



Directors Board Meeting No: 25

8th December 2020

5:00 – 8:00 pm

VENUE
Microsoft Teams Platform

AGENDA

1.	17.00	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest (Directors are asked to note the Declaration of Interest Register) Apologies:
2.	17.05	Minutes To approve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of Board Meeting 24 (29/09/20) • Minutes of the Board AGM (29/09/20)
Items for Decision/Information – Confidential Papers for approval as detailed Committee/Sub-Group recommendation (Exempt Information¹)		
3.	17.10	Finance Update (LD) ¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Year Operational Budget Proposal • Outturn H1 2020/21
4.	17.25	Programme Sub-Group (PRS) ¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairs Update Report • Change Request
5.	17.40	Mid-Year Financial Report – Capital Programmes (LB) ¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1
6.	17.50	Corporate Governance Review (NT/LD) ¹ - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board succession Planning • Changes to By-laws
7.	18:00	Investment and Internationalisation Briefing (SJ/RB) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1 - Collaborative working with DIT and Partners • Annex 2 -Refreshed Oxfordshire Internationalisation Plan
8.	18.20	HMG Verbal Update/Discussion – Rowena Limb Area Director CLG/BEIS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSR Progress

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levelling up fund/UK Shared Prosperity Fund • Devolution and Recovery White paper -next steps • Industrial Strategy 2.0 Refresh
Public Invited to Join the Meeting – 18.35		
Board Meeting - Items for Decision/Information		
9.	18.40	Questions from the public arising from the Agenda (Max 3 mins per question – notified in advance in writing)
10.	19.00	Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan Update (AG/SP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation and discussion
11.	19:30	Oxfordshire Growth Board Strategic Vision (AG/ES) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion and consideration
12.	19.50	Chief Executives Report (NT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1 Communications Update (Activity Tracker) • Annex 2 Glossary of Terms
13.	20.00	Meeting Closes
<p>Dates of future meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 09th March 2021 – Microsoft Teams Platform • Future Dates to be confirmed 2nd Tuesday of the month (Provisional) 8th June, 7th September, 7th December, 8th March (22) 		



Subject: Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan Update	
Author: Ahmed Goga Tel: 07393 001076 Email: ahmed.goga@oxfordshirelep.com	BOARD MEETING No:25 Date of Board meeting: 08/12/20 Agenda Item no: 10
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Summary

This covering paper provides the Board with an update on the progress made since its September meeting in the development of the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP). It sets out the headline findings of the economic baseline report prepared by Steer ED and Cambridge Econometrics, which is attached as annex one to this paper. In addition, the paper sets out the components of the Recovery Plan and the progress being made through the ERP Task Group in finalising the document. The Board will receive a presentation on the emerging ERP at its meeting on 8th December, which will provide further details on the Plan and the key interventions it will cover.

Recommendation

That the Board:

- **approve the draft economic baseline report (attached as Annex One)**
- **endorse the core components of the emerging ERP including interventions being developed through the ERP Task Group**

1. Background

The ERP is being developed by a Task Group comprising chief officers from each local authority and senior representatives of both universities with attendance, also, from the Cities and Local Growth Unit. The Task Group is being supported by Steer ED and Cambridge Econometrics in preparing:

- a detailed economic baseline analysis of the impact which COVID-19 has had on the Oxfordshire economy including individual economic sectors as well as modelling and projections for economic recovery based on the data and market assessment compiled
- development of a Recovery Plan comprising the key interventions and support measures which will provide the focus for activity across the partners group, and which forms part of the overall Oxfordshire-wide response to the pandemic
- preparation of specific project interventions in targeted areas which have been identified by the economic baseline, businesses and key partners where measures are not available to Oxfordshire partners

The ERP will guide our discussions with Government on economic recovery activity including specific funding identified under the recent comprehensive spending review for 2021/22 and also provide the interface with the emerging UK Shared Prosperity Fund, alongside our proposals under the Oxfordshire LIS Investment Plan. Additionally, the ERP will provide local partners with the framework to deploy specific discretionary funding they have, as well as repurpose existing programmes in support of economic recovery activity at district and county level.

2. Economic Baseline Assessment

Steer ED and Cambridge Econometrics have undertaken a comprehensive assessment of the Oxfordshire economy reviewing performance between March and November; this includes econometric analysis, sector level activity and modelling of trends in the macro-economy and labour market. Alongside this, there has been a review of the take up by Oxfordshire businesses of national support schemes such as the COVID Business Interruption and Bounce Back Loans and the Job Retention Scheme for workers.

The Baseline Assessment also incorporates the output from nine insight sessions held with business leaders, stakeholders and the Oxfordshire Chamber, in thematic areas such as the visitor economy, town centres, skills, inclusive economy and green recovery to understand the impact on businesses and inform the scope and range of interventions which the ERP needs to focus upon. An update of the emerging issues has also been shared with the Growth Board and its Scrutiny Panel.

The full baseline report is attached as annex one – the headline findings are as follows:

- Overall, the Oxfordshire economy has been hit less hard than the wider UK due to the underlying resilience and sectoral strengths we have in the County
- The visitor economy encompassing tourism, hospitality, retail, arts and culture is the most significantly affected by the lockdown measures introduced and the economic impact this has had, and may not recover to pre-COVID levels until 2022/23 at the earliest
- Unemployment is up in the County but from a historical low of virtual full employment but remains below UK averages; this will need vigilance once the furlough scheme ends in March
- Apprenticeship levels have returned to 66% of the 2019 baseline by August, following contraction between March and May
- There has been variation within/across Oxfordshire in the level of economic shock experiences with Cherwell and Oxford City more impacted than other district areas
- Oxford is struggling to recover footfall and city centre spend relative to other similar cities across the UK and has not gained from any summer ‘staycation bounce’
- Business take up of COVID-19 loans have broadly been in line with UK averages though the overall value of loans has been significantly higher in Oxfordshire than elsewhere
- Technology and R&D based firms across the Oxfordshire Innovation Ecosystem have been remarkably resilient and, in some areas, enjoyed substantial growth; however, there is concern that venture capital and early stage investor funding may contract in 2021 as investors look to focus on current portfolio companies rather than support new or pre-revenue firms
- Whilst manufacturing and high-performance technology sectors have broadly survived the economic shock, it has highlighted vulnerabilities to existing supply chains and the need for increased investment in technology adoption and new business models to build resilience
- Projections suggest that there will be a short contraction in economic performance with c6000 fewer jobs before the pandemic but that Oxfordshire will experience a rapid and strong recovery in 2021 returning to pre-COVID levels
- There is an opportunity to accelerate key strengths in the economy as part of recovery planning but also a need to foster increased investment in skills to support people to secure new employment opportunities as well as develop capabilities to enable businesses to pivot into new markets and product development

The Baseline Assessment will be updated one further time in January to incorporate final data received at the end of the calendar year. It will also include a forward post-COVID economic projection by Cambridge Econometrics.

3. Recovery Plan

The Plan draws on the findings of the Baseline Assessment as well as district level recovery plans, where they exist. In addition to this, Steer ED has worked closely with the Transport and Infrastructure Team at Oxfordshire County Council to develop a clear picture within the assessment of mobility patterns, digital and road network and public transport use across the County to help identify key trends and interrelationships between connectivity and supporting economic recovery including the ability to connect people to employment opportunities.

Building on the findings from the Baseline Assessment, the Task Group has agreed to structure the Plan around the key themes of *Business, People* and *Place*. It will look to maximise, wherever possible, activities and investments which can be focused for recovery as well as better use of funds which are being released to support economic responses to the pandemic. As such the Plan will be based on the following four key building blocks which will set out the suite of interventions under the ERP:

- **LIS Investment Plan** - activities within the recently published investment Plan which specifically focus on the labour market, supporting the arts and visitor economy and helping individuals to develop ideas and start-up businesses including:
 - *Oxfordshire Social Contract encompassing adult skills and retraining*
 - *THRIVE (Tourism & Hospitality sector business recovery programme)*
 - *Culture & Creative Industries Hub*
 - *Entrepreneurship Hub*

- **Existing Activities** – projects and programmes which can be flexed and repurposed to support recovery activity and provide acceleration to businesses looking to rebuild or develop skills capability to pivot into new markets or opportunities including:
 - *OxLEP-led EU funded business support and skills projects including Innovation Support for Business, Skills for Business and eScalate*
 - *Oxfordshire partner-led EU funded business support and skills projects including OxFutures, Internationalisation Fund and Skills Support for the Workplace*
 - *OxLEP funded LGF projects including the Oxford Brookes Enterprise Centre and Abingdon & Witney College Construction Skills Academy*
 - *Transport and infrastructure programmes being led by Oxfordshire County Council with district councils which will be central to supporting recovery such as Connecting Oxford and Active Travel schemes*

- **Response Measures** – COVID specific schemes which Oxfordshire partners have secured investment for to support immediate responses to the pandemic and assist businesses and also kickstart local economic activity including:
 - *Getting Building Fund – seven projects worth c£8.4m supporting town centres, the rollout of gigabit technology to rural communities, clean growth and capital grants for businesses*
 - *Growth Hub – support services including business resilience plans, peer networking, Kickstart grants for the visitor economy and SMEs*

- *District Councils - discretionary grants to support business rate relief and targeting grants for businesses impacted by restricted trading due to COVID lockdown measures*
- **Additional Interventions** – targeted proposals responding to economic and market intelligence shaped by the Baseline Assessment and qualitative feedback from business and stakeholders via our insight sessions:
 - *Business Support* – augmenting our existing provision to provide tailored packages of support, advice and finance to ensure our local businesses are well positioned overcome the challenges they are facing and enable them to grow back stronger
 - *Supply Chains* – to better understand the scope, nature and potential fragility of local supply chains and to identify how to improve resilience and identify opportunities for local business growth
 - *Visitor Economy* – sector-focussed programme reflecting the severity of the impact of COVID on our Visitor Economy and we can accelerate recovery and adapt to the new normal and accelerate
 - *Skills* – to support residents back into work including targeted support for our most vulnerable groups and those hit hardest by redundancies and business closures
 - *Town Centres* – a Countywide programme to reimagine and revitalise our key settlements to ensure they are viable and attractive places to live, work and play

The Plan will, broadly, encompass c20 projects and activities which will provide the framework for recovery-based activity across the County; the Task Group will work with Steer ED in framing these interventions into a coherent recovery plan. Alongside this, specific working sessions are planned in December with business leaders to flesh out and develop the propositions which will form the proposed supply chain initiative, whilst the Skills Board will oversee the development of proposed skills packages within the ERP. A dedicated working group has been created to oversee interventions for the Visitor Economy which includes representation from both Experience Oxfordshire and Cotswold Tourism Partnership and will feed into the final proposals under the ERP.

4. Next Steps

Following comments and direction from the Board, the Task Group will work with Steer ED in finalising the Recovery Plan and the suite of interventions which will underpin our approach. It is anticipated that a draft final document will be ready for Board consideration and approval in January. We anticipate a further update being shared with the Growth Board at its next meeting in January, and also future follow up sessions with the Oxfordshire Chamber and Oxfordshire Strategic Transport Forum.

The aim is for the Plan to guide Oxfordshire’s discussions with Government on economic recovery and also provide the framework for how we access investments set out under the recent Comprehensive Spending Review for 2021/22. It will also provide the framework for Oxfordshire partners to consider how best to deploy and target discretionary spend and planned investment for the next financial year to support recovery in the County.

Oxfordshire's Economic Recovery Plan: The Economic Baseline Assessment



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Executive Summary

Context and purpose

In July 2020, Oxfordshire partners convened a senior stakeholder Task Group comprising OxLEP and chief officers from Oxfordshire's six local authorities, senior representatives from the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University and the Oxfordshire Growth Board, to oversee the development of a County-wide COVID-19 Economic Renewal Plan (ERP).

Due to the immediate economic challenges created by the pandemic and the disruption caused to employment, trade and supply chains in specific parts of the economy, the ERP will have a near term focus covering an immediate response and recovery period of 24 months. It will look at the ways and means to maximise existing activities and introduce additional responses to regain the pre-COVID-19 growth trajectory for the County and its localities. The ERP's immediate purpose is to coordinate and galvanise a County-wide response. Should additional COVID-19 recovery support measures be introduced by Government, then the Plan will also work to underpin subsequent Oxfordshire policies and funding submissions.

Methodology

To establish the impact of COVID-19 on Oxfordshire, key socio-economic indicators were assessed prior to and, where possible, after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. This gave an understanding of the nature and scale of the impacts on Oxfordshire, relative to the UK and of district level variations within the County.

Econometric modelling was also conducted to project the impact that COVID-19 will have on the economy of Oxfordshire in relation to the rest of the UK, by running a baseline projection and then an updated projection accounting for economic disruption caused by COVID-19, and subsequent restrictions put in place by the Government.

Quantitative work was supported by consultation with 50 key business leaders and stakeholders in eight themed Focus Groups, covering the Visitor Economy, Town Centres, Green Growth, Rural Economy, Strategic Sites and Assets, Inclusive Growth, Business Growth and Supply Chains, and Jobs and Skills. In addition to this a working session with Oxfordshire Chamber was also undertaken to assess impact on members.

Key insights

COVID-19 impact on Oxfordshire overview

Overall, significant impacts of COVID-19 has been felt around the county in terms of employment, business turnover, travel, and indeed how and where people work. The two national lockdowns have demonstrated that some sectors have been able to adapt to restrictions to a greater degree than others, based on the ability for work to be conducted remotely and products and services to be conducted in this manner.

Sectors dependent on face-to-face interaction and trading with customers and those reliant on free movement of people have been severely impacted. Although Oxfordshire saw a recovery in these sectors as restrictions were eased in the summer, they remain vulnerable to further restrictions, which can be imposed at very short notice. Real consideration needs to go into how to support these sectors during periods of restrictions and, going forward, how to help them recover and adapt to new trading conditions once restrictions are eased.

Oxfordshire has been hit less hard than the UK as a whole due to a mix of helpful factors:

- **Its strengths in knowledge intensive industry** – in times of crisis, innovative industries are key to recovery and thus are in high demand. For instance, the Life Sciences sector in Oxfordshire has reported increased sales and demand for services since March 2020
- **Its dispersed and (to a degree) polycentric geography**, which lends more easily to adaptive ways of working. The polycentric nature of the county with multiple nodes of business has lent itself to localisation of economies caused by restrictions on movement
- **Extant high skill levels**. The jobs most impacted by COVID-19 restrictions have been in service industries. Oxfordshire's strength in professional, scientific and technical services and high value manufacturing have meant that impacts have been limited to a degree by the ability to work flexibly and by continued demand for high quality products.

However, there are clear causes for concern. The Visitor Economy in Oxfordshire has been hit hard with tourism, hospitality and retail severely affected; city centre footfall and spend is dramatically down with knock on effects to those working in these sectors. The Education sector, reliant on influxes of international students and researchers has been impacted, and Arts, Culture and Entertainment has seen the highest rates of employees placed on *furlough*. The impacts in these sectors have been driven by national level interventions, but renewal will require County-level responses to boost levels to pre-COVID-19 norms and beyond.

The future outlook

Pre-COVID-19 forecasts showed the Oxfordshire economy was expected to maintain its impressive growth moving forward, with performance set to exceed comparator areas and the UK average. However, updated forecasts incorporating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, indicate a comparatively short but substantial impact to economic activity in Oxfordshire. Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory, over the next decade the Oxfordshire economy could expect to have in the region of 6,000 fewer jobs and reduced output by c£522million.

Sectors such as Retail, Tourism and Food will bear the brunt of the impact but some of Oxfordshire's breakthrough industries, such as Professional Services, IT and Health and Science could emerge stronger. Within Oxfordshire, Cherwell and Oxford are set to face the biggest shock to economic activity, with Vale of the White Horse the least impacted. That said, all areas are expected to experience a smaller shock and recover faster than the UK average.

On-the ground findings

COVID 19 has had far reaching impacts across Oxfordshire's businesses, people and places. The impacts have been uneven in terms of:

- the spatial spread across the County; varied impacts, both negative and positive;
- between and within different business sectors; and
- on different individuals, households and vulnerable groups.

In terms of the business base, the COVID-19 crisis to-date has had seen some sectors see growth (tech-/solution-driven businesses), whilst some severely impacted (non-food retail, transport) and other sectors largely unchanged (agribusiness). Alongside this, the switch to homeworking has spawned a new localism which, depending on the COVID-19 trajectory, could have lasting impacts on commuting patterns, and the hierarchy of use between cities like Oxford and market towns and villages. The 15-minute community concept has resonated deeply across the County.

The hardest hit sector across the county is the Visitor Economy which will raise further socio-economic challenges. Businesses will need support in the face of ongoing government

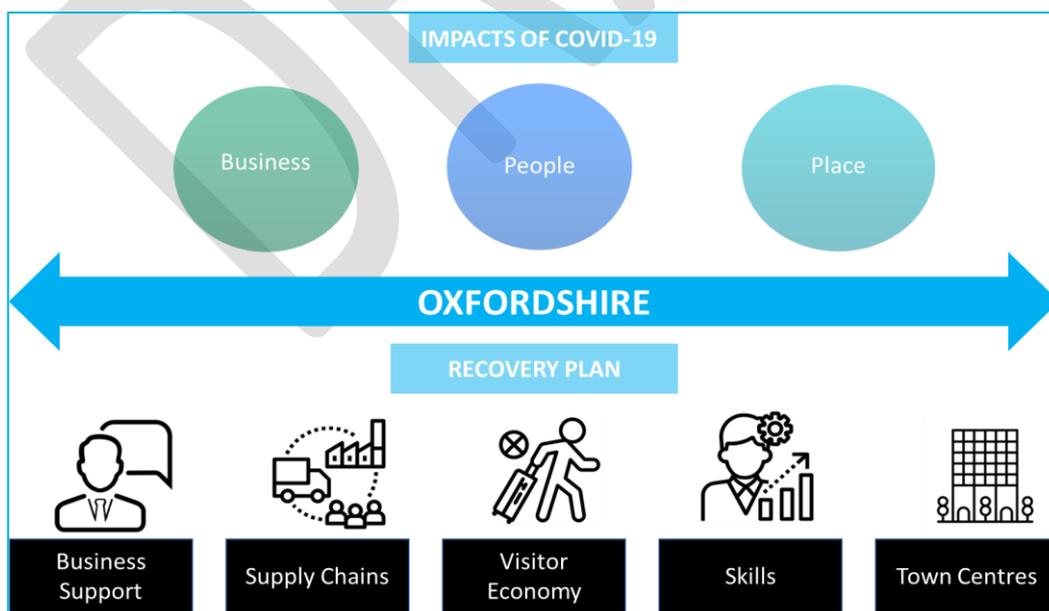
lockdowns as will the individuals employed in the sector (disproportionately those with lower skill levels and women – both core to Oxfordshire's inclusive economy aspirations). In addition, it is a vital source of entry level employment for young people and those returning to the labour market. As such, targeted employment and skills initiatives with tailored packages of wrap around support will be of increased importance.

Conclusions and Implications for the Economic Recovery Plan

The impacts of COVID have been felt across Oxfordshire's businesses, people and places and a co-ordinated County-wide response is required. There is a clear need for a targeted and well-resourced recovery plan to ensure Oxfordshire can continue to adapt to the new normal. Alongside this support to mitigate negative impacts, the County must also seize the opportunities emerging from the pandemic, including growing existing and new sector strengths and transitioning transition towards a zero-carbon economy.

Drawing together the findings from this comprehensive evidence base we have identified the following five priority action areas:

- *Business Support* – augmenting our existing provision to provide tailored packages of support, advice and finance to ensure our local businesses are well positioned overcome the challenges they are facing and enable them to grow back stronger.
- *Supply Chains* – to better understand the scope, nature and potential fragility of local supply chains and to identify how to improve resilience and identify opportunities for local business growth.
- *Visitor Economy* – sector-focussed programme reflecting the severity of the impact of COVID on our Visitor Economy and we can accelerate recovery and adapt to the new normal and accelerate.
- *Skills* – to support residents back into work including targeted support for our most vulnerable groups and those hit hardest by redundancies and business closures.
- *Town Centres* – a Countywide programme to reimagine and revitalise our key settlements to ensure they are viable and attractive places to live, work and play.



Working closely with local stakeholders from across sectors and across the County, we are developing these thematic priorities into our Economic Recovery Action Plan.

1 Introduction

Context: Drivers, Purpose, and Audience

- 1.1 In July 2020, Oxfordshire convened a senior stakeholder Task Group led by OxLEP and comprising chief officers from Oxfordshire's six local authorities, senior representatives from the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University and the Oxfordshire Growth Board, to oversee the development of a County-wide COVID-19 Economic Renewal Plan (ERP).
- 1.2 Although only four-months into the global crisis, it was clear to the Task Group that COVID-19's impact would go well beyond the pandemic's devastating health impacts and create a ripple-effect into Oxfordshire's local and sub-regional economies.
- 1.3 Whilst central government provided immediate nationwide COVID-19 assistance through the Job Retention Scheme (JRS, commonly referred to as *Furlough*) and subsequent *Kick-start* programmes, Oxfordshire's partners were keen to identify what was required in the Oxfordshire context to support 'Recovery and Renewal' across the county, post-COVID-19.
- 1.4 Due to the immediate economic challenges created by the pandemic and the disruption caused to employment, trade and supply chains in specific parts of the economy, the ERP will have a near term focus covering an immediate recovery and response period of 12-24 months. It will look at the ways and means to maximise existing activities and introduce additional responses to regain the pre-COVID-19 growth trajectory for the County and its places. The ERP's immediate purpose was to coordinate and galvanise a County-wide response. Should additional COVID-19 recovery support measures be introduced by government, then the Plan would also work to underpin subsequent Oxfordshire policies and funding submissions.
- 1.5 This document presents the baseline position of Oxfordshire's economy post-COVID-19, highlighting the areas which need concerted efforts from the Task Group and partners to aide recovery and boost the economy.
- 1.6 In preparing the ERP, two documents have been prepared:
 - This document, the *Economic Baseline Assessment*, presents the socio-economic data and forecasts for Oxfordshire and its districts, pre-and post-COVID-19. As such, it provides the authoritative and independent assessment of how, and where, the pandemic has affected the economy, and what has been 'lost' to the County and its places as a consequence of the crisis; and
 - A companion document, *Recovery Plan*, takes the evidence base and then uses this as the foundation to develop a formal and proactive plan of economic renewal for the County and its districts.

Methodology underpinning this Volume

- 1.7 A structured, mixed methods approach to assessing the impact of COVID-19 on the county of Oxfordshire and the five districts (Cherwell, Oxford, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, and West Oxfordshire) was undertaken. This methodology included the following:
- **Meta-analysis** of data availability for indicators which would provide information on the nature and extent of COVID-19 impacts on the socioeconomic conditions in Oxfordshire and the districts;
 - **Pre-COVID assessment.** A summary of relevant pre-COVID indicators using published reports (e.g. the Local Industrial Strategy) and data (including a structural breakdown of the economy of each district). This enables an understanding of the Oxfordshire economy in relation to the UK and also identifies key differences within the County;
 - **During-COVID assessment.** A detailed quantitative analysis of all identified relevant socioeconomic indicators with data available after March 2020. The primary analysis looks at timeseries, where possible, to track changes in key indicators post-March 2020 and snapshot analysis where timeseries data are not available. All indicators are assessed at district level where possible;
 - **Post-COVID projection.** A detailed series of sectoral level projections of employment and GVA indicators. At November 2020, two scenarios have been run. The first, using pre-COVID conditions, with the second accounting for COVID and subsequent control measure impacts on the economy. A third projection will be driven by economic indicators in 2021;
 - **Consultation.** Eight Insight Theme focus groups with public and private sector stakeholders covering The Visitor Economy, Town Centres, Green Growth, Rural Economy, Strategic Sites and Assets, Inclusive Growth, Business Growth and Supply Chains, and Jobs and Skills. Additionally, a working session was also held with Oxfordshire Chamber.

Structure of this Volume

- 1.8 The *Economic Baseline Assessment* is structured with the following five sections, with each beginning with headline messages, before presenting the evidence and analysis, and concluding with key messages and implications:
- Section 2, **The Baseline Position – The County in Overview pre-COVID-19**, provides analysis of the Oxfordshire economic position pre-COVID-19
 - Section 3, **The Oxfordshire Economy – understanding the effects of COVID-19**, with a focus on present data sets applying to national, subnational, and local levels;
 - Section 4, **Looking forward – The Structural Impacts**, sets out the results of econometric forecasting, providing insights into the pre/post COVID-19 projections for Oxfordshire's areas and sectors, and the growth consequences resulting;
 - Section 5, **Qualitative Insights**, summarises the inputs from eight Insight Theme focus groups, covering The Visitor Economy, Town Centres, Green Growth, Rural Economy, Strategic Sites and Assets, Inclusive Growth, Business Growth and Supply Chains, and Jobs and Skills; and
 - Finally, Section 6, **Implications for Economic Renewal Action** draws together the key themes from the preceding evidence and analyses, and synthesises this into a set of implications and challenges which the *Recovery Plan* then responds to.

Making Contact

- 1.9 Further detail regarding the Oxfordshire ERP and its ongoing development is available from **Ahmed Goga, Director of Strategy, OxLEP, ahmed.goga@oxfordshirelep.com**.

2 The Baseline Position – The County in Overview pre-COVID-19

Headline Messages

- Oxfordshire had a strong economic baseline position prior to COVID-19, particularly in knowledge intensive industries, driven by its high skill levels. This put it in a more resilient position to deal with shocks than the rest of the country
- But, variations exist across the county, with Cherwell and West Oxfordshire more reliant on service industry jobs and South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse being heavily represented by Professional, Scientific and Technical jobs
- Oxfordshire is leading the UK average in most key indicators of socio-economic strength, but growth is currently limited by constraints including availability of suitable R&D space, transport connectivity between employment sites, and housing affordability
- Oxfordshire has a diverse economy. Its key economic strengths are in Real Estate, Manufacturing, Education, Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities, and Wholesale & Retail Trades, but at a district level there are differences. Oxford City is proportionally much stronger in terms of output from the education sector, whereas West Oxfordshire, for example is disproportionately reliant on Arts/Entertainment
- Congestion and limited options for public transport are challenges for Oxfordshire. The heavy reliance on car ownership causes journey time issues on major arterial routes. Public transport routes also limit the work location options of poorer residents

Purpose of this Section

- 2.1 This section sets the context for the ERP by providing an overview of the state of the Oxfordshire economy, both absolutely and relative to the UK. This includes an assessment of the pre- and post-COVID-19 position situation in order to provide insight on the key challenges and opportunities that were present in Oxfordshire to March 2020, The Oxfordshire Economy – the general overview pre-COVID-19 overview.

Approach and work done

- 2.2 This section sets out Oxfordshire's pre-COVID-19 position in terms of challenges and opportunities and then highlights the key changes to this that have been recorded in the data since March 2020, and the implications of this.
- 2.3 The approach taken to produce this baseline position section was carried out in two stages. This first stage was to compile quantitative evidence, drawn from publicly available sources, internal and publicly available baseline evidence reports provided by OxLEP. Data was taken from the following sources:
- NOMIS
 - ONS

- Centre for Cities
- Google Mobility
- BICS Survey
- British Bank
- Think Broadband

2.4 Government Department Data

Recognised Strengths . . .

Key Messages

- A diverse and innovative economy supported by a highly skilled workforce
- A High concentration of innovation assets distributed around the County
- Leading the UK average in all key indicators of strength indicators, except for Productivity (limited by constraints on growth including connectivity, suitable R&D space, and housing affordability)

2.5 Oxfordshire is one of the UK's strongest economies, with sustained annual growth of 3.9 % per annum recorded between 2006-2019 and exceeding national and South East averages on most key measures (Figure 2-1).

2.6 The high concentration of innovation assets, both through business and academia, position the County at the forefront of global innovation in transformative technologies and sectors such as Fusion Technology, Autonomous Vehicles, Quantum Computing, Cryogenics, Space, Life Sciences, and Digital Health.

2.7 Oxfordshire is a leading centre of innovation, with a globally recognised bioscience cluster hosting 180 R&D companies, and over 32,250 businesses in total, covering a broad range of sectors from Space through to Digital. Innovative businesses are distributed across the County in a number of clusters, giving Oxfordshire a unique polycentric economic development profile. Higher Education in Oxfordshire is extremely strong, with the University of Oxford boasting the highest number of university spin-out companies in the UK and being partnered with some of the world's leading companies in R&D-intensive sectors.

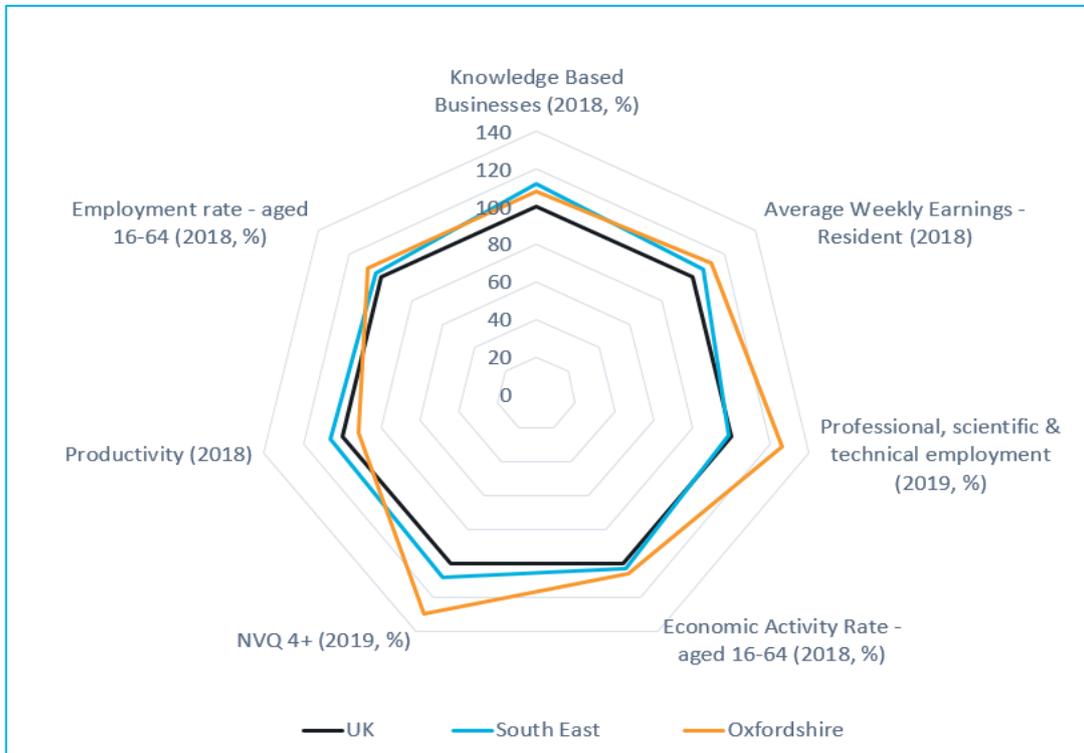
2.8 Supporting Oxfordshire's innovation and business ecosystem is a highly skilled workforce, with low unemployment. The percentage of people with NVQ4+ qualifications in all districts of Oxfordshire is higher than the national average but with district disparities, and average weekly earnings for residents and workers is above the national average (£632 and ££613 respectively, compared with £550 in the UK).

2.9 The unemployment rate was over 50 % lower than UK average in 2019 (1.3 %, compared to 2.7 %). Further to having a low unemployment rate, average wages for the lowest 10 % of earners is the second highest in the country, indicating that economic prosperity is trickling down well throughout the economy.

2.10 Figure 2-2 indicates the position of each individual district in relation to the UK on key economic indicators. It clearly shows that despite Oxfordshire performing better than the UK on all indicators except productivity, there are significant district level differences. Wages are and NVQ4+ levels are above UK levels in all districts. However, the degree to which they exceed national averages varies, with Oxford and South Oxford scoring particularly high relative to other districts for NVQ4+ levels. Another major sub-county level difference is the percentage of employment in Professional, Scientific, and Technical employment. This is

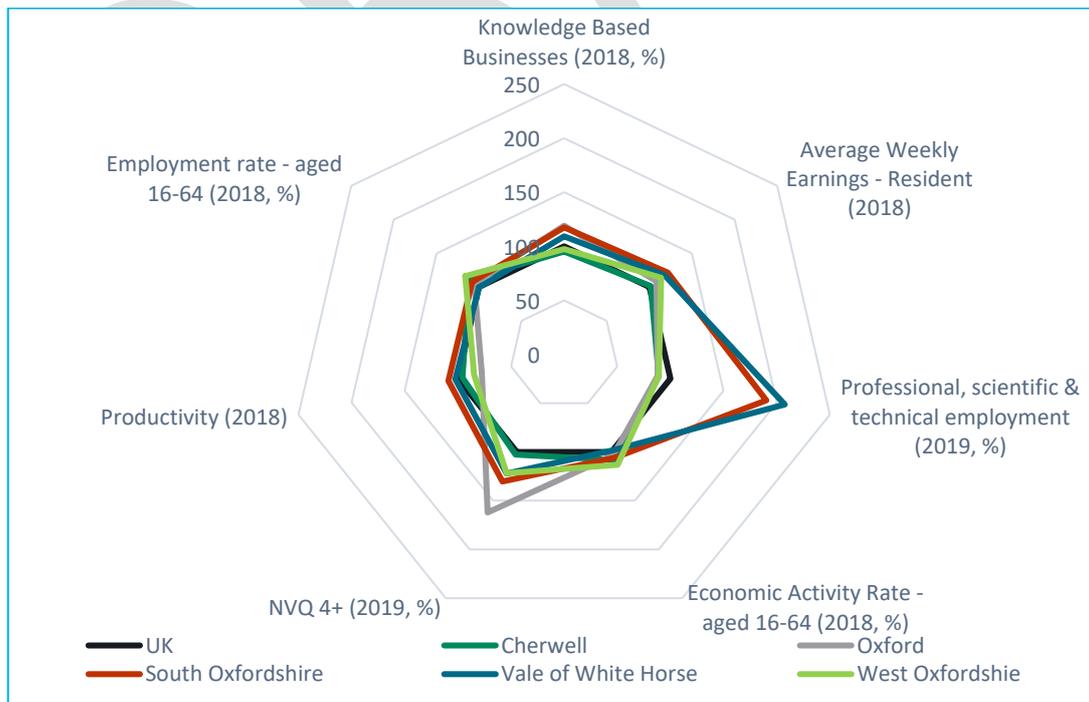
especially pronounced in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse, whereas Cherwell, West Oxfordshire and Oxford are below UK averages on this measure. It is important to consider these sub-county differences in all activities geared towards economic recovery.

Figure 2-1: Oxfordshire's key economic indicators indexed to UK and South East averages



Source: ONS, 2018/19

Figure 2-2: Oxfordshire's District key economic indicators indexed to UK averages



Source: ONS, 2018/19

... but also Challenges

Key Messages

- Growth is being held back across the County by limitations in supply of R&D space, housing, and connectivity
- There is heavy reliance on car ownership, leading to congestion issues on major arterial routes and limiting the options available for residents without car ownership
- Oxford's heavy dependence on Education is, potentially, a key risk, particularly given difficulties with international collaboration under COVID-19 conditions
- There are stark sub-county level differences in the economic make-up and employment levels, meaning one solution may not fit all

2.11 Oxfordshire's rapid growth has generated some key economic challenges, with transport, housing, and energy struggling to meet the population demand, and businesses finding it difficult to grow and scale given competing demands for land. As such, despite being a vital net contributor to the UK economy, Oxfordshire is underperforming relative to its peers regarding its levels of productivity (Figure 2-1).

