

---

**Oxford-Cambridge Arc Update**

---

**SYNOPSIS**

This report updates members on the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and progress with a Growth Deal

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Alongside the Autumn Budget 2017, and following the National Infrastructure Commission's report<sup>1</sup>, the Government published a visioning document<sup>2</sup> in which the Government announced its ambition to work with authorities in the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc to support the economic growth of the area and build a million homes by 2050. The area has been identified by Government as a location for transformational growth and as a world-leading economic place capable of boosting the productivity and earning power of people across the UK.
- 1.2 Sitting at the northern edge of the Arc, North Northamptonshire has a significant role to play in delivering on the Government's ambitions. There is a necessary level of funding that is required to ensure that this growth is delivered and the supporting infrastructure is in place. The Government is looking at partnering with authorities to consider Growth Deals, where housing is delivered and the supporting infrastructure funding is provided by Government in return for an increase in housing numbers.
- 1.3 The Joint Delivery Committee and Joint Planning Committee for North Northamptonshire considered the implications of the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc at meetings on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018. The Joint Committees resolved to support officers initiating discussions with Government and Homes England over a bespoke Growth Deal for North Northamptonshire based on the acceleration of existing growth commitments to 2031 subject to a series of safeguards and to start work on the prioritisation of infrastructure projects and other investments needed.

**2. Progress**

- 2.1 Updates on the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and the implications for North Northamptonshire were presented to the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee and North Northamptonshire Joint Delivery Committee on 25 April and 6 June 2019 respectively.
- 2.2 In summary, these were noted as follows:
  - The Government has affirmed that the extent of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc covers the whole of Northamptonshire.
  - Discussions have been ongoing with Government and Homes England to identify the support needed to accelerate the delivery of committed growth, and unlock the potential of the area to contribute in the longer term.
  - Preparation of a joint spatial vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc has been delayed. This will have implications for the timing and nature of the Joint Core Strategy review.
- 2.3 In relation to work on the prioritisation of infrastructure projects and other investments needed, planning and development consultants Litchfield's were commissioned to prepare a North Northamptonshire Investment Framework setting out measures to accelerate housing and employment delivery and identifying priorities for future funding. This was discussed at a seminar for members of the Joint Committees on 17 January 2019. The final North Northamptonshire Investment Framework and background information was presented to the

---

<sup>1</sup> Partnering For Prosperity: A new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc, National Infrastructure Commission, November 2017

<sup>2</sup> Helping the Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford corridor reach its potential, HM Government, November 2017

North Northamptonshire Joint Delivery Committee on 6 June 2019 (Appendix 1). Priority projects within the North Northamptonshire Investment Framework include Corby Northern Orbital Road, Walking and Cycling Improvements, Little Stanion highways Infrastructure and A6003 Improvements. The Joint Planning and Delivery Unit will work with relevant stakeholders to identify how priority projects will be delivered.

- 2.4 The next stage of Litchfield's work is to undertake further work on an economic prospectus for North Northamptonshire which provides a clear economic narrative that articulates existing economic strengths and USPs and focusses attention and resources to realise key priorities.

### **3. Options to be considered (if any)**

- 3.1 There are no direct options to be considered as a result of this report.

### **4. Issues to be taken into account:-**

#### ***Policy Priorities***

The North Northamptonshire Investment Framework supports the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Prospectus for Change.

#### ***Financial***

None directly linked to this report.

#### ***Legal***

None directly linked to this report.

#### ***Human Rights, Community Safety, Performance Information, Best Value***

None directly linked to this report.

#### ***Equalities and Sustainability***

None directly linked to this report.

#### ***Risk Management***

None directly linked to this report.

### **5. Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

#### **Background Papers**

[North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee](#), 6 June 2019

[North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee](#), 25 April 2019

[North Northamptonshire Joint Delivery Committee](#), 15 March 2018

#### **Officer to Contact**

Terry Begley

Principal Planner

01536 463185

[terry.begley@corby.gov.uk](mailto:terry.begley@corby.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT DELIVERY COMMITTEE		Item 5	Page 1 of 5
<b>Date</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> June 2019</b>		
<b>Report Originator</b>	<b>Head of North Northamptonshire Joint Planning and Delivery Unit</b>		
<b>Report Title</b>	North Northamptonshire Investment Framework		

### 1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

For the Joint Delivery Committee to agree the final North Northamptonshire Investment Framework and that the JPDU should work with relevant stakeholders to identify how priority projects will be delivered.

