

**Q1 What was your driver for undertaking a Joint Core Strategy?**

A1 Broxtowe Borough Council

We had two. Not only the obvious sense in making sure the policy framework for the housing market area is consistent, but we were also a "growth point" area. As such, over the period we have had money to spend. About £10m to be precise. This was tremendously helpful in giving members something positive to focus on and a real incentive to engage jointly – we tried to ensure that the benefits of growth (which included green infrastructure not just projects to enable the unlocking of housing land) we shared across the area.

A1 South Ribble Borough Council

The main driver for working in this collaborative way was the recognition that all three authorities are effective within the same housing market area, employment market and travel to work area. Thus there were very similar issues affecting all three authority areas. The other key driver was of course resources, the ability to share staff knowledge, skills, capacity and to share the overall costs of the process and the evidence base.

A1 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

The main driver was the identification of North Northamptonshire as part of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands (MKSM) Growth Area (Sustainable Communities Plan 2003). The 2005 [MKSM Sub-Regional Strategy](#) (subsequently incorporated into the East Midlands Regional Plan) directed major growth to Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough and identified the need for joint local development documents covering these authorities and East Northamptonshire "to reflect common issues across this complex growth location". Subsequent regional work confirmed North Northamptonshire as a single Housing Market Area.

Alongside this strategic driver for joint working were practical considerations over the capacity within the four local planning authorities to plan for significant growth. It was also necessary to satisfy Government that robust planning arrangements were in place to complement the newly formed North Northamptonshire Development Company (NNDC), which was an urban regeneration company with no planning powers.

Over time, the ability to secure cost savings and to satisfy the Duty to Co-operate have become increasingly important as drivers for joint working.

A1 West Lindsey District Council

Central Lincolnshire as presently constituted for local planning purposes is made up of the Districts of West Lindsey, North Kesteven and the City of Lincoln. Historically these districts have worked together on planning policy matters due mainly to the economic influence of the city of Lincoln as a place where a significant proportion of residents from all these

district work, shop and use the leisure and recreation facilities. The move to prepare a joint core strategy was to a large extent driven by this relationship. Evidence for the soundness of this approach can be seen in such things as a common housing market area, travel to work patterns, shopping patterns etc. It is also true to say that there were potential cost savings in preparing one local plan/core strategy across the three council areas.

#### A1 Cheltenham Borough Council

Our JCS process started in 2008 under pressure from the (then) South West Regional Development Agency and the (then) Government Office South West. They jointly pointed out to us under the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (now of course defunct) the housing growth for Cheltenham and Gloucester would in major part consist of urban extensions which crossed the border into Tewkesbury and that it thus made no sense for Cheltenham and Gloucester to be trying to develop their Core Strategies separately from Tewkesbury. Connected with this was a political view that Cheltenham and Gloucester politicians wanted to have an influence over where Tewkesbury decided to put its housing.

#### A1 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

The driver for undertaking a joint core strategy was the Black Country Study – a 30 year urban renaissance strategy. Political and business leaders in the area recognised the need to consider radical change in the Black Country to counter the processes of decline over the last 30 years and agreed to the production of the Study. The Study informed revisions to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and provided evidence for the formulation of the Black Country Core Strategy.

#### A1 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

There were many issues which were seen as drivers for the production of the Joint Core Strategy. Firstly there were many parallel strategic issues which crossed the sub regional Black Country area which were seen as requiring a consistent approach. Secondly a strengthened strategy developed in a cooperative and collaborative manner was seen as essential to address the regeneration needs across the four Black Country authorities.

#### A1 North Kesteven District Council

There are specific challenges related to growth in the central Lincolnshire area. Parts of the area have grown rapidly in recent decades and the area is projected to grow significantly over the next 20 years. The City of Lincoln is a relatively small geographical area, and the future growth of the city is reliant on development in West Lindsey and North Kesteven. Central Lincolnshire is also a single housing market area. There was compelling logic to the preparation of a single core strategy/local plan, with a single evidence base. Should three local plans have been

prepared, they would have been based on a shared approach to growth and a shared evidence base. The shared approach is delivering better planning for the area.