2.12 The heavy reliance on car travel between housing and employment locations is a major issue. Severe traffic congestion on key routes around the County, such as the A34 and the A40, have been challenges for some time. Prior to March 2020, there was already an increasing demand for improved digital infrastructure, driven by the increasing use of cloud storage and the digitalisation of business processes, being driven by Industry 4.0. Oxfordshire had varying speeds and coverage of Superfast and Ultrafast broadband across the County, and download speeds ranging from 10 % below the UK average to 30 % above. The Digital Infrastructure Programme lifted Superfast broadband coverage from 69 % in 2014 to 98 % in 2019, but demand for Ultrafast and Fibre broadband is ever increasing, particularly in innovative businesses.

2.13 As highlighted above, the County is home to a world leading Higher Education system. But, at the same time, Oxfordshire's early years education and Primary and Secondary school achievements fall behind on a number of measures, resulting in lower than average rates of social mobility. And even though a key strength for the County is the number of science- and technology-related companies, the lack of STEM related skills amongst the workforce and the low annual growth rate of apprenticeships across the County are key weaknesses, constraining the scaling of businesses. This is particularly the case in Cherwell and West Oxfordshire, which have low levels of employment in Professional, Scientific and Technical roles.

County-wide Variation

2.14 Oxfordshire performs economically strongly, but there are variations within the County, with varying demographics and levels of deprivation and wage disparity. All five local authorities are in the 50 % least deprived English local authorities in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. However, the City of Oxford is in the top quartile for deprivation related to Housing and Air Quality – this includes measures of affordability, overcrowding, housing quality, and homelessness.

2.15 Deprivation as a whole is concentrated in the South of Oxford City and Banbury in Cherwell; Abingdon in the Vale of White Horse district also has a high level of deprivation (Figure 2-3). The City of Oxford in particular has one of the lowest levels of workers with No Qualifications,

at 3.2 %, compared with a UK average of 8%, yet a significant proportion of the workforce have low skills and qualifications.

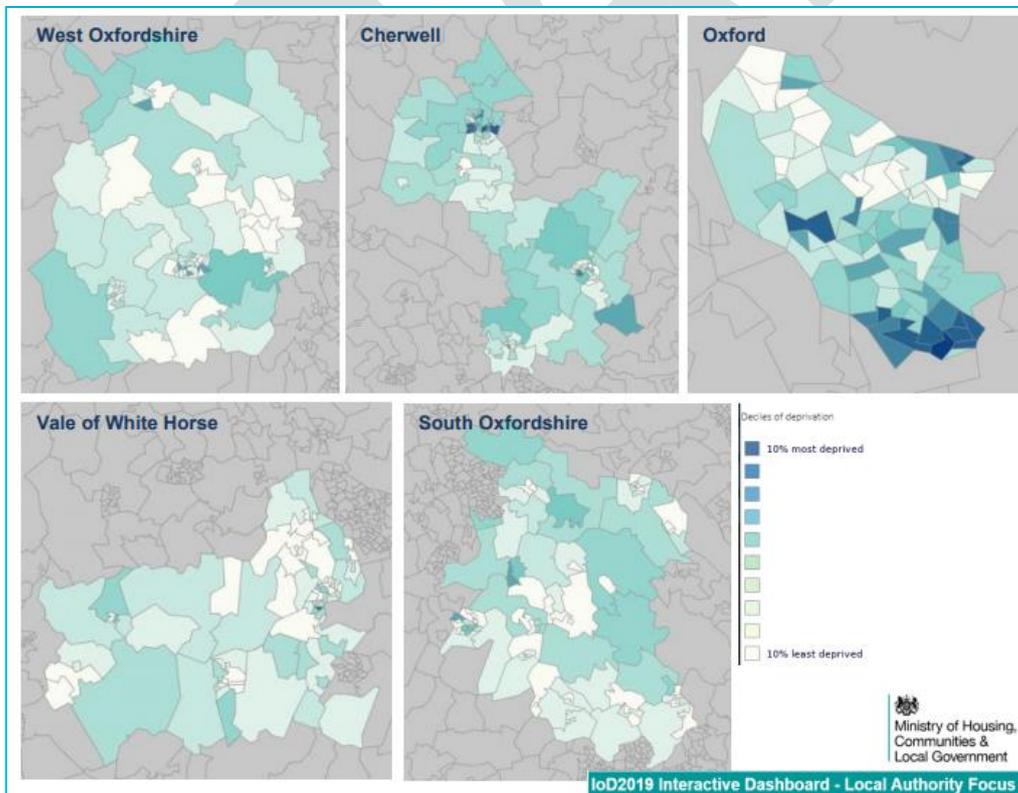
2.16 On wages, South and West Oxfordshire have average salaries at around two-thirds the rate of the other three authorities, driven by these districts having significant 'out commuter' movements to other local authorities. A significant issue across much of the County is housing affordability, with one of the highest price to earnings ratios in the country, at 12:1, with some parts of the County rising to 17:1. This is also reflected in housing affordability, which is low across much of the County

2.17 In terms of sectoral drivers of the economy, the County as a whole is driven largely by five broad sectors, which produce around 60 % of the GVA output from Oxfordshire. These five sectors are listed below by percentage share of total GVA output for the County:

- Real Estate;
- Manufacturing;
- Education;
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities; and
- Wholesale & Retail Trades.

2.18 Of these, Education is represented significantly above the national average, with Manufacturing, Professional/Scientific/Technical activities, and Real Estate also above national averages. However, there is a deal of variation across the County on the relative strengths of sectors - Table 2-1 below indicates the very high proportional strength of the Education sector in Oxford and of the Arts/Entertainment sector in West Oxfordshire.

Figure 2-3: Indices of multiple deprivation 2019



Source: Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2019

- 2.19 It is important to understand the proportional strengths of each local authority (which is done by identifying areas with a Location Quotient – LQ above 1.5, Table 2-1) prior to March 2020. This enables us to identify the driving sectors of local economies and therefore how each local authority may be affected differently by economic shocks. This is crucial to developing a successful ERP which addresses all districts' key challenges and aid understanding of the many uncertain impacts of COVID-19.
- 2.20 In the next section, the pre-March 2020 position is updated with data available after the initial COVID-19 lockdown, to show how these measures have impacted Oxfordshire to date. Where possible, this is analysed at a district level. Where this has not been possible, it is indicated in the document text.

Table 2-1: Strengths of broad sectors in the five Local Authorities in Oxfordshire relative to the UK in GVA. 1 = UK average. Light Green = relative strong sector, dark green = relative very strong sector

Sector	Oxfordshire percentage of GVA	Oxfordshire LQ	Cherwell LQ	Oxford LQ	South Oxfordshire LQ	Vale of White Horse LQ	West Oxfordshire LQ
Real Estate Activities	16	1.17	1.33	0.80	1.26	1.21	1.51
Manufacturing	13	1.33	1.68	1.03	1.73	0.68	1.79
Education	11	1.87	0.77	4.10	0.98	1.17	1.22
Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities	10	1.24	0.70	1.01	1.84	1.95	0.63
Wholesale & Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles	9	0.89	1.26	0.47	1.13	0.90	0.76
Information & Communication	7	1.04	1.01	1.11	0.56	1.78	0.48
Human Health & Social Work Activities	7	0.98	0.77	1.92	0.40	0.63	0.68
Construction	5	0.88	0.84	0.72	0.76	1.22	1.00
Administrative & Support Service Activities	4	0.69	0.49	0.50	1.29	0.56	0.74
Public Administration & Defence	4	0.92	1.60	0.98	0.48	0.68	0.59
Transportation & Storage	3	0.61	0.63	0.38	0.69	0.63	0.99
Accommodation & Food Service Activities	3	1.05	0.91	1.12	1.18	0.64	1.68
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing; Mining & Quarrying	2	0.62	0.65	0.23	0.45	1.33	0.57
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2	1.18	1.40	0.61	0.97	0.77	3.19

Sector	Oxfordshire percentage of GVA	Oxfordshire LQ	Cherwell LQ	Oxford	South Oxfordshire LQ	Vale of White Horse LQ	West Oxfordshire LQ
Other Service Activities ¹	2	1.18	1.62	0.64	0.86	1.40	1.80
Financial & Insurance Activities	1	0.08	0.04	0.09	0.15	0.06	0.04

Source: ONS, 2018

¹ This section (as a residual category) includes the activities of membership organisations, the repair of computers and personal and household goods and a variety of personal service activities not covered elsewhere in the classification

3 The Oxfordshire Economy – understanding the effects of COVID-19

Headline Messages

- A strong economic base in industries less impacted by COVID-19 restrictions means Oxfordshire's economy has been more resilient to the Pandemic than most areas of the country
- However, the Visitor Economy has been hit very hard. *Furlough* and job losses are highest in this sector, and city centre footfall and spend are down 50 % to October 2020. The scale of this damage means that the Visitor Economy is not expected to recover until 2024
- Broad industry-level data does not tell the full story, with some businesses (particularly in Life Sciences) having increases in turnover, while others suffer losses of over 50 % (tourism related industries)
- Cherwell and West Oxfordshire have been hit harder than other areas in Oxfordshire, likely due to higher levels of baseline deprivation and a high dependence on the Arts/Entertainment sector, respectively
- Major challenges present themselves for the transport sector, with bus use and rail use recovering to maximum levels of still below 50% of pre-COVID-19 norms in summer 2020, before falling again throughout the autumn
- One fifth of businesses in Europe are expected to default on loans and make redundancies, a trend that looks to be similar in Oxfordshire based on business loan applications to the UK government. Innovative businesses are more resilient but still need support, particularly at early stages.

Purpose of this section

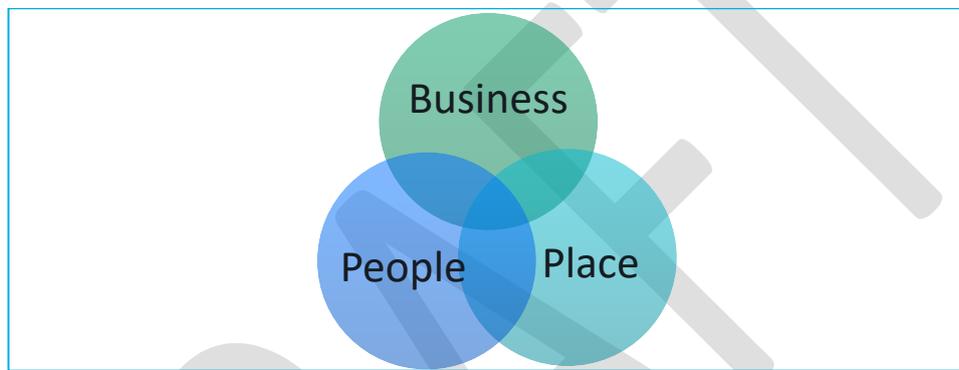
- 3.1 This section builds on the baseline socio-economic indicators for Oxfordshire and looks at how these have changed throughout the year since March 2020, in the highly changeable unprecedented conditions created by COVID-19. It also assesses how the economy has responded to the series of measures introduced by Government over this period and to mitigate the economic effects of the pandemic.

Approach and Work Done

- 3.2 Following the assessment of the baseline data pre-COVID-19, a meta data analysis of c. 130 indicators of economic prosperity was undertaken, covering the socio-economic spectrum, and then prioritised these for review based on their availability post-March 2020 (i.e. the initial date for the introduction of COVID-19 lockdown measures). Those data which were available were then analysed pre- and post-March 2020 to build a picture of the change to the economy brought about by COVID-19 and subsequent government interventions, with this analysis for the County as a whole and disaggregated to district level.

- 3.3 This section is further supported by Section 4, Qualitative Insights, by qualitative insights gained from eight insight calls with c. 40 representatives from Oxfordshire's public and private sector, alongside a working session with Oxfordshire Chamber.
- 3.4 COVID-19 and the its subsequent mitigation measures introduced by Government have had a significant impact on all areas of Oxfordshire and the UK. The underlying strengths and challenges of each local economy will determine how individual places have responded accordingly Of course, the level of impact varies by place, dependent on its prior socioeconomic conditions and the severity of the restrictions in place.
- 3.5 In analysing the available economic data for Oxfordshire, we have set out key findings based Accordingly, In this sub-section the key findings from COVID-19 related socioeconomic data are presented and analysed, based around three key domains - *Business, People, Place* - which although being separate, interact with, and influence each other.

Figure 3-1: Organising lenses through which to understand Oxfordshire's pre-and post COVID-19 positions



Source: Steer-ED, 2020

Businesses

Key Messages

- Oxfordshire's historically strong sectors have been hit less hard by turnover decreases as a result of COVID-19
- The area's strength in knowledge intensive industry is adding resilience to the economy in some areas, but Accommodation/Food and Arts/Entertainment suffering heavy losses
- Broad sectoral trends do not tell the whole story. Impacts are specific to the activities undertaken by businesses and the supply chains they operate in
- Business support is crucial for both short term cash flow and for safeguarding long-term innovation potential

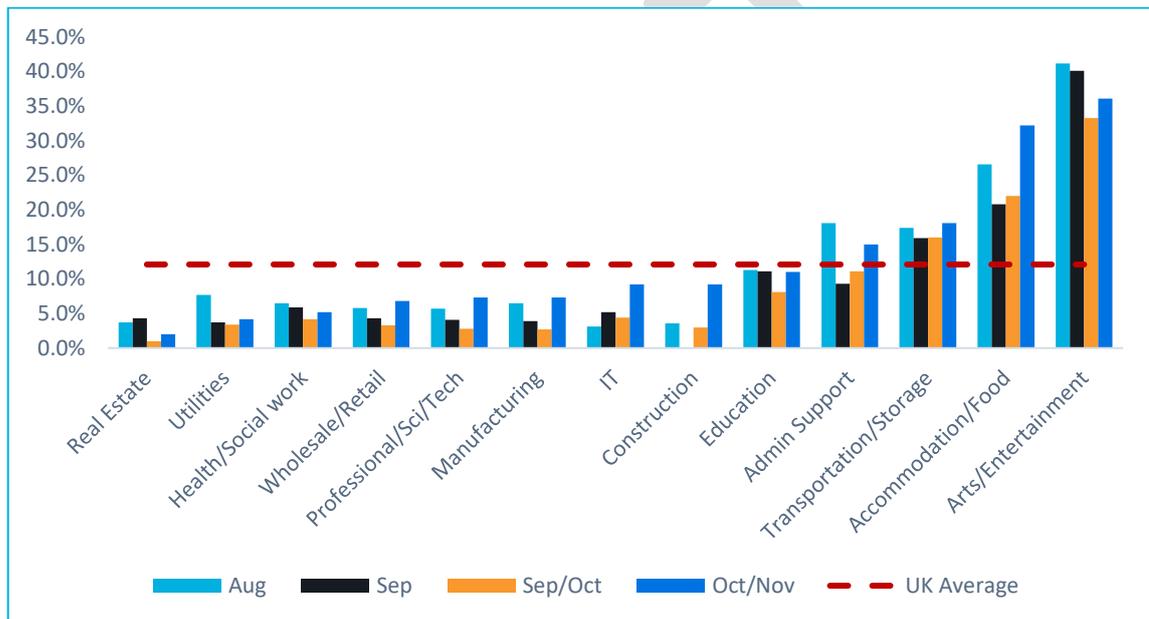
- 3.6 The unprecedented nature of the pandemic has meant that it is important to recognised that all businesses have been impacted in some way by COVID-19. The type of activity that a business engages in determines the extent to which these impacts have been highly negative, slightly negative, or, in some cases, positive. As a general rule, businesses reliant on face-to-face and in situ activities and those reliant on gatherings of workings have been the hardest hit and remain the most vulnerable to future COVID-19 control measures.
- 3.7 Data is available through a number of government and publicly available sources on some key indicators of COVID-19 impact. Due to limitations, some of these are only collected at a

national level. However, national level trends are broadly in line with local level projections based on the data available at both scales. Given this similarity, impacts on specific sectors nationally are indicative of county and local level trends. Qualitative insights, which are presented later in the report, are also used to supplement evidence on local level trends.

Impact of COVID-19 on business turnover by economic sector turnover

3.8 Data on the effect of COVID-19 on business turnover by sector is available only at the national level. Overall, the proportion of UK businesses reporting a decrease of more than 50% in turnover² is 8.5 %. The sectors most impacted are the Arts/Entertainment and Accommodation/Food, with – at one stage – 40% of businesses nationally in Arts/Entertainment reporting over a 50% drop in turnover (Figure 3-2).

Figure 3-2: Percentage of businesses with >50% decrease in turnover by sector



Source: BICS Survey, November 2020

3.9 One of Oxfordshire's most dominant sectors is Education, which is the fifth most impacted sector nationally on this metric. However, other dominant sectors in Oxfordshire (Real Estate, Professional/Scientific/Technical Activities, and Manufacturing have been less impacted. This indicates that Oxfordshire has been less hard hit than the majority of other places in the UK.

3.10 At district level within Oxfordshire, the data on business sectors highly impacted by COVID-19 imply that West Oxfordshire has been particularly hard hit, due to its strong relative reliance on Arts/Entertainment, as indicated in Table 2-1.

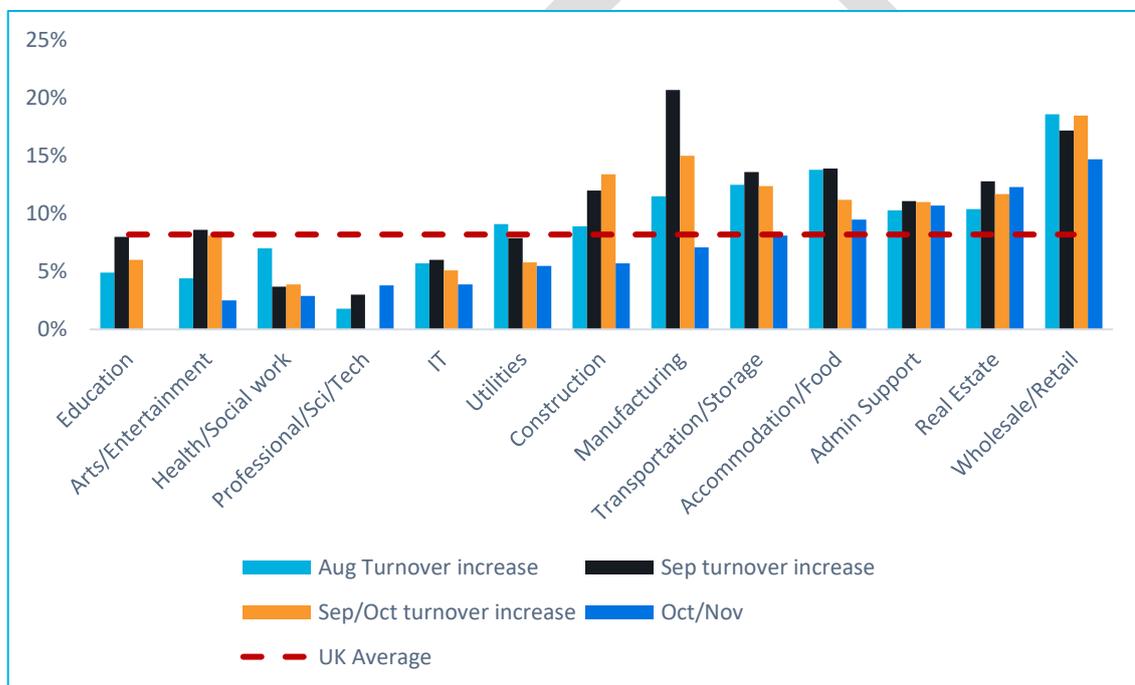
3.11 The most recent September/October BICS survey shows that compared to August, the number of UK businesses, across the majority of sectors, reporting a greater than 50% decrease in turnover has fallen. However, this has reversed to some degree in October/November with the introduction of further COVID-19 control measures.

² Business Impacts of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) Sep/October 2020 release

3.12 Manufacturing, Wholesale/Retail, Real Estate, Professional, scientific & technical activities and Education sectors all represent a high proportion of GVA for Oxfordshire (c. 60 % of all GVA). Two of these sectors, Real Estate and Wholesale/Retail have had the highest number of businesses reporting increases in turnover (Figure 3-3). With this, and Manufacturing performing around average, Oxfordshire has fared better than the average UK county, due to its underlying strengths in these sectors.

3.13 However, there is cause for concern that Education is the sector with the lowest percentage of businesses reporting any increase in turnover. This is, however tempered by data on university admissions in 2020, showing that there has been an increase in the number of applications to universities of 3.5% compared with the same time in 2019. The boost in admissions is partly down to the continued popularity of studying in the UK by foreign students, with international recruitment having increased by 1.7%³. It is driven primarily by the jump in A-level grades caused by the UK government's decision to revert grades to teacher assessed grades.

Figure 3-3: Percentage of businesses with an increase in turnover by sector



Source: BICS Survey, November 2020

3.14 Not fully captured by these data are the variation within sectors. For instance, a low percentage of Professional/Scientific/Technical sector businesses have reported increases in turnover since COVID-19 restrictions were put in place. However, insights from business leaders and qualitative analysis – discussed in section four indicated that some businesses in the Life Sciences sector, for example, in Oxfordshire have reported significant increases in turnover and demand. This has been reported across Oxfordshire and is a strong indicator that the economy of Oxfordshire is performing better than most of the UK; its underlying strengths in technology, R&D and innovation and other sectors such as real estate, are of crucial importance presently and going forward.

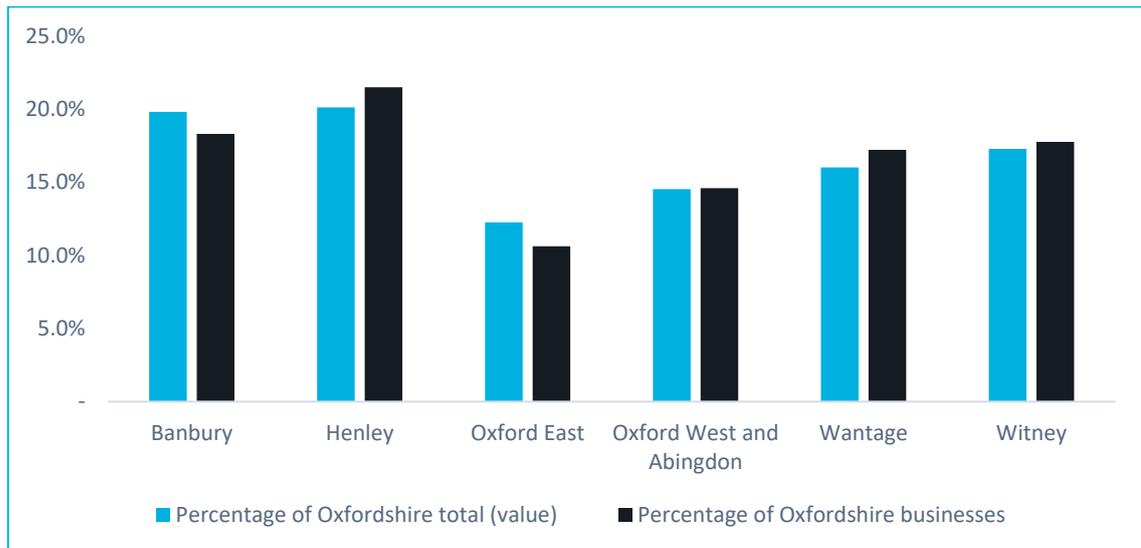
³ UCAS, July 2020

Business Loans

- 3.15 A study published by McKinsey and Co. in October 2020⁴ highlights that one fifth of businesses in Europe are expected to default on loans and make redundancies. Further to this, it reports that if revenues remain constant at current levels, 55% of SMEs could close by September 2021, and could be as high as 77% if revenues decline.
- 3.16 British Business Bank (BBB) loan data is available down to constituency-level, which cuts across some district boundaries. BBB provides two loan services for SMEs to help them access finance for support during the COVID-19 pandemic. These come in the form of the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BLS), offering up to £50,000 of support for cashflow issues and the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), offering up to £5m support to business. It is important to track trends in this measure, as this will provide indications of the level of businesses at risk of further cashflow issues. The schemes were due to end on 30 November 2020 however this has now been extended to March 2021, providing companies with the necessary cashflow in the short term but at the same time increasing their leverage and therefore financial risk.
- 3.17 In Oxfordshire, to 2 August 2020, about 600 CBILS and 8,600 BLS had been offered, to a total value of c. £400m. This equates to 0.9 % of the UK total. This is slightly below the Oxfordshire share of UK businesses, at 1.2 %, indicating that businesses in the County have been impacted slightly below the UK average.
- 3.18 Within the County, the number and value of claims varies by constituency, with the largest number and value of loans offered in Henley and Banbury, respectively at the southern and northern ends of the County (Figure 3-4). Banbury and Oxford East have had the highest value of claims relative to the size of the business base in these constituencies. By value, generally all constituencies have had loan rates above that of the national average, with particularly large claims for CBILS being made in Wantage – 36 % higher than the national average. This could be due to the large proportion of businesses manufacturing expensive goods in Wantage compared to the other constituencies (pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and transport and equipment), although a definitive reason for this cannot be identified in the available data.
- 3.19 Future Fund loan data is available down to Regional level. The Government set up the Future Fund to support innovative businesses who typically are unable to access other government business support programmes, such as CBILS, because they are either pre-revenue or pre-profit and typically rely on equity investment. To 15 November 2020, £875m of convertible loans had been approved to UK businesses under the scheme.

⁴ McKinsey & Co., 2020, COVID-19 and European small and medium-size enterprises: How they are weathering the storm?

Figure 3-4: Value of CBILS and BBLs offered by constituency as a percentage of Oxfordshire total (blue) and business numbers as a percentage of Oxfordshire total (black)

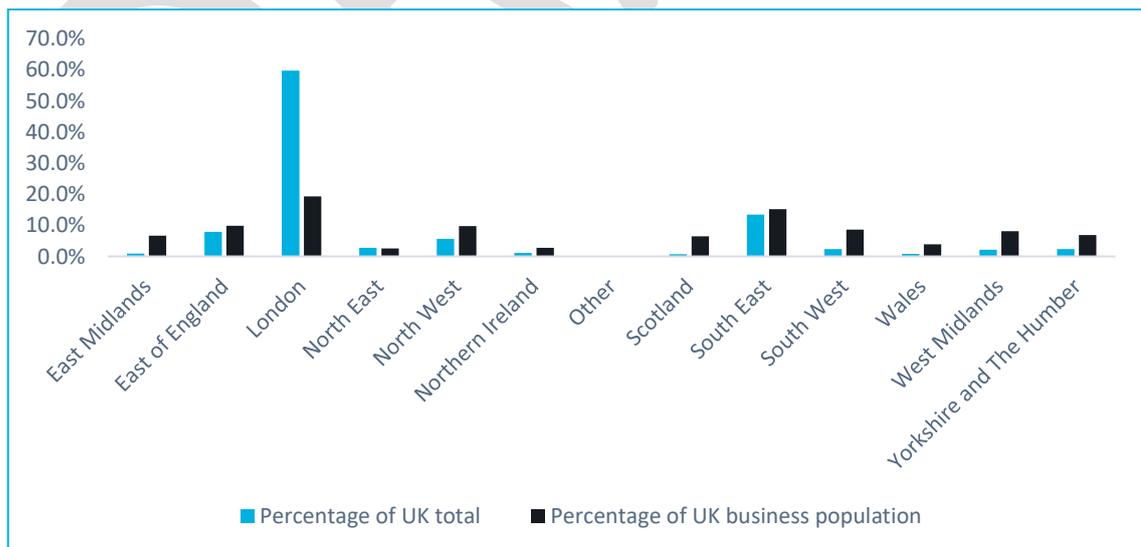


Source: British Business Bank, August 2020

3.20

Figure 3-5, highlights that loans to innovative businesses have been highly concentrated in London, with the South East receiving around 14 % of all approved loans. Loans from the Future Fund are contingent on the business having in place a suite of investors who will provide match funding, so this data does not directly show that businesses in London or the South East are suffering more due to COVID-19. In fact, it indicates that relative to the business populations in these regions, innovative businesses are more likely to meet the requirements for the loans. In turn this highlights that London and the South East (including Oxfordshire) have a large share of innovative businesses.

Figure 3-5: Value of Future Fund loans approved as a percentage of UK totals by region (blue) and business numbers as a percentage of UK total (black)



Source: British Business Bank, November 2020

Innovation

- 3.21 Innovative businesses, particularly SMEs, have been hit by COVID-19. Key impacts, uncovered in a survey of over 70 SMEs in South East England related to a drop in demand (52 %), delays in product/service trials (20 %), as well as limited access to R&D facilities (5 %), and the subsequent need to cut costs. Despite this, 10 % of SMEs have identified growth opportunities relating to COVID-19.
- 3.22 Based on the July 2020 survey of innovative SMEs conducted by Oxford Innovation⁵, the majority of these types of SMEs are in higher end markets which have been less negatively impacted than other sectors (Healthcare, IT, and Energy, making up 52 % of SMEs in the analysis). Providing support to businesses in these industries is crucial in providing jobs that will be resilient to COVID-19 and for the long-term for Oxfordshire.
- 3.23 Drawing on research undertaken by Advanced Oxford and Oxford Innovation, it is clear that to reverse the negative impacts of COVID-19 and enable SMEs to capitalise on new emerging opportunities, a clear and stable support package that is underpinned by evidence is required. Key features of this, as advocated by the research, includes the following components:
- Lab/R&D space needs to be delivered at pace, with demand already outstripping supply prior to March 2020 by 100 %⁶. The UK as a whole is well behind the leading global cities for the availability of lab/R&D space, with around 15,000 sq. ft. available in March 2020 in Oxford, compared to 16.6m sq. ft. in Boston and 1.36m sq. ft. in New York;
 - Increased brokering between firms and their supply chains to stimulate collaboration, to match-make, and to build consortia, so helping to break down perceived barriers for SMEs;
 - Providing SMEs with support that is stable and easy to navigate. Currently support is fragmented. This does not mean to change drastically the support already provided, but to make it more accessible;
 - Seed and VC funding since March 2020 has declined, with investors focusing on existing portfolio countries. Advanced Oxford estimate that although around 50 % of active investors anticipate making the same or more investment than the previous 12 months, 50 percent expect their investments in early stage companies to reduce;
 - The development of sector-based roadmaps which provide end to end training in priority sectors. This will address the perception presented in Advanced Oxford's work that the UK is too reactive on skills development.
 - Capitalizing on Net Zero opportunities. The University of Oxford has identified five priority areas which have innovation potential and could deliver maximum economic multiplier and climate impacts: These areas should be a focus for green innovation:
 - Clean Physical Infrastructure;
 - Building Efficiency Retrofits;
 - Investment in Education and Training;
 - Natural Capital Investment; and
 - Clean R&D.

⁵ Oxford Innovate, COVID-19-19 impact on innovative SMEs, July 2020

⁶ Advanced Oxford, Post-Pandemic Economic Recovery, July 2020

People

Key Messages

- The jobs 'hit' in most areas of Oxfordshire has been lower than the UK average, although claimant counts have doubled in the county since pre-COVID-19. In particular, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire are suffering the most
- There was a big reduction in furloughed workers from September to October, but closure of the scheme in November is likely to have knock-on impacts on unemployment
- Arts/Entertainment and Accommodation/Food have been the hardest hit sectors, with employment in these sectors continuing to be highly vulnerable to further control measures.
- Young and old (65+) hit hardest, as companies seek to reduce costs and become more efficient. The old have been more impacted than in previous recessions, likely resulting from the greater impact COVID-19 has on the older population.

OBJ

3.24 The deepest concern for a large portion of the population of Oxfordshire is the impact of COVID-19 and associated mitigation measures on employment. Data has been published by the government on a monthly basis since March 2020 on Job Retention Scheme (JRS) statistics and Claimant Counts (a proxy for unemployment).

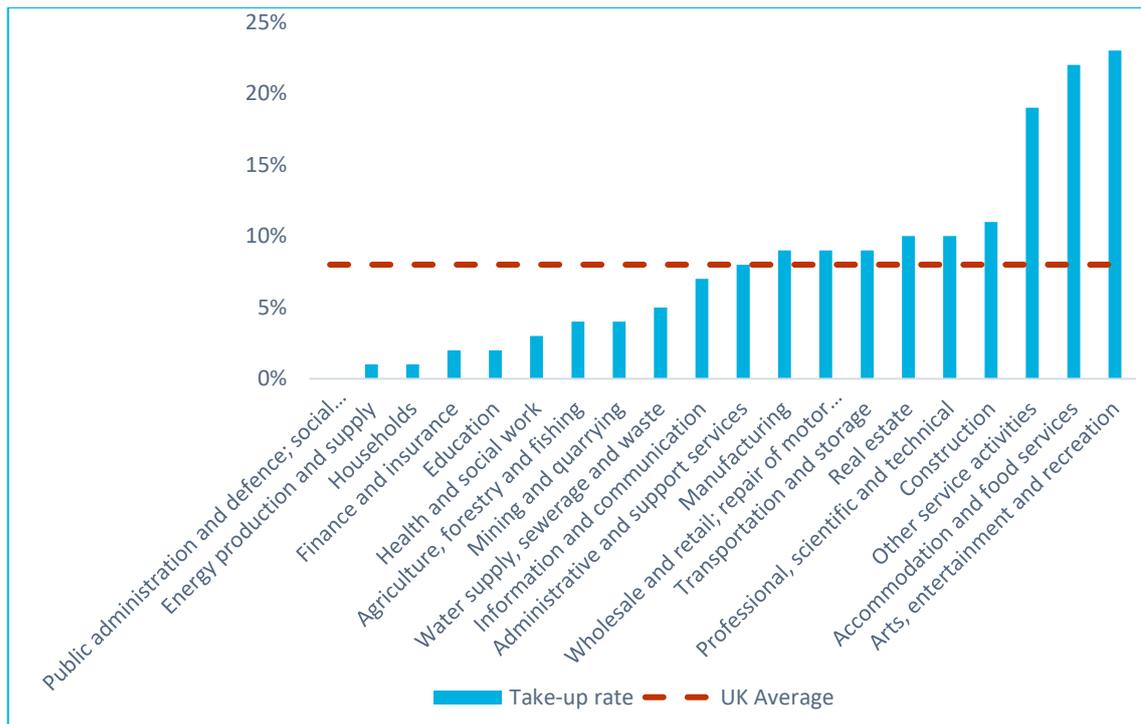
Employment impacts – Job Retention Scheme and Unemployment

3.25 Employment impacts of COVID-19 can be tracked by two key metrics: JRS take-up (by sector, age group, and geography), and Universal Credit Claims (as a proportion of population by age and geography). These data are available to district level as totals and to national level by sector.

3.26 On the 5 November 2020, the Chancellor announced a five-month long extension the JRS scheme. To date, JRS has protected a large number of jobs, which has to a degree tempered the impacts on employment. However, the impact of scheme closure next spring – and how this occurs – will likely have some impact on employment. Thus, it is important to track the trends in both JRS take-up and claimant counts to understand which sectors are most vulnerable to the withdrawal of the scheme.

