

Response from Bioabundance Community Interest Company – Matter 2

Procedural/legal requirements Issue

Housing needs and the housing requirement

Q2. What factors led to the decision to cease work on a joint plan for Oxfordshire?

The joint plan for Oxfordshire failed because three of the other four District Councils did not share Oxford City's desire of economic growth paying no regard to the impact on the environment and failing to address the need to inexpensive homes within the City.

Q3. How did engagement with other authorities in Oxfordshire change after this decision?

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership was established. This is an advisory body with no decision-making powers. It conducts business in a series of meetings where the Chair has the challenge of taking too many papers in too short a time. In the two meetings I have attended there has been no time for any discussion by the elected decision makers on the questions raised.

Q4. How and when did the Council engage with other authorities in Oxfordshire in relation to the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA)? Why was it only commissioned by Oxford City and Cherwell District Councils?

The objectives of the HENA were not shared with and agreed by the other authorities. No common objectives seem to have been established before the HENA work of Cambridge Econometrics was commissioned.

Q5. Why was the decision taken to assess housing needs on an Oxfordshire wide basis and then set out a distribution of this by individual district authorities? Were the other authorities involved in this decision?

It was the only way Oxford City felt it could force its GDP driven Growth Agenda on the other Districts. Any divergence from the GDP driven Growth Agenda is denounced by the Leader of Oxford Council as anti-growth. This simple 'Get out of my way' reaction ignores the immense potential for economic activity to address our 2020 situation of climate change, for instance, the need to redirect the building industry to the task of insulating our existing building stock.

Q7. How has the Council engaged with the other authorities in relation to the capacity of Oxford City to accommodate housing?

The potential to solve the shortage of homes in Oxford by high rise multi- purpose buildings in brown field sites does not seem to have been considered. This is an obvious solution as seen by those living outside the City.

Q10. What is the position of the other authorities in terms of the duty to co-operate in relation to this issue?

Oxford City has not cooperated or consulted with three out of the four other Districts in the development of the HENA.