1. Election of the Town Mayor and Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

To elect a Town Mayor for the 2021/2022 municipal year.

2. Election of Deputy Mayor

Newly elected Mayor to propose a Deputy Mayor for the 2021/2022 municipal year.

3. Report of Retiring Mayor

To receive the report of the retiring Mayor.

4. Vote of Thanks to Retiring Mayor

The newly elected Mayor will propose a vote of thanks to the retiring 2020/2021 Mayor.

5. Apologies for Absence

6. Declarations of Acceptance of Office

To decide whether any outstanding Declarations of Acceptance of Office may be made at or before the next meeting of the Council to be held on Monday 9th May 2022 in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 s83(4)(c).

7. Minutes of Town Council Meeting

To approve the minutes of the following meeting:

BTC01 - 13th May 2019

8. Public Session

In accordance with Standing Orders 1 d-f, members of the public may make representations, ask questions, and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.

Time allocation shall not exceed 10 minutes. No member of the public shall speak for more than 2 minutes.

9. Appointment of Mayor's Cadet

The Mayor will propose the 2021/22 Mayor's Cadet.

10. Appointment of Committees

To appoint standing committees, confirm the terms of reference, agree the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations election of chairman and vice chairman to each.

11. Working Parties and Task and Finish Groups

To appoint members of working parties and task and finish groups.

12. Representatives to Outside Bodies

1. To receive the reports of working parties and task and finish groups.
2. To make appointments of representatives to sit on the following Outside Bodies and other organisations and confirm arrangements for reporting back.
 - Bicester Vision (1 representative – Chairman of Policy Committee)
 - Bicester Twinning Association (Mayor plus 2 other representatives)
 - Strategic Delivery Board (Mayor and Chairmen of Policy & Planning)
 - FEEOFFEE (2 representatives)
 - Bicester Fairtrade Committee (1 representative)
 - Lady Jersey Trust (1 representative)
 - South West Sports Village Project Board (Chairmen of Planning & Policy)
 - Bicester Foodbank (1 representative)
 - Bicester & District Chamber of Commerce (1 representative – Chairman of Policy Committee)

13. General Power of Competence

To confirm the Council meets the conditions of eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence in accordance with The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 Article 2; that at least 2/3 of councillors have been elected at the ordinary elections; and the clerk (Chief Officer) holds a relevant qualification (Certificate in Local Council Administration).

14. Calendar of Meetings 2021/2022

To agree the dates and times of Meetings for 2019/20 and confirm that other than the Annual Meeting of the Council meetings will normally take place at The Garth.

15. Attendance Register 2020/2021

To note the councillors Attendance Register.

16. Date of Next Meeting: Monday 21st June 2021 – 7pm

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE

Monday 26th April 2021

Mayor Making 2021

Chairman: Councillor Richard Mould

Telephone: 01869 245917 richard.mould@bicester.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Phil Evans, Service Manager

Telephone: 01869 252915 phil.evans@bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on Mayor Making to take place on Tuesday 18th May 2021.
- 1.2 Mayor Making will be held on Tuesday 18th May 2021 in the JPIL Centre. The meeting will be held under the current COVID-19 restrictions which limits attendance at events. We are unable to hold this meeting as a virtual meeting on Zoom as the regulations permitting council meetings to be held virtually expire on the 6th of May.
- 1.3 As the legislation applies at this time, we are limited to an attendance of XXX which is the maximum socially distanced numbers permitted.
- 1.4 The meeting will be publicised as normal with numbers permitted to attend and request that members of the public wishing to attend book a place through the Town Council website or by telephone. Once this number is reached no further bookings will be taken.
- 1.5 The agenda set out below is reduced to formal business only. Good Citizens Awards will be presented later in the year when restrictions are removed, and Grant Aid Cheques will be posted to recipients for this year only.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to **NOTE** the update and Agenda.

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 18 MARCH 2021

MEETING: Bicester Strategic Delivery Board DATE AND TIME: 18 March 2021 at 10:30am VENUE: Virtual Teams meeting		Board Members: Cllr Barry Wood (CDC) (Chairman) Cllr Ian Hudspeth (OCC) Cllr Colin Clarke (CDC) Cllr Richard Mould (BTC) Cllr Lynn Pratt (CDC) Cllr Jason Slaymaker (BTC) Cllr Lawrie Stratford (OCC) Cllr Michael Waine (OCC) David Crook (Homes England) Robert Jolley (Cherwell District Council (CDC)) Graham Perryman (Bicester Chamber of Commerce) Rosie Rowe (NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)) Lyndon Robinson (Bicester Vision) Attendance as required (MHCLG)		
Meeting link:				
	TOPIC	PURPOSE	RESP.	TIME
1.	Apologies	Chairman to update members re apologies from Rosie Rowe, NHS CCG.	Cllr Barry Wood	10:30
2.	Notes of previous meeting and matters arising	To agree the notes of 4 February 2021	Cllr Barry Wood	10:35
Governance				
3.	Recommendations following the review of the SDB	Presentation by Dean Fischer	Dean Fischer	10:40
Development and Investment				
4.	Update on the Bicester Town Centre Task Group work	Verbal update and presentation on progress to date including details of the event happening on 25 March	Robert Jolley / Dean Fischer / Dale Hoyland	11:00
5.	ERDF funding and Oxfordshire Greentech	Report and presentation on the project	Dale Hoyland	11:10
Garden Town				
6.	Programme update	Report and presentation on the progress of the Garden Town Programme	Dean Fischer	11:20

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 18 MARCH 2021

Infrastructure				
7.	Update: a) NW Bicester Rail Underbridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane b) Oxford Cambridge Expressway c) London Road Level Crossing d) A41 Scheme e) Misc.	Holistic report on infrastructure projects	Jacqui Cox	11:30
8.	Press release summary and agreed communication messages	(i) To note the press releases and any other articles published by the Bicester Delivery Team that have been issued since the last meeting; and (ii) agree communication messages from the Board Meeting		11:45
	Date of next meetings	2021 date: 29 July, 28 October (under new governance) Venue: Virtual online by MS Teams	All to note	11:55

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

MEETING: Bicester Strategic Delivery Board DATE AND TIME: 4 February 2021 at 10:30am VENUE: Virtual Teams meeting		Board Members: Cllr Barry Wood (CDC) (Chairman) Cllr Ian Hudspeth (OCC) Cllr Colin Clarke (CDC) Cllr Richard Mould (BTC) Cllr Lynn Pratt (CDC) Cllr Jason Slaymaker (BTC) Cllr Lawrie Stratford (OCC) Cllr Michael Waine (OCC) David Crook (Homes England) Robert Jolley (Cherwell District Council (CDC)) Graham Perryman (Bicester Chamber of Commerce) Rosie Rowe (NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)) Lyndon Robinson (Bicester Vision) Attendance as required (MHCLG)	
	TOPIC	PURPOSE	Action
1.	Apologies	Received from Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Cllr Ian Corkin attending in place; Cllr Lawrie Stratford, Cllr Les Sibley attending in place; Cllr Jason Slaymaker.	
2.	Notes of previous meeting and matters arising	The notes of 29 July 2020 were agreed with updates in agenda items below.	
Governance			
3.	Recommendations following the review of the SDB	Dean Fischer, interim Bicester Delivery Manager, gave a presentation and presented the circulated report on the Review of the SDB. The purpose of the review is the need for greater scrutiny and control of the Garden Town Programme and the funding received to date. The report summarises the extensive work carried out to date by the Task and Finish Group, including the consultation with Board Members, one to one meetings, and best practice discussions with Aylesbury Garden Town and Harlow & Gilston Garden Town as recommended by Homes England. Recommendations on the way forward and the new governance are also set out in the report including the Board's name change; for the governance to be split into 3 layers: strategic, operational, and tactical; and that there is a clear delineation across the demand and supply process. Suggested changes to membership include the reduction in the number of councillors on the board and the invitation to OxLEP to sit on the Board for oversight on county wide business issues. Support will continue to be provided by the Bicester	

