

# Partnership Strategy

A framework for developing the vision for Oxfordshire  
and delivering on the priorities.

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## Strategic vision and leadership

The leadership of Oxfordshire County Council believes that better quality and more cost effective public services can be provided through real partnership across the public, voluntary/community and business sectors in the county.

Local people need access to services which are delivered to consistent quality standards regardless of who the provider is and where they live in the county. As the major supplier of statutory social, educational and environmental services in the county our goal is to ensure that we are working effectively at a regional and county level with the police, health, learning and skills council and other public agencies – and equally - with district, town and parish councils at the local level.

While these organisations have a duty to co-operate with one another it is important that the public sector as a whole has a clear working relationship with a range of third sector and private sector service providers and with the voluntary sector development organisations who support the large number of voluntary, community and faith organisations who do so much to support people in rural and urban areas across the county.

Oxfordshire County Council believes that this can best be accomplished through a clear framework of strategic and operational partnerships - that are publicly and democratically accountable through the involvement of elected members – all working to a shared set of priorities and outcomes set out in an agreed strategic vision.

During 2007 Oxfordshire County Council shall lead on the development of a long-term strategic vision for the county with the organisations that participate in the Oxfordshire Partnership.

## Issues for Oxfordshire County Council and the Oxfordshire Partnership

### The LAA and the Oxfordshire Partnership

- As the upper tier authority, Oxfordshire County Council has a duty to lead on the LAA, the sustainable community strategy and the Oxfordshire Partnership (the local strategic partnership for the county).
- We will have a larger LAA by April 2008 with between 40 to 53 mandatory targets and the opportunity to develop our own LAA targets with the participants in the Oxfordshire Partnership.
- The LAA targets will be included in the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- Our public sector and local government partners have a duty to co-operate with the County Council in the LAA.
- Continued development of robust performance management systems that can be used by all the participants in the LAA.

- The County Council is the accountable body for pooled budgets and generally to the Audit Commission on behalf of all the partners in the LAA.

## Doing things differently - Comprehensive Spending Review

- Staying as we are is not an option. The County Council needs to progress radical modernisation and streamlining of services by working more effectively with other organisations.
- Looking beyond 2-tier working at bigger solutions is encouraged.
- Working with the voluntary and community sector to deliver on some LAA targets is crucial to the development of preventative services and the sustainability and resilience of local communities.

## Oxfordshire 20:20 (the sustainable community strategy) - a long-term strategic vision for Oxfordshire.

### Purpose of the Oxfordshire Plan 20:20

During 2007 Oxfordshire County Council shall develop a long-term strategic vision for the county with the organisations that participate in the Oxfordshire Partnership – The Oxfordshire Plan 20:20 – that :

- Is a single vision for the county – setting out the strategic priorities for the county and the regional / national issues that affect people in Oxfordshire.
- Describes what is important about Oxfordshire to Government and other external agencies.
- Is a partnership not just a council plan that is owned and acted upon by all the participants in the Oxfordshire Partnership.
- Sets out targets for delivery through the Local Area Agreement.
- Sets out how strategic priorities will be tackled in partnership with others.
- Sets out how we work with local communities and partnerships that deliver at the local neighbourhood level.
- Includes spatial planning issues and priorities (links to Local Development Framework)
- Has regard to the highest level objectives in the corporate and strategic plans of the organisations in the Oxfordshire Partnership.
- Draws on evidence and data about Oxfordshire, local communities and the region.
- Provides a focus for partnership working and our relationship with government.

## Priorities

The prosperity which a **successful local economy** brings is the foundation for successful, healthy and cohesive communities that care about their environment. It is proposed that this is the starting point for our vision for the county.

**FOR EXAMPLE ONLY** - the strategic priorities for Oxfordshire 20:20 may be :

**1. Developing Local Communities**

Strategic projects : for example the central and Southern Oxfordshire Quadrant, Oxford West End and others.

