



<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	1 October 2021
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and Delivery	
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Stephen Kelly, Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development	

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## **Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (Spatial Framework) Consultation**

### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to agree South Cambridgeshire District Council's response jointly with Cambridge City Council, to the Government's Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Consultation for which the deadline for responses is 12th October.

This report sets out for the Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Consultation response the key response points and elements for discussion, to be refined following the meeting and submitted in advance of the consultation deadline.

### **Key Decision**

1. No

### **Recommendations**

2. To agree a joint response with South Cambridgeshire District Council to the Government's Creating a Vision Oxford-Cambridge Arc Consultation as set out in Appendix 1.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

3. To ensure the council articulates its view on the emerging ARC spatial framework as a key stakeholder in the formation of the framework

### **Details**

## **Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework Vision Consultation**

In February 2021, the government published a policy paper that set out how it intends to develop a Spatial Framework to progress the ambition to support sustainable economic growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc - the area that spans the five ceremonial counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire (see background paper – Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc: an introduction to the spatial framework).

In July 2021, government published the current consultation document, Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, that sets out the government's first public consultation on the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework (see background papers). The consultation is seeking views to create a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework, and in doing so guide the future growth of the area to 2050. The consultation closes on 12 October 2021.

Government have committed to ensuring sustainability is embedded in the Spatial Framework and are therefore producing a Sustainability Appraisal for which an initial scoping report has been produced. A Scoping Report has been prepared as part of this consultation with an associated Annex (see background papers).

The consultation is on both documents (the Vision and the Scoping Report) and it is intended to respond through the digital engagement platform once the draft response is agreed.

This consultation is being undertaken to inform the approach to the future of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, which has been identified by the government as a key economic priority and to guide the future growth of the area to 2050.

The Spatial Framework will form national planning policy and transport policy for the Arc and local planning and local transport authorities will have to have regard to it when preparing local transport and local development plans and policies and it will be capable of being a material consideration in relevant planning decisions in the area.

The consultation is broken down into eight sections which deal with each element of the spatial framework in high level to be commented upon individually. The main part of the consultation response is primarily a Likert Scale (Agree/Disagree) approach with options to add limited free text comments at the end of each of the eight sections. Our proposed responses to each of these are set out in **Appendix 1**.

The eight sections of the consultation are as follows;

[1.Introduction: Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc](#)

[2.The Environment](#)

[3.The Economy](#)

[4.Connectivity and Infrastructure](#)

[5.Place-making](#)

[6.Our commitment to engaging communities](#)

[7.Our commitment to data, evidence and digital tools](#)

[8.How we will monitor and deliver the Framework](#)

## **General Comments**

In line with broad discussion with partners in the OxCam Arc leadership group comprising representatives from all councils along the Arc geography, officers views are that the Councils should provide a high level joint response which seeks to align our aspirations and commitments for the emerging joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan with the emerging Arc framework and to signpost existing work including the Local Plan themes, policy direction, community engagement, digitisation and evidence base that is already in the public domain.

Although there are many broad principles which are welcomed within the emerging spatial framework vision, the amount and detail of information within the consultation is not sufficient or adequate in order to respond with any detail or certainty and significant further work will be needed in order for the councils to fully endorse or provide meaningful comment to the emerging Spatial Framework.

It is not proposed to provide comprehensive answers to all questions within the consultation as the detail provided is not of sufficient depth to be able to be commented on with any certainty. However, we have where appropriate highlighted key areas for further work and signposted the consultation to our own emerging evidence in aligned areas which can provide the spatial framework team significant evidence concerning the Greater Cambridge area.

## **Options**

1. N/a

## **Implications**

4. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

### **Financial**

5. There are no significant implications

### **Legal**

6. There are no significant implications

## **Staffing**

7. There are no significant implications

## **Risks/Opportunities**

8. There are no significant implications

## **Equality and Diversity**

9. The council has not prepared an Equality Impact Assessment because it is responding to a government consultation. However, government is expected to prepared an assessment as it develops the draft Oxford-Cambridge Spatial Framework.

## **Climate Change**

10. The government has prepared a detailed Sustainability Appraisal scoping report to accompany the vision consultation. There are no climate change or environmental implications directly arising from the report. However the environmental principles are likely to bring positive implications in relation to this area.

## **Health & Wellbeing**

11. There are no significant implications

## **Consultation responses**

12. N/a

## **Alignment with Council Priority Areas**

### **Growing local businesses and economies**

13. Economy is one of the ARC foundational pillars. We have signposted our own work in this area specifically in 'The First Proposals' emerging Local Plan report which has considered the needs of the local economy so the ARC framework is able to align and reinforce our approach.

## **Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in**

14. Infrastructure and homes is a core consideration within the ARC spatial framework vision. We have signposted our own work in this area specifically in 'The First Proposals' emerging Local Plan report which has considered the housing needs of the area so the ARC framework is able to align and reinforce our approach.

## **Being green to our core**

15. Environment is one of the ARC foundational pillars. In addition the council has recently endorsed the ARC Environmental Principles which have been co created by the councils and other environmental stakeholders involved in the ARC. We have signposted our own work in this area specifically in 'The First Proposals' emerging Local Plan report which has considered the needs of the environment so the ARC framework is able to align and reinforce our approach.

## **A modern and caring Council**

16. N/a

## **Background Papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc: an introduction to the spatial framework (February 2021) - [Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc: an introduction to the spatial framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92421/Planning_for_sustainable_growth_in_the_Oxford-Cambridge_Arc_-_an_introduction_to_the_spatial_framework.pdf)

Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (July 2021) - [Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92421/Creating_a_vision_for_the_Oxford-Cambridge_Arc.pdf)

Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc: Sustainability Appraisal scoping report (July 2021): [Sustainability appraisal scoping report - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92421/Sustainability_appraisal_scoping_report.pdf)

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Appendix 1: Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc – joint response to consultation

## **Report Author:**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report contact, Paul Frainer, Assistant Director Strategy and Economy  
tel: 07711 918993, email: [paul.frainer@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:paul.frainer@greatercambridgeplanning.org)