In addition, the shared approach was attractive to Lincolnshire County Council, who are a full member of the CLJSPC (each district nominates three members to the joint committee, and the county council also nominates three members). The joint arrangements have therefore enabled integrated planning for infrastructure alongside the local plan, with a single infrastructure delivery plan.

Furthermore, the joint arrangements have created efficiencies (see below).

The Inspectors report on the East Midlands Spatial Strategy (2008) also recommended a joint approach, particularly related to the growth of the city of Lincoln.

#### A1 Daventry District Council

At the time that the decision was taken we were within the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Growth Area policy framework, and we had a Urban Development Corporation in place. Discussions between the UDC and Regional Government Office resulted in us being 'pushed' into the joint working arrangement.

#### A1 West Dorset District Council

Our drivers for undertaking a joint local plan were: the decision of the two councils to set up a joint staff partnership; the fact that the two districts together form a single housing market area; the need to address cross-boundary issues; and the changes to the planning system, arising from the Localism Act.

#### A1 Gateshead Council

Gateshead and Newcastle have a good history of working together and there was and is strong political leadership that supports this. Gateshead and Newcastle started to work together back in 2000 with a shared ambition of culture led regeneration. In 2003 Gateshead and Newcastle jointly bid for a joint Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder. This was successful and Bridging Newcastle Gateshead (BNG) was established to tackle housing market failure across both local authority areas. In 2007 both Gateshead and Newcastle councils agreed the establishment of a new Partnership between the two authorities which would act as an umbrella body for agreed joint activities. The purpose of the Partnership was and is to provide political steering of joint working between Gateshead and Newcastle to develop shared thinking on new and emerging issues and to sustain the spirit of partnership approach. The establishment of the Gateshead and Newcastle Partnership was a catalyst towards greater collaboration across Gateshead and Newcastle on a number of issues, including the preparation of a joint economic and spatial strategy for

Newcastle Gateshead (1 Plan) by the then City Development Company (1 NG). This provided a timely analysis of the challenges and opportunities facing the area, recognising that the two areas are inextricably linked, and that by working together provides a stronger basis for addressing these challenges and opportunities. In spring 2009 Gateshead were in the early stages of developing a Core Strategy, with an Issues and Options stage complete, and in the early stages of commissioning research work to form the evidence base. Newcastle were also at an early stage of developing their Core Strategy, after its original Core Strategy was withdrawn during Examination. Both authorities therefore considered there was an ideal opportunity to prepare a joint Core Strategy. A driver was also the anticipated cost savings as a result of economies of scale, sharing officer resources and access to a broader range of skills, both within the joint team and within each local authority.

A1 Nottingham City Council

The formation of JPAB predated the Duty to Cooperate, and the key driver was to prepare a consistent and coherent strategic planning framework for the area as a whole as directed by the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. However, JPAB was able to take on the Duty to Co-operate comprehensively.

**Q2 Did you undertake any analysis of options prior to taking this approach? If so what were the options and why did that evaluation lead to this choice?**

A2 Broxtowe Borough Council

Yes. The main other option we considered was doing a formal joint core strategy. In the event we opted for aligned core strategies. Altogether easier. In our aligned version, most of the policies are the same across the area. The housing allocations are then specific to each area. For the areas where only part of the area fall within the HMA its easier to align, since these authorities also have other parts of their area to think about. Finally it's a lower risk option as, when/if authorities find it all too much and drop out, the boat doesn't sink tipping everyone else out, the particular authority just jumps overboard ( and as happened in our case come swimming back later and climb on board again!).

A2 South Ribble Borough Council

This collaboration originally started in 2006 with the early stages of the Core Strategy preparation and joint procurement on the evidence base. A Joint LDF Officer Team was set up in April 2008 staffed by secondees from the three authorities and also from Lancashire County Council who have supported this work since the beginning. One of the seconded staff acted as Team Coordinator. An initial draft Memorandum of Intent was prepared to cover staffing and funding arrangements. The intention was that a more formal permanent arrangement would be put in place when possible. This Team was supported by an Officers Working Group made up of the Planning Policy Officers of the respective Councils.