Community development : local town, community, area, neighbourhood and parish projects. For example, Bicester, Banbury, Wood Farm, Didcot First, Berinsfield and others.

**2. Economy**

Supporting local business; sustainable economic growth.

**3. Housing**

Controlled development and affordability.

**4. Transport**

Getting around the city, our towns and the county.  
Regional, national and international links and infrastructure.

**5. Education, learning and skills**

Improving educational achievement in schools.  
Access to skills, training and learning.

**6. Improved health, care and wellbeing**

Improved access to health services, support to live independently, better access to sport and recreational facilities.

**7. Safer communities**

Reducing crime, fear of crime, hate crime, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour.

**8. Environment**

Waste and carbon reduction. Cleaner and greener city, towns and parishes.  
Caring for the natural heritage. Climate change.

**9. Enjoying life: culture, leisure, recreational opportunities**

Developing access to sports and arts. Tourism and the economy. Caring for the built heritage.

**Targets – the Local Area Agreement from 2008**

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is the delivery mechanism for the priorities in the Oxfordshire Vision 20:20. From 2008 onwards Oxfordshire will have a larger LAA with between 40 to 53 mandatory targets and the opportunity to develop our own LAA targets with the participants in the Oxfordshire Partnership.

Oxfordshire 20:20 needs to drive the LAA and not the other way around. This is an opportunity develop an LAA that works for Oxfordshire and that involves a wide range of partners in its development and delivery.

For example : if Oxfordshire 20:20 were to have the following strategic priorities these could translate into LAA targets as follows :

FOR EXAMPLE ONLY

Oxfordshire Plan 20:20 Priorities	LAA delivery targets	
	Mandatory national target	Local target
Developing Local Communities	Empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making	Target to increase the communities who are developing a local action plan. Target to develop voluntary sector infrastructure development.
Economy & Skills	Workforce skills targets.	Improved skills and training
Learning Opportunities for all	Percentage of 18-18 year olds not in education, employment or training	Improved achievement at GCSE
Improved health, care and wellbeing	Reduce health inequalities Reduction in the under 18 conception rate	Support to live independently
Safer communities	Crime reduction targets	Target to reduce alcohol related violence. Target to set up ASB reporting system.
Environment	Target for reducing business waste. Target on carbon emissions	Target around access to footpaths and byways
Enjoying life: culture, leisure, recreational opportunities	Health target about participation in sport and exercise.	Target to improve communication and marketing. Target to make activities

		available to hard to reach groups.
Housing	Target for numbers of affordable homes.	Suitability Key workers
Transport	N/A	Availability of community transport
Other	Etc	Etc

## The Oxfordshire Partnership

The framework for Oxfordshire County Council's partnership working is the Oxfordshire Partnership. This is the senior overarching local strategic partnership (LSP) for the county. Its purpose is :

- To develop Oxfordshire 20:20 – a sustainable community strategy
- To develop and manage delivery of the Local Area agreement
- To provide the framework for closer working with :
  - Regional and central government,
  - Police, health and other public sector agencies and bodies,
  - District, town and parish councils,
  - District Local Strategic Partnerships,
  - The voluntary / community / third sectors,
  - The private sector.

## Developing the Partnership to meet the challenges ahead

Oxfordshire County Council first set up a local strategic partnership (The Oxfordshire Community Partnership) in 2001 and published its first Community Strategy (The Oxfordshire Community Strategy) in 2002.

In advance of the Local Government White Paper, Oxfordshire County Council decided to restructure its strategic partnership arrangements and bring in a new governance framework. Following a period of consultation (June to October 2006) the Partnership and the County Council's Cabinet adopted the new governance framework for the Oxfordshire Partnership in December 2006.