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

		Delivery Team and OCC officers. Subject to consultation feedback received from Board members by 26 February, the new governance will come into effect from 1 April 2021. Action: All Board members to review the proposed new governance and submit any feedback to Dean.Fischer@cherwell-dc.gov.uk by 26 February 2021.	All Board Members
Development and Investment			
4.	Update on the Bicester Town Centre Task Group work	Robert Jolley, Assistant Director – Growth & Economy, introduced the verbal update and presentation on progress to date on the (i) Grimsey event and town centre work; (ii) Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSS); and (iii) a joint project with OxLEP and other districts on the ‘Meanwhile Uses’ programme Grimsey event and town centre work – following the event on 19 November 2019, six ‘foundation stones’, critical to the delivery of the vision and outline plan, were agreed: single delivery vehicle; investment; strategic spine; community hub; communication and brand identity; and planning policies. To enable the outline plan to happen, seven pledges of action were made by attendees at the event on 19 November and these pledges will be followed up at the next Grimsey event in March along with progressing a detailed plan and plans for engaging with the public. It is proposed that this work will then be fed into the SDB for future reporting. RHSS (Reopening High Streets Safely Fund) – is an HM Government (HMG) COVID-19 national recovery initiative with the aim of delivery additional measures for a safer trading environment for businesses and customers in high streets and CDC has been allocated £133,843 from ERDF funds under the RHSS scheme. Progress to date includes a signed funding agreement from HMG; meetings taking place with stakeholders; and progressing the procurement process for the agreed 5 of 6 projects. The deadline for procurement and payment is end June 2021. Once commissioned from June 2021, the projects will run for a maximum period of 12 months. ‘Meanwhile’ Use project – OxLEP delegated responsibility to Oxford City Council (also the	

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

		accountable body) for an Oxfordshire system-wide operation. A 12 month scheme to take current vacant retail units in town centres and put them to good use on a temporary/meanwhile use. Progress to date includes the procurement of a specialist meanwhile operator contracted to lead on the project; and from 77 units across the district, 16 have been identified for Bicester, with 9 potential occupiers identified within Cherwell to date. Capital funding is only available for 12 months with project delivery to be completed by January 2022. It is expected that the project will continue for at least another two years, until January 2024, in order to realise the benefits of the upfront injection of funds. A discussion was held on the town centre and Cllr Corkin asked if the town was oversubscribed for retail premises. Action: as part of the Economic Recovery Planning (ERP) project with OxLEP, RJ to enquire whether further research into the relationship between retail and market towns (including Bicester) could be commissioned.	RJ
Garden Town			
5.	Programme update	A report and presentation on the progress of the Garden Town (GT) Programme was given by Dean Fischer, interim Bicester Delivery Manager. Good progress is being made on all capital projects. A tighter programme regime has been introduced and Homes England are being kept up to date with progress to ensure the release of additional funds to deliver the schemes at pace. Work is progressing on branding to improve the communication and engagement with the public and stakeholders. The Chairman thanked the team for the ongoing work. Action: due to agenda time constraints, any questions or feedback to be forwarded to Dean.Fischer@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, after the meeting.	All Board Members
Healthy Bicester			

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

6.	Programme update	Rosie Rowe, Healthy Place Shaping Lead, presented the report and Appendices on the progress of the Healthy Bicester Programme. RR indicated very supportive of the proposed restructuring and alignment of the Healthy Place Shaping (HPS) work that contributes to the delivery of the Garden Town objectives to create a healthy and sustainable community. The report updates on current priorities during COVID-19 and the lockdown and acknowledges the great response from the public. Future priorities are also identified from the challenges that the pandemic has highlighted, ie lower physical activity, social isolated and increased mental health problems. Appendix A shows the results of the Bicester Healthy Lives study; Appendix B: Top performing @HealthyBicester Facebook posts (October 2020 to January 2021); and Appendix C is a summary Theory of Change diagram which demonstrates the complexity of improving health and wellbeing by seeking to change the wider determinants of health. The Chairman highlighted that the Health New Town accreditation was not easily awarded or straightforward to retain and there is a lot of good work in this project which contributes to the whole system approach. Action: due to agenda time constraints, any questions or feedback to be forwarded to Rosie.Rowe@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, after the meeting.	All Board Members
Infrastructure			
7.	Update: a) NW Bicester Rail Underbridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane b) Oxford Cambridge Expressway c) London Road Level Crossing	Jacqui Cox, Infrastructure Locality Lead, OCC, presented the report. NW Bicester Rail Underbridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane – on track for Easter 2021 track possession. The aim of this project is to realign the existing A4095 along Howes Lane and the western end of Lords Lane in line with the new underbridge below the railway line near Bucknell Road/A4095 junction. This will provide an important strategic link for the town and sustainable connections through to the North West Bicester strategic development allocation. Funding will be used to deliver an interim scheme ahead of the development sites progressing, to ensure that there is a road in place once the bridge has been completed. Oxford Cambridge Expressway – no updates given.	

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

	d) A41 Scheme e) Misc.	London Road Level Crossing – following the Government announcement for further funding towards the continuation of the East West rail line, this means that at least the Oxford Bletchley section is expected to be up and running by 2025. This year is noted as a critical time to look at mitigation packages for the crossing. East West Rail Company are likely to be starting to engage with members and the communities from Spring 2021 A41 Scheme – OCC have recently commissioned Steer to undertake a study to find at least two preferred options for the Local Plan and OCC connectivity by end May 2021. England’s Economic Heartland (EEH) – have been developing a Transport Strategy for the region. Feedback received from a consultation on the draft strategy, between 14 July – 6 October 2020, will be shared with EEH’s Member-led Strategic Transport Forum on 5th February, with an aim to publish the finalised strategy by the end of February 2021. One area of feedback most notable is that the strategy should be more ambitious on decarbonisation. The final strategy will now include an explicit reference to aim to achieve net-zero by 2040, with an absolute date of no later than 2050. Market Square/town centre - OCC officers are looking to commission an urban design consultancy to consider the options for an enhanced mixed-use space for this key part of the town centre and the transport elements that would feed into this. The project brief is currently being drafted, with the aim to complete this phase of the work by the end of the Summer with a preferred option to take forward into the design process. South West Bicester Active Travel Measures – a route to connect south west Bicester with the town centre for active and healthy travel modes is being funded by the LEP, based on the Government’s Active Travel Fund initiative. A key stakeholder workshop was held during December and the scheme is now out to public consultation to present the package of measures and receive any detailed comments or feedback. The majority of the scheme needs to be delivered by the end of March, which means that the formal Traffic Regulation Order consultations for the proposed 20mph, Causeway restrictions, crossings and footpath conversions are therefore taking place concurrently with the wider consultation, and notices have had to be published to prepare for the construction phase.	
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BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - AGENDA – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

		Incremental planning permissions and the impact on highways – Member concern was raised prior to the meeting re a number of sites coming forward within close proximity. JC advised that The National Planning Policy Framework requires that development sites are considered on their own merits and there are assessment tests to ensure planning requirements are reasonable. Where there are a number of sites coming forward within close proximity, such as along the A41 corridor, this can result in piecemeal delivery of highway infrastructure. The only ways to combat this are either to have a masterplan and Supplementary Planning Guidance in place to cover a number of neighbouring sites or have a very detailed transport strategy that the developers contribute towards. The Chairman acknowledged and thank Jacqui Cox for the update on the large programme of work coming together at pace and the connectivity between the projects is key. Also noted that the railway project is a real success story and the funding secured to make this happen has been a vindication of the Garden Town programme. Cllr Pratt highlighted that communication will be key with the wider public for the Easter 2021 rail bridge work. Noted that a joint press release between OCC, CDC and Network Rail will be issued shortly. The Board noted the report.	
8.	Press release summary and agreed communication messages	A report of Bicester press releases for October 2020 to January 2020 was previously circulated with the report pack. Action: the Chairman requested the Board to delegate the outcome of this item to himself, Robert Jolley and Victoria Walton, Communication and Marketing Executive to decide on the three communication messages from this meeting.	Cllr Wood/ Robert Jolley/ Victoria Walton
9.	Any Other Business	Due to the time constraint on the agenda, the Chairman moved to end the meeting and this item was not discussed.	
	Date of next meetings	2021 date: 18 March. Venue: Virtual online by MS Teams	

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

Date of meeting: 18 March 2021	AGENDA ITEM NO: 5
Report title: Oxfordshire Greentech - update	
Author: Dale Hoyland, Team Leader (Projects), Bicester Delivery Team Tel: 01295 221640 Email: Dale.Hoyland@cherwell-dc.gov.uk / Info@oxfordshiregreentech.co.uk	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To update and raise awareness of the work of Oxfordshire Greentech, a countywide business network to support and champion a low carbon future, since CDC led on its creation.
- 1.2. To highlight how Oxfordshire Greentech can support Cherwell District Council, for example, assisting towards the target of net-zero carbon district-wide emissions by 2030 as part of CDC's Climate Emergency Declaration.
- 1.3. To explain how Oxfordshire Greentech fits into the wider work of OxFutures, and CDC's role within this for the next two years as a 'delivery partner'.