3.27 Figure 3-6 presents JRS take-up by sector. The average take-up rate of the Jobs Retention Scheme across the UK is 8 %. Those sectors with the highest take-up are Arts/Entertainment/Recreation and Accommodation/Food Services, mirroring the sectors reported above as having the greatest reductions in turnover.

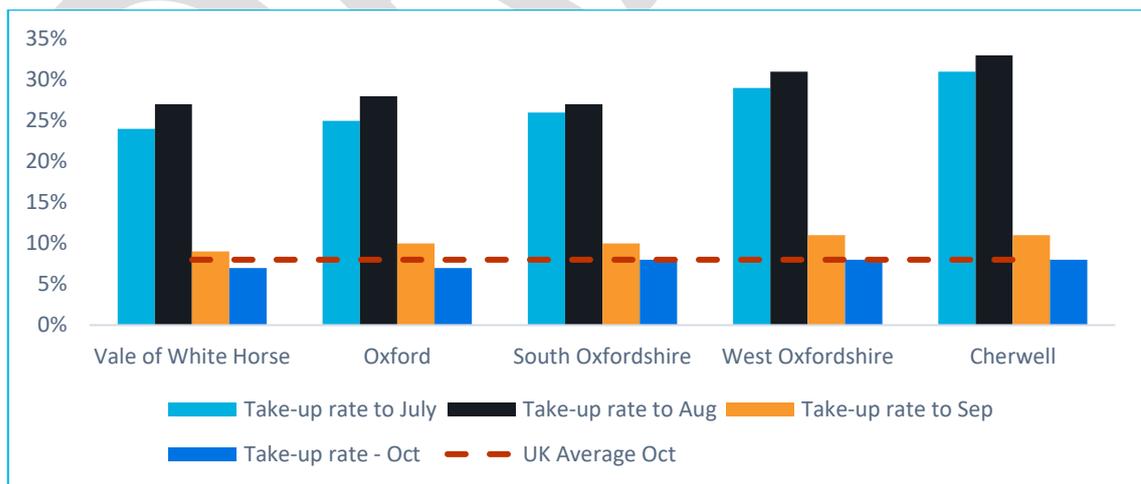
Figure 3-6: Job Retention Scheme take-up by sector (UK) at 31 August 2020



Source: HMRC, October 2020

3.28 The figures suggest that the Oxfordshire economy has been more resilient than elsewhere as it has a lower relative dependence on outputs from those sectors that have been hit most hard (Figure 3-6). In terms of JRS take-up, three of Oxfordshire's most dominant sectors, Manufacturing, Real Estate and Wholesale/Retail are similar to the UK average, while Health and social work and Education have been less hard hit.

Figure 3-7: JRS take-up by Local Authority



Source: JRS take up, November 2020

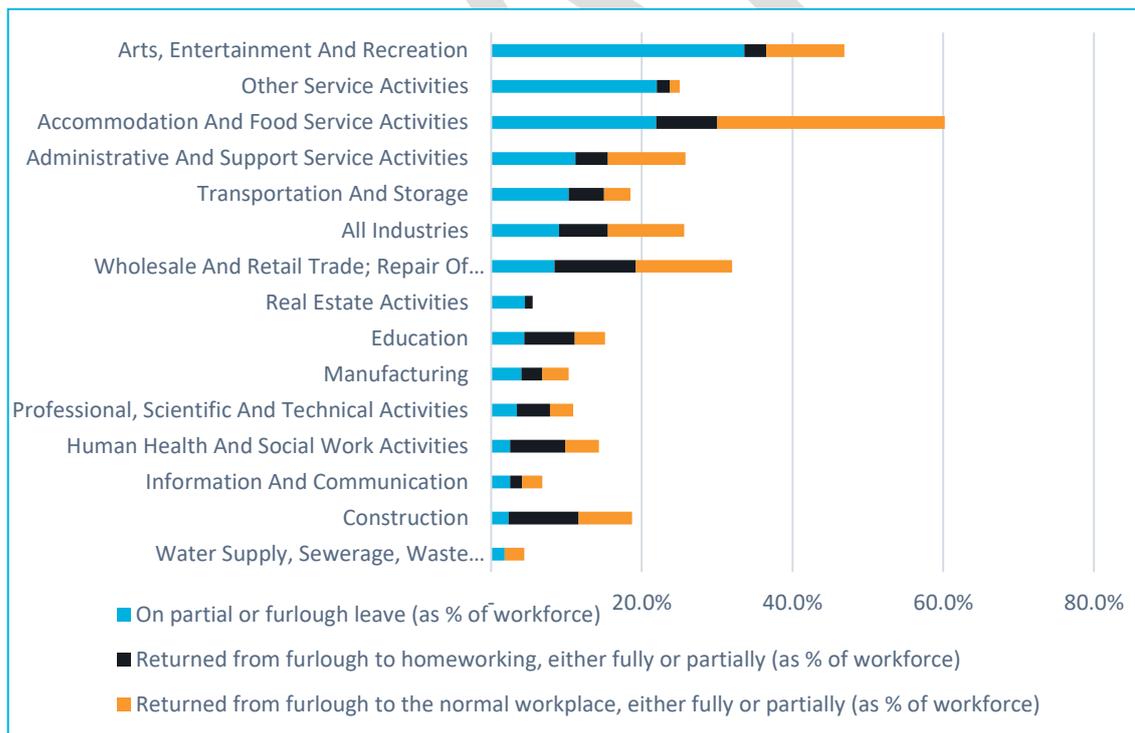
3.29 Locally, Figure 3-7 shows that Cherwell and West Oxfordshire have seen the highest take-up of JRS, while the Vale of White Horse has shown the lowest. Overall, all local authorities had between 24 % and 31 % furloughed staff in July, this rose in August but has since fallen significantly in September and October. Take-up of the JRS in September ranges from 9 % to

11 % in the County, with only Cherwell and West Oxfordshire above the national average. The Arts / Entertainment / Recreation sector is strongly represented in West Oxfordshire, which can explain the greater JRS take-up rate in the district. Cherwell has a significant proportion of Oxfordshire's more deprived areas, with lower skilled jobs which have been affected disproportionately by the pandemic. It is noticeable that the district has a significant percentage of those employed in 'Other Services Activities' being on *furlough*, with limited returns to work for this cohort within the workforce.

3.30 Figure 3-8 indicates that a large proportion of people in most industries have returned to work. However, the percentages of those returning to work in Arts/Entertainment/Recreation and Accommodation/Food Services have been well below 50 %. These sectors are still struggling and are equally those subject to the most immediate impacts of further lockdown measures and will most likely need intensive and targeted support.

3.31 Age related *furlough* data is available at the national level. In terms of demographics, the younger and older workers within the labour market have been hit hardest according to JRS statistics, with a higher proportion of claims being made in the 16-24 and 65+ categories than other age groups (Figure 3-9). Importantly, older citizens have been hit harder during the pandemic, as a proportion of the labour market, than other previous economic recessions. This is particularly concerning given the barriers to training and employment in existence for older people⁷ at later stages of their career.

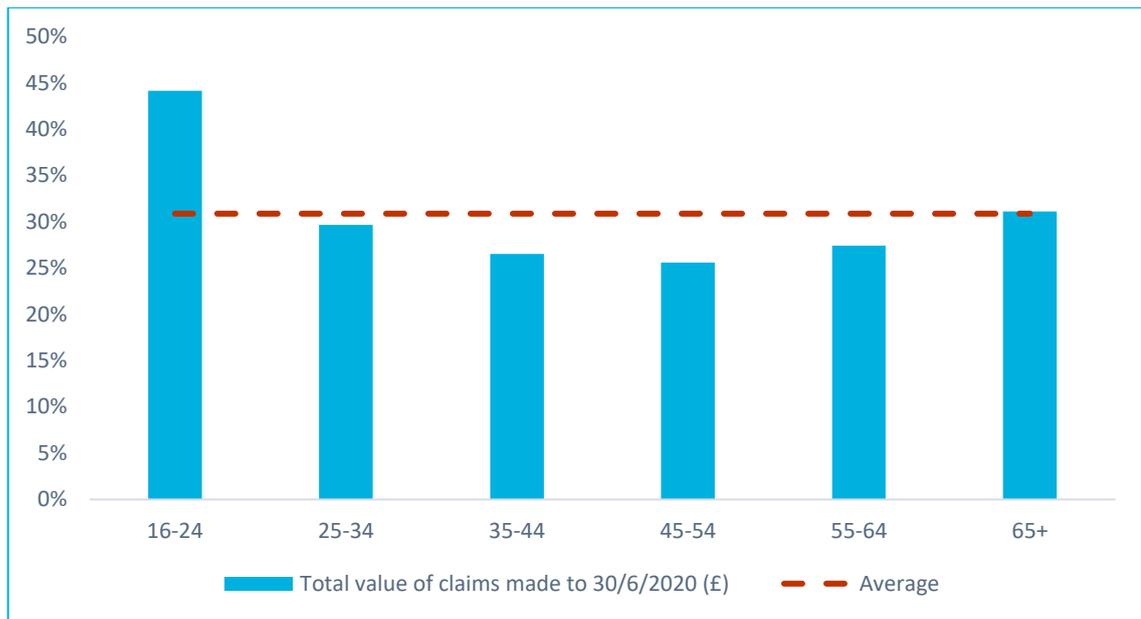
Figure 3-8: Percentage of employees returned from *Furlough*



Source: BICS Survey, November 2020

⁷ The University of Birmingham, The Impact of the COVID-19-19 Crisis on Older Workers, 2020

Figure 3-9: Proportion of working population in each age group registered to JRS to July 2020



Source: HMRC, Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics, July 2020

- 3.32 Claimant count data is available down to District level as a percentage of the population. In terms of unemployment, this rose quickly through April 2020, but has since levelled off. Relative to the UK, Oxfordshire has seen a larger proportional increase, but from a much lower base (Figure 3-10). Cherwell and West Oxfordshire have shown the highest proportional increases, replicating the JRS data.
- 3.33 Unemployment has been protected to a degree by the JRS. However, this will need to be continually monitored as JRS comes to an end, as there is likely to be a further spike in claimant counts depending on how and when this occurs.

Figure 3-10: Claimant Count as a percentage of population

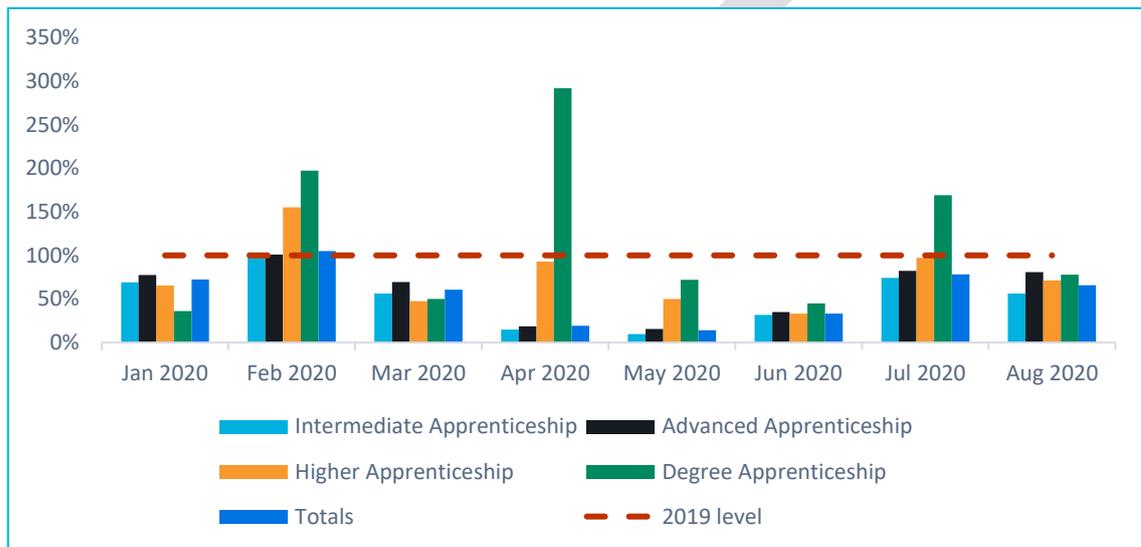


Source: Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey, 2020

Apprenticeships and training

3.34 Apprenticeship data is available at national level, though there is limited data available on apprenticeships and training post-March 2020. However, the Department for Education produces monthly statistics on the number of apprenticeships advertised on the Find an Apprenticeship website in the UK by type. This is available to August 2020 and shows that after a drop from March to May (based on the same month in the previous year), levels picked up in June and were up to 66 % of 2019 levels by August 2020. It appears that degree apprenticeships were less hard hit than other forms, likely due to the longer-term nature of this apprenticeship type.

Figure 3-11: Vacancies posted on the Find an Apprenticeship website, by level in 2020 as a percentage of the same month in 2019

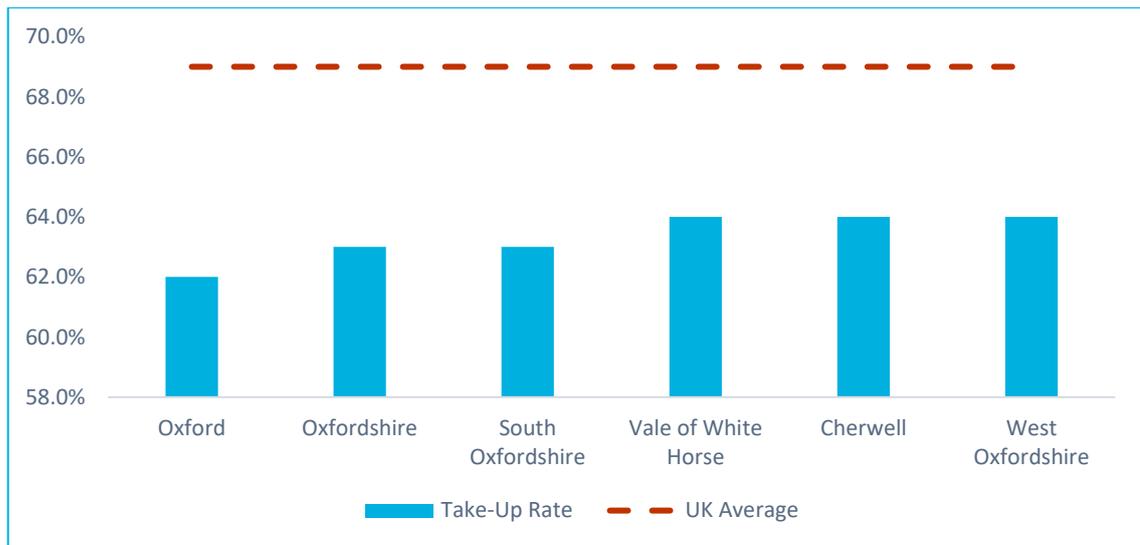


Source: Department for Education, November 2020

Self-Employment

3.35 Self-employment support claims data is available to District level, as a percentage of total self-employed people. The percentage of self-employed people claiming support in Oxfordshire is below the national average in all local authorities, highlighting stronger resilience than in the UK as a whole (Figure 3-12). However, it is important to note that there have been eligibility issues related to receiving self-employment support, which may impact the data presented nonetheless, this is likely to be throughout the UK rather than isolated locations. Data by sector is only available to a South East level but indicates that there is less variation between sectors than in JRS and turnover impacts (a take-up rate range of c. 40%), with construction, transport and storage, and education hardest hit. Those working in Agriculture and Real Estate have made the lowest percentage of claims.

Figure 3-12: Percentage of self-employed claiming government support



Source: HMRC, PAYE RTI, November 2020

Place

Key Messages

- Commercial and private transport use has recovered steadily since May 2020, with heavy goods use now above pre-lockdown levels
- Public transport use is still well down on pre-lockdown levels, and of great concern for the Visitor Economy and lower value service sectors
- Use of cycles increased greatly throughout the summer months, but has tailed off subsequently; this travel mode could be capitalised on to infill for reduced public transport use
- Ultrafast broadband coverage is largely good for Oxfordshire, but Fibre to the Premises (fastest) broadband coverage must be expanded to adapt to the new ways of remote working
- The Visitor Economy has been hit very hard, with town centre footfall still well below pre-lockdown levels. Expected to cause up to 20,000 job losses in the sector and a reduction in revenue of 50% from £2.3bn⁸
- A trend of localisation of economies has occurred, as evidenced by lower footfall in the main UK cities and the fall off in the use of public transport; which is still significantly below pre-COVID-19 levels

3.36 COVID-19 has changed the way society travels and the places where time is most spent. Understanding these changes and the likely temporal scale of these is crucial to providing a robust recovery plan, particularly with regard to how places, including town centres, rural areas, and local neighbourhoods are, and will be, used in the future.

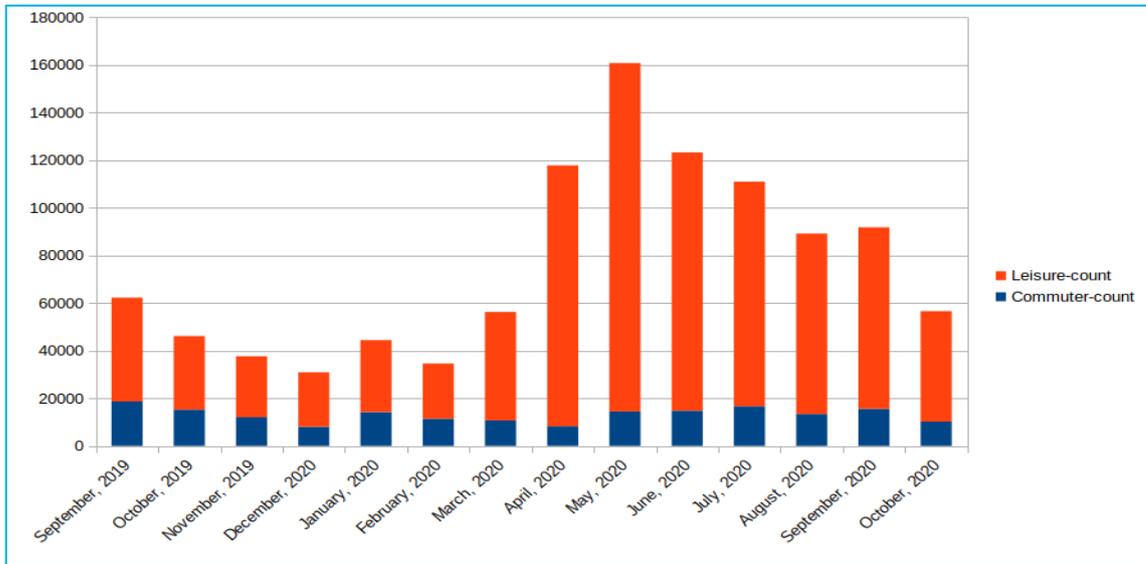
Transport – Active Travel

3.37 Oxford has a high baseline level of active travel, with the 2nd highest cycling commute level in the UK. Therefore, it is unsurprising that during lockdown and the summer months, data showed major increases in cycling for leisure purposes, while remaining relatively high as a

⁸ Oxfordshire LEP, 2020

commute mode for those still travelling to work. Figure 3-13 shows that in Oxfordshire cycling use has continued to remain slightly higher than in 2019, with leisure cycling consistently higher. Commute trips are down but close to pre-COVID-19 levels in September and October. This is with sensor data captured by Oxfordshire County Council which indicates that October 2020 cycle count data was only 5% down year on year and, despite a high percentage of people still working from home.

Figure 3-13: Cycling data by trip Purpose, Oxfordshire



Source: Oxfordshire CC, Strava data feed

3.38 Pedestrian count data showed that late October figures peaked closer to levels seen in early February compared to April and May when figures were at least 50% down (Figure 3-14). However, there was a clear gap in October Half Term visitor figures compared with previous years, showing the decline in Oxford’s visitor numbers has continued.

Figure 3-14: Active Travel counts – Oxfordshire 24hr Sensors (Primarily Oxford data)



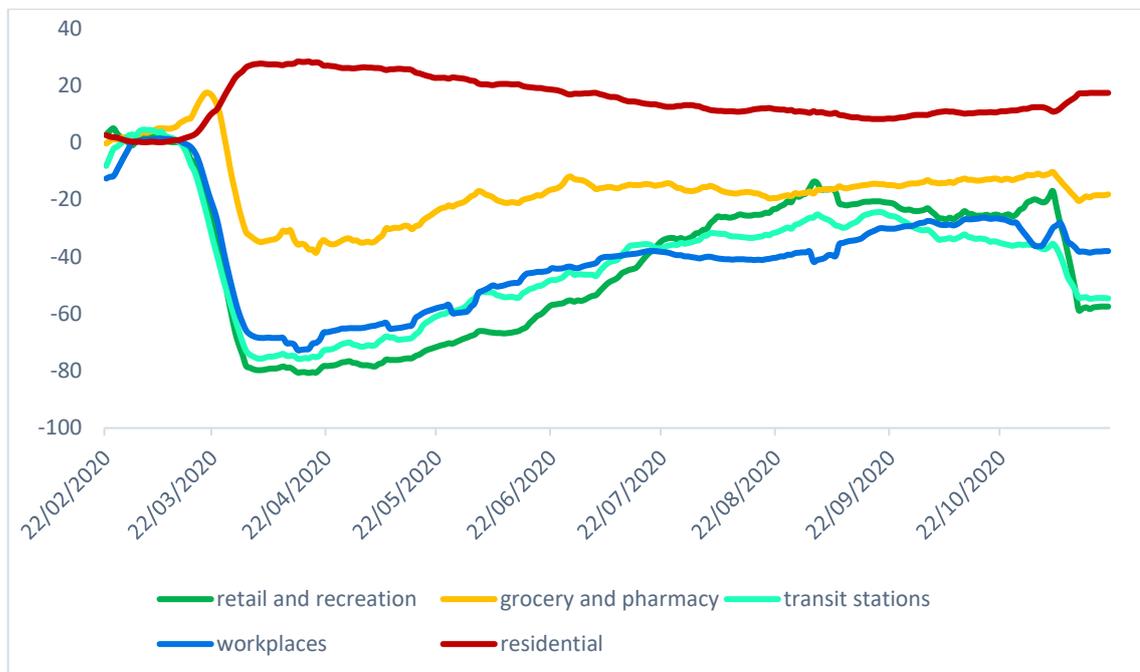
Source: Primary data supplied by Oxford County Council, 2020

Changing Behaviours

3.39 Google Mobility data, reporting trends in people’s location, is available to district level. Trends in Oxfordshire’s five districts are very similar, so Figure 3-15 shows that for Oxfordshire, from

March 2020, there was a steep drop-off in time spent at workplaces, retail and recreation, and transit stations. This coincided with an almost 30 % increase in time spent at residential premises, reflecting first the lockdown measures, and the continued trend of working from home. The working from home trend is visible in all districts, but less pronounced in Cherwell due to the higher degree of service sector jobs. Use of parks grew rapidly and stayed high throughout summer but has tailed off rapidly towards the end of September, indicating that seasonality boosted this trend.

Figure 3-15: Post COVID-19 Mobility



Source: Google Mobility, 2020

- 3.40 Use of public transport, as indicated by the time spent at transit stations is still well below average and has decreased from September through to November following both stricter local and regional restrictions and the National Lockdown, which was re-imposed at the start of November. This has also noticeably impacted on the time spent on retail and recreation. This highlights the vulnerability of sectors reliant on transport and retail and recreation to changes in lockdown levels. Broadly, this means that the tourism industry as a whole is continuing to be hit hard by COVID-19 mitigation measures.
- 3.41 The data also point towards localisation of the economies. More individuals are spending time in their homes and using less public transport. Furthermore, these data are supported by the October 2020's Business Impacts of COVID-19 Survey (BICS), in which businesses reported that 28 % of the workforce is working from home.
- 3.42 Notable areas of increase in the use of parks for recreation were observed in summer, above seasonal averages (Figure 3-16). The uptake in the use of parks was a trend in all local authority areas in the County, according to Google Mobility data. However, as we move towards cooler conditions, levels have returned to close to pre-COVID-19 levels. This does, however, show that there is a willingness to use active modes of transport and can be used as evidence for the rationale for improved provision of active travel routes in the County moving forward.

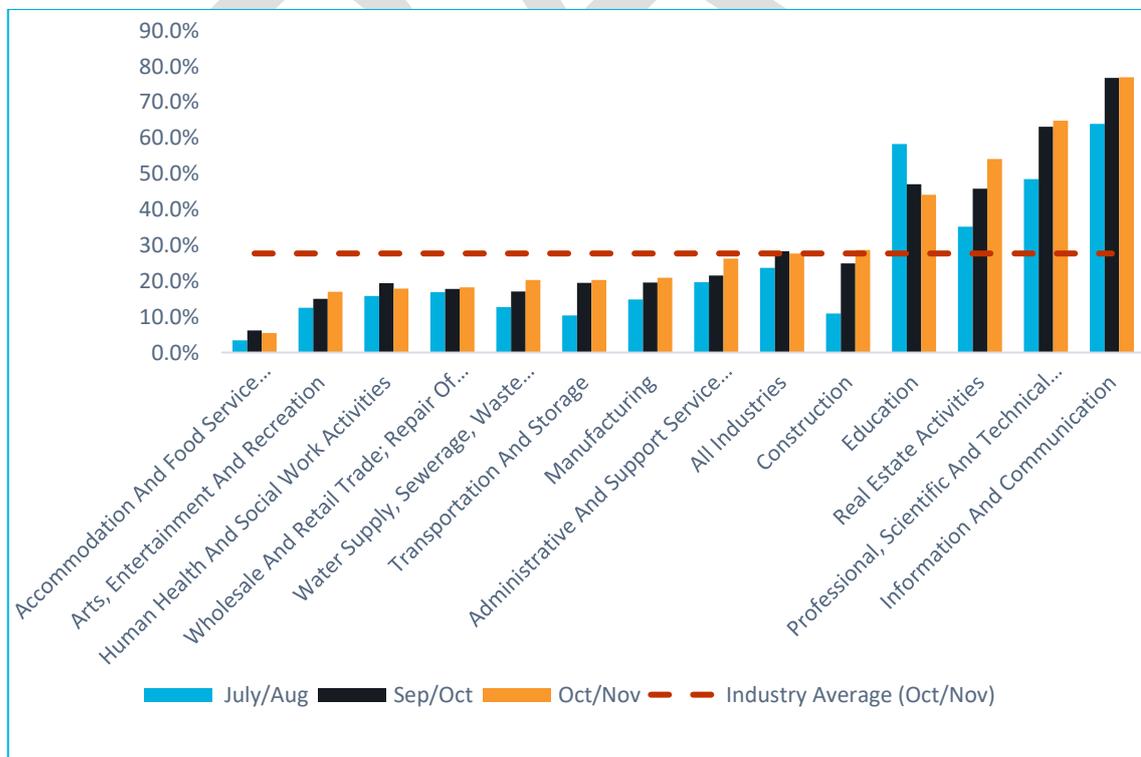
Figure 3-16: 5 day moving average of changes in use of parks in Oxfordshire



Source: Google Mobility Report and Department for Transport statistics, 2020

3.43 In terms of working from home, 77 % of staff in Information/Communication and 65 % for Professional/Scientific/Technical activities are working from home (Figure 3-17). These are two relatively important industries for Oxfordshire. Therefore, the ability of these sectors to continue with people working from home can explain to a degree the general lower level of economic impact felt in Oxfordshire than other counties.

Figure 3-17: Percentage of staff working from home by broad industry

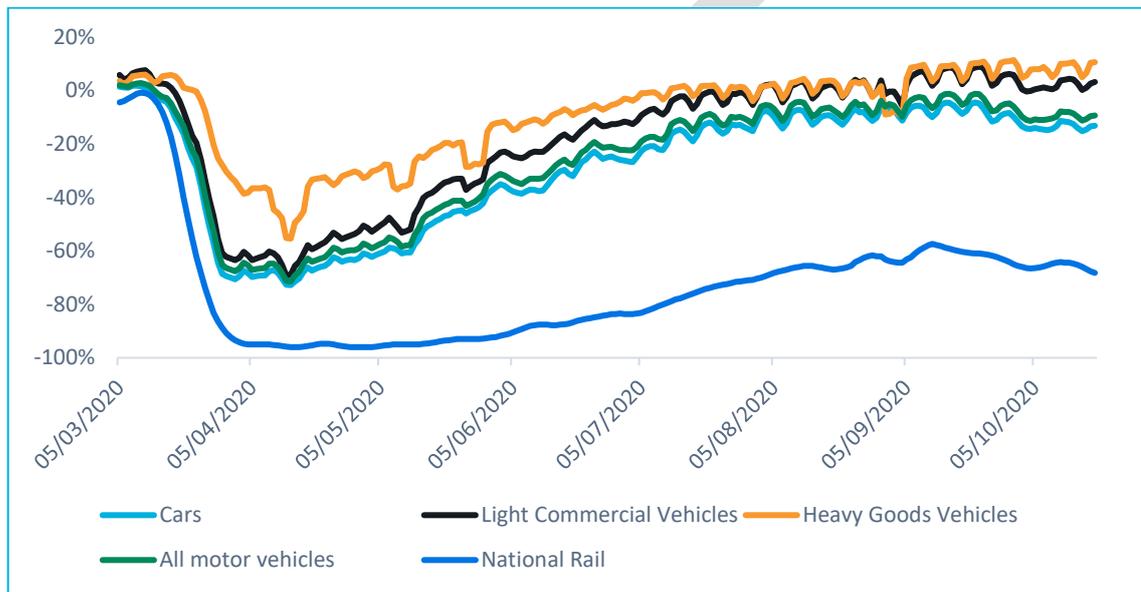


Source: BICS, 22 November 2020

Physical Connectivity – Overview

- 3.44 Data on transport use by day is available to national level, with bus usage data available to Oxfordshire level. Figure 3-18 shows how the initial national lockdown and subsequent restrictions have altered the volume and way people have travelled in 2020. All transport modes saw a dramatic fall in use from March 2020, with a relatively steady but modest rise from mid-April.
- 3.45 Rail and bus travel suffered much larger drops in March 2020 and have not come close to pre-COVID-19 levels since then. Bus travel in Oxfordshire recovered to around 40 % below pre-COVID-19 conditions in September 2020, and UK rail travel to 60 % below in the same month. Both have since started to fall since, bringing implications for the transport industry.

Figure 3-18: Five day moving average of changes in UK public transport use relative to pre COVID-19 levels

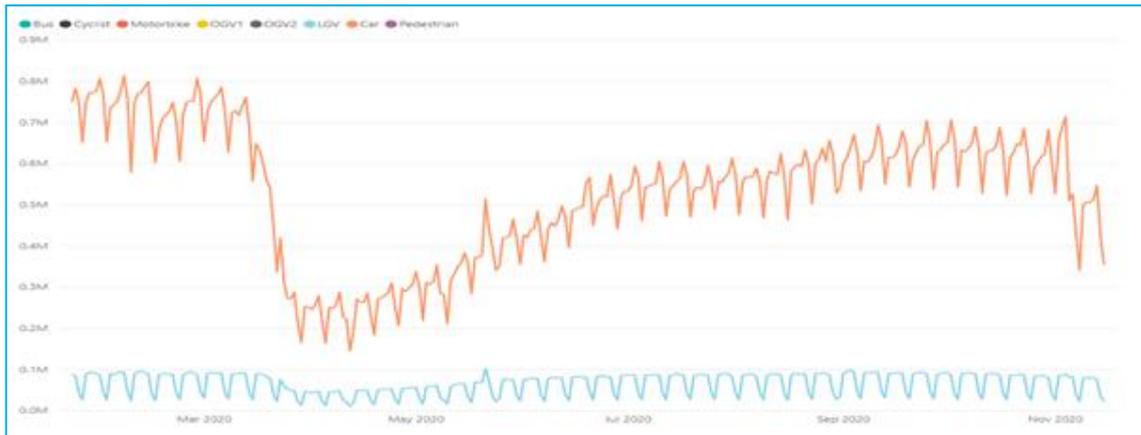


Source: Department for Transport statistics, October 2020

Physical Connectivity – Road traffic

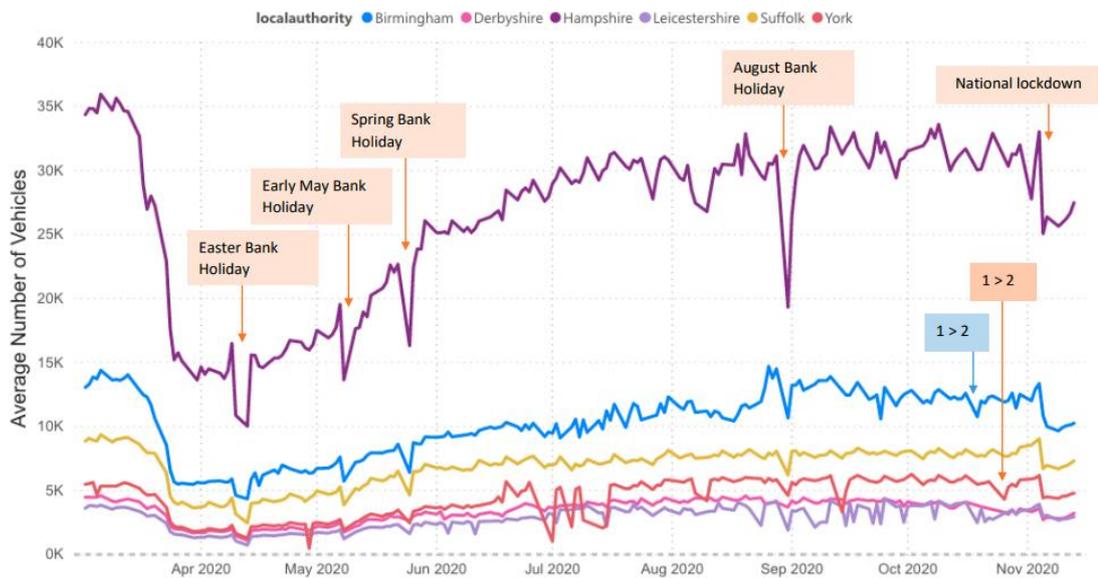
- 3.46 Oxfordshire's levels of car use still remain below the pre-COVID-19 levels, with differences depending on locations. Oxford is still approximately 20% below pre-COVID-19 norms, while Bicester and the A40 returned to pre-COVID-19 levels in October before the November Lockdown drop. When comparing Oxford against other parts of the UK (Figure 3-20) we can see that car use is similar to but slightly below wider trends, with some cities reaching pre-COVID-19 levels on occasions in September and October. Light Goods Vehicle (LGV) numbers have remained consistent after a small drop in April into May.
- 3.47 The use of commercial road vehicles had returned to pre-COVID-19 levels by September and has remained slightly higher since then, particularly for heavy goods vehicles. Private car use was still hovering around 12-15 % below average leading up to November and has seen a recent dip, coinciding with the introduction of tighter restrictions.

Figure 3-19: Oxfordshire Car and LGV daily volumes



Source: Data from OCC 24hr sensors primarily Oxford some in Bicester and Didcot.

