



Subject: Oxfordshire Energy Strategy Delivery Plan	
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Summary

This report provides the Board with an update on the development of a delivery plan for the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy and seeks approval of the draft document attached as Annex One. The Plan has been prepared with local authority, university, business and community partners across Oxfordshire and brings together over 20 projects which sit under the three themes of the strategy. The Plan is a living document and will be updated annually, and will be an important mechanism through which to tackle the wider proposals to tackle climate change in Oxfordshire.

Recommendation

That the Board:

- **approves the draft Energy Strategy Delivery Plan, attached as Annex One**

1. Background

The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy was approved by both the Board and the Growth Board earlier this year. It was prepared following an invitation from BEIS for each LEP to work with their local partners to prepare strategies which responded to the energy priorities in their localities. Oxfordshire's strategy was led by a Steering Group including representatives from:

- Oxfordshire local authorities
- The Low Carbon Hub
- University of Oxford's Environmental Change Institute
- Thames Water
- Scottish & Southern Electric
- Private sector businesses

The strategy was developed through extensive engagement and consultation with a wider range of regional and national stakeholders. It builds on the influential *Oxfordshire Low Carbon Economy* report which shows that, with the right policies in place, Oxfordshire could add a further £1.35

billion annually to the local economy and create over 11,000 new jobs by 2030, and in doing so, deliver emission reduction targets in line with local and national targets.

Critically, the strategy informs our emerging Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), and help inform Oxfordshire's growth ambitions, as outlined in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, through the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 process.

The Vision of the Energy Strategy is:

For Oxfordshire to be at the forefront of energy innovation to foster clean growth

Objectives:

1. Secure a smart, modern, clean energy infrastructure – including increased electricity grid capacity - which supports our planned housing, industrial and commercial growth, and changing energy requirements;
2. Lead nationally 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. We will realise the economic benefits of this low carbon transition 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
3. Enhance energy networking and partnership working to date to focus on the low carbon energy challenges and funding opportunities arising from the Industrial Strategy and Clean Growth Strategy.

2. Draft Delivery Plan

We have been working closely with partners through the Energy Strategy Steering Group during the spring to prepare the draft delivery plan. This has also been discussed within local councils through their political structures and also with other partners and stakeholders including BEIS and the Greater South East Energy Hub.

The Delivery Plan provides the strategic framework to secure a smart, clean energy infrastructure across the county, drive countywide decarbonisation and ensure that Oxfordshire prospers from clean growth. It seeks to build on and harness the wealth of key assets in the energy and low carbon sector across the county and brings together over 20 individual projects across the three strategic objectives of the Energy Strategy. The draft Plan is attached as Annex One.

Among the key headline projects which have secured resourcing to date include:

- **Project LEO**, a trailblazing InnovateUK partnership project led by Scottish & Southern Energy Networks (SSEN), will demonstrate a smart, flexible energy system in Oxfordshire
- **Energy Superhub Oxford**, our second Innovate UK partnership project, led by Pivot Power LLP will pioneer new models of battery storage to support the acceleration of Oxford's electric vehicle charging capacity and fleets and provide low carbon ground-source heating to residential and commercial properties
- **OxFutures II**, led by the Low Carbon Hub, focusing on growing the low carbon economy:

- *Oxfordshire Greentech* is a new low-carbon business network, that brings businesses together to encourage innovation, collaboration and knowledge transfer. It has special interest groups around key themes, including EV transport, social enterprise and the built environment
- *Oxfordshire Green Fund* supports implementation of business energy efficiency measures through free energy audits and grants. Low carbon feasibility funding is available for new start-ups and established firms developing new products and services. This funding has now been extended for a further 3 years to March 2023.
- The **Cosy Homes programme**, led by the Low Carbon Hub and NEF, will trial and demonstrate a model to deliver home energy efficiency, establishing trusted suppliers and installers and a follow through service to deliver best practice.
- **Go Ultralow Oxford, V2GO, Electra and Park & Charge**, led by Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council and supported by our four District Councils, will trial, innovate and deliver the charging infrastructure needed to support the transition to low emission vehicles.
- **High Potential Opportunity Programme**, led by OxLEP and funded by the Department for International Trade, aims to position Oxfordshire as a location for investment in low carbon technologies including fusion and battery technology, focussing on Harwell and Culham

The Delivery Plan sets out immediate and short term actions required or underway, and also flags up areas of uncertainty or where further work will be required to identify the delivery pathway. A rigorous review process will monitor progress against our objectives and prioritise areas for further action and investment

It is a living document, to be reviewed and updated at least annually; partners will undertake a more detailed review at three to five year intervals. This is particularly key in light of local and national calls to achieve carbon neutrality much sooner, and four of six Oxfordshire councils declaring a climate change emergency with some calling for area-wide carbon neutrality by 2030. The implications of this new undertaking, and how projects in the Plan can be scaled up or, where resources permit, can be accelerated and brought forward will be considered as a key priority in this Delivery Plan. We will work with partners through local authorities and, collectively, under the Oxfordshire Growth Board to consider appropriate responses in due course

3. Next Steps

The Delivery Plan details a core governance structure which envisages a *Strategy Leadership Group* which will guide priorities detailed in the Energy Strategy and also oversee the alignment and integration of local, national and international policies and initiatives which will drive the clean growth and low carbon agenda across Oxfordshire. This group will direct the work of an *Operational Group* which will manage delivery of the work programme set out in the Delivery Plan and facilitate collaboration between partners across the energy and low carbon ecosystem. There will be regular reporting into both the OxLEP and Oxfordshire Growth Boards, to ensure full alignment of this critical agenda with wider economic growth priorities.

Discussions are also underway with partners to develop an extensive communications plan to promote the ambitions of the strategy and raise the profile of the rich and vibrant low carbon sector within Oxfordshire. The aim will be to develop a series of key common messages and a consistent narrative which all stakeholders will be able to use to promote Oxfordshire as a leading hub for clean growth innovation and ground breaking technologies.

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It is the intention to launch the strategy and delivery plan at a key event in the Autumn at the new Bicester Eco Business Centre and dovetail with the commencement of the roll out of both Project LEO and the Energy SuperHub projects.