2. Oxfordshire Greentech - background

- 2.1. Oxfordshire Greentech was originally created by the Bicester Delivery Team and Bioregional (a local sustainability consultancy charity) following a successful collaborative bid to MHCLG in 2017 for European Regional Development Funds (ERDF). Following its launch in February 2019, Oxfordshire Greentech attracted a wide range of members wanting to respond positively to the climate emergency. Its annual "Clean Growth" conference and regular workshops/webinars have enabled delegates access to the latest information on best practice as well as a valuable place to interact and share ideas with like-minded companies.
- 2.2. ERDF funding for CDC's direct delivery against set targets came to an end in March 2020, allowing Oxfordshire Greentech to become a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee. Cherwell District Council joined its growing membership, at Founder-level so as to access ongoing support and continue to have a seat at the steering group to help provide direction and ensure its continued success.
- 2.3. In a press release, published on 27th May 2020, Councillor Lynn Pratt, Cherwell's lead member for Economy, Regeneration and Property was quoted as saying: "Cherwell

District Council has been instrumental in the development of Oxfordshire Greentech from the outset and having declared a climate emergency, it is only right that Cherwell nails its colours to the mast and signs up to projects like these. Whilst it is clearly possible and advantageous to have a thriving economy alongside a responsible approach to climate change, navigating that pathway can be difficult. By becoming a founder member of Oxfordshire Greentech Ltd, we will be able to play a pivotal role in supporting and promoting green innovation in the region, helping businesses to flourish in the low carbon era.”

2.4. Please see attached “Oxfordshire Greentech – a year in review” for an overview of impact delivered in the first year of operation.

3. Synergy with CDC’s strategies

3.1. All members of Oxfordshire Greentech are automatically members of sister company, Cambridge Cleantech, providing strong links at both ‘nodes’ of the [OxCam Arc](#) or ‘Knowledge Spine’. With a long-term investment in the area, the Arc represents unrivalled opportunity for sustainable, innovative growth, building on existing assets of international significance. It is our ambition that Cherwell District benefits from such low-carbon investment and growth, such as via planned developments for Bicester (Arrival being one such example with their contract to build e-delivery vans for UPS: please see the following website for more information: <https://www.electrive.com/2020/03/20/arrival-moves-into-new-bicester-factory/>).

3.2. Having declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019, a Zero Carbon Action Plan has been produced, providing a roadmap to achieve net-zero carbon emissions from both internal operations and district-wide by 2030. Businesses clearly have a key role to play in this, and Oxfordshire Greentech Ltd under the structure of a number of ‘special interest groups’ facilitates action to assist in the transition to a sustainable future where we are able to operate within the available resources available, prompting climate and ecological recovery for future generations to come.

3.3. The Bicester Delivery Team work closely with the Economic Growth Team who are tasked with production of the Cherwell Industrial Strategy (CIS). It is anticipated that this will provide a pathway to action, for which Oxfordshire Greentech would be able to assist. For example, an offer of organising a launch event for the CIS, providing exposure to a wider range of businesses and key stakeholders, facilitated networking opportunities, speaker slots and a launchpad for action has been made.

3.4. Oxfordshire Greentech Ltd operates out of Cherwell’s Eco Business Centre in Bicester, the first non-residential Passivhaus Plus building in the UK offering zero carbon offices and coworking space (a contribution of £350,000 towards this asset was received via another ERDF programme that the Bicester Delivery Team have managed, ending more recently in December 2020). The team assists in the promotion of the development and opportunity afforded to other potential occupiers.

4. Wider work of OxFutures

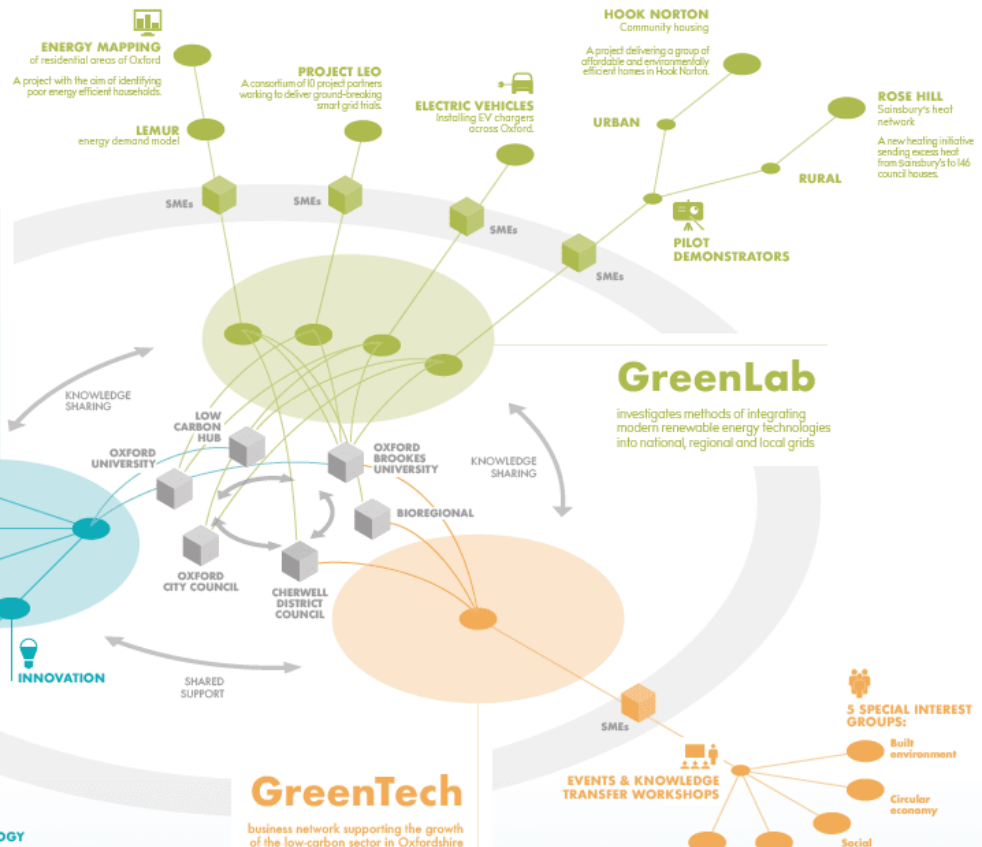
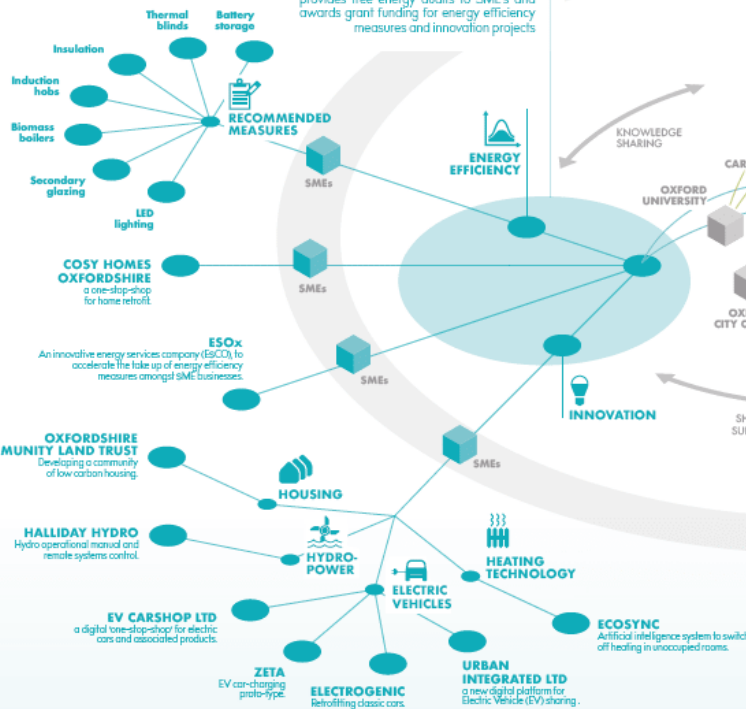
4.1. OxFutures is the £3.2million umbrella programme, comprising of three delivery arms:

- GreenFund – the grant giving side of the programme, providing energy audits and grants to incentivise installation of energy efficiency measures, and funding for innovative low-carbon projects.
- GreenLab – researching methods of integrating modern low-carbon solutions and energy technologies into national, regional and local grids
- GreenTech – the business network for a low-carbon future (as discussed above)



GreenFund

provides free energy audits to SMEs and awards grant funding for energy efficiency measures and innovation projects



4.2. The Bicester Delivery Team continues to have (paid) involvement in Oxfutures, with the Team Leader sitting on both the Oxfutures Board, and the Grant Assessment Panel for GreenFund.