The main developments in governance, which came into effect from January 2007, are :

1. Increased involvement of elected members to increase democratic accountability of our partnerships.
2. The Oxfordshire Community Partnership Strategy Group is replaced by the Oxfordshire Partnership Board which is chaired by the leader of the County Council in the first instance. The membership includes senior representatives of the police, health service, higher education, learning and

skills, and the business, rural, voluntary, community, faith and BME sectors. All tiers of local authority are represented. Its role is to set the strategic vision for the county and articulate this in a sustainable community strategy – Oxfordshire 20:20.

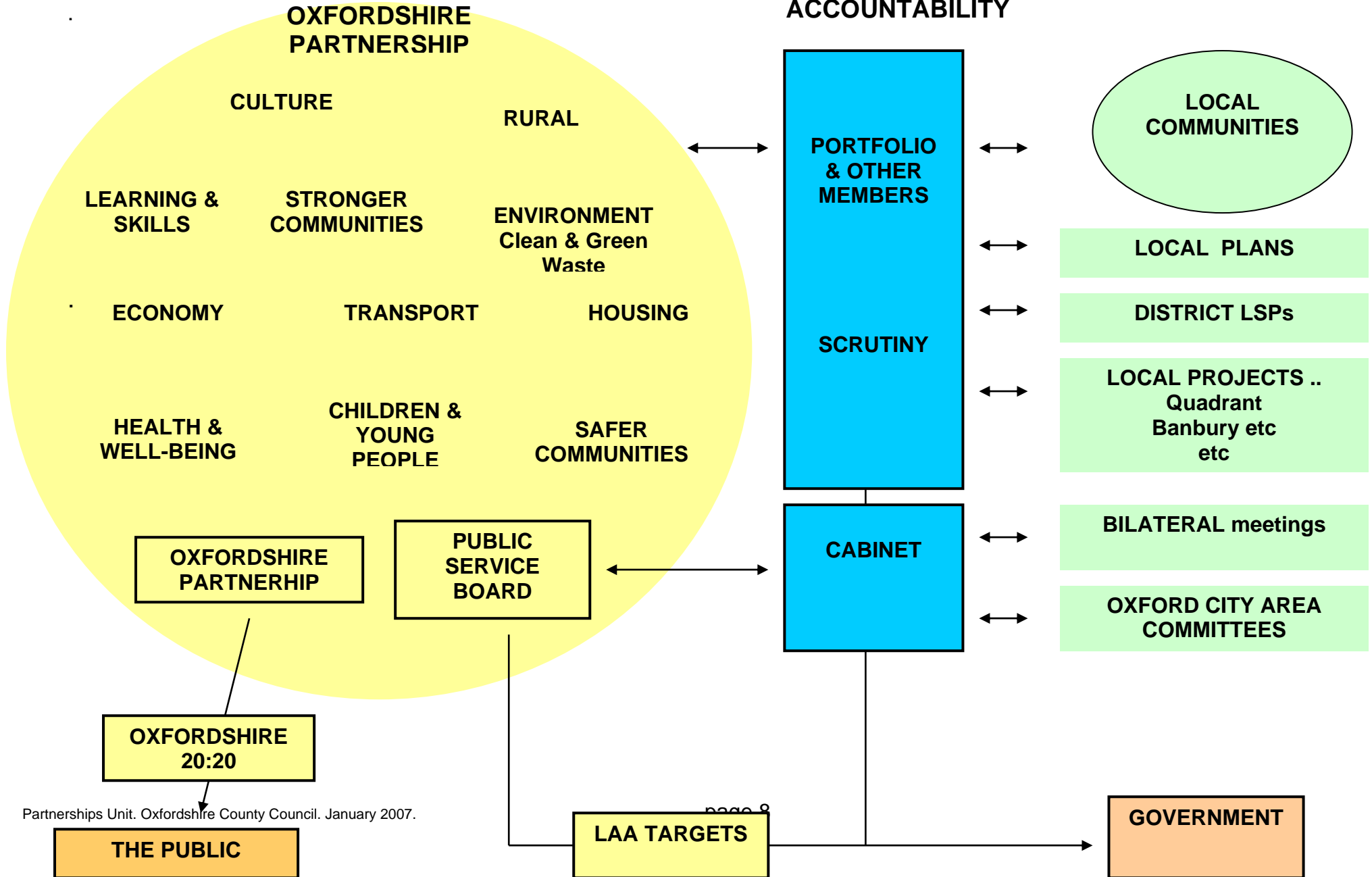
3. The membership of the Local Area Agreement Public Service Board changes to ensure that all organisations who are responsible for delivering the Local Area Agreement are represented. The Chairman is the Deputy Leader of the Council. Its role is to oversee delivery and performance in meeting the LAA targets.
4. The original Ambition Groups have been overtaken by the work of the thematic partnerships who are responsible for delivery of the sustainable community strategy. These include the Children and Young People's Partnership, Safer Communities Partnership, Health & Well-Being Partnership and economic development, learning and skills, environment and culture partnerships. Elected members with a cabinet portfolio shall, if they are not already doing so, be members of the executive bodies of these thematic partnerships.

