

OXFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP MEETING – 11 DECEMBER 2007

OUTCOMES OF WORKSHOP DISCUSSION

Questions asked of representatives attending:

1. Is a vision for a better Oxfordshire emerging?
 - (a) Does it balance ambition with practicality?
 - (b) Do the pledges and actions capture what is important?
 - (c) Process improvements/amendments.

2. Keeping everyone involved in the process
Do you agree with the proposed new timetable?
 - (i) Full draft to be developed – Jan/Feb
 - (ii) Consultation: March/April
 - (iii) Adopt – May
 - (iv) Launch - June

Question 1

(a) Does it balance ambition with practicality?

- Thrust of document and number of issues broadly right within what is an ambitious plan
- Not ambitious enough generally – it should be looking to stretch objectives beyond statutory duties
- There needs to be specific targets referred to in the longer term vision
- The education pledges are not ambitious enough – two additional pledges are required - to improve relative performance overall - and a further one that focuses on where attainment is poorest
- ?
- There should be a ‘bottom up’ approach

Question 1

(b) Do the pledges and actions capture what is important?

- There is not enough emphasis on ‘world class economy’ – which underpins other themes – there is a need to describe the reality of what a world economy would actually mean for Oxfordshire (put under (b)), and, for example, the benefits to small businesses of the development of the transport infrastructure
- Some of the actions are being driven by the LAA and care should be taken not to restrict the Partnership from focussing on the long term actions that deliver pledges
- Where is the former pledge ‘making people included and valued’?
- The work of carers should be recognised
- Reference should be made to the increase in the number of volunteers required to meet the needs of particular members of society, such as older people – and specific age ranges need to be referred to separately

- There is no mention of faith communities – could this be part of the voluntary and community sector commitment?
- Issues centring on housing have been generally ‘watered down’ – particularly as there is much agreement around the need for land release to satisfy particular needs
- There is a need to ensure that young families are addressed within the section on Housing
- Pledges and actions not specific enough to the ‘special bits’ of Oxfordshire
- ‘Raising the level of Achievement’ and ‘Narrowing the Gaps’ should be dealt with separately
- The issue of development of skills for young people is crucial for breaking the cycle of deprivation – shouldn’t it be a theme not a thread? – it is the key to changing the aspirations of people
- Together with each action relating to the breaking of the cycle of deprivation there should be a target specific to that issue
- The pledges around activities for young people should be strengthened
- Safer communities is missing actions on cohesion and development – and therefore needs to be developed much further
- There needs to be greater emphasis on issues relating to alcohol consumption within ‘healthy and thriving communities’ and this needs to be dealt with on a singular basis.
- Access to services in their rural/urban settings should be a more specific pledge.

Question 1

(c) Process improvements and amendments

- There is no information with regard to population trends or migrant patterns within the county – this making long term action a little divorced
- There is a lack of consistency in the development of detail across all sections – for example, not enough in relation to the under 5’s
- Why are some road hotspots mentioned and not others? – a wider access to Oxford should be mentioned
- Carbon reduction, in the long term, is very important – there is a need to refer to adaptation as well as mitigation
- There is a need to address flooding also
- The term ‘breaking the cycle of deprivation’ is a little negative – ‘creating a more equal society’ is a more positive improvement
- There ought to be a section included describing how it is intended to develop the strategy
- The terms ‘long term’, ‘short term’, ‘20/30’ served to create a confusion of where the focus was - too many dynamics
- The creation of a faith forum as a short term measure could assist to co-ordinate views.

Question 2

Keeping Everyone involved with the process

Do you agree with the proposed timetable?

- General satisfaction was expressed that the consultation would be extended
- There is a need to ensure that there is a suitable date when partners/elected members could debate and sign off the Strategy
- Partnership organisations to allow time for detailed action plans to be developed
- The current remit of the various partnerships, their membership, and chairmanship, needs to be understood and reviewed – and a clear mechanism and timetable identified for how this will happen.
- There is a need to consider if the smaller partnership organisations have the capacity in terms of governance to take forward the actions?