4.3. During the three years of CDC involvement as a 'delivery partner', the following impact has been achieved by the ERDF programme:-

136

FREE ENERGY AUDITS

907

MEASURES RECOMMENDED

£2,500

AVERAGE ANNUAL ENERGY SAVING

£265,617

AWARDED IN GRANT FUNDING

13

FEASIBILITY GRANTS HAVE BEEN
AWARDED TO FUND INNOVATION
PROJECTS

648

SMALL BUSINESSES SUPPORTED

Dale Hoyland, March 2021

Powering the Clean Growth Era



A year in review



18

EVENTS DELIVERED

Last year, we delivered 18 events around a range of topics: first/last mile delivery, circular economy, sustainability for social enterprises, eBikes, the future of built environment, and much more. We hosted at a range of fabulous venues across Oxfordshire, including the Said Business School, Oxford Town Hall, the University of Oxford, the Eco Business Centre in Bicester and more...

We're proud to have close to 100 members of our network within the first year of operation. We're a broad church, looking to transition all sectors to a low/zero-carbon economy, so we have EV dealers, architects, lawyers, business advisors, printers, estate agents, and even furniture sellers!

100

GREENTECH MEMBERS

250+

DELEGATES AT OUR LAUNCH

Oxfordshire Greentech officially launched in the prestigious Said Business School last February, where we had 250+ delegates in attendance, and 30 new member sign-ups. We heard from Barbara Hammond OBE of the Low Carbon Hub, Cllr Tom Hayes of Oxford City Council, and Ahmed Goga, Director of Strategy & Programmes at OxLEP

To give events focus and members a chance to share their expertise, we have 5 special interest groups (SIGs): Low Carbon Mobility, Built Environment, Access to Finance, Social Enterprise, and Circular Economy. We've delivered high quality events around all of these topics, attracting diverse audiences across Oxfordshire

5

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

15,000

VISITORS TO THE COUNTY'S LARGEST STATIC EV SHOW

We supported Oxford City Council and one of our associate founder members (Go Green Autos) to deliver the county's largest ever static electric vehicle show in the heart of Oxford, recording a footfall of 15,000 people on the day. We had a range of manufacturers and EV owners, and even showcased the world's fastest EV: the Nio EP9 electric supercar...

The Cleantech Venture Day, run by our sister network Cambridge Cleantech and sponsored by Oxfordshire Greentech and others, saw three of our members selected through the highly competitive process to pitch! The day is hosted in the prestigious surrounds of KPMG's Number Twenty in Mayfair, London and takes the form of a Dragons Den-esque event where SMEs pitch to panels of investors

3

MEMBERS SELECTED TO PITCH AT CLEANTECH VENTURE DAY

70%

IDENTIFIED NEW PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

More than two-thirds (70%) of surveyed members cited the networking opportunities offered as having helped identify new partners and collaborators



70%

FELT PART OF A WIDER MOVEMENT

More than two-thirds (70%) of surveyed members said that being part of Oxfordshire Greentech benefits them by making them feel part of a wider movement, with 100% of respondents having joined to network and collaborate with other sustainable businesses

"I'd like Oxfordshire to be the most sustainable place on planet earth. We've got the knowledge, the skills and the passion, so why not?"

Gareth Dinnage, MD at Seacourt Printing and Founder of Oxfordshire Greentech



"I met several inspirational people at the Town Hall event... We've recruited a consultant already through the network and can see ourselves doing a lot more work with her."

Chris Williams, Commercial Manager of Jennings of Garsington Ltd and member of Oxfordshire Greentech



"It's the only one of its kind in Oxfordshire and it has been needed for years. Oxfordshire Greentech is filling a strong demand to bring the sustainable business community together. Nobody else is doing it and they're doing a good job."

Karen David, Co-Founder of TechTribe Oxford and member of Oxfordshire Greentech

"For us, joining was about raising our profile locally. We're very positive about Oxfordshire Greentech and we'll certainly renew our membership."

John O'Brien, Founder and MD of LCMB Building Performance Ltd and Associate Founder of Oxfordshire Greentech



Want to get involved?



Join Oxfordshire's rapidly growing low-carbon business network today for our member benefits:



- Free attendance at our frequent events
- Receive email alerts with grant funding and investment opportunities
- Profile your organisation by exhibiting at one of our events
- Post your news, jobs and events on our website/in our newsletter
- Initiate and champion new Special Interest Groups, or immerse yourself in an existing one
- Enjoy excellent networking opportunities with others in the low-carbon economy

To become a member, email us: info@oxfordshiregreentech.co.uk



@Ox_Greentech
#oxfordshiregreentech



Oxfordshire Greentech



www.oxfordshiregreentech.co.uk



"I believe we're on a groundswell of a fundamental paradigm shift in the role of the environment and climate change going forward. That's the big message, so the local message is, 'I should be investing in networks like Oxfordshire Greentech.'"

Bev Hindle, Director of the Oxfordshire Growth Board and Oxford to Cambridge Arc Leaders and CEX groups

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

Date of meeting: 18 March 2021	AGENDA ITEM NO: 6
Report title: Garden Town Report	
Author: Dean Fischer, Interim Bicester Delivery Manger	
Tel: 01295 221539	
Email: Dean.Fischer@cherwell-dc.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. MHCLG are actively promoting housing growth through the Garden Communities programme. Bicester was one of the first Garden Towns within the programme, identified in 2014, which now comprises a further 49 Garden Towns and Garden Villages.

1.2. Garden Communities are defined by the Government as having the following characteristics:

- a purpose-built new settlement, or large extension to an existing town;
- a community with a clear identity and attractive environment;
- it provides a mix of homes, including affordable and self-build;
- planned by local authorities or private sector in consultation with the local community.

1.3. As well as building new homes, the communities will develop:

- job opportunities
- attractive green space and public realm areas
- transport infrastructure, including roads, buses and cycle routes
- community infrastructure, schools, community and health centres
- a plan for long-term stewardship of community assets

1.4. Garden Communities champion 'best practice', well planned and designed settlements. This work is supported, by MHCLG capacity and revenue funding.

1.5. This report aims to highlight key areas of work that have been progressed since the last SDB update.

2. Garden Town Capital Funding

2.1. As Board members will be aware, during 2014/15 Bicester was identified as a Garden Town by MHCLG. With this, MHCLG provided an allocation of both capital and revenue funding to support the sustained growth of the Town. In total £19m capital

was identified for Bicester, subject to the submission of a business case justifying the spend.

- 2.2. In 2017 agreement was reached with MHCLG to pay £4.25m to Cherwell to pay Network Rail part of a 'shared value' payment to enable the rail bridge to be built at NW Bicester. This funding is no longer required for the 'shared value' payment and subsequently negotiations between CDC, OCC and MHCLG are ongoing to agree if this money could now be reallocated elsewhere in Bicester.
- 2.3. As will be reported during this SDB, the NW Bicester Railway bridge and underpass scheme remain on programme to be delivered during 2021.
- 2.4. During April 2018 a business case was submitted to undertaking three further highway schemes:
 - Pioneer Roundabout;
 - Ploughley Road junction;
 - Banbury Road roundabout.
- 2.5. The delivery of these schemes will enable the acceleration of housing delivery within Bicester.
- 2.6. Despite the impact of COVID-19 restriction during 2020 / 21, progress has been made on all three schemes.
- 2.7. MHCLG is working in partnership with CDC to ensure the delivery of the second tranche of funding in a timely manner and discussions continue to facilitate this.
- 2.8. The Board will recall that OCC will deliver both Ploughley Road junction and Banbury Road roundabout and that the Graven Hill Village Development Company (GHVDC) will deliver Pioneer Roundabout.
- 2.9. Grant agreements have now been finalised with OCC (Banbury Road and Ploughley Road) and with GHVDC (Pioneer Roundabout) to ensure CDC can transfer funds for the delivery of the infrastructure.
- 2.10. Good progress is being made on all capital projects however tighter programme regime have been introduced.
- 2.11. As a critical part this, the SDB Review has been concluded which will, subject to Board approval on 18 March 2021, provide greater scrutiny and programme discipline moving forward.
- 2.12. Finally, the Board will recall that a further bid for Capacity funding was submitted to MHCLG during September 2020, to enable further work by the BDT which will help set the conditions for the delivery of new homes within Bicester. MHCLG has confirmed that the result of this bid will be officially announced on 25 March 2021.