## Partnership working through themes and place

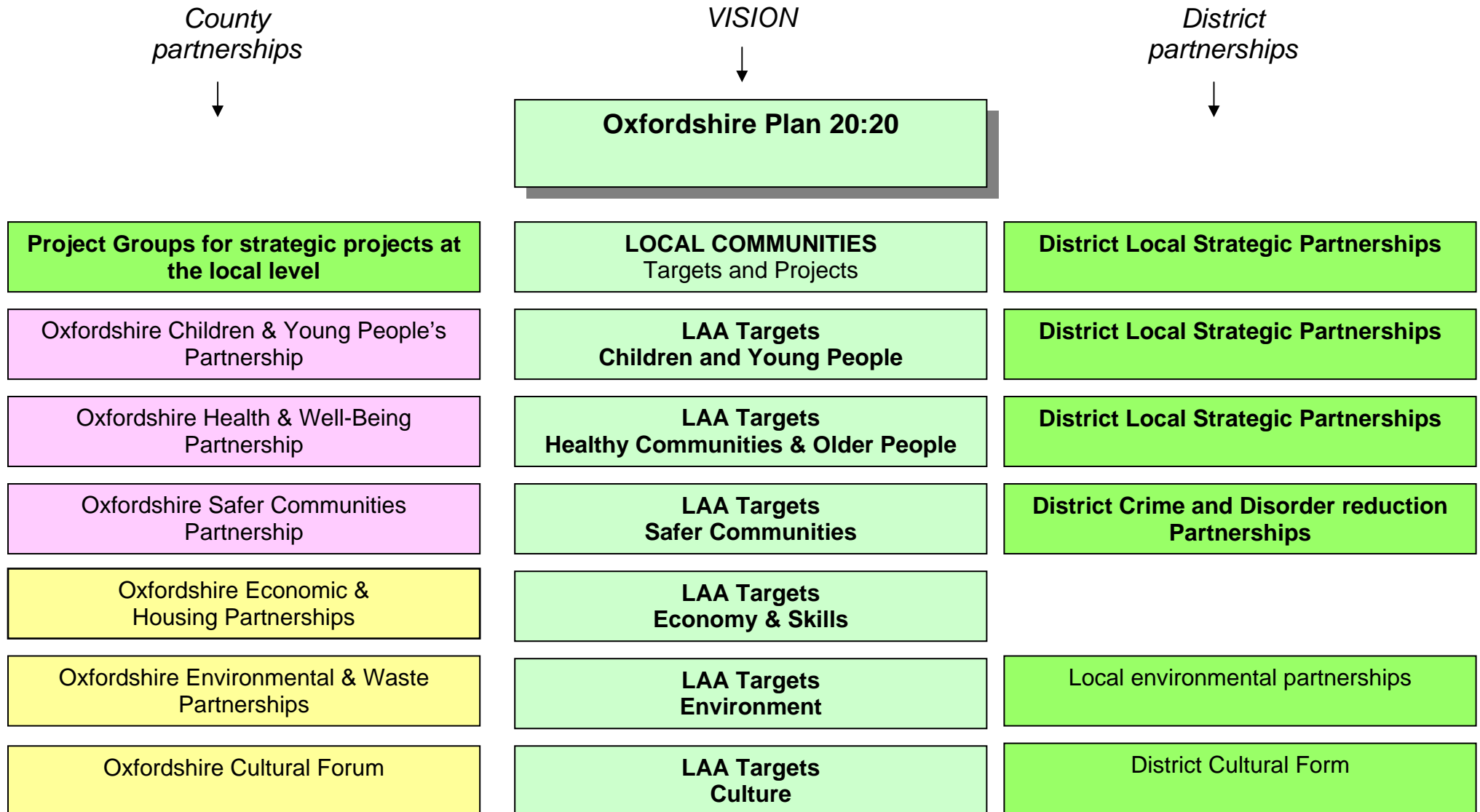
The following two diagrams show :