Figure 3-20: TTF Sample of UK Cities change in daily traffic volumes



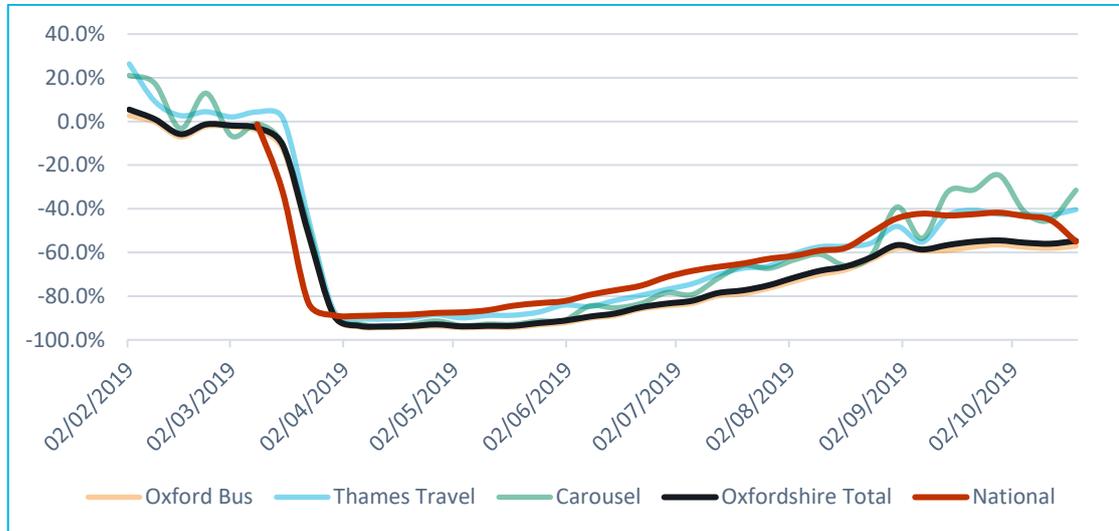
Source: Transport Technology Forum UK Weekly Travel Digest 16/11/20 sample of UK Cities

Physical Connectivity – bus use

- 3.48 Compared to the wider UK, bus travel lagged by 10% in Oxfordshire prior to the latest lockdown. A main driver of this is that a higher percentage of bus use in Oxfordshire is discretionary (i.e. people using buses to, for example, reach leisure and retail centres, rather than for commuting).
- 3.49 Bus use across Oxfordshire has been hit to varying degrees, with inter-urban routes having recovered more than others. Park and Ride is now a real cause for concern for operators and will have knock-on effects to users if they not supported through recovery. Park and Ride is operating at 20% of normal levels as of early November (Figure 3-21) but car parking at the Westgate Shopping Centre was almost at capacity in the weekend of 7 November. The balance of private car use to bus use will need to be reversed in order for the economy to recover sustainably and with lower congestion levels.

3.50 Bus use in areas with low car ownership, such as Didcot, have also seen greater rates of recovery of bus use, due to the higher levels of non-discretionary use, as reflected in the percentage use data for Thames Travel (Figure 3-22).

Figure 3-21: Bus use as a percentage of the same week in 2019 (March – November 2020)



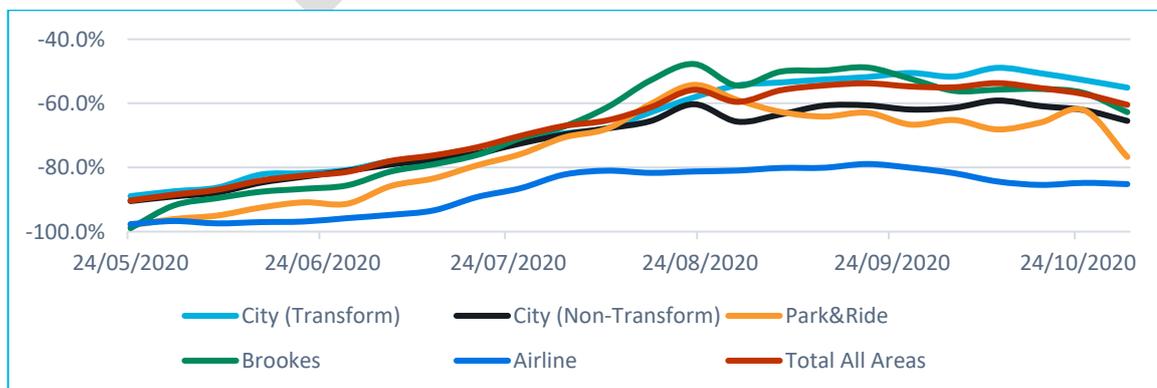
Source: Oxford Bus Company and Department for Transport, November 2020

3.51 More broadly, the lower levels of travel have severe implications for the Visitor Economy and more broadly for lower end employment in retail (and beyond). Tourism relies heavily on people traveling to Oxfordshire from outside the County, whereas workers in retail and other low skilled jobs rely heavily on public transport to travel to employment sites. Without being able to use these services as they are reduced or stopped, many people will not have access to employment opportunities. Further to this, Lower levels of bus use also indicate a growing trend of the localisation of economies, with people working, and shopping closer to home.

3.52 As restrictions ease, public transport use will increase again but it is highly vulnerable to mitigation responses and passenger attitudes to public safety of traveling on public transport.

3.53 There will be major pressures on bus operators to attract passengers back onto buses as it forms an integral part of the transport system in Oxfordshire. Measures such as creation of a zero emissions zone in Oxford should start to improve the reliability of some corridors through the restriction of certain vehicle types, as well as continuing to look at restrictions to make through routes to general traffic unattractive in the city.

Figure 3-22: Bus use as a percentage of the same week in 2019 by type (May – November 2020)



Source: Oxford Bus Company, November 2020

Physical connectivity – rail use

- 3.54 Latest regional rail figures are yet to be released. However, data from the pedestrian crossing sensor outside Oxford station provides a good indicator of levels of use of the station. Figure 3-23 shows that pedestrian levels at Oxford Rail station reached, at best, 50% below the pre-COVID-19 levels in October before a further fall in November.
- 3.55 These figures reflect passenger numbers on trains, with Great Western Rail (GWR) estimating that passenger loadings are running at around 30% (to November 2020). This is higher than the first lockdown, when loadings were as low as 10%, but has fallen back from the 40-50% seen over the summer. GWR, along with most franchises, have noted more off peak and weekend leisure travel, but continually low levels of commuting.
- 3.56 Trends suggest that people travelling to work do so one or two days a week rather than 4 or 5 days a week. This appears to be a pattern that could continue post COVID-19, with balanced work from home patterns seemingly popular. If this pattern does become permanent, it presents challenges in terms of balancing demand for 'new peaks', as well as for the profile of revenue, ticketing and pricing. These challenges and nationalised management of the network as it stands do, however, offer major opportunities to deliver change quickly to meet modern user requirements.

Figure 3-23: Daily counts of pedestrians crossing at entrance to Oxford Rail station



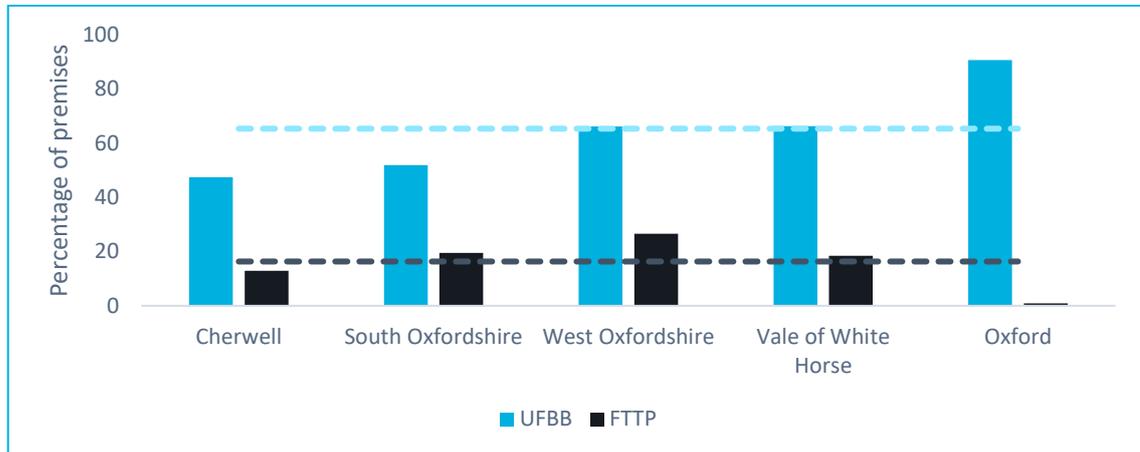
Source: Oxford County Council, 2020

Digital Connectivity

- 3.57 Broadband coverage by speed is available to district level. Digital infrastructure is even more important under COVID-19 conditions than before. Demand for Ultrafast (UFBB) and Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) broadband, offering speeds of >10mbps and >300mbps respectively, was already high in early 2020 due to the increased use of cloud storage for businesses and on the trend of digitalisation in innovative firms. Since March 2020, and with the requirement for many professions to be home-based, the need for extended coverage of UFBB and FTTP is even more pressing.
- 3.58 Superfast broadband (>30mbps) coverage across Oxfordshire is 98 %, just above the UK average (97 %), but with the increase in working from home, with the increase in remote

conferences and meetings that this brings, UFBB is now a requirement in many homes. Figure 3-24 shows the coverage of UFBB and FTTP in Oxfordshire. West Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, and Oxford all have UFBB coverage at or above the national average, with coverage being particularly strong in rural areas. This means that working from home has been relatively effective, although coverage is lagging in Cherwell and South Oxfordshire.

Figure 3-24: percentage of premises with Ultrafast (UFBB) and Fibre Broadband (FTTP) – dashed lines are UK Average



Source: Think Broadband, October 2020

3.59 Regarding FTTP, rural areas are again well served relative to the wider UK, but Oxford is noticeably behind. This is likely due to the requirement for additional physical infrastructure to link up FTTP, which is more difficult and costlier in urban centres. For the County to adapt to new ways of working, coverage increase of FTTP is a priority, and has been assisted already by the January 2020 Digital Infrastructure and Delivery Plan.

3.60 5G mobile connectivity, also highlighted in the Plan Strategy is also of great importance, enabling further flexibility in working and also advancing the potential for use of automated/autonomous vehicles across the County.

The Visitor Economy

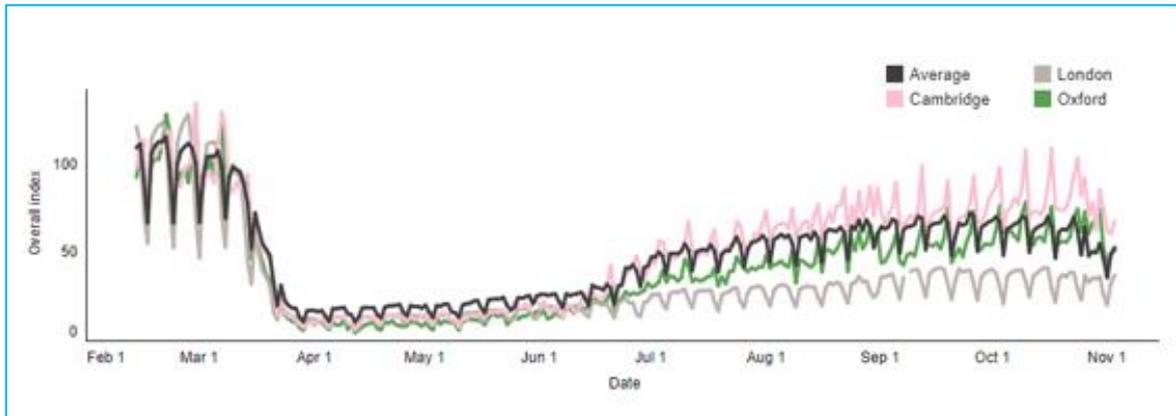
3.61 Data on impacts to the Visitor Economy specifically is available at a national level, with some statistics produced by Experience Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire’s destination management organisation, in May 2020. City centre footfall data is available for Oxford City. The impact of COVID-19 on Oxfordshire’s Visitor Economy is one of the greatest concerns facing the County economically, with the large losses caused by reduction in travel and restriction on business operation impacting the vast majority of businesses in the Tourism Sector. 85 % of businesses in tourism in Oxfordshire reported at least a 50 % reduction in revenue, with £140m lost each month to May 2020, estimated to be £1.2bn in total.

Local increased spend is not offsetting the losses incurred from fewer international visitors, with Oxford City showing significant drops in footfall. In October, of the c. 60 cities tracked for footfall and city centre spend in the UK, Oxford had been the fifth hardest hit for footfall losses and sixth hardest hit for reduction in spend (Figure 3-25). Likely reasons for Oxford being particularly hard hit beyond the national and international travel restrictions are a reduction in summer schools and conference activities associated with the universities and the wider conference scene. Furthermore, reductions in coach travel and rail use, particularly from

London have impacted visitor numbers. This trend will need to be continually tracked throughout the recovery process as a key indicator.

- 3.62 Additionally, the COVID-19 Pandemic and the introduction of distance learning and other measures presents a real risk for Oxfordshire. The County is highly dependent on the education sector, and as the funding for universities continues to weaken, there is a threat of this impacting its knowledge intensive eco-system.

Figure 3-25: Footfall as a percentage of pre-lockdown averages



Source: Centre for Cities, November 2020

Conclusions and Implications

- 3.63 Overall, significant impacts of COVID-19 has been felt around the county in terms of employment, business turnover, travel, and indeed how and where people work. The two national lockdowns have demonstrated that some sectors have been able to adapt to restrictions to a greater degree than others, based on the ability for work to be conducted remotely and products and services to be conducted in this manner.
- 3.64 Sectors dependent on face-to-face interaction and trading with customers and those reliant on free movement of people have been severely impacted. Although we saw a recovery in these sectors as restrictions were eased in the summer, they remain vulnerable to further restrictions, which can be imposed at very short notice. Real consideration needs to go into how to support these sectors during periods of restrictions and going forward how to help them recover once restrictions are eased.
- 3.65 Oxfordshire has been hit less hard than the UK as a whole due to due to a mix of helpful factors:
- **Its strengths in knowledge intensive industry** – in times of crisis, innovative industries are key to recovery and thus are in high demand. For instance, the Life Sciences sector in Oxfordshire has reported increased sales and demand for services since March 2020
 - **Its dispersed and (to a degree) polycentric geography**, which lends more easily to adaptive ways of working. The polycentric nature of the county has lent itself to localisation of economies caused by restrictions on movement
 - **Extant high skill levels.** The jobs most impacted by COVID-19 restrictions have been in service industries. Oxfordshire's strength in professional, scientific and technical services and high value manufacturing have meant that impacts have been limited to a degree by the ability to work flexibly and by continued demand for high quality products.

- 3.66 However, there are clear causes for concern. The Visitor Economy in Oxfordshire has been hit hard, whilst city centre footfall and spend is dramatically down and will further reduce in November. The Education sector, reliant on influxes of international students and researchers has been impacted, and Arts and Entertainment has seen the highest rates of employees placed on *furlough*. The impacts in these sectors have been driven by national level interventions, but renewal will require County-level responses to boost levels to pre-COVID-19 norms and beyond.
- 3.67 A business survey conducted by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse indicates that home-based businesses, the newly self-employed and limited company freelancers, predominantly in professional services, are really feeling the impact of the economic crisis and are not benefitting from sufficient support. Supporting businesses is crucial for recovery and will form a key part of the ERP.
- 3.68 In the next Section, projections of economic growth in Oxfordshire at sector level are presented, with focus on the pre- and post-COVID-19 positions, and the economic delta which has resulted.

4 Looking forward – The Structural Impacts

Headline Messages

Headline Messages

- Pre-COVID-19 forecasts show the Oxfordshire economy was expected to maintain its impressive growth moving forwards, with performance set to exceed peer areas and the national average
- However, updated forecasts incorporating the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic indicate a comparatively short, but substantial, impact to economic activity in Oxfordshire
- Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory, over the next decade the Oxfordshire economy could expect to have in the region of 6,000 fewer jobs and output £522 million lower.
- Sectors such as Retail, Tourism and Food will bear the brunt of the impact. But some of Oxfordshire's breakthrough industries, such as Professional Services, IT and Health and Science could emerge stronger
- Within Oxfordshire, Cherwell and Oxford are set to face the biggest shock to economic activity, with Vale of the White Horse the least impacted. This said, all areas are expected to experience a smaller shock and recover faster than the UK average
- Reflecting the resilience of the Oxfordshire economy, the short-run impact is expected to be less pronounced in Oxfordshire, whilst Oxfordshire's recovery will also outperform the UK average, resulting in a smaller relative 'lost growth' shortfall.

Purpose of this Section

- 4.1 The evidence presented in the previous section this can be used to quantify the immediate and present impact of the COVID-19 crisis on different sectors and places within Oxfordshire's economy. However, in order to forecast the potential recovery and subsequent stabilisation period and return to long-term trends, a more future-facing approach is required.
- 4.2 Accordingly, this section augments the data insights set out in previous chapter with econometric modelling, detailing the impacts of COVID-19 on the growth of the County, both absolutely and relative to the wider UK. More details of the methodology can be found in Appendix A.

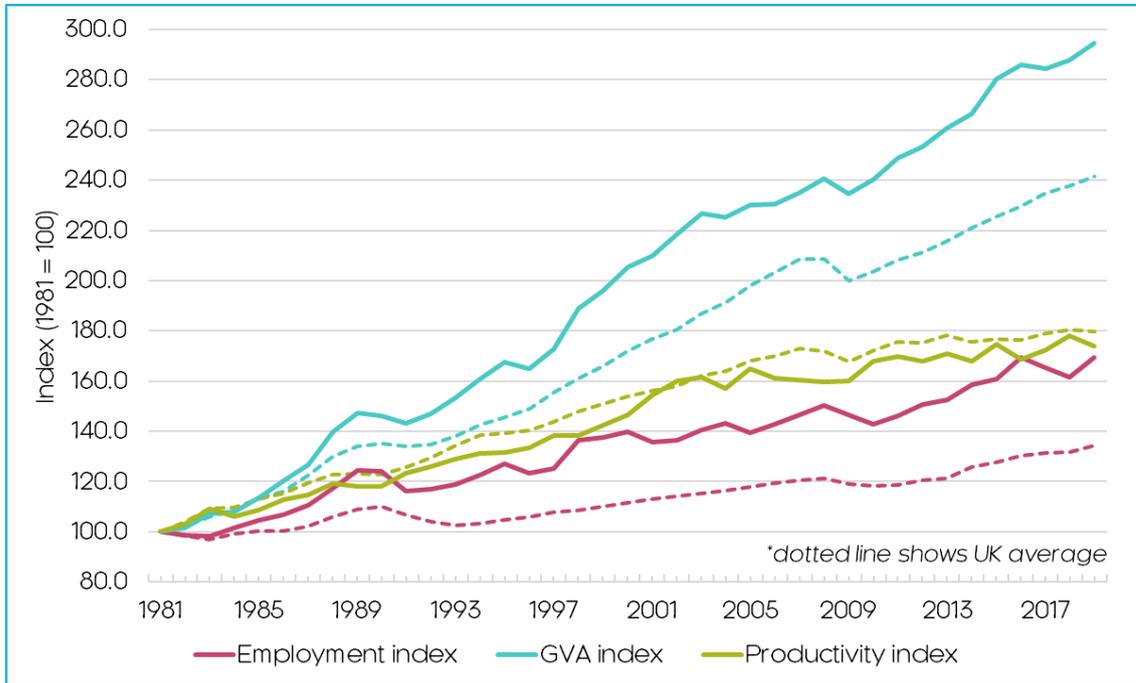
Oxfordshire – the pre-COVID-19 outlook

1. As of 2019, the Oxfordshire economy contributed an estimated £23.1 billion to the UK economy, supported some 430,000 highly skilled jobs, and was home to 32,250⁹ active businesses.

⁹ ONS 2020, UK Business Counts - enterprises by industry and employment size band

2. Since 1981, the Oxfordshire economy has consistently grown faster than the UK average. As Figure 4-1 shows, this has been driven by stronger employment growth rather than productivity growth, which has more closely tracked average UK growth

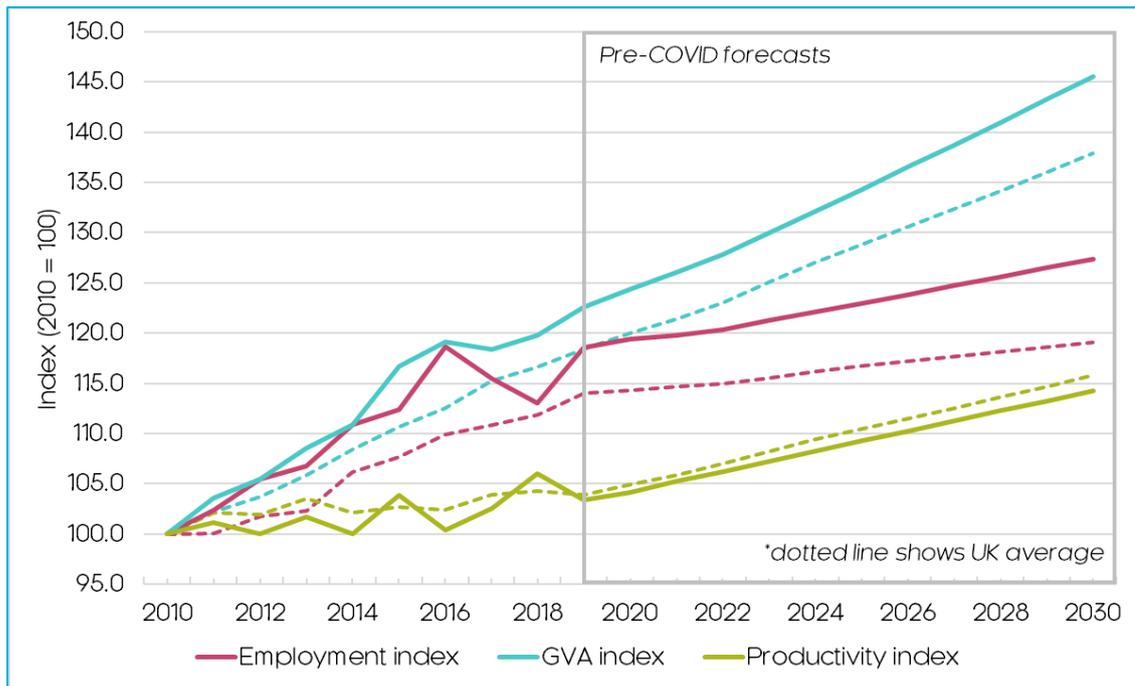
Figure 4-1: Performance of the Oxfordshire economy since 1981 (note: dotted line shows UK average)



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

- 4.3 The Oxfordshire economy has performed particularly well over the past decade, emerging as one of the fastest growing in the country following the 2008-09 recession, ranking third of 38 LEP areas for growth. Since 2010, Oxfordshire's economy has grown on average by over 3% per annum in real terms, relative to a UK average of 1.9%. Oxfordshire has delivered significant and sustained growth.
- 4.4 Since 2010, on average more jobs had been created in Oxfordshire than any other equivalent period in the last 50 years. Resultantly, at the start of 2020, Oxfordshire had the highest employment rate in the country, with 82.8% of working age residents in work, exceeding the UK average of 75.5%.
- 4.5 Looking ahead, under a pre-COVID-19 trajectory, Oxfordshire was expected to maintain a robust pattern of growth. As Figure 4-2 and Table 4-1 show, across key measures of economic performance (Employment, Output – or GVA – and Productivity, indexed to 100 in 2010 to highlight the relative change between areas), central forecasts suggest the Oxfordshire economy would continue to outpace the rest of the country.
- 4.6 In terms of employment, there was pre-COVID-19 the potential for 32,000 net additional jobs to be created in the county by 2030, equivalent to an increase of 2,900 per annum. This would have resulted in a total of 462,400 jobs in the County by 2030, a 7.4% increase on current levels, almost twice the expected increase of the UK average (4.5%).

Figure 4-2: Forecast performance of the Oxfordshire economy under a pre-COVID-19 trajectory



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Table 4-1: Forecast performance of the Oxfordshire economy under a pre-COVID-19 trajectory

	2019 (forecast baseline)	2025	2030	Growth, 2019-30	% growth, 2019-30
Employment	430,300	446,200	462,400	32,000	7.4%
GVA (£2016, bn)	£21.1	£23.1	£25.1	£4.0	18.7%
Productivity (£2016)	£49,100	£51,800	£54,200	£5,200	10.5%

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

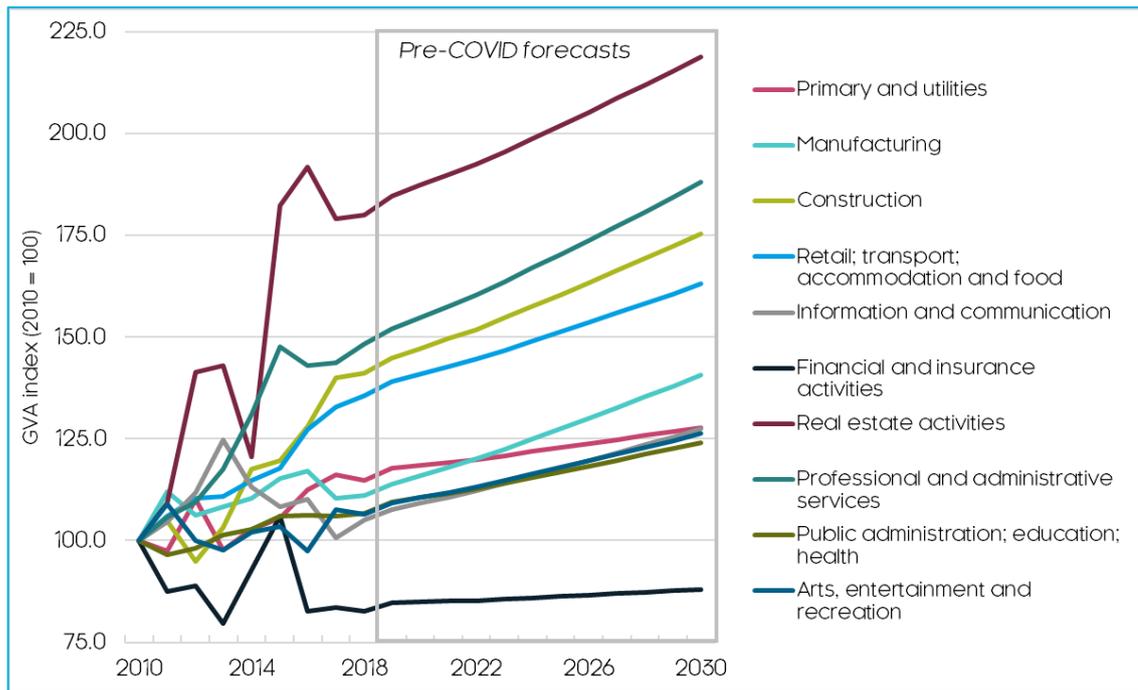
4.7 As a consequence, the size of Oxfordshire’s economy was also expected to increase, being worth a potential £25 billion by 2030, £4 billion more than it is worth currently. As with employment, the 18.7% increase in GVA would outpace the UK average (16.4%).

4.8 Oxfordshire’s subdued productivity growth was expected to continue though, with the 10.5% improvement to 2030 tracking below the UK average (11.4%). This ‘productivity puzzle’ is already estimated to have cost the Oxfordshire an estimated £3.7 billion and is being keenly felt in a number of industries, largely service-based.

Sectoral Expectations

Figure 4-3 and Table 4-2 consider the high-level sectoral composition of growth under the pre-COVID-19 trajectory (graphs are indexed to 100 in 2010 to highlight the relative change between sectors). Given Oxfordshire’s increasing strength and ambition in the sector, Professional and Administrative Services was expected to see the highest overall employment and GVA growth.

Figure 4-3: Forecast GVA performance of Oxfordshire’s sectors under a pre-COVID-19 trajectory



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

- 4.9 The Public Administration/Education/Health sector was also expected to continue being a significant growth generator in the County, accounting for a quarter of additional economic activity by 2030, reflecting increased demand in the Health (aging population) and Education (particularly higher education) sectors (demanding high-level and technical skills).
- 4.10 Given strong projected economic and household growth in Oxfordshire as well as an increasing tourism offer, the demand for Consumer Services (Retail; Transport; Accommodation and Food) was also expected to increase, and as such its employment and GVA would continue to grow strongly.
- 4.11 Automation, Digitisation and Outsourcing were expected to lead to robust GVA growth in Manufacturing, driven by rapid productivity improvements underpinned by the adoption of frontier technologies, the flipside of this being the continued longer-term downward trend in Oxfordshire’s manufacturing employment demand.
- 4.12 Continued economic growth alongside ambitious policy aspirations around housing delivery, infrastructure and commercial space resulted in an expectation that Oxfordshire’s construction (and related real estate) sectors would also grow strongly, in both employment and GVA terms.

Table 4-2: Forecast performance of Oxfordshire’s sectors under a pre-COVID-19 trajectory

	Employment growth, 2019-30	Employment% growth, 2019-30	GVA growth £m, 2019-30	GVA% growth, 2019-30
Primary and Utilities	-300	-3.8%	£40	8.5%
Manufacturing	-500	-1.7%	£660	23.6%
Construction	3,000	9.7%	£240	21.1%

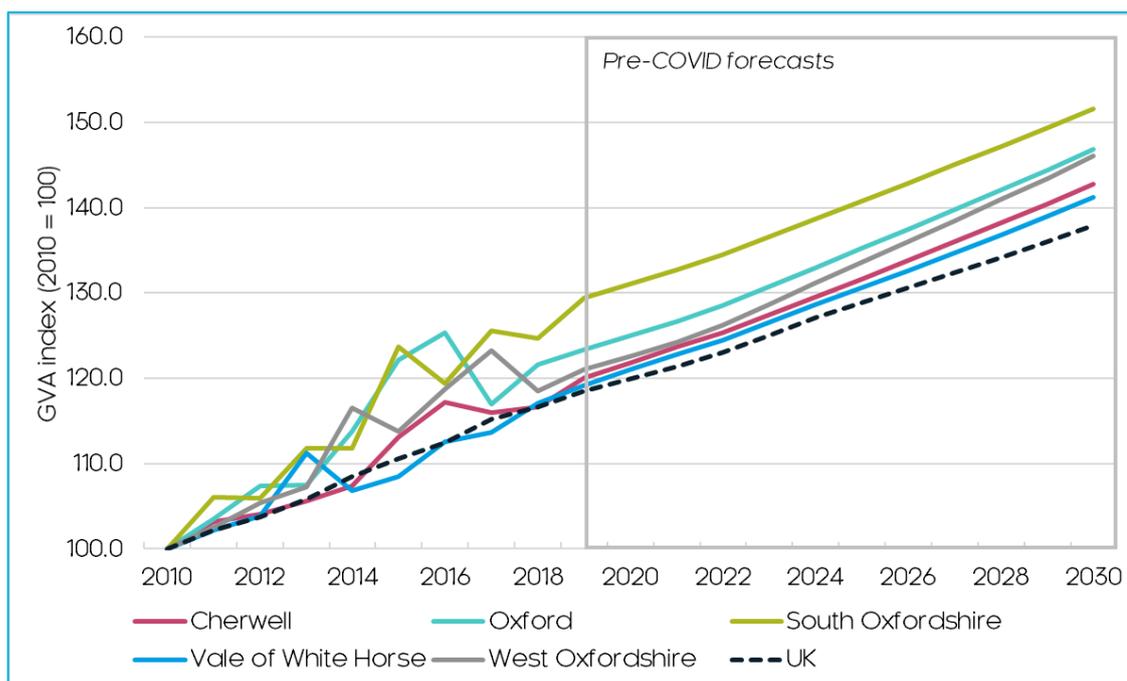
Retail; Transport; Accommodation and Food	8,500	8.5%	£540	17.2%
Information and Communication	1,900	8.5%	£280	18.5%
Financial and Insurance Activities	-200	-3.8%	£5	3.9%
Real Estate Activities	600	9.7%	£150	18.5%
Professional and Administrative Services	9,300	12.1%	£680	23.7%
Public Administration; Education; Health	8,000	6.2%	£640	13.4%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1,500	6.7%	£140	15.5%

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

District Expectations

- 4.13 Figure 4-4 and Table 4-3 summarise the expected spatial pattern of growth across the County under the pre-COVID-19 trajectory (graphs are indexed to 100 in 2010 to highlight the relative change between areas). A robust and relatively balanced growth picture was expected to emerge, with local growth rates showing relatively minor deviations relative to the Oxfordshire average, whilst all were expected to continue outpacing the UK average.
- 4.14 Reflecting the favourable sectoral structure of the area (including advanced Manufacturing, Professional and IT Services), stronger growth was expected to continue along the 'Knowledge Spine', particularly around Didcot (South Oxfordshire) and Abingdon (Vale of White Horse) to the south, through to Oxford City, and up to Bicester (Cherwell) in the north. Again, potential productivity growth was expected to remain subdued in parts.
- 4.15 Robust growth was also expected in West Oxfordshire, in and around the market towns such as Witney. Reflecting its concentration of high-growth service sectors, Oxford City was expected to remain the main driver of growth though, accounting for almost a third of additional economic activity to 2030.

Figure 4-4: Forecast GVA performance of Oxfordshire's districts under a pre-COVID-19 trajectory



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Table 4-3: Forecast performance of Oxfordshire's districts under a pre-COVID-19 trajectory

	Employment growth, 2019-30	Employment% growth, 2019-30	GVA growth £m, 2019-30	GVA% growth, 2019-30
Cherwell	6,300	7.0%	£896	18.9%
Oxford	9,500	6.9%	£1,108	19.1%
South Oxfordshire	5,900	7.8%	£704	17.2%
Vale of White Horse	6,500	9.0%	£752	18.5%
West Oxfordshire	3,800	7.0%	£495	20.7%

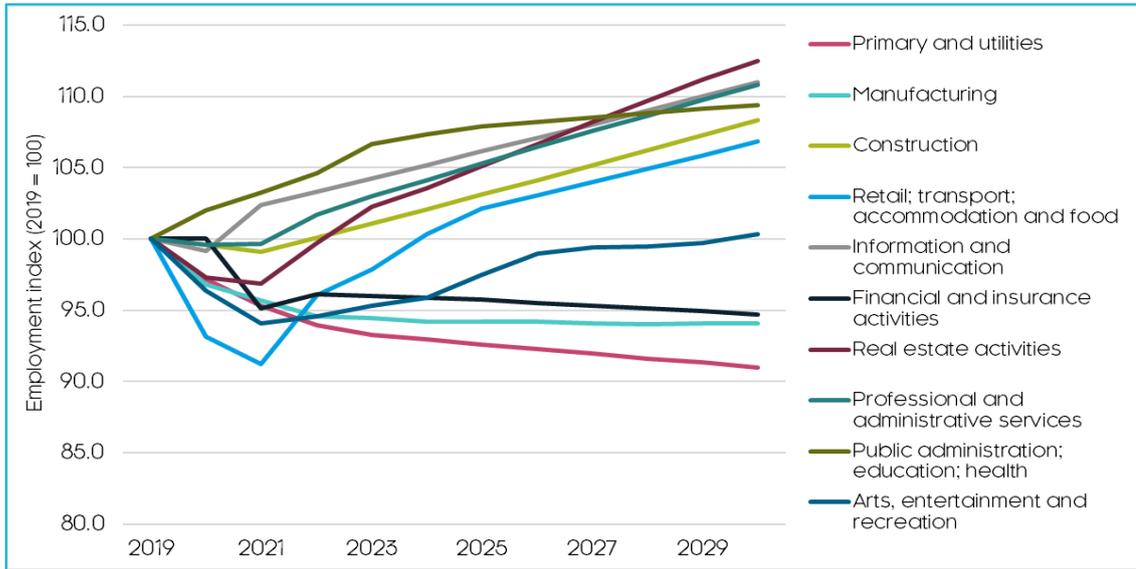
Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Oxfordshire – the position with COVID-19

- 4.16 Given the nature of the shock associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying local area modelling assumptions (see earlier *Approach and Work Done*), the response of local areas will largely be determined by sectoral structure. Areas overrepresented with industries most strongly impacted by the pandemic and associated restrictions (e.g. retail, accommodation, food) for instance will likely experience a greater shock to economic activity.
- 4.17 Figure 4-5 and Figure 4-6 show the expected impact of the pandemic on industries across the UK, and the resulting representation of these industries in Oxfordshire (relative to the UK average). Generally, Oxfordshire has a similar if not slight under-representation of highly impacted industries, such as accommodation, food and business services, and a relative overrepresentation of lower impacted (even growth) industries, notably public administration, health, media and professional services.