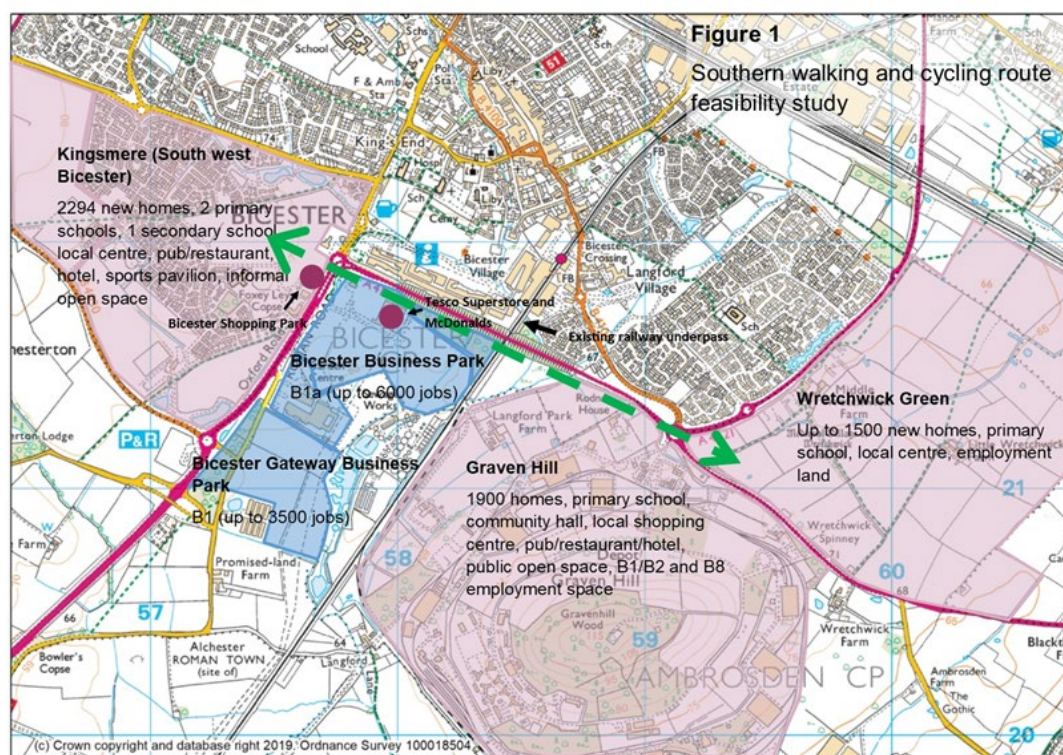
3. Bicester Air Quality Management Area

- 3.1. Funding was secured through the Healthy New Town programme to undertake an innovation project to design and implement a planting scheme to reduce the impacts of poor air quality in the town's Air Quality Management Area.
- 3.2. The first phase of this project has been to appoint Landscape Architects to develop options for the area. After a formal procurement process local firm Applied Landscape Design, a local company, were successful.
- 3.3. Applied Landscape Design have prepared a planting design scheme which has been circulated to key stakeholders for initial comments. The design includes a planting scheme the King's End/Middleton Stoney Road junction where deficiencies in pavement width and current provision for pedestrian desire lines have been identified.
- 3.4. A wider improvement scheme has been proposed and developed with OCC which would address these issues alongside the provision of continuous cycle route connectivity with the existing Queen's Avenue cycle route. Funding has been sought by the County Council as part of the Tranche 2 Active Travel Fund the outcome of which is imminent.
- 3.5. Should funding be secured the environmental planting scheme will integrate with these improvements. Whilst the project has been delayed by the footpath issues as well as Covid 19, issues should be resolved in the near future. Final draft schemes are currently being prepared.
- 3.6. BBOWT have indicated that they will be available to assist with this project to work in partnership within the local community (primarily the West Bicester area), either as part of Wild Bicester or as a separate piece of work, in terms of long term maintenance or custodianship of the newly planted areas.

4. Southern Connectivity in the Town for Walking and Cycling

- 4.1. Consultants EAS were appointed in April to undertake a detailed feasibility study to understand the available options for the creation of a new pedestrian and cycle route to address the gap in the network that exists on the A41 between the roundabout junction with London Road and the roundabout junction with Oxford Road.
- 4.2. There is an overgrown segregated route to the north of the carriageway from Oxford Road ending at the railway bridge and a further existing section of route running roughly east-west from the Talisman road roundabout.
- 4.3. The railway represents a key barrier to overcome to join these routes together and to connect to London Road where a S106 funded route is being progressed by OCC.

4.4. A business clearance process is currently being progressed with Network Rail and once the outcome of this is known, EAS will be able to complete their work and carry out a safety audit, to enable the work with Network Rail to continue to the next stage.



5. Access to the Countryside Project

5.1. The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan sets out the following policy commitment:

“Policy Bicester 7: Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation As part of measures to address current and future deficiencies in open space, sport and recreation provision in the town we will:

“Seek to establish an urban edge park around the outskirts of the town, by protecting the existing network of green spaces and securing new open space and linear route provision linked with public footpaths/cycleways, to create a circular route with connections to the town centre and the countryside beyond”

5.2. With respect to this policy objective and the wider need to achieve modal shift to active modes this project identifies the following aims:

“To provide safe and attractive walking and cycling routes between Bicester and the villages within the immediately surrounding area to provide for both leisure and utility trips by these modes.”

- 5.3. To enhance opportunities for recreation and exercise with the creation of circular walking and cycling routes which readily connects with the Bicester urban area negating the need for an initial journey by motorised means.
- 5.4. The consultant, EAS, has completed all site work now having walked/cycled each potential route, making additional visits where required.
- 5.5. EAS currently preparing betterment drawings and proposals for the scoped areas for CDC feedback ahead of the final options report.

6. Town Centre and Market Square

- 6.1. A “Town Centre Task Group” formed following an event with retail guru Bill Grimsey in June 2019. The group reported back on its work in November 2020, presenting an outline plan for reimagining Bicester’s town centre for the 21st century. Feedback received from this meeting has highlighted the importance of Market Square in providing connectivity with Sheep Street, Crown Walk, Deans Court and also as a focal point when accessing the town centre from the south, Bicester Village and Bicester Gateway (being large visitor attractors). It also has the potential to provide space for events and activities.
- 6.2. CDC officers and OCC have been working closely together to produce an options appraisal. An invite-to-tender (ITT) is currently live, for pre-design stage work with an external supplier, and will close on 18th March.
- 6.3. Some funding is held by OCC to implement a scheme, but it is unlikely to be sufficient on its own to fulfil all aspirations. Garden Town funding provides the opportunity to work with the winning tenderer to the ITT as discussed in 6.2, to review the previous design to alter market square and explore the opportunities to create a destination space within the town centre, bringing in the views, aspirations and expertise of the Town Centre Task Group that CDC are also a part of.
- 6.4. The town centre work has good synergy with a number of other programmes of work, such as the ‘*Meanwhile in Oxfordshire*’ project (utilising Renaissance Funding) to transition empty retail units back into use, ‘*Reopening High Streets Safely Fund*’ which will deliver up to five projects for Bicester, and the ‘*Contain Outbreak Management Funding*’, for which project ideas are currently being progressed.

7. Wild Bicester Project

7.1. Wild Bicester is a new partnership project between Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust and CDC. Bicester Town Council is also a key partner - as they own much of the land which the projects will take part on.

7.2. Good progress has now been made.

7.3. Funded through Cherwell's Community Nature Project, Healthy Place Shaping and Bicester Garden Town. It is an 18 month programme, costing £31,500. After 18 months, it is hoped a sustainable model is established so the project can run on its own (as with Wild Banbury).