1. How the Oxfordshire Partnership work through thematic partnerships and partnerships to improve the sustainability, resilience and cohesion of places and local communities.
2. How the Oxfordshire Plan and the thematic partnerships relate to the Local Area Agreement.

The Oxfordshire Partnership. Framework of thematic partnerships.



The Oxfordshire Partnership. The Partnership, plans and the Local Area Agreement



**Purpose of the Oxfordshire Partnership**

The Oxfordshire Partnership is responsible for:

Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop a Sustainable Community Strategy – a single strategic vision for Oxfordshire.</li> </ul>
Monitoring of outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To monitor the outcomes of the Strategy and recommend remedial action.</li> </ul>
Horizon scanning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise awareness of, and debate on, the major emerging issues likely to affect the quality of life of people living in, working in or visiting the county.</li> </ul>
Raising the profile of Oxfordshire regionally and nationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To lobby, campaign and champion the issues that are important to Oxfordshire to regional and national government and the media.</li> <li>To communicate the priorities, activities and achievements of the Partnership (this includes the achievements of the thematic partnerships) to the public and across the wider partnership.</li> <li>To have clear links and communication with the major thematic / delivery partnerships.</li> </ul>
Consultation and data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring together, where possible, strategic consultation exercises.</li> <li>To promote the use of the Oxfordshire Data Observatory and ensure that the partners share data and information and that data sharing protocols are in place.</li> </ul>
Relationship management, inclusion and equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To work closely and supportively with the statutory / public sector service providers.</li> <li>To maintain the best possible communication and understanding between the partners and sectors.</li> <li>To ensure that the partnership is accessible.</li> </ul>
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that the Partnership's activities are accessible to the public.</li> <li>To ensure strong governance and partnership agreements are in place and that these are reviewed annually.</li> </ul>

**Membership of the Oxfordshire Partnership Board**

<b>Organisation / sector</b>	<b>Members</b>
County Council	Leader of the Council – Chair for first 2 years.
Health	Chief Executive, Primary Care Trust
Thames Valley Police	Thames Valley Police Assistant Chief Constable
District Councils	Leaders of Oxford City, Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, West Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse District Councils.
District LSPs	Chairs of the Oxford, Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, West Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse Local Strategic Partnerships.
Parish / Town Council	Up to 5 representatives. Further consultation is required with 3 <sup>rd</sup> tier authorities / the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils to clarify representation.
Learning, skills, education	Executive Director Learning and Skills Council Thames Valley Oxford Brookes University Oxford University Chair of the Learning Partnership
Private Sector	Chair of Oxfordshire Economic Partnership Editor Oxford Times A member who is a senior representative of a large business. Further consultation is required with the sector to clarify representation.
Government Office for the South East	GOSE Locality Manager for Oxfordshire (Thames Valley)
SEEDA	Area Director
Voluntary, Community and faith sectors.	2 senior representatives to be nominated by the county voluntary sector forum.
BME Sector	Director, Oxfordshire Racial Equality Council.
Culture, Tourism & Leisure	Further consultation is required with the sector to clarify representation.
Environment	Further consultation is required with the network of forums and partnerships in this area to clarify representation.
Rural communities	Director of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.
Total	Up to 33 members
<b>Others who attend as required / by invitation.</b>	
County Council Health Other ...	County Council - Chief Executive. District Chief Executives Director of Public Health Chairs of the thematic partnerships – for example: Children and Young People's Partnership. Purpose is to link these partnerships with this Board and report on LAA and other