A2 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

Baker Associates were commissioned in 2004 to provide Advice on Joint Working Arrangements for Spatial Planning in North Northamptonshire. A copy of their report is attached. This led to the formation of the JPC and JPC.

A2 West Lindsey District Council

It appears the main options analysis undertaken at the time was between the three districts working together to produce a single core strategy/local plan or individual local plans being produced in each district area. Clearly if individual local plans were produced there would have to have been significant joint working between the districts, especially around the city of Lincoln which has a very tight boundary. It therefore made sense to produce a local plan for the three districts. I am not aware that any other options were analysed at the time -such as involving other neighbouring districts.

## A2 Cheltenham Borough Council

Until the intervention of SWRDA and GOSW we were intending to do our own Core Strategy in conformance with the emerging RSS. Doing our own thing has always remained an option but for practical reasons of geography would have presented major practical problems. There was an option considered when the Joint Core Strategy process was started in 2008 to add Stroud into the JCS process. The rationale is that housing to the South of Gloucester could have been planned for more easily with Stroud in the JCS process but as neither Gloucester or Stroud were very keen on any strategic allocation to the south of the city the idea of adding Stroud was not taken forward.

## A2 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

The Black Country authorities have a long history of working together and have the Black Country Consortium (the Black Country's strategic public/private partnership), that co-ordinated the production of the Black Country Study. Therefore, working together to produce a joint strategic planning document seemed to be the obvious next step. The alternative option considered was to produce separate plans.

## A2 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

The work followed the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and specifically the Black Country Study (the Urban Renaissance Strategy for the Black Country) which set out the need for change, where it would happen, and how it would be delivered. That study supported a sub-regional strategy for the Black Country and formed part of the subsequent evidence base. During the early stages of consideration of the options various models were considered. These models included preparing joint strategic policies at a very high level (for example just dealing with housing numbers and employment land numbers) with more detailed policies individually adopted by each Council. The early stages of consideration were undertaken in the climate of a changing national planning policy framework. Ultimately a jointly developed full core strategy was considered most appropriate as it joined up the approach to the overall strategy across the Black Country which needed issues tackling at a sub regional level to ensure complimentary rather than conflicting development in each of the four areas. The model chosen was seen as most streamlined and the most appropriate to maximise resources in terms of staff expertise and shared costs (resulting in significant savings). It also provided the Black Country authorities with a robust platform to deliver a consistent message for their growth strategy.

## A2 North Kesteven District Council

We did consider a range of options. It would have been possible to prepare a single local plan, which would then require approval by each of the partner councils. This approach was not favoured as it was considered preferable for a single Local Plan to be developed within a single governance framework. This significantly reduces the risk of different

decisions being taken by one of more partners. The twelve members of the Joint Committee each have a single vote; it is not possible for a council to exercise a veto over the arrangements or the proposals brought before the committee.

A2 Daventry District Council

We did but given our answer to question 1 it was of little weight in the decision making process.

A2 West Dorset District Council

The options considered were the preparation of the joint local plan or continuation of preparation of two separate core strategies/local plans. Analysis suggested that there would be a delay in the programme for one of the two authorities as a result and that there were risks that the two councils might be unable to agree on the joint plan. We concluded that these were outweighed by the potential cost savings, desirability of a consistent policy framework for the joint development management staff team, and ability to deal more effectively with the cross-boundary issues.

A2 Gateshead Council

There was no recognised options analysis. Gateshead and Newcastle were already collaborating on joint evidence base covering economy, housing, and infrastructure. A joint Core Strategy was a logical follow on.

A2 Nottingham City Council

Consideration was given to continuing to prepare plans on an ad hoc basis, and also to the formation of a formal Joint Local Plan, which would have entailed the creation of a Joint Committee with executive powers. Ultimately it was decided a cooperative approach was most appropriate to our area.