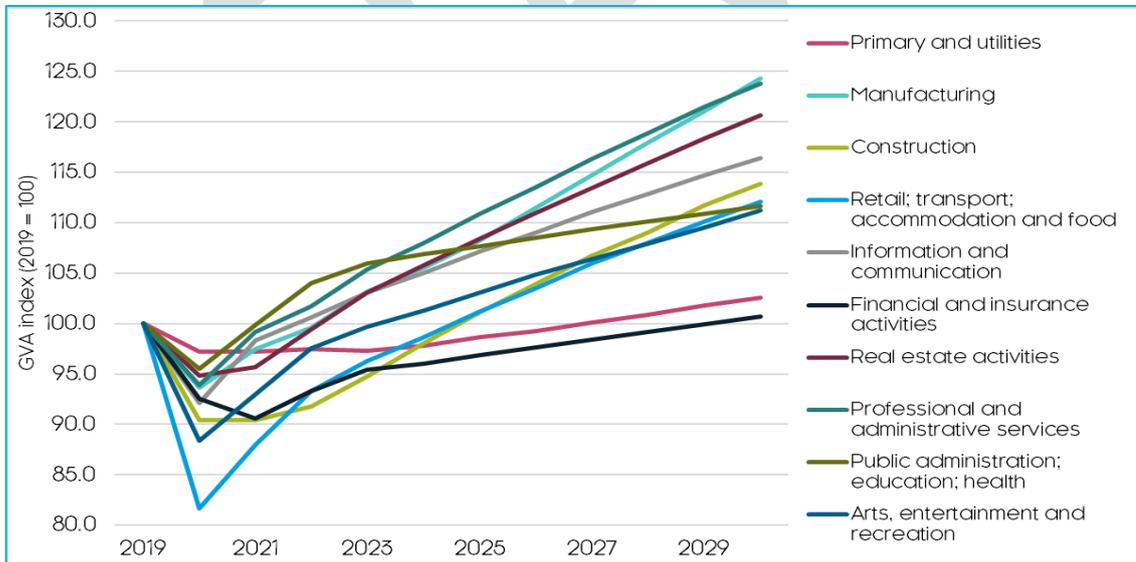
4.18 It is, therefore, reasonable to expect Oxfordshire will experience a gentler impact to economic activity than the UK average, and potentially even more so depending on the relative historical resilience and recovery of these sectors. And, with greater spatial detail, the magnitude of these effects will increase, reflecting greater sectoral diversity; for instance, Cherwell's sectoral structure differs from South Oxfordshire's, and so will their impacts.

Figure 4-5: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sectoral GVA in Oxfordshire



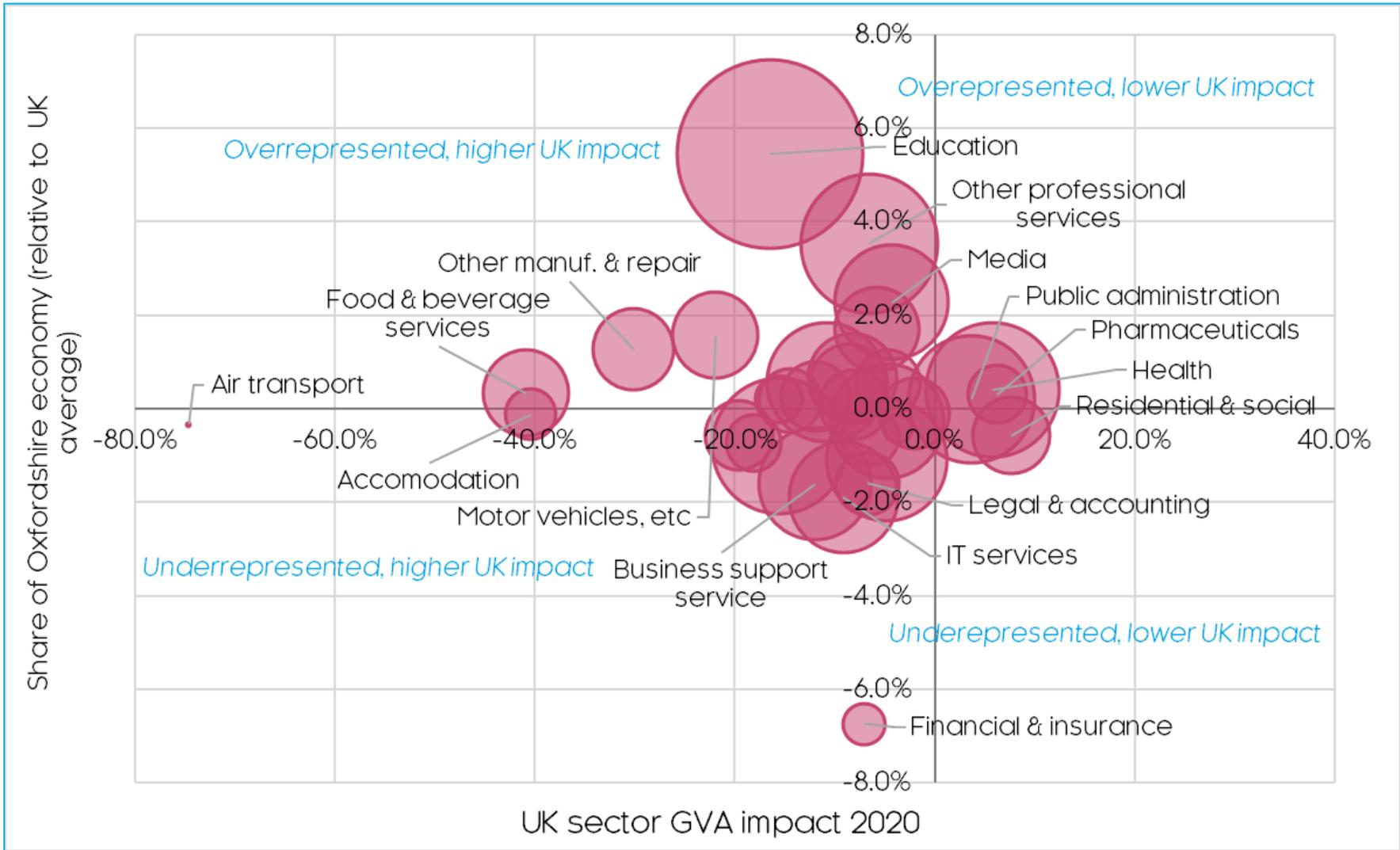
Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Figure 4-6: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sectoral employment in Oxfordshire



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Figure 4-7: UK sector impacts (as measured by GVA) and relative representation of the sector in Oxfordshire (note: size of bubble refers to size of sector in Oxfordshire as measured by GVA)



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Table 4-4: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sectoral performance in Oxfordshire, relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory

	Employment growth, 2019-30 relative to pre-COVID-19	Employment% growth, 2019-30 relative to pre-COVID-19	GVA growth £m, 2019-30 relative to pre-COVID-19	GVA% growth, 2019-30 relative to pre-COVID-19
Primary and Utilities	-400	-5.2%	-£30	-6.0%
Manufacturing	-1,200	-4.2%	£10	0.7%
Construction	-400	-1.3%	-£85	-7.2%
Retail; Transport; Accommodation and Food	-1,700	-1.7%	-£160	-5.1%
Information and Communication	500	2.5%	-£27	-2.1%
Financial and Insurance Activities	-100	-1.5%	-£5	-3.1%
Real Estate Activities	200	2.8%	£15	2.2%
Professional and Administrative Services	-600	-1.3%	£20	0.1%
Public Administration; Education; Health	3,900	3.2%	-£90	-1.8%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	-1,400	-6.4%	-£40	-4.3%

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

4.19 Table 4-4 considers the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Oxfordshire's sectoral growth trajectories, in terms of both output (GVA) and employment (this distinction is important, given the employment-focussed nature of accompanying policy interventions e.g. *furlough*. Graphs are indexed to 100 in 2019 to highlight the relative impact across sectors). Naturally, the magnitude of the expected impact varies greatly across and even within sectors in Oxfordshire:

- **Primary and Utilities:** only a gentle impact to output is expected, largely a result of the general deterioration in economic conditions and decreased demand from restriction impacted industries. The recovery however could be slow and uncertain. Employment also contracts whilst employment growth remains subdued, continuing along its long-term trend. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 400 fewer jobs and £30 million lower output.*
- **Manufacturing:** a short contraction in output is expected given the deterioration in wider economic conditions and decreased demand from restriction impacted industries, though performance varies between Oxfordshire's sub-sectors: e.g. pharmaceuticals and health could be buoyant, whilst aerospace faces an unprecedented shift in demand. A robust

recovery has the potential to accelerate in the latter half of the 2020's, driven by strong productivity growth as local industries re-establish and exploit their comparative advantage. Employment continues along its long-term decline, as automation, digitisation and outsourcing could be accelerated. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 1,200 fewer jobs but £11 million additional output.*

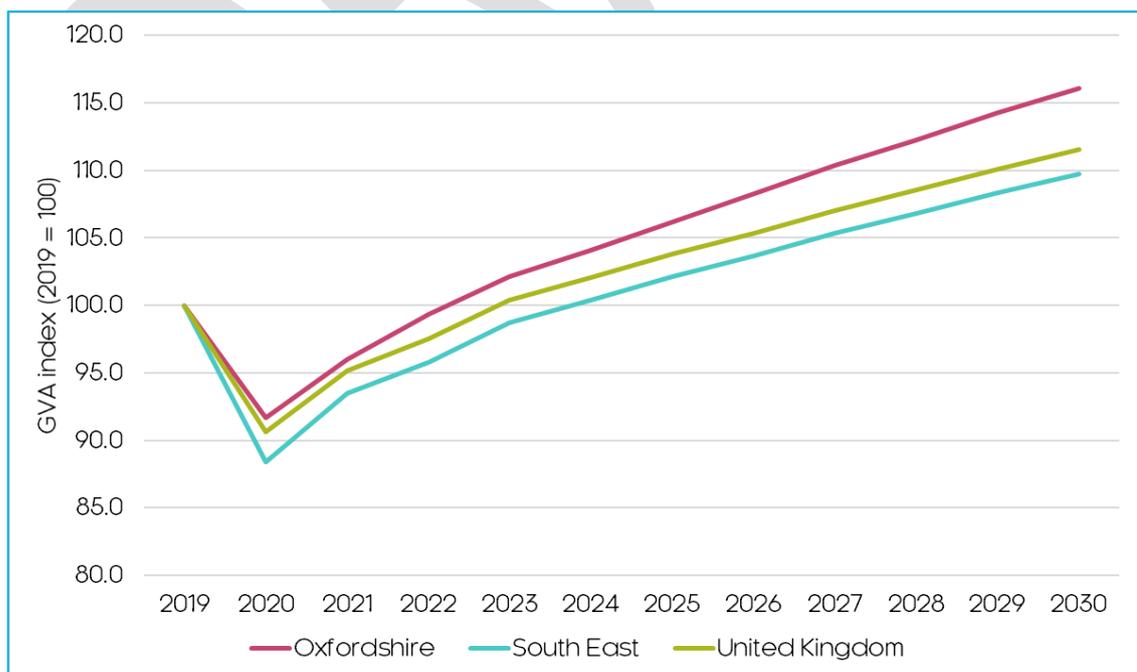
- **Construction:** a relatively deep and protracted contraction is expected, given reduced demand and increased uncertainty short term, though growth could accelerate 2023-onwards. *Furlough* and related employment support dampen the employment impact, whilst the adaptable nature of the sectors labour market could see a rapid return to growth. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 400 fewer jobs and £84 million lower output.*
- **Retail; Transport; Accommodation and Food:** the impact of social distancing measures and related restrictions in Oxfordshire will be most keenly felt in these industries. Resultantly, output is expected to contract sharply, by approx. 20% in 2020. Naturally, performance varies within sector; wholesale, some retail and transport (particularly logistics and distribution) will prove resilient and may benefit from increased demand. Accommodation and food, encompassing tourism and leisure related industries, will face the brunt of impact. Once a recovery is underway though, the sector has the potential to recover rapidly. *Furlough* and related employment support will dampen the employment impact, though greater job losses could emerge moving into 2021, disproportionately impacting the young, low-paid and those on flexible contracts. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 1,700 fewer jobs and £158 million lower output.*
- **Information and Communication:** underpinned by a strong research base and skilled workforce in Oxfordshire, the sector could prove resilient and adaptable. An accelerated recovery is likely after a brief output hit, driven by post-COVID-19 demand for innovative services e.g. around cloud computing, e-commerce, streaming and conference services. Employment could remain stable with the potential for robust growth 2021-onwards, though productivity growth will remain disappointing. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 500 additional jobs but £27 million lower output.*
- **Financial and Insurance Activities:** output could experience a fundamental shift downwards, whilst the pandemic could accelerate and maintain the ongoing contraction in employment, driven largely by automation, digitisation and out-sourcing, though the sector is a comparatively small part of the Oxfordshire economy. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 100 fewer jobs and £4 million lower output.*
- **Real Estate Activities:** after a relatively sharp contraction, output could accelerate strongly in the latter half of the 2020's, given Oxfordshire's potential to attract additional residential and commercial demand from less-desired and expensive urban agglomerations in a post-COVID-19 world. Employment could also grow given the need to expand to manage and oversee a potential increase in demand. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 200 additional jobs and £15 million additional output.*
- **Professional and Administrative Services:** Oxfordshire has shaped a strong comparative advantage in this sector, and there is the potential it could prove resilient and adaptable to the challenge of the pandemic. Despite a short term hit to output due to shifting demand and uncertainty, productivity-driven growth could accelerate through the 2020s. Underpinned by a skilled workforce, employment will be insulated from the worst of the pandemic's labour market effects, though admin-level jobs (e.g. security guards, cleaners, temps) will be susceptible to losses given the decreased demand from restriction

impacted industries. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 600 fewer jobs but £20 million additional output.*

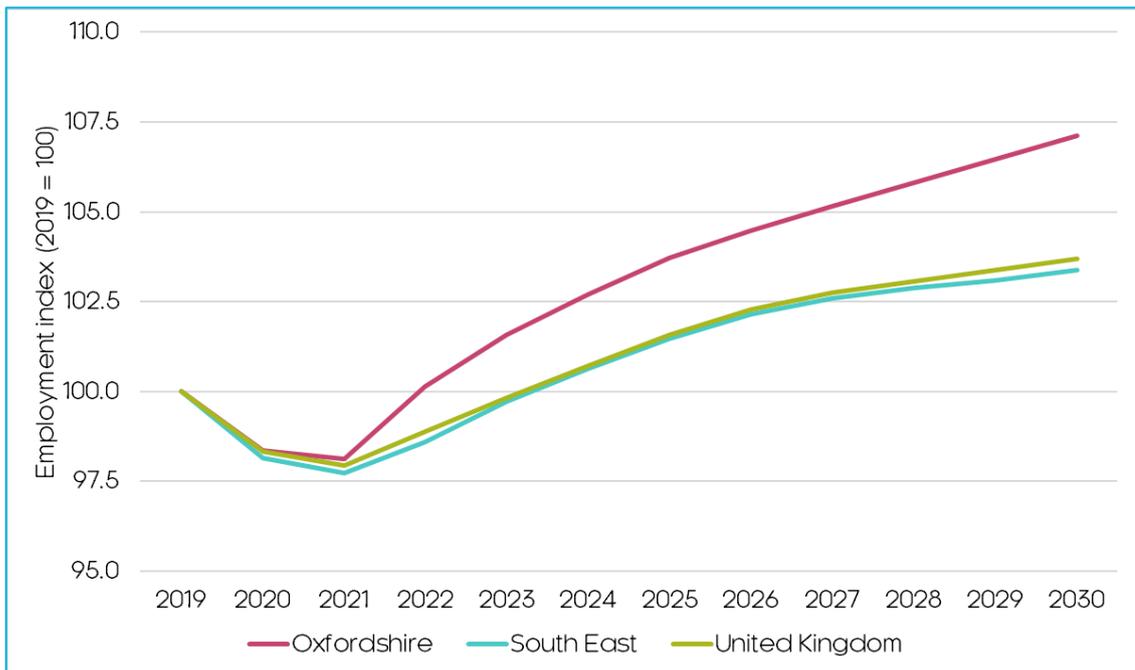
- Public Administration; Education and Health:** given the COVID-19 pandemic is a public health problem, demand is expected to increase and remain high (given the need to manage the demand backlog) as Oxfordshire leads the global pursuit of a resolution to the virus. Output is however expected to marginally contract, largely driven by shifting demand in public admin and education, but this will rebound 2021 onwards as increased resources are put into health and related initiatives. Given these industries have largely continued to consistently operate even during strict restrictions, employment losses are expected to be minimal, with the potential for further growth to manage and oversee increased demand for health and related services. Fragile productivity growth could be stymied during the recovery though. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 3,900 additional jobs but £90 million lower output.*
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation:** broadly covering non-accommodation tourism, hospitality and leisure, this sector will be amongst the worst-affected by social distancing measures and related restrictions. The sectors labour-intensive nature and consumer-facing dependency means it will be even more susceptible to employment losses and a slower recovery, despite *furlough* and related support. Job losses could be greatest in 2021, and will disproportionately impact the young, low-paid and those on flexible contracts. *Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory: 1,400 fewer jobs and £40 million lower output.*

4.20 With these sector impacts in mind, Figure 4-8, Figure 4-9 and Table 4-5 summarise the potential Oxfordshire-wide impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on economic activity (similarly, graphs are indexed to 100 in 2019). As expected, compared with regional and national comparators, the Oxfordshire economy will likely experience a much gentler, though still significant, contraction to economic activity, and could also undergo a much stronger recovery.

Figure 4-8: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on GVA in Oxfordshire relative to the South East and UK



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Figure 4-9: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment in Oxfordshire relative to the South East and UK

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Table 4-5: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on economic performance in Oxfordshire, and relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory

	2019 (forecast baseline)	2025	2030	Growth, 2019-30	% growth, 2019-30
Employment	430,300	439,100	456,400	26,000	6.0%
<i>relative to pre-COVID-19</i>	-	-7,100	-6,000	-6,000	-1.4%
GVA (£2016, bn)	£21.1	£22.7	£24.5	£3.4	16.3%
<i>relative to pre-COVID-19</i>	-	-£0.5	-£0.5	-£0.5	-2.5%
Productivity (£2016)	£49,100	£51,600	£53,800	£4,700	9.6%
<i>relative to pre-COVID-19</i>	-	-£300	-£400	-£400	-0.9%

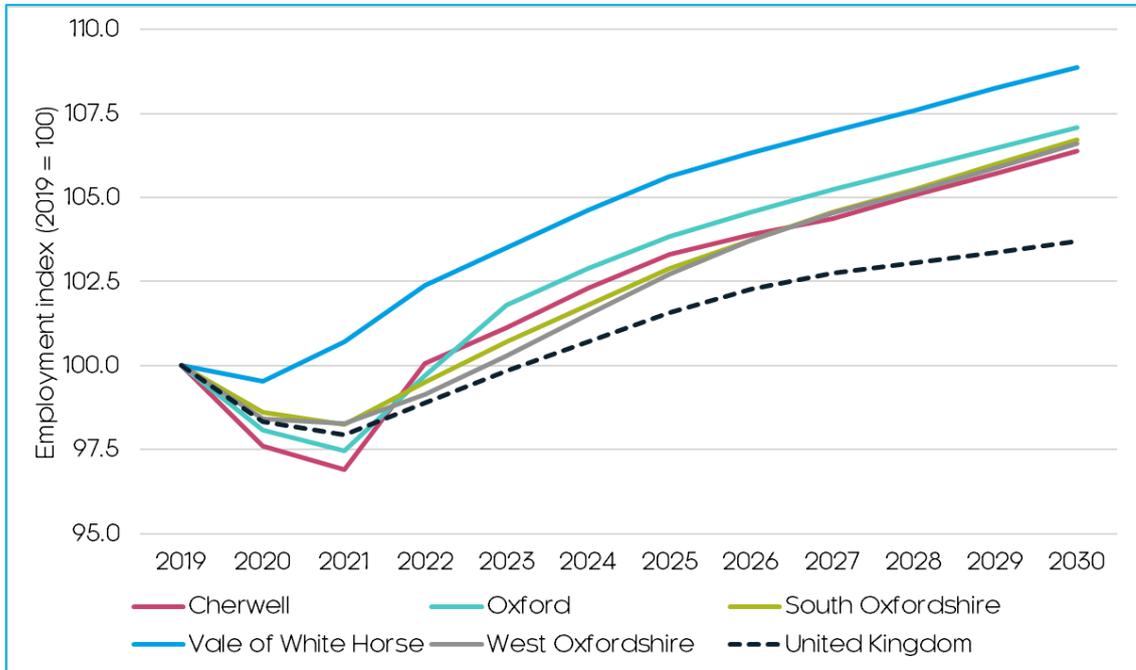
Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

- 4.21 Given the *furlough* scheme and related employment support, alongside the desires of firms to retain staff in spite of falls in output, employment is expected to contract much less than output (approx. -2% rather than -9%). However, this also leads to a delayed recovery in employment, with the worst job losses occurring by 2021 before starting to recover rapidly in 2022.
- 4.22 Output, meanwhile, is expected to recover quickly following a sharp bottoming-out in 2020. Indeed, Oxfordshire could open up a 5% gap relative to the UK recovery by 2030. Given the

contrasting response of output and employment, productivity consequently undergoes a sharp drop in 2021 and could recover slowly, exacerbating Oxfordshire's 'productivity puzzle'.

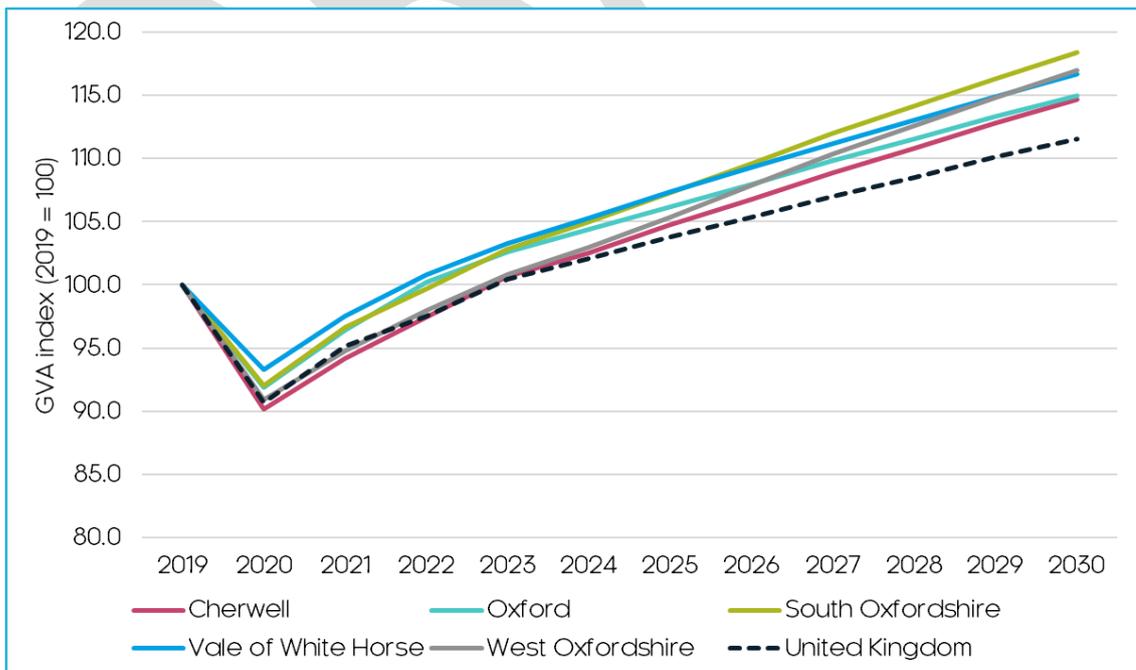
4.23 Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory, these preliminary forecasts show that by 2030, as a legacy of the pandemic, the Oxfordshire economy could expect to have in the region of 6,000 fewer jobs, output £522 million lower, and a workforce £400 per annum less productive.

Figure 4-10: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment in Oxfordshire's districts



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Figure 4-11: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on GVA in Oxfordshire's districts



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Table 4-6: Forecast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economic performance of Oxfordshire's districts, relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory

	Employment growth, 2019-30 relative to pre-COVID-19	Employment% growth, 2019-30 relative to pre-COVID-19	GVA growth £m, 2019-30 relative to pre-COVID-19	GVA% growth, 2019-30 relative to pre-COVID-19
Cherwell	-600	-0.7%	-£156	-3.3%
Oxford	400	0.2%	-£194	-3.3%
South Oxfordshire	-800	-1.0%	£67	1.6%
Vale of White Horse	-100	-0.1%	-£46	-1.1%
West Oxfordshire	-300	-0.4%	-£58	-2.4%

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

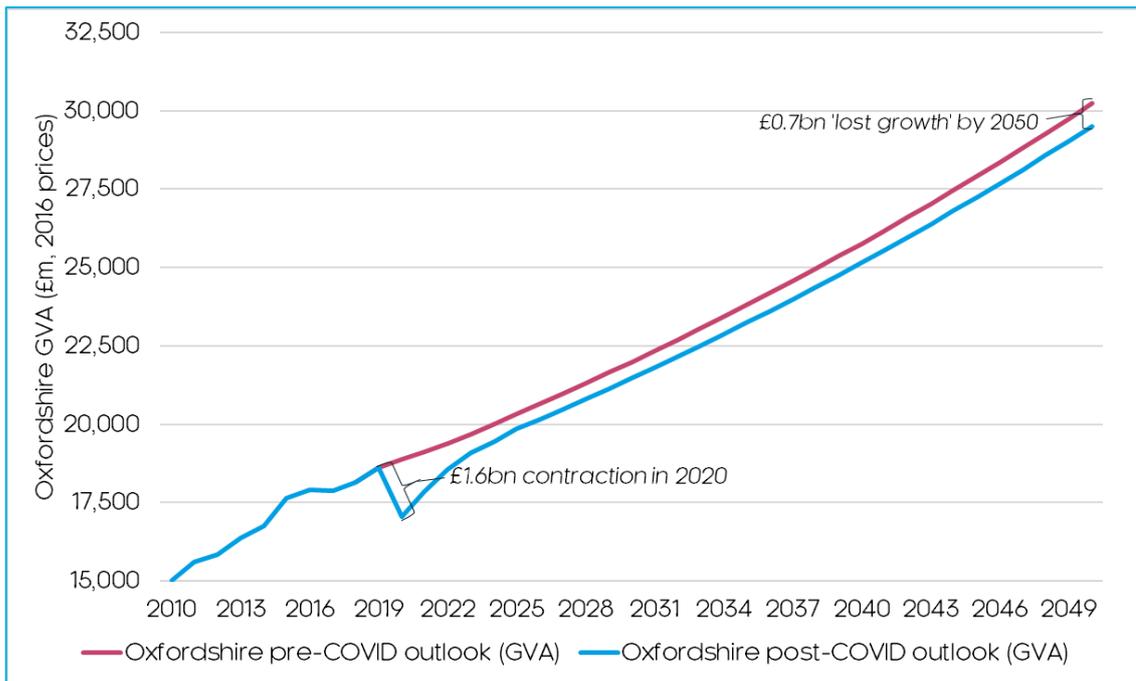
4.24 District Expectations

- 4.25 The expected impact at district level depends on an area's sectoral composition and history of performance during previous recoveries. Figure 4-10, Figure 4-11 and Table 4-6 consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local economic activity in Oxfordshire (graphs are indexed to 100 in 2019, to highlight the relative impacts experienced by different areas).
- 4.26 In terms of output, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire are initially the worst affected within the County; however, this is still around, rather than significantly below, the UK average. The Vale of White Horse is the least severely impacted, reflecting its favourable sectoral structure. All areas are fully recovered by 2023 and are all projected to outperform the UK recovery from 2023 onwards.
- 4.27 As noted previously, the picture for employment is subtly different. Here, Cherwell and Oxford, with their concentration of labour-intensive, restriction-impacted industries such as Retail, Accommodation and Food, and Recreation (i.e. Tourism), track marginally below the UK average, yet as with output, all areas are projected to return to 2019 employment levels by 2023, and to see higher year-on-year employment growth than the UK average from 2023 onwards.
- 4.28 Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory, the employment shortfall for areas in Oxfordshire in 2030 ranges from -800 in South Oxfordshire to a potential +400 additional jobs in Oxford City (the latter, reflecting the City's global role in Public Health). The GVA shortfall, however, is expected to be greatest in Oxford, at a loss of £194 million, closely followed by Cherwell, at a loss of £158 million, highlighting the longer-term legacy of the pandemic's 'lost output' for some industries.

Conclusions and Implications

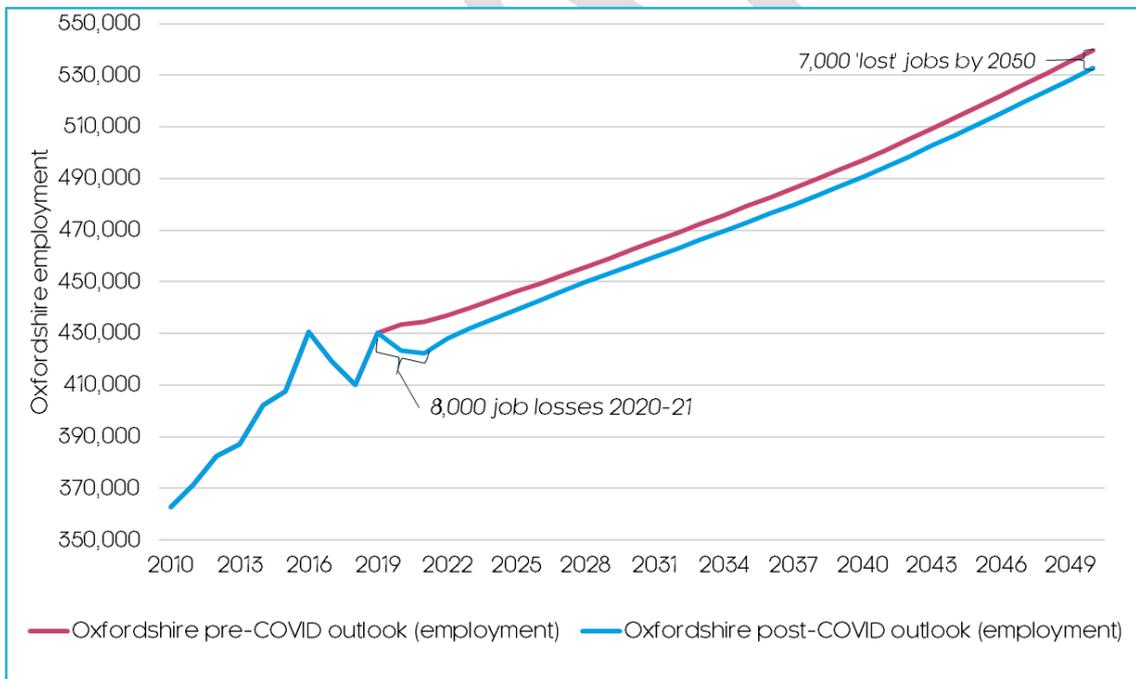
- 4.29 Even after an extended period of recovery and growth, it is likely that the legacy of the pandemic's impact on the Oxfordshire economy will continue to be evident in terms of a 'lost growth' shortfall, as Figure 4-12 demonstrates (for both employment and output). This highlights the longer-term scarring effect of the recession, as well as the fundamental changes the pandemic will bring for Oxfordshire's industries and businesses.

Figure 4-12: Comparison of Oxfordshire's GVA outlook pre and post-COVID-19



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Figure 4-13: Comparison of Oxfordshire's employment outlook pre and post-COVID-19



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

4.30 However, it is important to set these trends within the wider national context; as Table 4-7 shows, not only is the short-run impact expected to be less pronounced in Oxfordshire (see column 1), Oxfordshire's recovery will also outperform the UK average (column 2), resulting in a smaller relative 'lost growth' shortfall over the longer timeframe (column 3).

Table 4-7: Response of the Oxfordshire economy to the COVID-19 pandemic relative to the UK

Geography	GVA impact, 2020 (relative to 2019)	GVA recovery per annum, 2021-30	GVA shortfall relative to pre-COVID-19, 2050
Oxfordshire	-7.2%	2.1%	-2.1%
UK	-9.3%	1.8%	-3.3%

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

- 4.31 This can be attributed to the intrinsic resilience and adaptability of the Oxfordshire economy and its sectors to national economic shocks, as Table 4-8 summarises. It shows that Oxfordshire's resistance to economic shocks (as seen in columns 1, 3, 5 and 7) has generally been stronger than the wider UK economy, although there are some exceptions (e.g. 1974-75 and 1990-91 recessions).