### 2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018 the Joint Delivery Committee agreed that the JPDU should commission work on an Investment Framework to provide detailed information on the infrastructure required to support delivery of development in North Northamptonshire.
- 2.2 Planning and development consultants Lichfield's were commissioned to undertake this piece of work, the North Northamptonshire Investment Framework (NNIF). Two workshops were held with members and senior officers in September 2018 and January 2019 to discuss the infrastructure requirements across the area and to agree on the prioritisation methodology.

### 3. **North Northamptonshire Investment Framework**

- 3.1 The draft document has been consulted on with the officer working and steering group as well as with wider infrastructure stakeholders. This has resulted in some minor changes to pick up factual issues. The document has now been finalised and is provided at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 The document provides background to growth within North Northamptonshire and uses various local and regional documents and references to the Oxford – Cambridge Arc to understand the drivers and factors affecting the area. The NNIF addresses the delivery of growth proposals set out in the adopted Joint Core Strategy (JCS). It highlights the potential to accelerate the pace of delivery, consistent with the Joint Committees' position on a potential growth deal. An assessment of historic delivery alongside housing and commercial markets provides an overview of various factors affecting delivery. The infrastructure element is then explored in more detail with the various themes and identification of potential projects that are required to support delivery.

- 3.3 There are syntheses of the various aspects throughout the document, these bring together and provide a clear analysis of the sections.
- 3.4 A key issue identified throughout the NNIF and emphasised within the conclusion of the document is that North Northamptonshire is currently lacking a coherent and compelling economic narrative and strategy. It is suggested that a document is needed to articulate the existing economic strengths and unique features and to focus attention and resources on areas that will maximise the areas growth potential.
- 3.5 A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis is also provided within the document, page 50 of Appendix 1. The Opportunities that are stated here need to be explored with partners, and the weaknesses need to be understood so that they can be addressed through future work.
- 3.6 The next stage of Lichfields' work is to undertake the further work on an economic narrative referred to above. The proposed content of this is outlined in [Appendix 2](#). The Joint Delivery Committee will be updated on progress.

#### **4. Priority Projects and Action Plans**

- 4.1 The prioritisation framework uses various components to assess their relative need against a range of criteria, including the strategic fit against national, regional and local strategy. It considers the scope of the infrastructure in its ability to unlock housing or employment development. The deliverability of the project is set out using the project status and the timescales for delivery alongside how the project is to be funded and the speed of delivery. Weight is given to those projects that will unlock more than one site and provide cross-over with other desired outcomes. This is a live document and can be updated as new information becomes available or funding streams released. The appraisal criteria can also be changed should the funding priority be different.
- 4.2 It is recommended that the Joint Delivery Committee agree that the JPDU works with the relevant stakeholders to identify how the priority projects can be delivered. This may take the form of action plans that can be used to bid for resources.

#### **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 It is considered that the NNIF is a robust document that provides the evidence to support future funding bids from the JPDU and partner Councils. The positive feedback to it from attendees at the Homes England/MHCLG Study tour in April, and wider stakeholders is welcomed, and should further support the implementation and wider use of the document and the projects within it. The commissioning of further work on economic strategy and narrative should further strengthen the evidence base to ensure that attention and resources are focused on areas that maximise North Northamptonshire's growth potential.
- 5.2 Endorsement of the NNIF and the projects within it by the Joint Delivery Committee further strengthens the document, allowing the JPDU and partner

Councils to focus on implementation of projects including the preparation of action plans for priority projects.

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the North Northamptonshire Investment Framework is agreed and that the JPDU should work with relevant stakeholders to identify how priority projects will be delivered.

---

Background Papers:	None
Title	
Date	
Contact Officer	Andrew Longley 01832 742359; Andra Stopforth 01832 742337