	strategic targets and emerging issues.
Support Team	Partnership's Unit, Chief Executives Office, Oxfordshire County Council

### Purpose of the Public Service Board

The Public Service Board is responsible for:

Performance and risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level performance and risk management of cross-public sector and LAA targets.</li> <li>• Remedial action to maintain progress on targets.</li> </ul>
LAA negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiation with Government on future LAA targets.</li> </ul>
Resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify resources to deliver LAA targets.</li> <li>• Propose policy on budget pooling and alignment.</li> </ul>
Communication and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work closely and supportively with the Oxfordshire Partnership Board.</li> <li>• To have clear links and communication with the thematic partnerships responsible for delivery of LAA and other targets.</li> </ul>

### Membership of the Public Service Board

Organisation / sector	Members
Chairman	Deputy Leader of Oxfordshire County Council
County Council	Chief Executive
Health	Primary Care Trust Chief Executive and the Director of Public Health
Thames Valley Police	Thames Valley Police. Oxfordshire BCU Commander,
District Councils	5 representatives. 1 nominated by each District Council.
Voluntary & Community Sector	1 representative from the Stronger Communities Partnership (senior representative of the voluntary / community / faith sectors).
Learning, skills, education	Executive Director Learning and Skills Council, Thames Valley
Government Office for the South East	GOSE Locality Manager for Oxfordshire (Thames Valley)
SEEDA	Area Director
Total	14
Others who attend as required / by invitation	Chairs of the Local Area Agreement Thematic Partnerships Officers responsible for performance and risk management reporting. Other Government agencies.
Support Team	Officers from the Partnership's Unit, Chief Executives Office, County Council

## Democratic accountability / involvement of elected members

To increase democratic accountability and scrutiny of partnership arrangements, the governance framework involves elected members as follows :

- The Oxfordshire Community Partnership Strategy Group is replaced by the Oxfordshire Partnership Board. All tiers of local government are represented. The Board is chaired by the Leader of the County Council in the first instance. The Leaders of the 5 district councils and representatives from parish and town councils are also members of this board. The membership also includes senior representatives of the police, health service, higher education, learning and skills, and the business, rural, voluntary, community, faith and BME sectors. Its role is to set the strategic vision for the county and articulate this in a sustainable community strategy – Oxfordshire 20:20.
- The membership of the Local Area Agreement Public Service Board changes to ensure that all organisations who are responsible for delivering the Local Area Agreement are represented. The Chairman is the Deputy Leader of the Council. The 5 District Councils are also represented. Its role is to oversee delivery and performance in meeting the LAA targets.
- The original Ambition Groups have been overtaken by the work of the thematic partnerships who are responsible for delivery of the sustainable community strategy. These include the Children and Young People's Partnership, Safer Communities Partnership, Health & Well-Being Partnership and economic development, learning and skills, environment and culture partnerships. Elected members with a cabinet portfolio shall, if they are not already doing so, be members of the executive bodies of these thematic partnerships. It is also anticipated that where the work of the thematic partnership is relevant to that of a district council – for example, the Safer Communities Partnership – that there will be district representation.