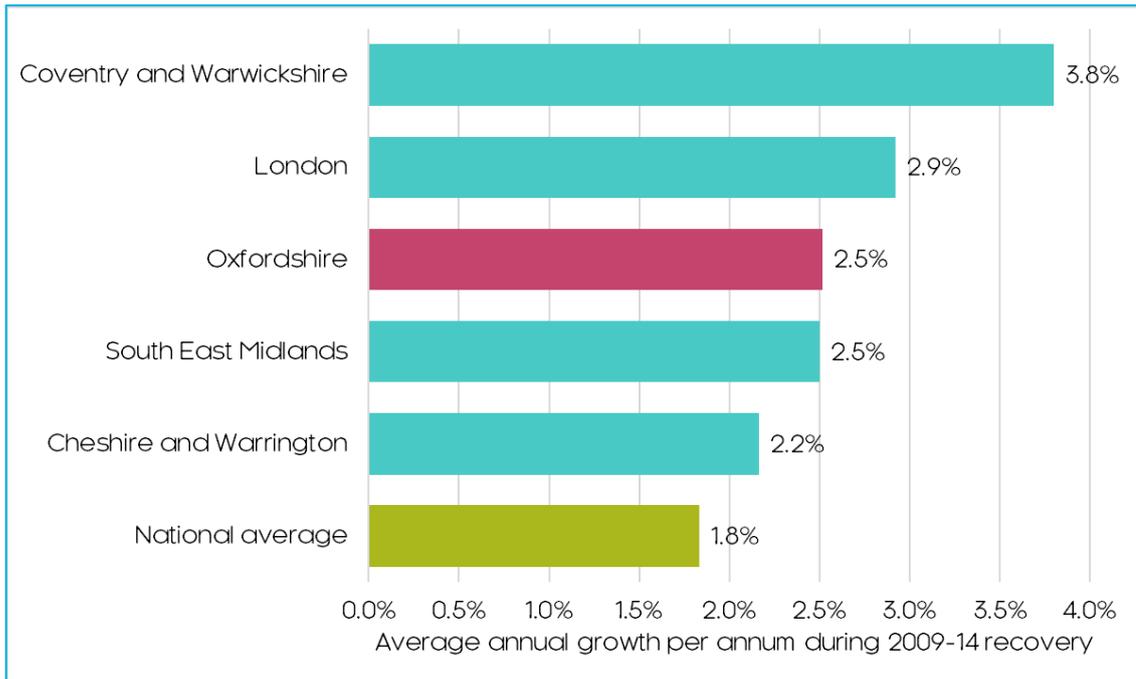
Table 4-8: Oxfordshire's past response and recovery from economic shocks, relative to the UK average (as measured by GVA)

	Actual data								COVID-19 forecast	
	1974-75	1975-79	1979-81	1981-90	1990-91	1991-07	2007-09	2009-19	2019-20	2020-30
	Recession	Recovery	Recession	Recovery	Recession	Recovery	Recession	Recovery	Recession	Recovery
Oxfordshire relative to UK	-5.8	0.1	0.3	0.3	-1.5	0.2	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.1

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

- 4.32 As observed previously, it is expected that the Oxfordshire economy will show greater resilience to the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic (Column 10) relative to the wider UK economy, although this will not be to the extent of its resilience to the 2007-09 Global Financial shock.
- 4.33 Of particular interest, though, is the ability of the Oxfordshire economy to rapidly recover, stabilise, and return to long-term trends following an economic shock. In fact, following every recession over the past 50 years, the Oxfordshire economy has recovered more strongly than the UK average.
- 4.34 This has enabled Oxfordshire to establish and maintain a strong performance advantage relative to the rest of the country. In fact, as Figure 4-14 shows throughout the recovery period following the 2007-09 recession – the deepest economic contraction in the county since the 1970s - Oxfordshire emerged as the third fastest growing economy in the country (ranked out of 38 LEP areas).

Figure 4-14: Oxfordshire's recovery to the 2007-09 recession



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

Table 4-9: The impact of previous recessions on the Oxfordshire economy

	GVA loss in Oxfordshire (% loss relative to pre-shock peak)	Employment loss in Oxfordshire
1974-75 recession	-14.1	-12,900
1979-81 recession	-2.9	-900
1990-91 recession	-2.0	-19,900
2007-09 recession	-2.4	-9,600
2019-20 recession (forecast)	-7.2	-7,000

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

4.35 Of course, this is not to suggest the road to recovery from the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic will follow a similar pattern, with the nature of this shock presenting a number of unique and unprecedented challenges for Oxfordshire and its businesses. The novelty of the shock is demonstrated in Table 4-9, which shows the loss to employment could be relatively modest compared to historic shocks, but output could experience a sharp and sudden contraction.

5 Qualitative Insights

Headline Messages

Key Messages

- In terms of the business base, the COVID-19 crisis to-date has had some winners (tech-/ R&D / innovation) losers (non-food retail, transport) and sectors largely unchanged (agribusiness).
- Working from home spawned a new localism which, depending on the COVID-19 trajectory, could have lasting impacts on commuting patterns, and the hierarchy of use between cities like Oxford and market towns and villages. The 15-minute community concept has resonated deeply across the County.
- Whilst aspects of the property market have been negatively affected, demand for R&D floorspace property market and given Oxfordshire's historic supply constraints there is a strong desire to ensure that R&D demand can be met, including through adaptation of vacant city centre space.
- The hardest hit sector is the Visitor Economy; businesses will need support in the face of ongoing government lockdowns as will the individuals employed in the sector (disproportionately those with lower skill levels and women – both core to Oxfordshire's inclusive economy aspirations)
- The Green Recovery ranks high in the public and professional sector minds-eye but the policy mandate and incentive mechanisms are insufficient to match the scale of the challenge/opportunity.
- Ladders of opportunity for local youth and the newly unemployed will become more essential, heightening the need for targeted employment and skills initiatives with tailored packages of wrap around support.

Purpose of this Section

- 5.1 Alongside the 'hard' data analysis presented in Sections 2 and 3, the Baseline Assessment has captured qualitative local insights and intelligence drawing on business and stakeholder views of the economic impact of the pandemic. A series of 'Insight Groups', comprising cross sector representatives, and spanning the following thematic areas were convened: *Strategic Sites and Assets; Green Transition; Town Centres; Visitor Economy; Rural Economy; Business Growth and Supply Chains; and Inclusive Growth.*
- 5.2 This Section summarises the key qualitative findings of these sessions and is organised around the following structure: the impact on COVID-19 (to-date and anticipated); key issues and concerns; potential intervention responses and opportunities.

Findings by Insight Group

The Business and Supply Chain Theme

The Impact of COVID-19

- 5.3 The impacts of COVID-19 have varied significantly across sectors and businesses. Some sectors, including tourism, hospitality, non-food retail and the automotive industry and their respective supply chains have been severely hit and has raised uncomfortable questions on

their underlying preparedness and business continuity plans for major economic shocks and trading disruption.

- 5.4 The impact has been less severe in other sectors, and some business (i.e. retailers with online platforms) have benefited from the disruption, changes in consumer behaviours and increased demand for products and services. Reduced levels of congestion have also benefited certain business in their use of the road and rail networks.
- 5.5 The variation in impacts on businesses, both across and within sectors, illustrates that there is underlying resilience in the Oxfordshire economy but that interventions to aid recovery will need to be highly targeted. Additionally, the economic shock has challenged all sectors to consider their existing business models, business plans and investment strategies to assess where improvements can be made with technology adoption, skills development and market positioning to ensure that they are more resilient and agile for future economic challenges including new UK trading arrangements in 2021 following the end of the EU transition period.

Key Issues and Concerns

- 5.6 In defining the 'new normal', four issues were highlighted for business. First is the role of property in a future business model. Businesses have been forced to consider their present operating space and whether it is too large or if it is sufficiently agile for flexible working. As a sector, property in particular has undergone major change with the pandemic accelerating a decade's worth of change in barely ten weeks. Second, is the urgent need for businesses is to ensure that the resilience challenges of supply chains are better understood, characterised and strengthened for it to be able to respond to future shocks. Third, is the role of digital technology in business transformation and the urgency in the accelerated adoption of 'Industry 4.0' standards in business processes, manufacturing and operations. Fourth, businesses will have to be agile in understanding and anticipating shifts in consumer behaviours, preferences and requirements that the pandemic may have profoundly altered.
- 5.7 An important further cultural shift – impacting both business models and consumer behaviours – which businesses will also need to consider is the growth of the 15-minute neighbourhood concept and the ways in which the County's cities, towns and business parks are starting to remake/repurpose their property offers to adapt to this new phenomenon.
- 5.8 More generally, the employee-working-from-home model has received mixed responses and raises important questions for businesses moving forward. For some, it has undoubtedly provided greater flexibility in the operating model, for others there are concerns about trust and productivity. Working hours are probably longer at home than they were in the factory/office, and it is clear that, in many cases, for younger workers in rental accommodation 'working from kitchen tables' is far from ideal.
- 5.9 For parents, home schooling has been hugely disruptive for working patterns and created significant pressures for employers as they have sought to balance staff availability and production/service demands. Different technical and cultural challenges have been faced by employees over 60, many of whom have senior business roles and place a premium on face-to-face engagement. All of these issues mean businesses will need to invest in skills development and new flexible working policies to attract and retain staff eager to retain some of the positive experiences that have been created by the pandemic

Potential intervention responses and opportunities

5.10 There are opportunities for the Recovery Plan to explore interventions for action at both national and local levels. This included, for example, using the experience of COVID-19 to design a new paradigm for learning i.e. take the entire educational system and restructure it to work online, focusing on building essential skills for the workforce. There is a vital role for education and training providers to embrace this new operating model and build new approaches to support businesses to invest in training and their workforce.

5.11 At the local level there are opportunities to:

- Develop new models for town and city centre growth across Oxfordshire to ensure that they provide the environment and amenities that meet the evolving needs of residents, visitors, businesses and service providers.
- Embrace the Social Value Act, and work to ensure that the imperative for social value underpins all public procurement activity to facilitate meaningful inclusive growth;
- Re-prioritise 'buying local' to ensure we build the resilience of local businesses and their communities.

The Green Recovery Theme

The impact of COVID-19

5.12 COVID-19 has triggered significant business and public interest in a 'Green Recovery ' with 'The Climate Emergency' and the road to zero carbon now featuring consistently in public dialogue. The pandemic is seen as an opportunity to rethink how we recover, with zero carbon principles at the core of a renewed economy. This has culminated in the Government's publication (November 2020) of its 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution which aims to "build back better, support green jobs, and accelerate our path to net zero."

5.13 In building consensus and support for a zero carbon approach to economic recovery, it will be important to recognise that many businesses are 'firefighting' in order to stay afloat with their focus on cashflow and workforce issues. Developing a clear and coherent case which offers demonstrable benefits to trading and operating will be important factors in achieving the step change being sought as part of rebuilding key economic sectors of Oxfordshire's economy.

Key Issues and Concerns

5.14 *Green Recovery* is influencing and shifting thinking in wide ranging ways:

- *Transport* – a fundamental shift has occurred in the propensity for daily commuting and traditional models for office-based working in major city centres.
- *House building* – some developers have devised ambitious targets and are committed to trailblazing pathways to zero carbon;
- *Commercial property* - a major financial asset held by institutional investors. Whilst expressing short-term support for working-from-home, some are beginning to exert pressure to reverse the trend

5.15 From a business leadership perspective there are significant challenges to overcome in moving from concept to implementation of a *Green Recovery* given:

- High capacity/competing objectives - large scale companies are most able and have, in many instances, implemented 'Green' policies but COVID-19 and a focus on business margins and profitability threatens to divert this commitment;

- Low capacity/high interest - companies at the SME-level, generally inclined to support Green measures are focussed on growth and, in many instances, survival in the face of COVID-19;

5.16 Oxfordshire has deep expertise in 'Green' policies and common ambition within local authorities, universities and other local partners; however, the policy levers and/or incentive mechanisms are not sufficient to address the scale of the challenges and opportunities which are being created.

Potential intervention responses and opportunities

5.17 There are opportunities for the Recovery Plan to explore interventions for action at both national and local levels. This includes, for example, establishing 'Green Recovery' campaigns for the public sector, businesses and young people and those most impacted by COVID-19 to engage them in jobs to contribute to a green recovery and the commercial and employment opportunities it offers.

5.18 At a local level there are opportunities to:

- Building a range of active travel corridors between key employment sites and residential sites and provide the bike/e-bike/e-scooter hardware. Oxfordshire is a relatively flat geography and more could be done to encourage cycling through investment in the bike network.
- Connect 'Interventions' to the local and national Climate Emergency Frameworks – Oxfordshire has great potential to lead the way for UK through its academic and spin-off enterprise resources.
- Capitalise on the leading-edge expertise across local businesses and universities to work in partnership with local government and other stakeholders to drive forward the green revolution across Oxfordshire.

The Inclusive Growth Theme

The impact of COVID-19

5.19 In line with the national picture, low income families and vulnerable groups are likely to be the hardest hit by COVID-19. Lower skilled workers in the hospitality and tourism industries, for example, are at a higher risk of unemployment which will have a negative impact on household incomes.

5.20 COVID-19 has had major impacts on individuals' mental health, particularly those who have lost work, those Key Workers under pressure, and those in 'unstable' work characterised typically by 'zero hours' contracts. As demand for services increases, there is major pressure on both mainstream health and the charitable sectors to deliver these services.

5.21 On the positive side, there are signs that the increase in homeworking and the '15-minute neighbourhood' concept can play an important role in local community wealth building and generating employment opportunities for local residents.

Key issues and concerns

5.22 Although Oxfordshire has a strong economy, it has 10 wards in the most deprived 20% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). These places are frequently home to key workers, BAME communities, and will be disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Care must be taken to

ensure that the relatively strong economic position of the County post-COVID-19 does not mask the significant specific challenges that exist locally.

5.23 The evidence from the 2008 recession was that graduates suffered from significant underemployment. Graduates are also likely to be affected under COVID-19 but of greater concern will be non-University educated young people aged 16-24-years old in deprived areas of the County who may be at risk of long-term unemployment, especially as sectors which have historically provided important entry level employment such as tourism, retail and hospitality have been the most affected by COVID-19.

5.24 COVID has also had a disproportionate impact on women, who have been critical in enabling home-schooling, are frequently in part-time jobs (which are often easy to cut), as well as providing caring support to older generations. Older people have also been seriously affected, with many expressing profound senses of isolation by dint of lockdown measures and the need to shield.

Potential intervention responses and opportunities

5.25 There is a key need for an Oxfordshire system-wide approach to drive and sustain its approach to inclusive growth, following the impact of COVID-19. There is the opportunity to work with 'Anchor Institutions' (healthcare system, universities, local councils) to redefine Oxfordshire's local growth model as part of its economic recovery and rewire the County's approach to achieving a truly Inclusive Economy. This ambition cannot be achieved by the public sector alone, but requires genuine partnership and leadership across government, business, the third sector and local communities to move the commitment forward.

5.26 Areas where progress could commence and be explored at the local level include:

- Re-engage our key anchor institutions as key actors in our inclusive economy agenda under the proposed *inclusive Economy Commission*. The NHS, universities and local authorities have major roles to play in supporting entry-level employment, supporting progression in the workplace and showcasing good employment practices.
- Promoting an Oxfordshire wide commitment to the living wage, recognising the variation in living costs across the County and balancing employer and employee needs;
- Building on existing and augmenting targeted employment and skills initiatives to connect local resident to employment opportunities including better integration of education, skills, DWP provision and community-led services to support young people into employment
- Recognising the development of the 15-minute neighbourhood, ensuring that employment support is delivered in the community and values the importance of volunteering.
- Promote Oxfordshire as a place for great opportunities for all, built around inclusion and diversity. Identify and demonstrate good practice, to encourage more activities and cultural change, where required.
- Develop high-quality walking and cycling path network across the County, fully linked into GP prescribing, and connected to high streets, recognising the key role of walking and cycling in maintaining well-being

The Jobs and Skills Theme

The impact of COVID-19

- 5.27 It is clear that the impacts of COVID-19 are wide ranging and cross sectoral spanning: Retail/Hotel/Catering, Cultural/Arts, Manufacturing and Property. Whilst each sector has its own unique issues, business models and operations the evidence suggests that a common thread is reduced end-consumer demand.
- 5.28 COVID has brought about some fundamental shifts in attitudes and behaviours, some of which may be permanent. Key examples of these shifts include: the move online for workers and students, and the digital skills and resilient broadband platforms required; the environmental benefits of reduced travel-to-work (and the contribution this can make to Net Zero); the move to distributed workplace 'hubs', rather than centralised offices, and homeworking to provide more flexibility and agility.

Key Issues and Concerns

- 5.29 There are concerns that young people who have been unable to attend school /college /university /work experience for six months, and whose learning-in-a social-context has been put on hold, will be severely impacted in their skills and education progression. This will have long-term implications and will require schools and educators to put in place remediation measures for many in getting young people back into the ways of disciplined learning, exam preparation, and readying them for a changed world of work.
- 5.30 There is a common expectation that COVID-19's effects will be felt more severely in the County's disadvantaged wards (where the issues are exacerbated by housing and caring challenges, and families without appropriate ICT facilities). There is also evidence from colleges that some parents are uneasy about taking on study-oversight responsibilities and further evidence of a marked increase in the demand for food parcels in our deprived communities.

Potential intervention responses and opportunities

- 5.31 There are opportunities for the Recovery Plan to explore interventions for action at both national and local levels. This includes clear recognition of the need for targeted investment in labour market programmes, such as:
- Renewed emphasis on closing the attainment gap
 - Support the development of skills and engagement of all members of society – building upon local resources via schools, colleges, DWP, councils etc.
 - Target employment and training initiatives at people exiting the tourism and hospitality sectors to support transition into the health and social care sector, where labour shortages exist.
 - Build on the Oxfordshire Social Contract with additional reach and wrap around support and develop more extensive and effective mentoring programmes for all.
 - Ensure that people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities are supported into the labour market and work with employers to design jobs that can be access and fulfilled by these groups.
- 5.32 Areas where progress could commence and be explored at the local level include:

- The need to ensure that the transition to increasingly pervasive online working is matched by the skill sets and capabilities of users. This should be achieved through partnership between government and industry (who all have affected workforces).
- Supporting the delivery of the Oxfordshire Digital Strategy with continuous review and investment to ensure that all our communities and business are equipped with up to date digital skills and infrastructure.
- Building on the shift towards home working and the more localised office hubs, explore the potential for expanding the model beyond the traditional centres to smaller towns and villages e.g. adapted space alongside the village hall/shop, providing skills, self-employment support services, etc.
- Undertake more sophisticated supply chain mapping to identify opportunities for spin-out enterprises to expand within the county to lower cost local sites, providing jobs close to where people reside.

The Rural Economy Theme

The impact of COVID-19

5.33 COVID-19 has not been as severe as anticipated within the agricultural sector with animal slaughter continuing and concerns over the availability of seasonal workers largely not being realised.

5.34 The impact on non-farming rural businesses, however, has been more varied. The visitor economy and group activities, including rural hospitality and events (e.g. weddings) have been hit hard. However, the new 'Localism' spawned by home working and the avoidance of cities/major shops, resulted in more reliance on local enterprises for food. Many pubs/shops pivoted and diversified in response to COVID-19 selling alternative produce and providing home deliveries; however, those that were less adaptive have suffered. In terms of property, residential tenancies are considered to be relatively unaffected but the market for commercial premises has shown signs of weakening.

Key Issues and Concerns

5.35 The hospitality sector is an important component of the rural economy with expectations that as much as 50% of businesses may be forced to stop trading in the first twelve-to-eighteen months of COVID-19. Open space and the Countryside has seen unprecedented use during the pandemic with increases in new users and visitors but this equally raises challenges of degradation/threats to biodiversity, as well as opportunities for growing the rural economy.

5.36 The wider concerns for local agriculture is the continued uncertainty associated with the imminent end of the EU transition period and the status for a future trading landscape, particularly for the rural sector with the end of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Potential intervention responses and opportunities

5.37 Critically, it was acknowledged that more needs to be done to encourage rural locations to be entrepreneurial and to promote and encourage young people to enter the rural economy as viable career opportunities. Moving forward, it will be important to push for rural areas to be properly supported under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund as a replacement for the LEADER and EAFRD programmes.

5.38 There is also opportunity to capitalise on the 'new localism' through provision of multi-purpose co-working and service hubs in smaller towns and villages. This 'new localism' has

provided a benefit to local community food infrastructure and to the environment (lower car-based travel) and public, private and third sector partnership and leadership is required to ensure that these benefits are not just temporary.

The Strategic Sites and Assets Theme

The impact of COVID-19

- 5.39 The COVID-19 crisis has brought Oxfordshire's R&D capabilities to the forefront and into the public domain through UK leadership in vaccine and ventilator development. Demand for premises within Oxfordshire continues to outstrip supply and has been stronger than anticipated in the face of COVID-19 (e.g. Brookfield completed their 50% acquisition of Harwell and there has also been notable progress with the construction and sale/letting of new premises on the new out-of-town business parks at Banbury and Bicester).
- 5.40 In parallel, increasing interest in the 'new localism' presents the opportunity to redefine the roles of cities, towns, villages and science parks and explore further new ways of developing mixed used developments. It is also apparent that the pattern of working from home is not an attractive long-term model for many individuals in R&D and other high growth sectors across the County: Zoom fatigue is resulting in collaborators seeking to get back into their lab/office environment.

Key Issues and Concerns

- 5.41 Whilst some business sectors have been severely impacted by the pandemic technology lab and science based premises are in demand. The increasing demand for R&D space (and in some sectors such as Life Sciences because of COVID-19) gives rise to an opportunity for repurposing of the existing property stock. With an increasing number of vacant spaces in town and city centres comes the potential to repurpose these as R&D spaces for use by businesses and sectors who have high demand for physical workspaces, while at the same time, bringing people back to town centres and enable innovative businesses to establish and grow in Oxfordshire.
- 5.42 This may, however, require support for businesses and investors to interpret and navigate the planning system and for Local Planning Authorities to review their planning policies in response to changes in demand within local urban centres.

Potential intervention responses and opportunities

- 5.43 The dynamic response by many of the County's world leading scientists and innovators to COVID-19 has elevated the image of Oxfordshire as a pioneering Innovation hub.
- 5.44 With demand historically outstripping supply there is also a need for a broader examination of the roles, relationships and connectivity between the science parks, established town/city centres and more rural communities across Oxfordshire. There is a need to review planning and growth policy within the new localism paradigm (e.g. 15-minute communities), striking the appropriate balance and flexibility in co-locating employment and residential land uses. There is also a desire to look, County wide, beyond the established strategic sites and science parks to ensure Oxfordshire can retain, grow and attract businesses and employment opportunities.

The Town Centres Theme

The impact of COVID-19

- 5.45 COVID-19 has had a huge impact on large town and city centres fuelled by: a shift away from offices to home working; constraints in accessing retail, leisure and hospitality offers and corresponding shifts in consumer (residents, students and visitors) behaviours; a dramatic reduction in public transport patronage and use of centrally located transport hubs. Business and political leaders are reimagining the role of urban centres across the globe.
- 5.46 A 'new localism' has emerged, aligned to the concept of 15-minute communities which draws into focus the wider network of Oxfordshire's settlements and the roles and relationships between these in terms of places to live, work and play.

Key Issues and Concerns

- 5.47 The nature of high streets has changed from destination/experiential shopping to shorter trips and 'picking-up what is needed'. Those high streets that are adapting to challenging retail conditions prior to COVID-19 are likely to survive; others will continue to struggle.
- 5.48 Some of the micro-centres across Oxfordshire are within local communities are doing relatively well despite trading restrictions (e.g. Summertown) but the backdrop is one of lower overall economic activity, as footfall has reduced. Uncertainty generated by the economic outlook is impacting negatively on consumer confidence and spending.
- 5.49 Co-working hubs initially dropped-off but are experiencing a resurgence as work patterns morph from pre-COVID-19 office to home working to localised co-working.

Potential intervention responses and opportunities

- 5.50 There are opportunities for the Recovery Plan to explore interventions for action at both national and local levels including:
- Greater investment to ensure that high streets are able to open safely focused exclusively to support business and local areas to implement the actions required to create safe environments and reassure consumers.
 - The taxonomy within Oxfordshire of use between city, market town and village should be mapped and understood through the lens of the new localism, emerging travel patterns, evolving business models and changing consumer preferences.
 - Changes to uses/planning to enable R&D/offices in vacant city centre spaces and more integrated employment and residential uses should be explored; this should include co-working hubs in smaller settles
 - Major landowners should be convened to review the existing uses of land and buildings and consider new and innovative uses/initiatives that meet the needs of the County's businesses, residents, visitors and service providers.

The Visitor Economy Theme

The impact of COVID-19

- 5.51 Visit Britain estimates the Visitor Economy will not recover until 2024, and that will likely be to 'new normal' levels. Oxfordshire's Visitor Economy is valued at£ 4.3b and supports 40k jobs but a 40% decline in tourists is having a devastating impact on the sector. This is further exacerbated by the drop in international and business visitors which, historically, have the highest levels of spend.

- 5.52 Loss in employment within the sector also has major socio-economic implications for the Oxfordshire economy. The demographics of the Visitor Economy are disproportionately skewed towards those with lower level skills, women and those just entering the labour market or returning to employment. These groups are, therefore, being disproportionately impacted and more vulnerable to longer term unemployment without targeted skills and careers support.

Key Issues and Concerns

- 5.53 There are major concerns around the short, medium and long terms impacts of COVID-19, in particular the County's ability to attract high spending international and business visitors in light of changing business models (i.e. move online), transport behaviours and consumer preferences. 46% of visitor expenditure in Oxfordshire comes from inbound visitors. Oxford City Centre attracts the most visitors and its hospitality sector is suffering disproportionately, relative to the rest of the County. The high-end is performing better than budget/ business hotels but occupancy levels are well down at 30-50%.
- 5.54 This trend is being felt more widely including at Bicester Villages where a decline in relatively high-spending tourists (who spend c.£1,000 per person per visit average) is not being offset by an increase in domestic visitors spending more (typically £80-£100 per person per visit). The imminent proposed abolition of Tax-free shopping is also likely to reduce Oxfordshire's European competitiveness in regaining the higher spending visitors.
- 5.55 Major visitor attractions like Blenheim and the Ashmolean are operating at restricted/reduced capacity – sustainable for a short-period only. Oxfordshire's wider arts and cultural offer including libraries, galleries, museums and gardens are also suffering with some reporting a 76% reduction in footfall/numbers.
- 5.56 It is important to recognise that tourism and hospitality businesses are destinations in their own right and require a physical property to operate. This means that there will continue to be challenging environments within which existing business rates costs will continue to be needed to be absorbed whilst turnover shrinks, The sector will equally need to consider how it innovates and competes for customers and what can be offered through online channels. This is increasingly critical, when many businesses and destinations are seasonal, meaning that they have only have 3-4 months to generate sufficient revenue to survive through winter.
- 5.57 Generally, 70% of tourism businesses in UK (168,000) are micro-businesses employing less than 10 people. A large number of these businesses are not members of trade associations, DMOs or other bodies, making communication with them very difficult as well as building a coherent package of support measures which can support the sector during recovery.

Potential intervention responses and opportunities

- 5.58 There are opportunities for the Recovery Plan to explore interventions for action at both national and local levels including:
- the need to design a visitor economy strategy which responds to the 'new normal', less focussed on commuting, retail, and city centre-based businesses and more aligned to localism, digital and cultural hubs.
 - closer integration is required between the visitor economy, the arts and culture sectors, alongside wider creative industries.
 - create new digital platforms for cultural content to be brought to the forefront and to find a way to monetise that delivery and attract new audiences

- looking beyond Oxford City Centre to develop a broader and more resilient visitor economy and to recognise the importance of domestic visitors and local residents visiting local attractions.
- embedding visitor economy ambitions and initiatives within existing/planned Town and High Street Funds and other programmes such as the Getting Building Fund.

Conclusions and Implications

- 5.59 COVID-19 has had far reaching impacts across Oxfordshire's businesses, people and places. The impacts have been uneven in terms of: the spatial spread across the County; varied impacts, both negative and positive, between and within different business sectors; and on different individuals, households and vulnerable groups.
- 5.60 The first wave of lockdown created a new localism, captured in the concept of '15-minute communities,' that could bring lasting change to how businesses and residents use cities, market towns and villages.
- 5.61 Local communities, businesses and the public agencies have responded with innovation and agility to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic and Oxfordshire has demonstrated great resilience to the economic and social shock caused by COVID-19.
- 5.62 For many, the recovery will be long and slow, with the worst of the impacts, around unemployment and business closures, yet to be felt. There is a clear need for a targeted and well-resourced recovery plan to ensure Oxfordshire can continue to adapt to the new normal. This recover plan must: support businesses to navigate and overcome the challenges they are facing and to enable them to grow back stronger; to support individuals back into work through targeted employment and skills support; and to revitalise Oxfordshire's town centres and key settlements to create environments which attract places to live, work and play.
- 5.63 Alongside this support to mitigate negative impacts, the County must also seize the opportunities emerging from the pandemic, including in continue to develop its existing sector and innovation strengths in areas such as the Life Sciences. There is also increased emphasis on more inclusive and sustainable growth, and the potential of the Green Industrial Revolution to create jobs and transition towards a zero-carbon economy.

6 Conclusions & Implications for Economic Renewal Action

Overall Messages

- 6.1 COVID-19 has had significant impacts across Oxfordshire in terms of employment, business turnover, travel, and indeed how and where people work. The two national lockdowns have demonstrated that some sectors have been able to adapt to restrictions to a greater degree than others, based on the ability to 'move online' and/or agility in flexing the provision of goods and services within the extraordinary circumstances generated by the pandemic.
- 6.2 A strong economic base in industries less impacted by COVID-19 restrictions means Oxfordshire's economy has been more resilient to the Pandemic than most areas of the UK. Oxfordshire's strength in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services and high-value Manufacturing has meant that impacts have been limited to a degree by the ability to work flexibly and by continued demand for high-quality products. Reflecting the resilience of the County's economy, the short-run impact of COVID-19 is expected to be less pronounced in Oxfordshire, whilst Oxfordshire's recovery will also outperform the UK average, resulting in a smaller relative shortfall in 'lost growth'.
- 6.3 Sectors dependent on face-to-face interactions/trade with customers and those reliant on consumer footfall have been impacted severely. Although we saw a recovery in these sectors as restrictions were eased in the summer, they remain vulnerable to further restrictions, and potential long-term shifts in consumer preferences and behaviours.
- 6.4 Critically, these impacts are being felt unevenly across Oxfordshire's residents. In line with the national picture, low income families, vulnerable groups, and the most deprived areas are likely to be the hardest hit by COVID-19. This will lead to heightened levels of inequality and may undermine Oxfordshire's inclusive growth aspirations. The evidence indicates that both young and old workers have been disproportionately affected by redundancies and job losses. Sectors such as Tourism and Hospitality have a high proportion of female employees and lower skill workers, and these groups will be suffering disproportionate impacts.
- 6.5 Working from home has spawned a new localism which, depending on the COVID-19 trajectory, could have lasting impacts on commuting patterns, and the hierarchy of use between cities like Oxford and the County's market towns and villages. The '15-minute community' concept has resonated deeply across the Oxfordshire, and the County's dispersed and (to a degree) polycentric geography lends itself more easily to adaptive ways of working and the localisation of economies caused by restrictions on movement.
- 6.6 The 'deep dive' views by our theme areas – Business, People and Place – are summarised below.

Business

- 6.7 Oxfordshire had a strong economic baseline position prior to COVID-19, particularly in Knowledge Intensive Industries (KIBs), driven by its high skill levels. Pre-COVID-19 forecasts show the Oxfordshire economy was expected to maintain its impressive growth moving forwards, with performance set to exceed peer areas and the national average.
- 6.8 Importantly, updated forecasts incorporating the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic indicate a comparatively short, but substantial, impact to economic activity in Oxfordshire. Relative to a pre-COVID-19 trajectory, over the next decade the Oxfordshire economy could expect to have in the region of 6,000 fewer jobs and output £522 million lower.
- 6.9 Sectors such as Retail, Tourism and Food will bear the brunt of the impact. The Visitor Economy has been hit very hard. Furlough and job losses are highest in this sector, and city centre footfall and spend are down 50 % to October 2020. The scale of this damage means that the Visitor Economy is not expected to recover until 2024. The Education sector, reliant on influxes of international students and researchers has also been hit, and Arts and Entertainment has seen the highest rates of employees placed on Furlough.
- 6.10 Broad industry-level data do not, however, tell the full story, with some businesses (particularly in Life Sciences) having increases in turnover, while others suffer losses of over 50 per cent. The COVID-19 crisis to-date has had some winners (e.g. Tech-/Solution-driven businesses), losers (e.g. Automotive, non-Food Retail, and Transport) and sectors largely unchanged (e.g. Agribusiness). The Life Sciences sector in Oxfordshire has reported increased sales and demand for services since March 2020, and some of Oxfordshire's breakthrough industries, such as Professional Services, IT, and Health/Science could emerge stronger.
- 6.11 Size-wise, many SME business have been hard hit by COVID-19 and have accessed approximately £400m in loan funds. A business survey conducted by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse indicates that home-based businesses, the newly self-employed, and limited company freelancers, predominantly in Professional Services, are really feeling the impact of the economic crisis, and are not benefitting from sufficient support.

People

- 6.12 In line with the national picture, low income families and vulnerable groups are being the hardest hit by COVID-19. Lower skilled workers in the Hospitality and Tourism industries, for example, are at a higher risk of unemployment which will have a negative impact on household incomes
- 6.13 Younger and older workers within the labour market have been hit hardest according to JRS statistics, with a higher proportion of claims being made in the 16-24 and 65+ categories than other age groups. The old have been more impacted than in previous recessions, likely resulting from the explicit impact of COVID-19 on older members of our population.
- 6.14 There was a big reduction in furloughed workers from September to October, when the scheme was scheduled to close in November. It is yet too early to predict what the impacts of the furlough scheme's extension to Spring 2021, but further unemployment effects are widely expected (and indeed reported in the Chancellors recent Autumn Statement 2020). Arts/Entertainment and Accommodation/Food have been the hardest hit sectors, with employment in these sectors continuing to be highly vulnerable to further control measures.

- 6.15 COVID-19 has had major impacts on individuals' mental health, particularly those who have lost work, those Key Workers under pressure, and those in 'unstable' work characterised typically by 'zero hours' contracts. As demand for services increases, there is major pressure on both mainstream health and the charitable sectors to deliver these services.
- 6.16 Although Oxfordshire has a strong economy, it has 10 wards in the most deprived 20% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). These places are frequently home to key workers, BAME communities, and will be disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Care must be taken to ensure that the relatively strong economic position of the County post-COVID-19 does not mask the significant specific challenges that exist locally.
- 6.17 More needs to be done to increase STEM skills across the workforce and to grow apprenticeships; the number of science- and technology-related companies on the doorstep is not translating to local opportunity for all.