7.4. Wild Bicester is designed to improve the overall biodiversity in Bicester as well as promoting the health and wellbeing of those involved through participation in the events/activities.

7.5. BBOWT will work with the local community to enable residents to improve spaces for wildlife whilst highlighting to local people the impact that nature-based interventions can have on their lives and wellbeing. BBOWT empowers local communities to improve space for wildlife and help people connect with local wildlife on a hyper local scale which in turn has a positive impact on the wellbeing of the individuals and the community.

7.6. Outcomes

- Increased skills, knowledge and confidence of local people about wildlife
- Increased nature connectedness for Bicester residents
- More spaces for nature in Bicester
- Improved wellbeing for Bicester community

7.7. Ed Munday, the Community Wildlife Officer will work in Bicester for two and a half days per week for 18 months and will be responsible for working with the wider community to promote the Wild Streets and Neighbourhoods, events and activities and work with BTC and CDC as part of the Wilder Spaces part of the project. Kate Sheard, Community Wildlife Manager (Volunteering) is responsible for the community group network and upskilling, and will work with groups to create bespoke training and support system as required by Bicester groups

7.8. Wild Bicester now has a portal on the BBOWT website:

<https://www.bbowt.org.uk/wild-bicester>.

7.9. Early engagement with a number of organisations has been encouraging, and a comms plan with ideas for the public to learn more and engage with nature will launch in the Spring. It will highlight national campaigns and offer practical solutions for people to try in their own gardens.

8. SPARK Funding/Community Engagement

8.1. SPARK funding is provided for community groups in Bicester jointly funded by Garden Town and Healthy Bicester. Grants are available up to £1,000 to support programmes of work in Bicester and surrounding villages that satisfy one or more of the SPARK funding priorities. The budget remaining is currently just over £10,00.00.

8.2. Priorities:

- Bringing new uses to or improving the town centre as the vibrant heart of Bicester
- Supporting the greater understanding of Bicester's heritage
- Improving opportunities for walking and cycling within Bicester
- Improving access to green spaces and opportunities for food growing or enhancing green spaces or bio-diversity
- Increasing opportunities for participation and reducing social isolation
- Improved health and wellbeing for residents

8.3. Successful applications have included gardening projects, arts and music projects and bike projects. Further promotion of the funding will be publicised at the next Healthy Bicester Stakeholders' Meeting in April and through the Bicester Voluntary Forum which will meet in May. Ongoing officer support to community groups in Bicester is facilitated on a regular basis through the Bicester Forum and wider Cherwell Voluntary Forum network, in association with colleagues in Community Services.

9. Conclusion

9.1. In conclusion, despite the difficulties of COVID-19 pandemic upon the team and the pressure that has put on the Garden Town programme, work continues at pace, to support the delivery of the Garden Town objectives. The BDT is working on a full spectrum delivery of the Garden Town programme providing an exceptional environment to work, live and play.

9.2. The BDT has proven to be agile and innovative, remaining focused on the delivery of the Garden Town commitments and helping to set the conditions for the delivery of new homes within Bicester

9.3. The significant provision of capital funding for infrastructure is supporting the delivery of strategic objectives, whilst capacity funding is helping deliver place shaping initiatives including active travel initiatives.

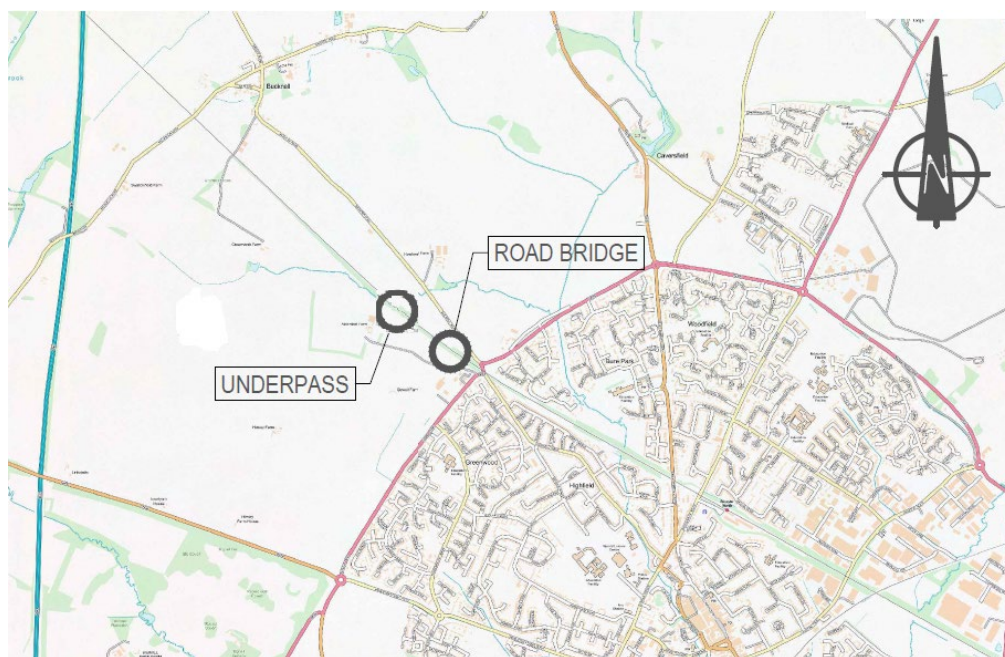
9.4. The BDT is working with a variety of critical stakeholders and partners to ensure successful outcomes for our communities within Bicester.

9.5. Moving forward there will be Greater focus on the delivery of the Garden Town programme to ensure timely delivery, as set out within the SDB Review and we will ensure that Bicester remains a national exemplar for Garden Communities.

Date of meeting: 18 March 2021	AGENDA ITEM NO: 7
Report title: Holistic report on infrastructure projects	
Author: Jacqui Cox, Infrastructure Locality Lead, Oxfordshire County Council	
Email: Jacqui.cox@oxfordshire.gov.uk	

a) NW Bicester rail under-bridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane

1. The prefabrication of the new road bridge and pedestrian underpass in the field just to the south of the railway are both complete and the structures are now ready to be transported into their final position within the railway embankment during the upcoming four-day track closure planned for this Easter. In the period between now and then, trackway and self-propelled modular transport units which will lift and move the structures into position will be delivered to site, assembled and tested. Additionally, a claim to draw down the first £2.5m of £6.7M of available Homes England HIFmv funding has now been successfully made.



2. The scheme to realign the A4095 away from Howes Lane to run under the new bridge is progressing. The consultants, Stantec, have carried out a review of the consented scheme and the recommendations made by PJA Consultancy to consider ways of reducing the cost of the proposals. The current work has also included a review of the compliance of the scheme against the DfT's LTN 1/20 cycle Infrastructure Design guidance.

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

3. The consultants have shared a draft design and options statement with officers for review and consideration. Once these have been considered and recommendations accepted this report will be shared. This has included consideration of the junction designs, whether a reduced carriageway width would be appropriate, the footway/cycleway provision and signalised crossings. In order to be compliant with LTN 1/20 it is recommended that the eastern footway/cycleway is widened to allow for suitable segregation. The width and gradient as the highway passes under the new bridge requires further design consideration.
4. The current work is expected to recommend an interim scheme that delivers the basic road and footways/cycleways but leaves some elements of the scheme, including some of the signalised junctions and the northern link to be delivered as a later phase.
5. It is intended that a s73 planning application will be submitted to Cherwell District Council to make amendments to the existing consent. The expected programme for delivery at this stage is:

A4095 Realignment Scheme Programme:

- Bridge Completion-July '21
- Realignment Feasibility-Mar '21
- s73 Planning Application-Jun '21
- Preliminary Design-Jun '21
- Construction start-Jun '22
- Construction completion-May '24

b) EEH Strategy Work and OxCam Arc Spatial Framework announcement

6. England's Economic Heartland (EEH) has published their finalised [Regional Transport Strategy](#) on 26 February 2021, accompanied by a useful [Summary Report](#). As previously shared with this Board, EEH consulted on the draft strategy between 14 July – 6 October 2020 and both Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Growth Board, on behalf of all Oxfordshire Local Authorities, submitted responses* to this.
7. The EEH Member-led [Strategic Transport Forum](#) approved the strategy at their meeting on 5 February. It is important to note that, while the EEH Transport Strategy is non-statutory and does not override or supersede any local Transport Strategy approved by its individual constituent Highway Authorities, it does provide an important sub-national framework for strategic transport planning in Oxfordshire. A paper is going to [Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet on 16 March 2021](#) to seek their endorsement.
8. In summary, the EEH Transport Strategy sets out how the region will:

