



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 10</b>
Subject	<b>BRIEFING ON THE OXFORDSHIRE ENERGY STRATEGY</b>
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Councillor Norman MacRae Cabinet Member for Environment Email: <a href="mailto:norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk">norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Claire Locke (Group Manager – Commissioning) Tel: 01285 623427 Email: <a href="mailto:Claire.locke@publicagroup.org">Claire.locke@publicagroup.org</a>
Summary/Purpose	<p>a) To highlight the recently published county wide Energy Strategy in underpinning planned housing and economic growth, and in setting the agenda for growing the county's low carbon sector.</p> <p>b) To set out the background to the strategy, why it is important, and how it will support the ambitions of the Growth Board.</p> <p>c) To highlight the Strategy's delivery plan themes and work streams for the Council to consider in the development of the future Climate Change Action Plan.</p>
Annexes	<a href="#">Annex A – energy strategy delivery plan – emerging themes and work streams</a>
Recommendation	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
Corporate priorities	<p>Corporate aim to 'protect and enhance the environment of West Oxfordshire and maintain the district as a clean, beautiful place with low levels of crime and nuisance'.</p> <p>Reducing the Council's own impact on climate change and supporting local residents, businesses and groups in reducing their impact and adapting to climate change.</p>
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) funded all Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's) to prepare Energy Strategies for their areas to support the Industrial Strategy in August 2017. The development of the Oxfordshire strategy has been led by the OxLEP in collaboration with an energy strategy steering group. The steering group included OxLEP, Thames Water, Low Carbon Hub, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford, OxLEP Business, Culham Science Centre, Oxford Bus Company, Scottish and Southern Energy Network (SSEN), British Gas and Oxfordshire Growth Board.
- 1.2. The Growth Board is a key stakeholder in the energy strategy (with representation on the project steering group). In addition, the County Council's Energy Strategy Team and the City and District Councils' Energy Officers have all provided significant support to the project.
- 1.3. Oxfordshire is entering a period of rapid planned growth, alongside a period of innovation and disruptive technological change. The Energy Strategy builds on the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy and provides a strategic framework for energy investment across Oxfordshire.
- 1.4. The Energy Strategy will support delivery of the Growth Deal by:
- Seeking to address grid constraints so the electricity grid meets the needs of the new homes and businesses committed through the Housing and Growth Deal.
  - Setting the framework for an innovation, local smart energy network which will make the best use of our existing infrastructure and avoid much of the need for expensive network reinforcement to meet increased demand.
  - Driving economic growth – high ambition for low carbon alongside our planned growth could create an additional 11,000 jobs and add £1.3 billion pa to Oxfordshire economy by 2030<sup>1</sup>. The low carbon sector already accounts for 7% of the local economy and we have existing strategic advantage in low carbon industry – particularly automotive, building technologies and renewables.
- 1.5. The strategy sets three objectives which together create a framework for future investment priorities:
- Secure a smart, modern, clean energy infrastructure – including increased electricity grid capacity – which supports Oxfordshire's planned housing, industrial and commercial growth, and changing energy requirements;
  - Enhance existing energy networking and partnership working to focus on the low carbon energy challenges and funding opportunities arising from the Clean Growth Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> University of Oxford Environmental Change Institute and Low Carbon Oxford, 2014, Oxfordshire's Low Carbon Economy. <http://lowcarbonoxford.org/reports/oxfordshires-low-carbon-economy/>

- Lead national and internationally to reduce countywide emissions by 50% compared with 2008 levels by 2030 and set a pathway to achieve zero carbon growth by 2050. The economic benefits of this low carbon transition will be realised by supporting:
  - Ambitious and innovative clean generation projects across the county, both in urban and rural areas, and in growth locations;
  - Projects that reduce energy demand and increase energy efficiency for domestic, industrial, commercial buildings and transport energy.

**1.6.** The approach to delivery leverages the Oxfordshire energy community's strengths, and focuses on:

- Innovation and learning – using the concept of Living Labs, which are being developed through the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy and linked to new housing settlements including garden towns and villages, to provide a space to trial and demonstrate proof of concept.
- Supporting delivery through:
  - Policy and regulatory frameworks which make and shape markets;
  - Sharing best practice; and
  - Engaging with the delivery chain.
- Coordination to increase impact and influence.

**1.7.** Coordination and partnership working are key to delivering the strategy. Whilst effective programme and project management and collective oversight will be needed to steer and prioritise, the end result will be achieved through a multitude of autonomous projects. A rigorous review process will monitor progress against our objectives and prioritise areas for further action and investment.

**1.8.** The Energy Strategy extends across all sectors, power, heat and transport. The projects and actions needed to meet the objectives fall onto key themes which reflect this and will be delivered through a range of interdependent, mutually supporting work streams. [Figure 1](#) provides a schematic overview – there will be many interconnections and cross fertilisation between the work streams. Actions will be required across the full spectrum.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

**2.1.** The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy has now been published on the OxLEP website at the following link <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/energystategy> and is due to be launched later this Autumn (a date to be confirmed). The resourcing for the delivery of the Energy Strategy has not been confirmed by OxLEP.

**2.2.** Cabinet will be asked to endorse the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy at its meeting on 16 October 2019. The Committee may choose to comment.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None associated with this report

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

None associated with this report

**5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**5.1.** None associated with this report.

**6. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS (IF REQUIRED)**

**6.1.** The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy themes and work streams will be influential in the development of WODC's Climate Change Action Plan and will be considered by the Climate Change Working Group.

**7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

None associated with this report.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPER**

**9.1** None