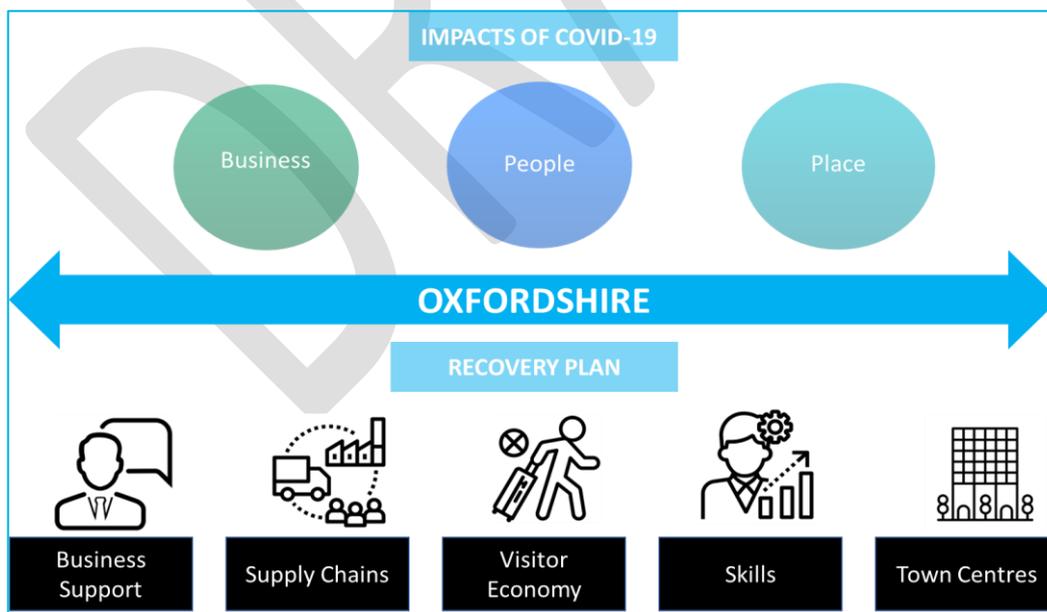
Place

- 6.18 Within Oxfordshire, the Cherwell and Oxford districts are set to face the biggest shocks to economic activity, with Vale of the White Horse the least impacted. This said, all areas are expected to experience a smaller shock and recover faster than the UK average.
- 6.19 Working from home is driving a new localism which, depending on the COVID-19 trajectory, could have lasting impacts on commuting patterns, and the hierarchy of use between cities like Oxford and market towns and villages. The 15-minute community concept has resonated deeply across the County.
- 6.20 Importantly, commercial and private transport use has recovered steadily since May 2020, with heavy goods use now above pre-lockdown levels. Public transport use, vital for those workers with lower value jobs in directly consumer-facing sectors is still well down on pre-lockdown levels, and so of great concern for the Visitor Economy and its revitalisation. The use of cycles increased greatly throughout the summer months, but has tailed off subsequently as a colder, darker and damper Autumn has arrived; over time, this travel mode could be capitalised on to infill for reduced public transport use.
- 6.21 Whilst broadband coverage is regarded to be good across most parts of the Oxfordshire, investment is needed in next stage Ultrafast and Fibre broadband across the County to serve data-driven businesses and home workers connecting to corporate networks (both for data and video).
- 6.22 Many parts of the property market have been negatively affected, especially in the agglomerated areas, yet demand for R&D floorspace property market and Oxfordshire's historic supply constraints is driving a strong desire to ensure R&D demand can be met, including through adaptation of vacant city centre spaces.
- 6.23 The Green Industrial Revolution is increasing in profile but policy mandate, incentive mechanisms and business leadership are insufficient to match the scale of the challenge/opportunity.
- 6.24 Across the Country, with its diverse and rich mix of settlements, much thinking is being given to the role of place, and how formal renewal activity can reposition and equip town and village settlements.

Moving to an Economic Recovery Plan

- 6.25 The impacts of COVID have been felt across Oxfordshire's businesses, people and places and a co-ordinated County-wide response is required. For many, the process of recovery could be long and slow, with the worst of the impacts, around unemployment and business closures, yet to be felt. There is a clear need for a targeted and well-resourced Recovery Plan to ensure Oxfordshire can continue to adapt to this 'new normal'. Alongside this support to mitigate negative impacts, the County must also seize the opportunities emerging from the Pandemic, including growing existing and new sector strengths and transitioning transition towards a zero-carbon economy.
- 6.26 Drawing together the findings from this comprehensive evidence base we have identified the following five priority focus areas for specific action:
- *Business Support* – augmenting our existing provision to provide tailored packages of support, advice and finance to ensure our local businesses are well positioned overcome the challenges they are facing and enable them to grow back stronger;
 - *Supply Chains* – to better understand the scope, nature and potential fragility of local supply chains and to identify how to improve resilience and identify opportunities for local- and County-level business growth;
 - *Visitor Economy* – a sector-focussed programme reflecting the severity of the impact of COVID-19 on our Visitor Economy, and which can address in a targeted and coordinated way the multitude of pressures facing such businesses;
 - *Skills* – to support residents back into work including targeted support for our most vulnerable groups and those hit hardest by redundancies and business closures.
 - *Town Centres* – a County-wide programme to reimagine and revitalise our key settlements to ensure they are viable and attractive places to live, work and play.

Figure 6-1: Oxfordshire's Response to COVID 19



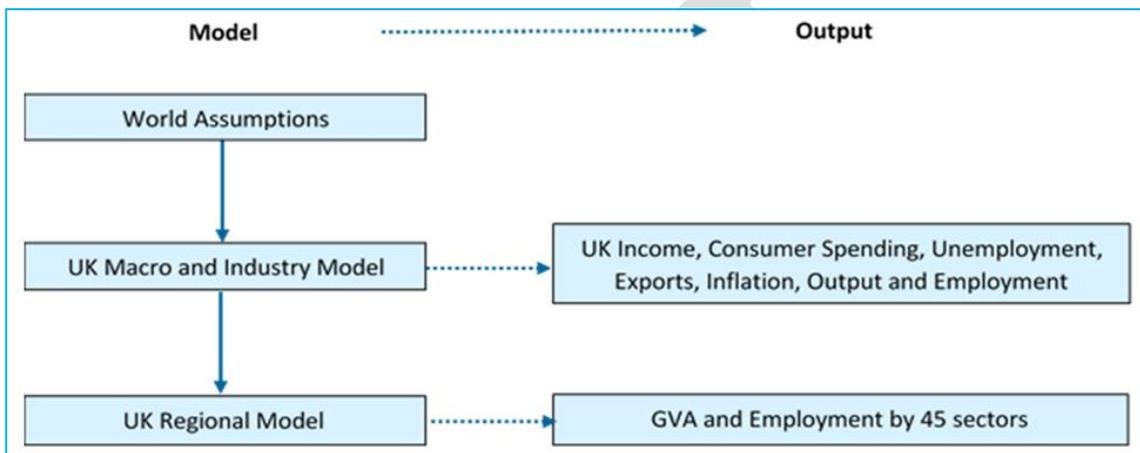
Source: Steer-ED, 2020

Working closely with local stakeholders from across sectors and across the County, we are developing these thematic priorities into our Economic Recovery Action Plan.

A Econometric Methodology

- 6.27 To better understand the likely longer-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Oxfordshire economy, Cambridge Econometrics (CE) were commissioned to develop a series of credible econometric forecasts for the County and its constituent local authority areas.

Figure 6-2: Links between Cambridge Econometrics' suite of models



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, 2020

- 6.28 An important feature of this modelling approach is the link to CE's wider modelling suite, ensuring any local area forecasts are consistent with CE's world, UK national and UK regional forecasts and assumptions (Figure 6-2). CE's headline UK forecasts are developed within the context of its position within global trade networks, the worldwide impact of COVID-19, and the changing nature of the UK's trading relationship with the European Union. These national level impacts are then systematically distributed to regions and local areas, based on historic sectoral relationships.
- 6.29 The regional and local impacts depend, therefore, on the historic precedent of how local sectors have historically performed relative to their national or regional equivalents, thereby capturing the differing intrinsic resilience of local sectors to national economic shocks. For example, if the Professional Services sector in Oxfordshire has historically been impacted less hard, and/or recovered more rapidly from past shocks, than the UK Professional Services sector as a whole, then this will be reflected in the local forecasts.
- 6.30 For the Oxfordshire results, the most up-to-date additional data have been incorporated into the forecasts, specifically for the year 2020, for which early data is now partly available. By utilising the 'live' indicators collected by Steer-ED, for instance Job Retention Scheme data, it has been possible to enhance the quality of the local forecasts in the very short term whilst ensuring alignment between the two workstreams.

- 6.31 It should be emphasised that at this early stage, any efforts to determine the quantitative implications of COVID-19 on national and local economies are highly uncertain and indicative. Even when accounting for this, as with all kinds of forecasting, there are margins of error associated with the results which tend to widen over time. Furthermore, it should also be noted that the quality and reliability of data decreases at more detailed levels of geography.
- 6.32 Whilst CE's/Steer-ED's approach incorporates a wide number of factors, including global, national and local interrelationships and detailed sectoral impacts, there are factors it cannot account for, including any long-term behavioural changes due to the pandemic, or large and unanticipated policy changes at the local or national level.

DRAFT

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Subject: Oxfordshire Growth Board Strategic Vision (Draft)	
Author: Ahmed Goga Tel: 07393 001076 Email: ahmed.goga@oxfordshirelep.com	BOARD MEETING Date of Board meeting: 8/12/20 Agenda Item no: 11
Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership: OxLEP Ltd, First Floor, Jericho Building, Activate Learning – City of Oxford College, Oxpens Road, Oxford, OX1 1SA	

Summary

This covering paper provides the Board with a brief summary of the draft Oxfordshire Strategic Vision, prepared by the Growth Board for discussion with key stakeholders; the Vision is attached as annex one to this paper. The Vision aims to create a statement which provides the context for the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (statutory joint spatial plan) and guides wider 'place shaping' and sustainable development for the county over the next 30 years. Following agreement by the Growth Board in October, the vision is now undergoing a series of engagement sessions with key stakeholders to test the aims and priorities within the document and its description of Oxfordshire as a place, prior to formal approval in March 2021. At its meeting on 8th December, the Board will receive a presentation from Growth Board officers setting out in more detail the objectives of the vision document and provide the context for comments and discussion on the present draft.

Recommendation

That the Board:

- **comments on the draft Strategic Vision (attached as Annex One)**
- **agrees to convene and delegate to a small task and finish group comprising private sector board directors to work with the Executive Team in shaping a formal response to the strategic vision consultation exercise by January 2021**

1. Background

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is the joint statutory spatial plan for the County and is a key deliverable under the Housing & Growth Deal. During an earlier consultation exercise for the Plan, feedback received flagged the need for greater ambition and a more radical approach. In responding to this, and the challenges created by COVID and climate change, the Growth Board believes that establishing a clear and coherent vision for Oxfordshire setting out what partners are seeking to achieve and their strategic priorities over the longer term, would provide the necessary articulation of ambition over the next thirty years and also play an important role in setting the context to the Oxfordshire Plan as it completes its journey through planning examination. In addition, it believes

a strategic vision can provide an articulation of Oxfordshire as a place to external audiences including Government.

It is proposed that the Strategic Vision will establish a common and shared ambition – but it is not intended to replace or set the specific vision for any of our individual communities or partner organisations. However, having a 'whole system' agreed vision of where Oxfordshire is heading and its expected outcomes would go a very long way to help align its collective activities, work programmes and even, potentially, services in the future.

The Growth Board recognises that delivering the Vision will require place-focussed responses to specific challenges and opportunities that reflect particular circumstances at different levels, both County-wide and district level. As such, it is proposed that the Vision should be read by partners within and beyond Oxfordshire as a statement of intent by the collective partnership that has prepared and endorsed it. Of particular significance also is the expectation that Oxfordshire partners will look to position the Vision to influence any emerging spatial framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, to help engage with Government and achieve outcomes from the process.

2. Key Points For Consideration

There are a number of important points which the Board may wish to note, from an OxLEP perspective, when considering the draft document and where it can be developed further:

- The draft vision is anchored around the concept of a particular definition of 'well-being' which is centred on people's well-being, addressing climate change, as well as on the health and quality of the natural environment – the economy or its role is not yet substantially discussed
- Business is not referenced at all in the vision, either as a key constituency within Oxfordshire or as a strategic driver for change in shaping how the County is seen by key external audiences
- There is limited discussion in the draft of what Oxfordshire is as a global innovation hub and the opportunities this brings, or visibility of the LIS ambitions for Oxfordshire which are endorsed by HMG and, equally, a key deliverable under the Housing & Growth Deal
- Does the description of Oxfordshire sufficiently distinguish itself from any other area of the UK seeking to position itself under a 2050 vision ie does it pass the 'Tipp-Ex Test'?
- Whilst the vision is not intending to replace existing strategies which OxLEP has set out there is the potential for it to be increasingly seen, once published, as the basis for how Oxfordshire engages with Government on key policy areas including the Oxford-Cambridge Arc

3. Next Steps

The engagement process on the vision document will continue throughout the autumn and into the early part of January 2021, before a final draft is prepared for endorsement by the Growth Board at its meeting on 22nd March.

To ensure OxLEP's engagement in this process, it is proposed that a small task & finish group comprising 3-4 Directors is convened to work with the Executive Team in shaping a formal response to the engagement exercise which can be submitted by early January 2021. This will supplement the work individual Councils are preparing in this period with their respective Leaders and Cabinets.

Appendix 1: Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development - Stakeholder Engagement Draft Document

Our Vision Statement for Oxfordshire

Enhanced well-being sits at the heart of our ambition.

We want Oxfordshire to thrive so that the lives of current and future generations are improved. To achieve this will require bold, innovative, collaborative and inclusive thinking with decisions and actions that deliver real and lasting change in ways that build resilience and enhance well-being.

To be well, we need the right environmental, social and economic conditions, underpinned by improved resilience, and built on a clear understanding that the different dimensions of well-being are intrinsically linked. By resilience we mean de-carbonisation, tackling climate change and mitigating its impacts, securing a biodiverse natural environment, building community connectedness, better health, and improved educational attainment and skills that will support the jobs of the future. Our ambition is to utilise the unique opportunities and assets in Oxfordshire to accommodate growth sustainably, and shape healthy, resilient communities in which it is possible for all residents to thrive.

If we are successful, these are the outcomes that will have been achieved in Oxfordshire by 2050:

- We will be the first generation to leave Oxfordshire's natural environment in a better state than that in which we found it. The natural environment will be more biodiverse, supporting social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.*
- Oxfordshire will already be carbon neutral, and will be moving towards a carbon negative future, in which the County is removing more carbon than it emits each year.*
- The population will be healthier and happier, inequalities will have been reduced, young people will feel excited about their future and the overall well-being of the population will have improved.*
- The economy of Oxfordshire will be successful and sustainable, making the most of all our people and with quality places where people want to live and work.*
- We will have energy efficient, well-designed homes, sufficient in numbers, location, type, size, tenure and affordability to meet the needs of our residents.*
- Movement around Oxfordshire will be transformed, with greater connectivity and mobility in and between places in ways that enhance environmental, social and economic well-being.*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Oxfordshire has considerable and diverse strengths. Its beautiful countryside, from the Chilterns to the Cotswolds, with high quality landscapes and areas important for nature conservation, its rich and diverse built and historic environment formed from the fabric of its market towns and villages and the vibrant, diverse cultural offer and urban environment in the City of Oxford, and its proximity and connections with other places, are key reasons why people choose to live, work, visit and invest here. These strengths have formed the foundation of Oxfordshire's economic success. But there are also challenges. Oxfordshire is one of the fastest growing economies in the country, but it is also among the least equal, with significant and stubborn economic and social inequalities. And there are problems linked to congestion, housing affordability and the well-being of the natural and built environments. All these impact on Oxfordshire's residents and businesses.
- 1.2 Oxfordshire is facing significant changes. Some of these – such as climate change and the unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic – are the result of trends that are being experienced by the global community. Other changes reflect Oxfordshire's status as an international centre of pioneering research and innovation based on a hive of knowledge-intensive economic activity at the universities and science, technology and business parks. Changes are being influenced by Oxfordshire's links with neighbouring areas such as the Thames Valley and Swindon, and more widely with the Oxford-Cambridge Arc which is now a key national economic priority for the Government.
- 1.3 Change is inevitable, but change is not inevitably detrimental. With change comes the opportunity for progress based on new ways of thinking. We have seen an important increase in emphasis on climate change internationally, nationally and locally, with legislation in 2019 to eradicate the UK contribution to climate change by 2050, and with climate change emergencies declared by all the Oxfordshire Councils. We now have a better understanding that every decision made as a result of emerging plans and strategies for Oxfordshire has the potential to, and very probably will, impact (positively or negatively) on local, national and global emissions in the short, medium and long-term, to way beyond plan end dates.
- 1.4 Most recently, the COVID-19 crisis has generated considerable uncertainty and brought into sharp focus important, complex and sometimes uncomfortable questions about the impact of the pandemic. But we have also seen how, although physically apart, people have come together to give care, support and friendship within their communities. It has also given us a glimpse of a world less dependent on personal travel and more reliant on digital connectivity. How can we capture the positive aspects of these changes as we move forward? The pandemic has forced us to think about how we should frame our choices as the country moves towards recovery, what our priorities should be and how to deliver positive outcomes.
- 1.5 We need to be pragmatic in responding to current circumstances, whilst recognising the importance of taking this opportunity to think strategically about how best to tackle long-term problems as we re-build and secure the future of our local economies. Others have referred to this process as 'building back better', in which traditional models of growth are re-thought, re-set and replaced with a more balanced approach based on a broader range of objectives. We should not avoid tackling issues now, but it is also important to establish a pathway for long-term change.

- 1.6 We know that within Oxfordshire there is a desire to see a different approach to place-shaping. Early in 2019 the partnership preparing the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 started a formal conversation with the public and stakeholders about planning for Oxfordshire's long-term future. The public's response to that consultation gave us a very clear steer that there is an appetite for an approach that:
- is more ambitious, radical, innovative and creative
 - is more Oxfordshire-specific and reflective of local people's views
 - prioritises climate change, and
 - focusses on social, economic and environmental well-being, and not solely on a narrow definition of growth.
- 1.7 Similar thoughts were also reflected in the One Planet Living Oxfordshire Shared Vision¹. Developed for a broadly-based Oxfordshire partnership, and drawing on input from some 100 stakeholders from across Oxfordshire, the One Planet approach sets out the sorts of big thinking and action that is required to achieve sustainable living based on a happier, healthier, greener future. And, the Oxfordshire Growth Board's Open Thought initiative² has added to the debate and pool of ideas by tapping into the wealth of knowledge to help find solutions to accommodate changes in how we will live and work, how we will connect with each other and how we will manage and respond to climate change.
- 1.8 Our bold economic ambitions³ have been brought to life in an investment plan⁴. We can see from this how Oxfordshire is uniquely placed to embrace the dynamic potential of world-leading innovation and research and development to support economic recovery and growth for the benefit of local residents.
- 1.9 Innovative work on inclusive growth⁵ has brought relevance and visibility to a need for us to actively recognise and address the inequalities in our success. It has highlighted a wide range of issues, including the need to tackle deprivation and disadvantage in Oxford and our other urban areas, improve educational attainment and to develop the skills required to access new employment opportunities and to improve physical and digital connectivity in our rural areas. If we are to deliver our vision and ambitions, these inequalities will need to be addressed so that growth is genuinely inclusive.
- 1.10 These conversations and thinking have shown that if we frame our ambition based on what is demonstrably achievable over the next thirty years, we could fall well short of what those who have contributed are looking to achieve. That would be a missed opportunity that fails to capitalise on Oxfordshire's scope for innovation over the longer-term. We therefore wish to determine in a positive, open and transparent way what our ambition for Oxfordshire should look like and how we can achieve it by drawing on new ways of thinking about sustainable development.
- 1.11 In doing so, we should not lose sight of the rich variety of places that make up Oxfordshire. We value the character of these different settings – our city, towns and villages and our natural and historic environments – and recognise that delivering our shared Strategic Vision will require place-focussed responses to specific challenges and opportunities that reflect particular circumstances. For example, activity to achieve ambitions for zero carbon and increased biodiversity will need different design solutions in the high-density environments of the city and urban areas than in rural settings. This

¹ One Planet Oxfordshire: Our Shared Vision, Bioregional, 2019

² See: <https://www.oxfordshireopenthought.org>

³ Oxfordshire's Local Industrial Strategy, 2019

⁴ Oxfordshire's Local Industrial Strategy Investment Plan, 2020

⁵ Led by Oxfordshire's Local Enterprise Partnership under Oxfordshire's 'Social Contract' and by the City of Oxford

happens best through inclusive processes and a detailed understanding of places and communities to arrive at solutions that work for them.

- 1.12 We also recognise that positive change will evolve and take time: it is not linear and not smooth. This Vision sets our ambition high: while we are realistic in understanding this will evolve over time and must be couched against dynamic economic, political and social forces beyond our direct control, we want to challenge the norm and the lowest common denominator to provide the best possible future for our residents.

2. Purpose & Status of the Strategic Vision

- 2.1 This Strategic Vision has been prepared by the collective leadership of the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The Growth Board comprises the six councils of Oxfordshire⁶ and key strategic partners⁷. It facilitates collaborative working on economic development, strategic planning and growth, and oversees the projects agreed in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, seeking agreement on local priorities.
- 2.2 The Strategic Vision cuts across many sectors and is designed to inform a range of strategies, plans and programmes. It represents our common and shared ambition but is not intended to replace or set the vision for any of our communities or partner organisations.
- 2.3 Not all the ambitions and outcomes will be within the sphere of influence of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. That plan will deliver parts of the Vision, but as a statutory planning document, it cannot address all aspects involved in delivering this Vision. Local plans, infrastructure plans, economic strategies and associated plans and programmes will also have important roles to play. There is also a role for the individual to help deliver our ambitions, as our own actions can support or detract from delivering the Vision.
- 2.4 We want our plans, strategies and programmes, including the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, to be ambition-led and outcome focussed. Our Strategic Vision will be transformative, centred on people's well-being, addressing climate change, as well as on the health and quality of our natural environment. The Strategic Vision is intended to facilitate a step-change in our approach to planning for and delivering sustainable development for Oxfordshire.
- 2.5 The Strategic Vision is high-level, overarching and long-term. While the outcomes and priorities are unlikely to alter over the short to medium-term, our approach needs to be resilient to change over time. Our Strategic Vision is positive and optimistic. It recognises that although there is a high level of uncertainty over a 30-year period, particularly around external factors including climate and technological change, new opportunities to balance environmental, social and economic needs to deliver sustainable development in different and better ways will emerge. This will position Oxfordshire to challenge and capitalise on the scope for innovation over the longer-term.
- 2.6 Delivery against a 30-year vision will require pragmatism and realism as the tools of our innovation and ambition develop. However, this pragmatism should be seen to support delivery against our vision and not as an excuse to under-perform.
- 2.7 Our Vision should be read by partners within and beyond Oxfordshire as a statement of intent by the partnership that has prepared it. Of particular significance is the

⁶ Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council

⁷ Oxfordshire LEP, Oxfordshire Skills Board, Oxford Brookes University, University of Oxford, Homes England, DEFRA, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Environment Agency, Network Rail and Highways England

Government's announcement in March 2020 of its backing for a spatial framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. Oxfordshire will look to influence any framework for the Arc based on this Strategic Vision to help achieve our collective ambition.

- 2.8 The Strategic Vision forms part of the informal interface between national and local policy, helping to deliver national objectives such as those for 'clean growth' which aim to make the most of low carbon opportunities locally while meeting national and international commitments to tackle climate change⁸. It also supports delivery of national health priorities⁹. These identify the importance of prevention and reducing health inequalities and recognise that embedding healthy place-shaping principles within plans ensures that future developments are designed to support prevention and physical and mental well-being.
- 2.9 This Strategic Vision is part of the existing portfolio approach to plan and strategy development in Oxfordshire. Its role is to establish an overarching ambition that informs the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 amongst other relevant plans, strategies and programmes that reflect wider considerations such as health and well-being and infrastructure that impact on place-making in Oxfordshire. By providing clear strategic leadership and direction, we aim to increase confidence in the delivery of long-term spatial priorities.
- 2.10 This is the beginning of a process. We want to be open about what we are trying to achieve so we are carrying out bespoke public and stakeholder engagement providing an early opportunity for people to share and shape our thinking through public discussion and debate.

3. Oxfordshire's Challenges & Opportunities

- 3.1 The starting point for developing ambition-led plans and strategies is agreement about what they are seeking to achieve or change and what strategic challenges will need to be addressed. We have identified six key strategic challenges facing Oxfordshire:
- Health & Social Inequalities
 - Our Natural & Built Environment
 - Climate Change & Energy
 - Housing Affordability & Access to Affordable Housing
 - Economic Growth
 - Transport & Digital Connectivity.
- 3.2 Many factors impact on our lives and well-being, and there are strong and complex relationships between these challenges: from the links between the well-being of the natural and built environments and the well-being of individuals, communities and the economy; to the relationships between social and economic inequalities and health; to the linkages between connectivity and climate change, the natural environment, economic productivity, physical and mental health, and community connectedness.

⁸ The Clean Growth Strategy – Leading the way to a low carbon future, HM Government, 2018

⁹ NHS Long Term Plan, 2019

4. Strategic Influencers

- 4.1 A key role for this Strategic Vision will be to help align long-term spatial, economic and infrastructure investment priorities across Oxfordshire. There are already other plans, strategies, policies and investment programmes (in existence or emerging), as well as legislative requirements, that will influence place-shaping in Oxfordshire, including where development in Oxfordshire should take place and where investment should be focussed. Oxfordshire will be shaped by these 'strategic influencers' to varying degrees over the next 30 years. We have 'mapped' the main strategic influencers and summarised their key messages for Oxfordshire. This information is set out in [Annex 1](#).
- 4.2 The strategic influencers will continue to evolve – some will change, and other new influencers will emerge as plans and strategies for Oxfordshire are developed, national policy changes and sub-national frameworks take shape. Some parts of this evolving context of strategic influencers will be more within the control of the partnership organisations than others. But in most cases, the relationship is a two, rather than one-way, process and there is an opportunity to influence and shape the priorities, plans, strategies and investment decisions of others, particularly in the longer-term – a means of 'influencing the influencers'. Our Strategic Vision can help maximise the benefits of decisions made by others, as well as helping to mitigate the impact of decisions outside the partnership's control.

5. Defining Our Ambition

- 5.1 Enhanced well-being sits at the heart of our ambition. We want Oxfordshire to thrive so that the lives of current and future generations are improved. To achieve this will require bold, innovative, collaborative and inclusive thinking with decisions and actions that deliver real and lasting change in ways that build resilience and enhance well-being.
- 5.2 The well-being of individuals is important, and the actions we take to address our own well-being are key to cumulative and collective success. But we have also taken the opportunity to think about well-being in the round and in ways that make important connections, recognising that different dimensions of well-being are intrinsically linked. To be well physically and mentally, we need the right environmental, social and economic conditions underpinned by improved resilience. By resilience we mean de-carbonisation, tackling climate change and mitigating its impacts, securing a biodiverse natural environment, building community connectedness, better health, and improved educational attainment and skills that will support the jobs of the future. Our ambition is to **utilise the unique opportunities and assets in Oxfordshire** to shape healthy, sustainable, resilient communities in which it is possible for all residents to thrive.
- 5.3 If we are successful, these are the **outcomes** that will have been achieved in Oxfordshire by 2050 – this is what better will look like. Although the outcomes are long-term, decisions, actions and investment are required now to place Oxfordshire on the pathway to delivery by 2050.

Outcomes for Oxfordshire

- We will be the first generation to leave Oxfordshire's natural environment in a better state than that in which we found it. The natural environment will be more biodiverse, supporting social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.
- Oxfordshire will already be carbon neutral, and will be moving towards a carbon negative future, in which the County is removing more carbon than it emits each year.
- The population will be healthier and happier, inequalities will have been reduced, young people will feel excited about their future and the overall well-being of the population will have improved.
- The economy of Oxfordshire will be successful and sustainable, making the most of all our people and with quality places where people want to live and work.
- We will have energy efficient, well-designed homes, sufficient in numbers, location, type, size, tenure and affordability to meet the needs of our residents.
- Movement around Oxfordshire will be transformed, with greater connectivity and mobility in and between places in ways that enhance environmental, social and economic well-being.
- Our communities will be rooted and flourishing, with enhanced and lasting connectedness driven by individual and community action.

6. Achieving our Ambition

6.1 Our Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire's future is driven by improvements to people's well-being. This is reflected in our definition of what 'good growth' will look like in Oxfordshire.

6.2 National planning policies require Oxfordshire to plan positively for growth in ways that achieve the three overarching objectives of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Growth can be defined narrowly in terms of expansion in numbers of homes and jobs and economic output. But growth can also encompass progress based on improvements in quality and circumstances for individuals and society.

We want current and future generations in Oxfordshire to share in: improvements in health and well-being; better access to truly affordable and high-quality housing; cleaner air and water; better jobs and access to education and training; enhanced green space; and protection from extreme weather and other impacts of climate change.

6.3 We think this is a better approach to achieving transformative and long-term sustainable development. This is how Oxfordshire will approach growth. It will be inclusive, focussing on progress in improving health and well-being, transitioning to a low carbon future, addressing inequalities and prioritising our natural environment, alongside greater resilience to climate and economic change.

'Good growth' in Oxfordshire will:

- Be **sustainable**, focusing development in ways that enhance quality of place and at locations which enable people to live and work nearby, avoiding unnecessary travel in the first instance, but using opportunities to increase movement by sustainable and active modes of travel when needed.
- Be **healthy and inclusive**, with all development addressing inequalities and contributing positively to the overall health and well-being of Oxfordshire's communities, environment and economy.
- Be **clean and green**, placing the County at the leading edge of UK and global de-carbonisation efforts by maximising all opportunities to significantly reduce Oxfordshire's carbon footprint, and increasing natural capital across the County.
- Embrace **innovation** based on our technology sectors and knowledge-intensive activity, and develop new innovative solutions for working, learning, mobility, health care, energy, sustainable design and improved public services.
- Facilitate **efficient** use of Oxfordshire's natural resources and land, with priority given to supporting a high-productivity economy.
- Build **resilience** to change, with growth planned in a way that can accommodate changes in technology, and in the way that people live and work, changing demographics, and global impacts, particularly climate and economic changes.
- Expect **high-quality** development which will have a positive impact on communities in terms of design, energy efficiency and public realm, utilises low impact building and construction methods and materials, and is properly supported by the necessary infrastructure. Everything we build or design in Oxfordshire will be fit for purpose in the world of 2050.

6.4 Our definition of 'good growth' forms the basis for a set of **Guiding Principles**. Taken together, our outcomes, the definition of 'good growth' and the guiding principles, form the foundation for our overarching approach to sustainable development for Oxfordshire, and for developing our plans, strategies and programmes.

Guiding Principle 1: We will reduce the impacts of climate change

We will reduce the impacts of climate change by making climate action a top priority in our decisions. We will maximise opportunities through our plans, strategies and programmes, to build long-lasting resilience to climate change, demonstrating leadership in carbon reduction and supporting emerging transformative technologies and sectors. Our aim is that Oxfordshire will be carbon neutral by 2040, or earlier if possible, and by 2050 will be moving towards a carbon negative future.

Guiding Principle 2: We will improve our overall health and well-being and reduce inequalities

We will place overall health and physical and mental well-being at the forefront of our decision-making. We will seek to deliver a net increase in the health and well-being of our communities in all our place-shaping decisions and activities, reducing inequalities and helping to enhance the overall quality of life, health and happiness of existing and future residents. This will include providing homes to meet people's needs, jobs to support livelihoods, enhanced access to green spaces, better access to sustainable, inclusive and resilient active and low carbon transport and improvements in air quality. We have access to some of the greatest health care facilities and minds in the world in Oxfordshire and through working closely with the universities and health organisations, we will ensure we are leading on prevention and healthy place-shaping.

Guiding Principle 3: We will enhance our natural capital assets

We will enhance our natural capital assets through our plans, strategies and programmes, recognising the significant contribution natural capital makes to our quality of place, the health and well-being of our communities, and their value in building resilience to climate change, reducing flood risk, increasing biodiversity and boosting economic productivity. We will value Oxfordshire's countryside, our parks and open spaces, the River Thames and our other rivers, canals, reservoirs, lakes, ponds and wetlands. We will protect where necessary, and seek new opportunities to add to and enhance our highly valued countryside, landscape and the greenspaces and environmental assets within the urban areas that provide valued recreation space and vital green lungs. Natural capital is a key reason why many people choose to live here, many businesses choose to locate here, and tourists choose to visit here.

Guiding Principle 4: We will reflect our distinctive and diverse qualities

We will ensure that our plans, strategies and programmes reflect the unique and distinctive qualities of places within Oxfordshire, maximising opportunities to deliver the development needed, embracing innovation whilst enhancing our valuable assets and recognising the diversity of our city, towns and villages, the quality of the historic, natural and built environment and the importance of local identity. While we are the most rural county in the South East, the vast majority of our population lives in our city, towns and villages. The diversity of our settlements, the synergy between urban and rural and the benefits both bring are critical to our success.

Guiding Principle 5: We will deliver homes that meet the needs of current and future generations

New homes will add to the vitality and vibrancy of our communities whilst positively contributing to our collective well-being. We will tackle the significant challenge of housing affordability in Oxfordshire by delivering more truly affordable homes. And we will deliver homes that allow people to live healthily, happily and independently in their old age. The emphasis will be on place-shaping: new homes will be high quality and low carbon, resilient to the impacts of climate change, meet people's needs, form part of connected communities and improve the local environment.

Guiding Principle 6: We will embrace technological changes

We will ensure that our plans, strategies and programmes are sufficiently flexible to embrace the potential offered from new and evolving technology in creating better opportunities and outcomes for people, in addressing inequalities, and in its impact on mobility, communications, energy and water supply, models of construction and increasing economic productivity.

Guiding Principle 7: We will create the conditions to support an inclusive, successful and sustainable economy based on world-leading innovation

We will work collaboratively with economic partners to ensure that our spatial priorities and economic priorities are aligned to deliver good, inclusive economic growth that supports people's health and well-being. We will ensure there is improved physical and digital connectivity, and that the right type of premises, land and infrastructure are provided to facilitate a high productivity economy and to meet the needs of our priority sectors. Inequalities in employment opportunities, and in access to education, skills and training will be addressed, building a skilled population with better opportunities for all.

Guiding Principle 8: We will expect high-quality development

We will expect all new development to be of the highest quality and design standards, with particular support given to innovative building solutions and sustainable construction methods, and development that improves the overall built environment and promotes good physical and mental health.

Guiding Principle 9: We will maximise the benefits of strong collaboration

We will build stronger collaboration with our partners to secure a plan-led approach to good growth, delivering strategic development opportunities that are aligned with our shared ambition and long-term investment priorities, particularly where these provide opportunities to enhance our strategic connectivity. And, we will create the conditions where people feel involved and empowered, embedding a culture of meaningful involvement and enabling communities to inform and shape local decisions.

Guiding Principle 10: We will help people to help each other by supporting communities and individuals to achieve positive change for themselves

We will help communities to be more cohesive and better able to adapt to change, based on accessible and quality key services and infrastructure, good digital connectivity and strong community networks. Communities will be supported and empowered to do the things that matter to improve their health and well-being.

Guiding Principle 11: We will proactively and positively engage and collaborate beyond Oxfordshire

We will foster links with neighbouring areas to facilitate the delivery of good growth through mutually beneficial relationships. Key to this will be ensuring that the Oxfordshire Plan's strategic priorities are fully aligned and integrated with regional and sub-regional priorities including the emerging Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

6.5 All the Guiding Principles articulate how Oxfordshire will change as a place over the next 30 years and all will shape our overarching approach. Individual Guiding Principles have not been weighted. Rather, because we are seeking to drive improvements to environmental, social and economic well-being in ways which build resilience, and because most of our Guiding Principles are relevant to more than one of our goals, the Guiding Principles form an inter-related set of equally important ground rules.

7. Next Steps – Delivering the Strategic Vision

- 7.1 This Strategic Vision has been prepared by the collective leadership of the Oxfordshire Growth Board which is ultimately responsible for it. Delivering the Vision will require long-term collective commitment and investment by the partners that make up the Growth Board but also, crucially, by a wider set of strategic stakeholders and partnerships.
- 7.2 As a first step in delivering the Strategic Vision, it is proposed several work streams are taken forward:
- Engaging with partners and communities
 - Measuring what matters
 - Developing plans & strategies and investment priorities.