- a. Focus on decarbonising our transport system by harnessing innovation and supporting solutions which in themselves create green economic opportunities
 - b. Promote investment in digital infrastructure as a means of improving connectivity
 - c. Use the delivery of strategic public transport schemes – such as East West Rail, the Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro and Milton Keynes Mass Rapid Transit - as the catalyst for a shift towards lower carbon modes of travel
 - d. Champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport to improve local connectivity to ensure that everyone can realise their potential
 - e. Continue to ensure the needs of the freight and logistics sector are met whilst lowering its environmental impact.
9. MHCLG have released a paper on 18 February 2021 that sets out the government's plan for developing a [long-term spatial framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc](#). The paper sets out the government's planned approach to developing the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework, including a timeline for delivery, its high-level scope, and how they will work with local partners. Whilst there is a strong emphasis in the report on working collaboratively with communities, we await further details on how Local Authorities will be able to get involved. It is worth noting in the interim that the paper states that there will be 3 stages of consultation in development of the framework; on a **Vision** in summer 2021, on a **Towards a Spatial Framework** document in Spring 2022, and on a draft **Spatial Framework** in Autumn 2022.

* Links to consultation responses from [Oxfordshire County Council 13 Oct 2020 Cabinet paper – Annex 2](#) and [Oxfordshire Growth Board 22 Sept 2020 Meeting paper – Annex 2](#)

c) London Road Level Crossing

10. The need to find a longer-term solution to the London Road, Bicester issue is becoming more important, as the plans for the next stage of East West Rail (Milton Keynes to Cambridge) come forward. In particular, it is understood that East West Rail Company are currently working towards submission of a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the next section and want to be sure that impacts of train service increases on the already consented/operational part of the route are appropriately mitigated. This includes London Road, Bicester.
11. An Options Appraisal Report was funded through the East West Rail Consortium Work Programme, with the work undertaken by the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Innovation Team (iHub), in association with transport modelling undertaken by consultants WYG using the Bicester model. This work sets out and appraises options for interventions that will help enable continued access to and from Bicester town centre as level crossing down-time increases in line with train service frequencies.

12. The options assessment tool that is used for transport schemes requires analysis of individual measures – in this case a direct highway intervention at London Road, investment in alternative highway measures in the town (south east perimeter road and eastern peripheral road improvements), and a package to strongly deliver on walking and cycling measures within the town. For this work, the assessment was undertaken using the Bicester model, and other relevant evidence, allowing for each option to be appraised using the Department for Transport Early Assessment Sifting Tool (EAST).
13. The outcome of the OAR assessment work indicates that the sustainable transport package options generally perform better than the highway options assessed. However, it is recognised that a package of transport measures will be needed to provide a longer-term solution to severance and connectivity issues to the south east of the town.
14. Given that plans to progress East West Rail to the next stage are now being taken forward in more detail, the next year is seen as crucial in determining the required mitigation package associated with London Road. In particular, it will be important to agree whether there is a package of measures that could provide positive connectivity for the town and form part of the wider transport strategy, as an alternative to a direct highway intervention at London Road.

d) A41 Corridor Study

15. Consultants working on the A41 Corridor Study have undertaken a review of past work and existing and emerging policies/strategies, to establish a consolidated evidence base of current and future issues, challenges and opportunities along the Corridor. A draft report for this first stage of work has been received and will inform an Options and Objectives' Workshop to be held on Friday 26th March.
16. The Workshop will be attended by a range of stakeholders including Town, District and County Councillors, Parish Council representatives and other key businesses and groups. The aim of the workshop is to establish a 'long list' of schemes/ measures to be considered as part of the A41 Corridor Study, and to agree the objectives against which these will be assessed. Information will be circulated in advance of the Workshop including draft objectives for consideration.
17. Following the workshop, the schemes/ measures will be judged against the agreed objectives and supporting assessment criteria, to establish two preferred potential packages of schemes/measures. There will be further stakeholder engagement in May to agree the final composition of the preferred packages before they are taken to wider consultation over the Summer.

e) Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

18. Following the OCC Cabinet approval of the Bicester LCWIP in November, officers have been developing a rolling programme to get the various schemes assessed, designed, funded and delivered on the ground. The DfT have funded Sustrans to support officers until the end of March to assess outline designs drawn up over recent years against current guidance and to propose schemes along some key corridors in the town.
19. There are some held s106 pots specifically for cycle schemes and the approval of the LCWIP puts Bicester in a strong position to bid for Government funding to assist with the development and delivery of schemes.
20. The first phase of delivery is focussing on the radial routes into the town centre and Quietways within residential areas. Building on the current active travel measures that are being delivered, one of the priority corridors is the Middleton Stoney Road.

f) Misc.

Scheme Name	Progress made to date	Future planned activity
Active Travel Scheme – Tranche 2 Provision of cycle connectivity measures between south west Bicester and the town centre, together with community activation to support people to use the new facilities	The proposed 20mph speed limit, toucan crossing and shared use footway/cycle tracks have been approved at OCC Cabinet Member Decisions, as well as Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders for waiting restrictions at Loddon Close and Villiers Road and width and loading restrictions on Causeway. A decision on proposals for a contraflow cycle lane on Causeway have been deferred to enable further consideration of the options and stakeholder discussion.	The delivery team are now on site on Middleton Stoney Road. There are a number of detailed matters to resolve along each section because of the speed at which these measures are having to be delivered to meet the funding requirements. The report on the options for Causeway is being drawn up to enable stakeholder discussions.
Market Square urban design and transport scheme	A project brief went out to urban design consultants and responses are due back on the 15 th March.	Once the consultants are commissioned, they will initially consider the options. This will entail engagement with stakeholders. This will feed into the town centre re-imagining work and into the review of the area transport strategy.
Banbury Road roundabout improvements	This scheme is out for consultation currently and a stakeholder workshop is being arranged to consider the options.	This is on a fast track delivery with a planning application due for submission this Summer to meet funding deadlines.



Bicester Press Releases Feb to early March 2021

Please see below headlines of all the media releases which were issued to the press, relating to Bicester, during the period Jan 25th to 5th March.

CDC Website

Published	Article (titles are hyperlinks)
12 th February	New project launches to make Bicester wilder A new 18-month project has been launched, bringing people and nature together creating a greener, healthier and wilder Bicester.
12 th February	New rail bridge coming to connect communities and support active travel in Bicester Residents of Bicester will soon benefit from the installation of a new bridge under the railway in a project led by Oxfordshire County Council, Cherwell District Council and delivered by Network Rail.
1 st March	Work on new cycling and walking improvements starts in Bicester Residents of Bicester will see work begin this week on a series of exciting new measures to improve...

Newspaper articles where Bicester has been mentioned

19/02/2021 13:33	24/02/2021 13:34	Oxford Mail Online	Bicester water park plans slammed as 'fanciful'
18/02/2021 13:29	24/02/2021 13:30	Bicester Advertiser	Ecologist says Bicester water park resort's hedge plan is 'fanciful'
17/02/2021 13:22	24/02/2021 13:23	Bicester Advertiser	Wild Bicester on mission to boost wildlife in town
17/02/2021 13:21	24/02/2021 13:22	Oxford Mail Online	Wild Bicester on mission to boost wildlife in town
16/02/2021 10:48	24/02/2021 10:49	Oxford Mail Online	Bicester railway line to close for construction of new bridge in Easter
15/02/2021 10:47	24/02/2021 10:48	Bicester Advertiser	Bicester railway line to close for construction of new bridge in Easter
15/02/2021 10:46	24/02/2021 10:47	Bicester Advertiser	Flats could 'bring more life' to 'dying' Bicester town centre
12/02/2021 10:37	24/02/2021 10:44	Oxford Mail Online	Flats could 'bring more life' to 'dying' Bicester town centre
11/02/2021 10:36	24/02/2021 10:37	Oxford Mail Online	Bicester resort's bus shuttle plan is 'really vague', planning Inspector told
08/02/2021 10:34	24/02/2021 10:35	Oxford Mail Online	Cash available for community groups in Bicester
08/02/2021 10:33	24/02/2021 10:34	Oxford Mail Online	Empty space above former Peacocks could be converted into flats in Bices
08/02/2021 10:29	24/02/2021 10:30	Bicester Advertiser	Empty space above former Peacocks could be converted into flats in Bices
12/01/2021 15:50	04/02/2021 15:50	Bicester Advertiser	Bicester says third lockdown is necessary, but rules aren't tough enough
11/01/2021 15:46	04/02/2021 15:47	Bicester Advertiser	Bicester town council still waiting for new cemetery site
25/01/2021 10:59	28/01/2021 11:00	Buckinghamshire Advertiser	Give your views on cycle scheme for Bicester.
20/01/2021 10:50	28/01/2021 10:50	Bicester Advertiser	Businesses set to occupy new controversial warehouses in Bicester.

Please note, due to a lag in timings between publishing and correlating data by the communications team, items after 19th Feb are not included.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE

Monday 26th April 2021

Portrait of Sir Tony Baldry

Chairman: Councillor Richard Mould

Telephone: 01869 245917 richard.mould@bicester.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Phil Evans, Service Manager

Telephone: 01869 252915

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Background

- 1.1 Sir Tony Baldry has recently sat to have his portrait painted by local artist Miranda Markham, one Deputy Lord Lieutenant painting another.
- 1.2 Sir Tony wishes to donate his portrait to Bicester Town Council to celebrate his time as the longest serving MP for Bicester.
- 1.3 It is intended that both Sir Tony and Miranda Markham attend a Full Council Meeting in the Autumn to formally present the portrait to the Town Council.

1. Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to **NOTE** the above and **WELCOME** Sir Tony Baldry and Miranda Markham to a Full Council Meeting in the Autumn.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE

Monday 26th April 2021

NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day

Chairman: Councillor Richard Mould

Telephone: 01869 245917 richard.mould@bicester.gov.uk

Phil Evans – Service Manager

Telephone: 01869 252915 phil.evans@bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Background

The first NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day will take place on Monday 5th July 2021. There will be a series of national events to support NHS Charities Together and the National Care Association. A full background can be viewed here:

<https://www.nhsfrontlineday.org/>

2. Taking Part

On the day Bicester Town Council can be involved by planning the following:

- 10:00 AM Raising and displaying the NHS, Social Care and Frontline workers Day Flag and Banner.
- 11:00 AM Leading a two-minute national silence and playing of The Last Post and Reveille. Encourage faith leaders to lead local silence in local community.

The costs associated with the above are (including delivery and VAT): X1 Flag 150cm (w) x 90cm (h) £34.98, X1 Banner (to be displayed at Garth Park entrance) 72 ins x 30 ins £49.02. Orders to be placed before Monday 7th June 2021.

Total cost: £84.00.

Councils are encouraged to take part and £5 from each flag and banner sold will be equally divided between the two chosen good causes.

3. Recommendation

Members are recommended to **AGREE** to the suggestions to take part on the day. With the recommendations to be submitted to the Policy Committee 26th April 2021 for the inclusion of the new flag and banner.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Monday 26th April 2021

Office Refurbishment

Chairman: Councillor Richard Mould

Telephone: 07906 810920

Phil Evans – Service Manager

Telephone: 01869 252915 phil.evans@bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All

1. Background

- 1.1 The Town Council office in Garth House is in need of refurbishment.
- 1.2 Given the current situation, I believe a face lift will help restart and refresh the team as we gear up to return to the office in June.
- 1.3 The refurbishment costs would include works being undertaken in all offices currently in use by Bicester Town Council – This will include the soon to be vacated registrars Room as the council look to establish a professional reception.
- 1.4 This does not include works being undertaken by Ridge
- 1.5 All costings are an approx. Officers will deliver to this in line with financial regulations and any costs not met will be approved through committee before commencing.

2. Breakdown

2.1 Paint and Flooring

Ground Floor

Flooring

Hard flooring (tiles) white throughout as this will see the main stay of footfall and shall be more easily maintained and cleaned.

Approx. £4400

Walls

Each Room (based on natural lighting and usage) will consist of magnolia with and offset navy wall.

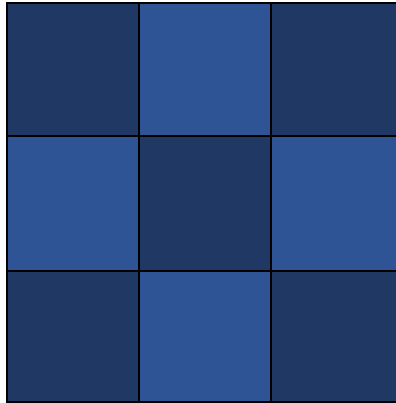
Registrar Office £715

Main entrance and landing £1485

First Floor

Including staircase (stops at security corridor)

Carpet tiles (navy blue and secondary offset blue)



Approx. £3830

Walls

Each room (based on natural lighting and usage) will consist of magnolia with and Offset Navy Wall.

Main Office £770

Back Office £510

Members Room £470

Service Managers Office £385

Chief Officers Room £470

Total Cost for Flooring £8230

Total Cost for Painting £4805

2.2 Furniture

Some items of furniture are now worn out and I need of replacement, A better selection of item can see the space better utilised.

Entrance Hall £1635

This will include a counter, visitor chairs and a magnetic lock (to keep the building COVID secure).

Old Registrar Room £485

This room has no furniture currently, we would utilise existing furniture where possible.

Back Office £1345

This will be utilised as an archive room as we look to better our standards. This will also be utilising some existing furniture.

Main Office £1776

Desks more in keeping with the size of the room, new chairs and dividers.

Chief Officers Office £313

Minimal Works

Service Managers Room £313

Minimal Works

Members Room £1694

New Chairs and display cabinets to display the many gifts professionally.

Total Cost for Furnishing £7561

3. Financial

This could be taken from 9020/901 which is earmarked reserves for BTC premises as this work would lower the overall cost planned with the Garth House refurbishment this current – this fund on this budget are more than comfortable.

4. Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to:

APPROVE the intended work for office Re- Carpeting

APPROVE the intended work for office Re- Painting

APPROVE the intended work for office Furnishing

BTC is in need of an uplifting change and this would be of huge benefit to team morale. Upon approval – Officers will source 3 quotes and will not exceed the amounts in this report without further approval.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE

Monday 26th April 2021

Nai's House

Chairman: Councillor Richard Mould

Telephone: 01869245917 richard.mould@bicester.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Phil Evans, Service Manager

Telephone: 01869 252915 phil.evans@bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Background

- 1.1. Councillors will recall that in late 2019 the founder of "nai's" house gave a presentation to the council explaining the background to the formation of the Charity and their aims and objectives in helping young people with Mental Health issues. They were looking for premises that they could move into to enable them to offer more facilities.

The council at that time were looking to redevelop the upper floors of Garth House but agreed to explore whether it would be possible for them to provide short term accommodation. In the meantime, nai's house moved into the Kingsmere Community Centre and ran services from there.

The Covid 19 pandemic interrupted their service and for the last few months they have been operating in KidzZoo in Crown Walk whilst that business has been forced to cease operation because of the pandemic. KidzZoo will reopen in May and nai's house will find themselves without premises.

The maintenance currently underway in Garth House is due to finish by the end of May when the first floor previously occupied by Outreach will have been brought up to standard regarding fire security and other safety issues.

Nai's house would occupy those rooms on the first floor previously used by Outreach which are the Kitchen, Toilet and three meeting rooms. Nai's house would need to partition one room into small consulting rooms "3" and would redecorate, as necessary.

The charity has extremely limited funds particularly since fund raising has been exceedingly difficult during the pandemic. They are currently paying £400 per month and it is proposed that the first six months of any tenancy should be at this rate. As they will need to carry out work to make the area suitable for their operation it is proposed that the first three months would be rent free.

The charity would be responsible for returning the rooms to their current condition e.g., partitions removed but they would not be required to redecorate.

2. Recommendation

- The Committee are asked to **CONSIDER** this proposal and **AGREE** to the Service Manager and Chairman of Policy working with nai's house to conclude an agreement.
- The Committee are asked to **CONSIDER** renting this space to nai's house for an initial 6-month period which may be extended depending on the redevelopment plans that the Town Council have been discussing coming to fruition.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

Monday 26th April 2021

Date/ Item/ Comment

1. Pending: Closure policy for cemetery
2. Pending: Retention of assets policy
3. Future management of 'new' open space play areas
4. April 2021: New burial ground and memorial policy
5. On-going: Working on town centre group