Engaging with Partners & Communities

- 7.3 Because we want to be open about what we are trying to achieve, one of the first actions will be to carry out bespoke public and stakeholder engagement late in 2020. This will provide partners and our communities with an early opportunity to challenge and shape the thinking we have done on our ambition, principles and shared outcomes. This engagement does not form part of any statutory process and is additional to consultations on other plans, strategies and programmes.

Measuring What Matters

- 7.4 The ambition, outcomes and priorities set out in the Strategic Vision have been explicitly designed for the long-term. They are unlikely to change over the short to medium-term and it is not anticipated that there will be a need for frequent reviews. To achieve the outcomes we have identified by 2050 will require some trends to be reversed, while for some other trends, where progress is already being made, there will need to be an increase in the pace of change. And, we will need to make the most of the vital role place-making plays in delivering positive outcomes.
- 7.5 Measuring progress, so that we know what responses are needed, will be an important part of our approach to delivering the Strategic Vision. It also provides a robust basis on which Oxfordshire's communities and stakeholders may hold the Growth Board to account. We will measure what matters, based on the strategic outcomes and the definition of Good Growth set out in the Strategic Vision. At this stage we have not attempted to define or agree targets or the indicators for monitoring delivery. Development of a robust monitoring framework, with agreed targets and indicators, will form a key part of the next phase of work on the Strategic Vision, drawing on the public and stakeholder engagement we will be carrying out.

Developing Plans, Strategies and Investment Priorities

- 7.6 Our well-being goals are ambitious. Achieving them will require all those who make future decisions about investment, and those planning for and delivering place-making across Oxfordshire, to maximise impact by working collaboratively based on shared strategic priorities and by embracing innovation to develop solutions.

- 7.7 The Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire will be delivered by a wide range of plans, strategies and programmes. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is one important example, but there are many others. At an Oxfordshire-wide level they include the Joint Health & Well-Being Strategy, the Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS), the Local Industrial Strategy, and the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, while sub-nationally the spatial framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and England's Economic Heartland's Transport Strategy will have important roles to play.
- 7.8 It is vital that we have an agreed set of long-term, strategic economic, infrastructure and environment investment priorities aligned to the outcomes we are committed to. This will help us to ensure that we are investing in the right infrastructure and other assets in a timely way, maximising the benefits of that investment, and avoiding unnecessary expenditure. It will also better position Oxfordshire to influence the priorities of other relevant organisations.
- 7.9 Oxfordshire's Growth Board will seek that those preparing relevant strategic-level plans, strategies and programmes consider how their policies, proposals and investment decisions deliver against this Strategic Vision, and future responses to these plans, strategies and programmes from the Growth Board will take these into account.

Annex 1: Strategic Influencers

A1.1 The following graphic 'maps' the main strategic influencers. Most have been, or are being, developed at an Oxfordshire-wide level, or relate to sub-national geographic areas, or are UK-wide. Many have a direct relationship with government policy or legislative requirements. We have not attempted to present an exhaustive set of influencers. Rather, we have captured those which we consider to be the most significant and most relevant at the strategic level, whilst acknowledging that some of these will have a greater impact than others.

A1.2 The key messages from the strategic influencers are summarised in the following table.

Key Messages	Strategic Influencers
There is a commitment to maximise the potential of existing urban areas to 2031 to deliver 100,000 new homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing & Growth Deal ▪ Local Plans ▪ National Planning Policy Framework (2019) ▪ Oxfordshire Local Transport & Connectivity Plan
Development should enhance the natural environment, improve access to the countryside and increase its natural capital, recognising its valuable role in supporting clean growth and improvements to health and well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Green Future: 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment ▪ Local Plans ▪ Oxford-Cambridge Arc: Government Ambition ▪ Oxfordshire's Draft Nature Recovery Network ▪ Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Joint Health & Well-Being Strategy
Strategic transport investment priorities should aim to enhance Oxfordshire's strategic connectivity value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ England's Economic Heartland Transport Strategy 2050 ▪ Oxford-Cambridge Arc: Government Ambition ▪ Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Local Transport & Connectivity Plan
Long-term strategic investment decisions should be responsive to climate, demographic and technological change, building resilience in the economy, transport infrastructure and the physical and natural environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clean Growth Strategy ▪ England's Economic Heartland Transport Strategy 2050 ▪ Oxfordshire Joint Health & Well-Being Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Local Transport & Connectivity Plan ▪ UK Industrial Strategy

Key Messages	Strategic Influencers
<p>The priority is to invest in strategic infrastructure that supports economic growth, particularly in the areas that have potential to support a transition to a low carbon economy, facilitate mobility changes away from the private car and where there is potential to support key sectors (especially in the science, technology and innovation sectors).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oxford-Cambridge Arc: Government Ambition ▪ England's Economic Heartland Transport Strategy 2050 ▪ Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Local Transport & Connectivity Plan ▪ UK Industrial Strategy
<p>Economic growth should be driven by innovation and higher productivity, should be 'clean', should focus on supporting clusters and corridors of economic activity and should reflect Oxfordshire's national and international role and profile. Economic growth should be more inclusive, with the benefits shared more equitably so that they reach all communities, including socially disadvantaged groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oxford-Cambridge Arc: Government Ambition ▪ England's Economic Heartland Transport Strategy 2050 ▪ Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Local Transport & Connectivity Plan ▪ UK Industrial Strategy
<p>Improvements to health and well-being should be at the heart of all decisions around place-making and infrastructure investment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Plans ▪ Oxfordshire Joint Health & Well-Being Strategy ▪ Oxfordshire Local Transport & Connectivity Plan
<p>Delivering the right type of housing, which is built to a high quality and design and is affordable, is as important as increasing overall supply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Plans ▪ Oxfordshire Joint Health & Well-Being Strategy



<u>Subject: Chief Executive's Report</u>	
Author: Nigel Tipple Tel: 0345 241 1196 Email: ChiefExec@oxfordshirelep.com	Board Meeting No.25 8th December 2020 Agenda Item no: 12
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Summary

The report provides an update on operational activity supported by the team over the Q3 reporting period. The update on the Economic Recovery Plan is covered at item 8. The report is supported by the following annexes:

- Annex 1 Communications Update (Activity Tracker)
- Annex 2 Glossary of Terms

Recommendation

That the Board:

- **Notes the report, annexes and activity supported to date;**

1.) Communications Update

Since the last Board meeting in September, our communications focus has continued to shift from amplifying the message of emergency COVID business support, towards focusing on delivering our key strategic objectives where possible. Annex 1 attached provides a detailed operational update. Also attached at Annex 2 is an updated, but necessarily live “Glossary of Terms” to help Board Directors navigate the complexity of the economic development environment (and associated acronyms) within which we operate.

2.) Business Teams Update

OxLEP Business (Oxfordshire Growth Hub)

Business Resilience grant scheme

The Board will recall approving a £800k grant programme to support businesses impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. The fund was designed to complement the range of support available from HM Government and provide eligible businesses with unmatched grants ranging from £1k - £10k. We awarded 114 grants (value £793,725) across 68 different sectors/sub sectors. Estimated outputs as a result of awarding the 114 grants are - jobs protected 636 and jobs created 230.

The first phase of the impact's evaluation will take place by the end of November to support ERP planning and the full and final review by the end of March 2021.

The Board will recall that we now offer an online triage service through our new 'Business Support Tool'. This tool is available on our website and traffic is being directed to it via social media, newsletters and referrals.

Since July we have triaged 919 businesses, produced 919 personal support plans, referred 287 businesses to other OxLEP Businesses support programmes, referred 406 businesses to the skills team, supported 85 businesses with one to one support, delivered 12 workshops to 423 businesses/individuals with 3 planned for November.

Our business support offer now includes:

- Access/sign posting to other programmes, e.g. ISfB, eScalate, Kickstart grant scheme, Peer Networks, S4B
- A series of webinars
- Business development support through up to 4 hours of 1:1 time with an expert
- Business "start up club"
- Peer Networks programme including locally led networks for businesses that are deemed ineligible for HMG programme

National Peer Networks programme

Peer Networks will bring together SME owners to collaboratively work through common business issues. Through interactive action learning, we will enable individuals to discuss their own challenges, gain and reflect on valuable feedback and implement practical solutions to overcome them. Peer networks will also provide 1:1 advice, mentoring and coaching service delivered by experts in sector challenges, executive leadership, sales, marketing, finance, HR and more.

Eligibility for attendance set by funders is:

- Operated for at least a year
- At least 5 employees (30% of cohorts can now have 2-4 staff)
- A turnover of at least £100,000
- An aspiration to improve/grow

We have committed to supporting 143 businesses, across 13 cohorts. To date we have enrolled 85 businesses and continue to market the programme. 5 cohorts have commenced their Peer Networks journey. This is a pilot programme which runs through to 31 March 2020.

National Kickstart grant scheme

The purpose of the Kickstart grant scheme is to help businesses who have been affected by COVID-19 to deal with the impacts of the pandemic and access specialist professional advice, equipment or technology to rebuild and support a quick recovery. This grant scheme is open to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) based. The total grant value for the scheme is £367,374 and is split into two streams:

- £117,374 - funding specifically aimed at tourism and hospitality-related businesses that depend on income from the visitor economy; and
- £250,000 - funding available to any small or medium-sized business impacted by the pandemic.

The scheme was launched in October 2020. We received 250 grant applications and have since offered 102 grant offer letters were issued in line with published timeline. As of 23 November, we still have £74k to award. A further campaign will launch on 1 December 2020.

Innovation Support for Business (ISfB)

We have now completed 14 grant rounds and approved grants of £632,897 against total project costs of £1,673,085. To date through workshop delivery we have provided 2,388 hours of support to 357 businesses. A total of 52 workshops have been delivered to date and 778 hours of 1:1 support to 283 businesses.

Progress to date means we have achieved 5 out of the 11 target outcomes and are on track currently to deliver the remaining with two further years of the programme to run. To date we have also committed three quarters of the Go-Create grant funding which is aimed at stimulating investment in new products, services and processes in a business.

Please note, the majority of our grant recipients have asked for extensions or grant change requests due to the current climate/Covid-19 which has affected their project delivery and has meant grants are not being claimed quickly as originally planned. We are offering split claims where possible and giving clients the opportunity to claim early.

eScalate

Since the launch of eScalate in November 2019 we have approved 24 grants totalling £418,025.62 against total project costs of £836,051.24.

We have run 23 workshops/webinars. In addition, we have worked with Oxford Social Enterprise Partnership to deliver an eScalate specific event to promote the support available and showcase some of the organisations involved in the programme as part of the Power of Purpose week commencing 16th November. 79 SME's have had or continue to have 1:1 support.

The Social Enterprise Peer to Peer networks continue to run, with 4 different networks either now finished or just about to finish; feedback from these have been very positive.

In the previous update to the board we mentioned that we had permission from MHCLG to flex this programme allowing us to support start up and growth businesses who would have been previously supported through our Elevate programme. The flex has been is very successful, with a large amount of interest, especially in the grants available from start-up and growth businesses.

Economic Renewal Capital Fund (ERCF)

Our agreed ERCF is a £2.1m capital co-investment grant fund part of the £8.4 million Getting Building fund allocation. The scheme will be focussed to support scalable SME businesses to move from response into economic renewal phase by co-investing grants of up to £50k (permission is being sought to increase the maximum to £100k), with business match funding, for capital projects that:

- supports business transition to net zero
- increase R&D and productivity enhancements
- support job and apprenticeship creation and retention alongside traineeship and kickstart initiatives that support young people into employment
- contributes to enhanced natural capital
- increasing exporting capacity (manufacturing and production)
- investing in capital that increases capacity to trade internationally
- support onshoring of supply chain activity to de-risk international supply chain challenges post covid-19 through increased manufacturing and production capacity

It is proposed successful applicants would have to evidence impact across at least 3 of these 6 priorities and support the delivery of the following outcomes:

- 27 jobs created
- 225 jobs safeguarded
- 45 businesses assisted

The programme is currently under development and is likely to launch in early January 2020 with a financial completion of December 2021.

EU transition

We are co-hosting (with ARC Growth Hub cluster) a series of EU Transition webinars through to March 2021. The webinars are being hosted by Andrea Collins from The Export Company who is also our eScalate Advisor.

In addition, £6.4million has been awarded to the Growth Hub network to provide EU transition support, from one to one to support through to webinars etc. We are waiting for formal notification of the value of the funding for Oxfordshire plus the terms of engagement for the support which can only run through to 31 March 2021.

4.) Skills Team Update

This quarter has seen the Skills team lead on utilising the newly purchased GotoWebinar software for virtual online events. Including the Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards 2021 and a variety of ESF 'Skills for Business' workshops. Team members have adapted well following training to the new approach and software platform. Despite the challenge of migrating our delivery to an on-line platform the team have adapted quickly and professionally; a testament to individual commitment.

We have seen the number of apprenticeships being offered by employers drop significantly due to Covid-19 and the resulting economic downturn. Our work to promote the value of Apprenticeships, through the Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards has never been so important. We would encourage board Directors to consider engaging with the awards through their own businesses as appropriate, advocating the benefits of such engagement to other businesses in their network and/or supply chain. The awards process is rewarding and free to enter, for further information about the Awards via the link [Oxfordshire Apprenticeships](#)

If you would like to get an idea of what the 2020 Awards were like, please see the highlights film at: https://youtu.be/r_AjFmlcxAE and/or the full broadcast at: <https://youtu.be/acZbv8EeNdw> on our YouTube channel.

Skills for Business (S4B) programme:

The S4B programme runs until March 2021, business feedback and response to the programme has been extremely positive. SME's increasingly require impartial, bespoke skills advice and guidance as they adapt to the new way of working due to Covid-19. The team has recently developed and submitted a 12-month programme extension request to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to extend the programme to March 2022.

We have experienced high levels of employer interest in the new skills 'Kickstart' programme. Starting from November, the programme has been established to help young people (between the ages of 16-24 years) obtain six months of work experience and workplace skills in a new role; with the Government paying both the national minimum wage and NI for each young person placed.

In order to inform and promote the 'Kickstart' placement programme to employers we have run four webinars in collaboration with DWP engaging 106 business leaders. We have received positive feedback from two of our most recent 'Kickstart' focused webinars (scores out of 5):

Attendee Feedback	Score
The event was engaging	4.4
The event content was relevant to my business	4.5
The event has inspired me to take action	4.1
I would recommend the event to others	4.4

Overall, the quality and content of the event was high	4.6
The presenters were interesting, clear and communicated well	4.7
Total score out of a possible 30 for overall satisfaction	26.7

Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) partnership:

We recently appointed a new Careers Hub Lead Nikki Wilson, formerly CEC Enterprise Co-ordinator at Thames Valley Berkshire LEP with extensive experience of working with schools.

In collaboration with the CEC and LearnLive, we brought together local businesses to take part in a webinar to help young people in Years 11, 12 & 13 better understand their career options and the skills employers are looking for. The webinar was held on 8th October, hosted in the evening to allow young people and their parents/carers, along with careers leads, teachers and governors to engage in the event simultaneously. With a key focus on skills needs, we worked with businesses to create short video clips highlighting their sector/industry, the roles within it and the type of skills they look for when recruiting young people; problem solving, staying positive and leadership. This session also highlighted careers Pathways Post 16 including Apprenticeships, T Levels and Traineeships alongside Higher Education routes. The webinar is accessible on the LearnLive platform, for free.

We also recognise and are concerned about the number of young people in school who are potentially leaving formal education early and becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Working with CEC we are aiming to run a ‘My Choices’ programme, the sessions are completely free and targeted to help young people finishing year 11 to prepare for the world of work, keeping them engaged in education and focusing on potential career paths.

Work Experience (WEX):

We carried out a review of the work experience activity following the significant loss of income due to the coronavirus pandemic. The review explored demand both schools and business, competitors’ and in-depth research into what our customers want/need as a model going forward. This research identified that physical work experience placements will no longer be prioritised by schools for this academic year and next, instead schools are increasingly considering virtual work experience currently. The market is responding quickly to the virtual work experience demand and a range of products at varying price points have already been introduced to market. As a consequence of the loss of income, market demand and proliferation of virtual work experience offers from large national operators, we have taken the decision to close our existing work experience function. Existing staff are being made redundant where redeployment and/or suitable alternative employment can not be provided.

To help schools navigate this new marketplace, we are working with our partner organisation, the CEC, to explore alternative delivery platforms, to signpost these and share best practice in support of Gatsby Benchmark 6 ‘Experience of the Workplace’ across Oxfordshire schools

**Communications update
December 2020**

Here is a summary of priorities and the activity that has taken place since the last Board meeting:

<p>COVID-19 business support section on website</p>	<p>Our key aim continues to be to ensure that our website acts as a 'portal' of information for our business community during this unprecedented time.</p> <p>This can be found via: www.oxfordshirelep.com/coronavirus</p> <p>As a communications team, we have also led marketing and communications campaigns to support the delivery of the following OxLEP Business programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Oxfordshire Kickstart Scheme • Peer Networks • Business Support Tool • Innovation Support for Business (ERDF) • eScalate (ERDF) <p>Since 23 March, we have delivered/produced significant levels of supporting content – this has included the following (at the time of writing this report):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 53 vlogs and partner organisation vlogs • 143 news stories, blogs or case studies • 79 digital events (Q&As, webinars or other social media-led events)
<p>COVID-19 county PR group</p>	<p>Alongside local authority, health and emergency service communication heads, we are playing a central role in communicating key messages to support the 'stop the spread' COVID message, as well as creating supporting assets for our business community.</p> <p>During the last quarter, we have also worked directly with business park and science park communication leads to ensure they are kept up to date with the latest Government support, providing them with assets to promote guidance to their own business communities.</p> <p>Details can be found here: https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/local-authority-support</p> <p>Significant resource was provided to create effective communications for the Oxford city move to tier two and the subsequent second national lockdown, with the aim of directing our businesses to key support:</p> <p>Oxford tier two: https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/news/article/oxlep-statement-oxford-moved-tier-two-covid-19-status</p> <p>National lockdown: https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/news/article/oxlep-statement-england-move-lockdown-measures-thursday</p>
<p>Ox-Cam Arc PR group</p>	<p>Following the publication of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc investment prospectus in September – through the Arc PR group – we continue to be one of the key organisation's helping to shape messaging for the prospectus and the economic potential of the region.</p> <p>These being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Prospectus aims to secure investment to support the physical, digital, financial and knowledge infrastructures across the Arc</i> • <i>The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Prospectus builds on the region's world-leading innovation, supporting our ability to compete successfully at a global level</i> • <i>The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Prospectus outlines how the region can create employment and an inclusive, prosperous economy for all our communities</i> • <i>The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Prospectus will demonstrate how the region can lead the UK's economic recovery from COVID-19 and support the government's 'levelling-up'</i>

	<p><i>investment programme</i></p> <p>In addition, we hosted an online event on 17 November: <i>'The Oxford-Cambridge Arc: A global asset and national investment priority'</i> which saw c.370 stakeholders join the event, representing the private and public sectors, as well as community groups across the Arc region.</p>
Oxfordshire Investment Plan	<p>Working with the strategy team, we continue to oversee a comprehensive communications plan for the Oxfordshire Investment Plan, identifying key stakeholders to be reached through a long-term strategy, that's particularly focused on engaging Westminster stakeholders, local communities and key sectors identified in the investment plan.</p> <p>Our main portal for the Investment Plan can be found here: https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/lis</p>
PR agency support	<p>PR agency Tala continues to provide guidance and a supporting activity plan, aligned with our strategic priorities.</p> <p>Current live projects include:</p> <p>Stakeholder mapping and prioritisation: Ongoing exercise to help us understand who our key stakeholders are, particularly with a digital presence.</p> <p>SIA update: Science and Innovation Audit update 2 – currently investigating the possibility of creating a SIA 2 aligned with a post-COVID economy</p> <p>Digital conversation starter: Project to utilise our LinkedIn audience, supporting us to showcase our key sectors to relevant audiences.</p> <p>EP50 (Energy Pathfinders: 2050) A new, special interest group formed by Oxfordshire Greentech (OG) and OxLEP with the aim of supporting the ambition of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy, setting a pathway to achieve zero carbon growth by 2050. EP:50 will select and champion 10 innovative projects that deliver both clean energy and insulation solutions for the region's greatly-needed new homes.</p>
Funded projects and the Getting Building Fund	<p>Final preparations have been put in place to oversee a comprehensive communications plan that highlights how we are supporting the economic recovery in Oxfordshire through the Getting Building Fund – we plan to generate substantial levels of content, across all sectors benefiting from funding: https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/news/article/getting-building-fund-help-kick-start-oxfordshire%E2%80%99s-economic-recovery-coronavirus</p> <p>Further government-funded project announcements that we have overseen included:</p> <p>Local Growth Fund – Henley College Creative Media Suite: https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/news/article/completion-refurbished-local-growth-fund-supported-creative-media-suite-will-%E2%80%98have</p> <p>Local Growth Fund – Activate Learning Hospitality and Catering Programmes: https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/news/article/local-growth-fund-announcement-oxlep-has-announced-activate-learning-has-been-awarded-</p>
Media coverage	<p>Since the last Board meeting in September, we have secured the following media coverage.</p> <p>Oxford Mail and Oxford Times: Companies in Oxfordshire adapt to pressures of coronavirus thanks to expert advice https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/18778867.companies-oxfordshire-adapt-pressures-coronavirus-thanks-expert-advice/</p> <p>City of Oxford College gets £2m for hospitality programmes https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/18816427.city-oxford-college-gets-2m-hospitality-programmes/</p> <p>Oxford pubs and restaurants fear for future under Tier 2 https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/18835303.oxford-pubs-restaurants-fear-future-tier-2/</p> <p>BBC Oxford: POP2020 https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p08x4dxp</p>

	<p>FE News Week: The Henley College Creative Media Suite Opening https://www.fenews.co.uk/press-releases/59106-the-henley-college-creative-media-suite-opening</p> <p>Prior to this, from mid-March to late-September, we secured an additional total of 27 pieces of media coverage across a variety of local, regional and trade titles – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x BBC South Today • 3 x BBC Radio Oxford • 4 x Jack FM • 13 x articles in the Oxford Times/Oxford Mail • 3 x Tech Tribe Oxford • 1 x Pharma Times • 1 x The MJ.co.uk
Annual report	<p>At the time of writing this update, the 19/20 annual report will shortly be published – as stated in the previous Board update, in-light of COVID-19, the report will be exclusively digital.</p> <p>We will publish the report and circulate a link to Board colleagues, as well as key stakeholders. The report is entitled: 'Leading, delivering and championing'.</p>
Annual event 2020	<p>Our annual event for 2020 took place on Wednesday 25 November via the Go To Webinar platform with 104 attendees – the event has also been shared on our YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjWOZ9mCKRI&list=PLRlcKUhnIDtg5iimxt9sj07N0hy4SOFj&index=1</p> <p>The event looked back on the challenging economic year, but also emphasised the strong innovation-led ambition that exists within the county. It also reflected on September's launch of the £4.3bn Oxfordshire Investment Plan.</p>
Digital Q&As and further digital events	<p>Since the September Board meeting, we have delivered two digital Q&A events, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 October: <i>'How critical is it for the county to remain connected post COVID-19?'</i> • 20 November: <i>'How critical is this time for our cultural and creative sectors?'</i> <p>At the time of writing this report, both events have collectively been viewed 280 times across our various platforms.</p> <p>The digital Q&A playlist can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRlcKUhnIDtjcpTUz1YbjZIIGJ5LYT1Br</p> <p>In addition to this, the Communications team have overseen the delivery of two OxLEP Business events and we supported the Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards 2021 online launch event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 October: <i>'What's next for Oxfordshire's business community?'</i> • 19 November: <i>'POP2020: How OxLEP Business can help your purposeful business'</i> <p>A further digital Q&A is scheduled to be recorded on 9 December with a focus on UK transition advice, with a further four Q&As to be delivered in the final financial quarter of 20/21.</p>
UK transition	<p>Working with local authority communications partners and business park communications partners, we have created social media-driven activity and digital assets to direct businesses to relevant UK transition government support and growth hub-led advice workshops.</p>

Further notes:

- Our PR and Communications Executive continues to be on maternity leave and will return to work in May next year.
- The European Communications Events Executive will be leaving OxLEP in mid-January – a recruitment process will begin in due course.
- We continue to update our communications strategy and calendar of activity in-light of COVID-19 and the upcoming UK transition. Our aim is to continue to place strategies and propositions – like the Local Industrial Strategy (in particular the Oxfordshire Investment Plan), Energy Strategy and the emerging Oxford-Cambridge Arc – at the centre of our communications work, though repurposed in such a way that it reflects the economic challenges and possible opportunities following the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit.



VERSION 1.0

MARCH 2019

Acronym	Full	Category	Notes
AA	Apprenticeship Ambassador	Role	Oxfordshire Apprenticeships
AB	Accountable Body	Compliance	
AEV	Added/ Advertising Equivalent Value	Communications	
AHP	Affordable housing programme	Programme	
AI	Artificial Intelligence	Technology	
ANR	Audio News Release	Communications	
AOB	Any Other Business	Term	
AR	Annual Report	Document	
ARU	Anglia Ruskin University		
AUG	Arc University Group		
AV	Audio-Visual	Communications	
B2B	Business-to-business	Term	
B2C	Business-to-consumer	Term	
B4		Organisation	Oxfordshire Business Members Group
BCLEP	Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy	Government Department	
BID	Bus Improvement district		
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Government Department	
BRO	Bus Representative organisation		
BTVLEP	Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
CA	Combined Authority	Organisation Description	
CandWEP	Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
Catapults			

CAV	Connected and Autonomous Vehicles	Sector	
CBI	Confederation of British Industry	Organisation	
CCFE	Culham Centre for Fusion Energy	Facility	
CCHTIP	Creative Cultural Heritage Tourism Investment Plan	Document	Sub-group, now VESG
CDC	Cherwell District Council	Local Authority	
CDI	Creative and Digital Industries	Sector	
CEC	Careers and Enterprise Company	Organisation	
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	Role	
CF	Careers Fest	Event	
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	Role	
CIOSLEP	Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
CIL	Community infra levy		
CIT	Capital Investment Team	Team	Part of DIT
CMA	Combined Mayoral Authority	Organisation Description	
CMT	Corporate Management Team	Team	
CO	Cabinet Office	Government Department	
COO	Chief Operating Officer	Role	
	Combined Authority		
COP	Close of Play	Term	
COP 26	26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26)	Event	
CRM	Customer Relationship Management	Database	
CS	Civil Service	Government Department	
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review	Government/Treasury	

CWLEP	Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP Area	
D2N2LEP	Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP Area	
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government	Government Department	
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport	Government Department	
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change	Government Department	
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Government Department	
DExEU	Department for Exiting the European Union	Government Department	
DfE	Department for Education	Government Department	
DfID	Department for International Development	Government Department	
DFT	Department for Transport	Government Department	
DH	Department of Health	Government Department	
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care	Government Department	
DISC	Disruptive Innovation for Space Centre	Project	
DIT	Department for International Trade	Government Department	
DoI	Declaration of Interest	Compliance	
DSO	Distribution Systems Operator	Role	Previously DNO
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions	Government Department	
EA	Enterprise Advisor	Role	
EA	Executive Assistant	Role	
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development	Fund	

EEN	Enterprise Europe Network	Organisation	
ELEVATE	Growth Hub Programme	Programme	
EN	Enterprise Nation	Organisation	Delivery Partner for Elevate programme
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund	Fund	
ESA	European Space Agency	Organisation	
ESABIC	European Space Agency Business Incubation Centre	Facility	Based at Harwell Campus
ESF	European Social Fund	Fund	
ESF	European Structural Fund	Fund	
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Fund	Fund	Also refers to the strategy document
ESSG	Environment and Sustainability Sub-group	Group	
EoD	End of Day	Term	
Eoi	Expression of Interest	Document	
	Experience Oxfordshire		
EZ	Enterprise Zone	Area	
FA	First Ascent	Organisation	Delivery Partner for Elevate programme
FA	Funding Agreement	Compliance	
FAS	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Project	
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	Invest	
FSB	Federation of Small Businesses	Organisation	
GBF	Getting Building und	Government Programme	
GBSLEP	Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
GCGP	Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	Now the Business Board of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

GCS	Government Communication Service	Government Organisation	
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation	Compliance	
GEV	Graduate Entrepreneurship Visa	Invest	
GLAM	Gardens, Libraries and Museums	Department	Oxford University
GMLEP	Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
GPF	Growing Places Fund	Fund	Earliest fund. Set up so that money is recycled through projects
GB	Growth Board	Partnership Structure	
GSEEH	Greater South East Energy Hub	Facility	
HE	Highways England	Government Organisation	
HE	Homes England	Government Organisation	
HeartofSWLEP	Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
HIF	Housing Infrastructure fund	Homes England fund	
HLS	Healthcare and Life Sciences	Sector	
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs	Government Organisation	
HO	Home Office	Government Organisation	
HofC	House of Commons	Government	
HofL	House of Lords	Government	
HoT	Heads of Terms	Compliance	
HPO	High Potential opportunity		
HR	Human Resources	Department	
IA	Innovation Advisor	Role	
IBC	Integrated Business Centre	Service	
IF	Oxford Science and Ideas Festival	Event	

IoT	Internet of things		
IoT	Inst of Technology		
IP	Intellectual property		
IPA	Infrastructure and Projects Authority	Government Organisation	
IPO	Intellectual property office	Government Organisation	
IS	Industrial Strategy	Document	
ISCF	Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund	Fund	
ISfB	Innovation Support for Business	Programme	
IST	Investment Services Team	Team	Part of DIT
ITA	International Trade Adviser	Role	Part of DIT
JET	Joint European Torus	Facility	Based at Culham Science Centre
JRS	Job retention scheme		
JSSP	Joint Statutory Spatial Plan for the growth Board Ox2050	Document	Part of Housing and Growth Deal
KEIT	Knowledge Exchange & Impact Team	Team	Oxford University team
KPI	Key Performance Indicator	Compliance	
LA	Legal Agreement	Compliance	
	Last mile – local transport connections		
LEAP	London Economic Action Partnership	LEP area	
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership	Organisation	
LEPN	LEP Network		

LGA	Local Gov't Assoc		
LGF	Local Growth Fund	Fund	3 phases - sometimes called Growth Deal but due to Housing and Growth deal (separate thing) should no longer be
LIS	Local Industrial Strategy	Document	
LLEP	Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
LLP	Limited Liability Partnership	Organisation Description	
LOP	LEP Operating Plan	Document	
LSDP	Local Digital Skills Partnership	Government Partnership	
LTN	Low traffic Network		
LTP	Local Transport Plan	Document	
MaaS	Mobility as a service		
MCA	Mayoral Combined Auth		
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government	Government Organisation	
MOD	Ministry of Defence	Government Organisation	
MOJ	Ministry for Justice	Government Organisation	
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding	Compliance	
MPLS	Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences	Oxford University Department	
MSCP	Multi Story Car Park	Facility	
NAO	National Audit Office	Government Organisation	

NC	Natural capital	Environmental Description	
NEBOSH	National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health	Organisation	
NEET	Not in Employment, Education, or Training	Description	
NELEP	North East Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
NHS	National Health Service	Government Organisation	
NIC	Nat infra commission		
NN	Network Navigators	Role	
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	Document	
NQIT	Networked Quantum Information Technologies Hub	Facility	
NS&I	National Savings and Investments	Government Organisation	
NSIP	Nationally significant infra project		
O2i	Opportunities to inspire	Organisation	Now part of OxLEP Skills
OA	Oxfordshire Apprenticeships	Organisation/Brand	Part of OxLEP Skills- separate brand
OA Awards	Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards	Event	
OBE	Oxfordshire Business Enterprises	Organisation	
OBS	Oxfordshire Business Support	Programme	Now OxLEP Business (re-branded) – Also called the ‘Growth Hub’
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council	Local Authority	
OCIC	Oxford City Council	Local Authority	
OFAS	Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme	Project	
Ofgem	Office of Gas & Electricity Markets – the UK energy industry regulator	Government Organisation	
OIS	Oxford Innovation Services	Organisation	Outsourced for the ISfB programme

OLS	Office for Life Sciences	Government Organisation	Part of Department of Health and Social Care and BEIS
ONS	Office for National Statistics	Government Organisation	
OPT	Oxford Preservation Trust		
OSI	Oxford Sciences Innovation	Organisation	
OSP	Oxford Science Park	Campus	
OSS	Oxford Space Systems	Organisation	
OTMN	Oxford Technology and Media Network	Organisation	
OUI	Oxford university Investments	Organisation	
OUP	Oxford University Press	Organisation	
Ox2050	Strategic Spatial Plan	Document	
OxBAs	Oxfordshire Business Awards	Event	
OxIS	Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy	Document	
OxLEP	Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP Area	
PLC	Public Limited Company	Organisation Description	
PM	Prime Minister	Role	
PO	Purchase Order	Finance	
PR	Public Relations	Department	
	Project speed		
PSG	Programme Sub Group	Group	
R&D	Research & Development	Sector	
RACE	Remote Applications in Challenging Environments	Facility	Based in Culham Centre for Fusion Energy at Culham Science Centre
RAL	Rutherford Appleton Laboratory	Facility	Based at Harwell Campus
RFI	Rosalind Franklin Institute	Facility	Based at Harwell Campus
RGF	Regional Growth Fund	Fund	
ROI	Return on Investment	Finance	
SAP	Skills advisory panel		

SatApps	Satellite Applications Catapult	Facility	Based at Harwell Campus
SCR	Sheffield City Region	LEP Area	
Sect 106	Planning Gain Agreement	Legal document	
SEEIP	Strategic Environmental and Economic Investment Plan	Document	Investment plan for ESG
SELEP	South East Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
SEMLEP	South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
SEP	Strategic Economic Plan	Document	
SFA	Skills Funding Agency	Organisation	
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment	Assessment	
SIA	Science Innovation Audit	Document	
SLA	Service Level Agreement	Agreement	
SF	Non statutory Spatial Framework – for the Arc		
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time bound	Description	Refers to measuring objectives
SME	Small to Medium Enterprise	Organisation Description	
SMT	Senior Management Team	Management Team	CMT + other managers
SODC	South Oxfordshire District Council	Local Authority	
	Spatial Framework – for the Arc		
SPD	Supplementary planning document		
SSP	Statutory Sick Pay	Finance	
SVCN	Science Vale Cycle Network	Network	
SWLEP	Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
T Level	Skills level award		

Tala	Communications Agency	Organisation	Current PR Agency
TBC	To Be Confirmed	Term	
TORCH	The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities	Facility	Oxford University Facility
TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations	Regulation	
UEA	Uni East Anglia		
UKAEA	United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority	Organisation	
UKRI	United Kingdom Research Innovation	Organisation	
UKSA	UK Space Agency	Organisation	
UA	Unitary Authority		
UTC	University Technical College	Institution	
VAT	Value Added Tax	Finance	
VESG	Visitor Economy Sub-group	Group	Previously CCHTIP Sub-Group
VOWHDC	Vale of White Horse District Council	Local Authority	
WE	Work Experience	Area of OxLEP Skills	
WLEP	Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP area	
WOBAS	West Oxfordshire Business Awards	Event	
WODC	West Oxfordshire District Council	Local Authority	