**Q3 What governance arrangement did you put in place for both Councillors and Officers?**

A3 Broxtowe Borough Council

Crucial. We had a "Joint planning advisory board". This contained the planning portfolio members from each of the authorities. Very importantly it did not take individual sovereignty away from any of the individual authorities. This meant every authority had to take their decisions back at their own authority. In the jPAB we just agreed to take the decisions, then everyone went off and sorted it out. This meant we had to have detailed scheduling of when everyone would be taking their decisions – all possible if slightly complex. Another great thing was we had meetings in public. We invited observers (these came regularly – not just developers but environment agency, Severn Trent, Highways agency, HCA, other councillors...). We met at least every three months. Sometimes more regularly.

A3 South Ribble Borough Council

On a Member level a Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) was set up with representatives from Lancashire County Council, and the 3 authorities. A key issue was the need to achieve joint coincident decision making without the use of a formal joint committee as the District Councils did not wish to relinquish executive powers. Terms of Reference for the JAC were agreed and the Committee is supported by officers of the three authorities. The JAC is an Advisory Committee, formal decisions on policy issues remain the responsibility of the respective Cabinets/ Councils. When required the three district council Cabinets have met to agree executive actions.

A3 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

See background above. The Governance arrangements for the JPC are set out in the Joint Committee Order and in Committee Standing Orders. Committee administration is managed by the County Council. The JPC operates with 3 councillors from each of the 5 partner authorities. At least one councillor from each of the five councils plus at least three other members must be present for the JPC to be quorate.

The governance arrangements for officers are set out in the Memorandum of Intent. The Head of the JPU reports to a monthly meeting of the Chief Planning Officers (CPO) Steering Group. There is also a monthly meeting of a 'Wider Team' of policy officers from the JPU and LPAs to ensure effective collaboration.



## A3 West Lindsey District Council

As Ian outlines in his letter the arrangements are underpinned by a statutory instrument which in effect creates a separate local planning authority to produce a core strategy local plan for central Lincolnshire. This, together with a "memorandum of understanding" to which all the constituent councils are signatories, sets out the main member governance framework for the partnership and the production of the core strategy/local plan. There is a strategic group of senior officers from all the council (chaired by Ian) who manage the "client side" of the local plan production.

## A3 Cheltenham Borough Council

Each of the 3 councils has preserved the right to say yes or no to any final JCS. The idea of a joint committee with decision making powers was considered but rapidly rejected, the issues around housing development being highly sensitive with politicians and our communities. The senior member body in the JCS is therefore the Member Steering Group which is a non-decision making body bringing together representatives of the different political parties within the 3 councils. Thus although Cheltenham is strongly Liberal Democrat controlled, the MSG membership is the Leader of the Council (Lib Dem), the Leader of the Conservative group and the Leader of our Independent group. We benefitted greatly around 3 years ago when we decided we needed an Independent Chair for the MSG – Jim Clayton a Planning Consultant and former inspector from Taunton was appointed and has introduced a dose of realism to member deliberations.

Decisions as regards the programme are made by an officer group which we call the Cross Boundary Programme Board which consists of Chief Executives and Senior Planning Officers together with our Local Enterprise Partnership.

Gloucestershire County are also represented at member level on the MSG and at officer level on the CBPB.

Below the CBPB there is a project group consisting of relevant planning officers and the Programme Manager and it is here that much of the detailed work is done. Naturally we have made extensive use of consultants and elected members have also been engaged through elected member seminars which have been run in each of the 3 councils.

## A3 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

With regard to the establishment of political groups, a Members' Joint Advisory Group was formed comprising the portfolio holders for Strategic Planning from each of the local authorities. This group received reports and updates from officers and agreed recommendations to be taken forward to council committees. All key decisions with regard to the procedures and processes involved with producing new policy were taken by the individual portfolio holders as part of their council business. Final approval to adopt was taken by the Full Council of each local authority.

For officers, a main Steering Group was set up and included lead officers from each local authority, a representative from the Black Country Consortium and the Government Office for the West Midlands. Other officers and additional organisations attended when appropriate. It was the role of this group to provide advice and guidance and to ensure the key deadlines and milestones were achieved.

## A3 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

The Core strategy was prepared through sound project management with a clear governance framework comprising of a Joint Advisory Group of Cabinet members from each Local Authority receiving regular reports on progress and a steer on key issues. A steering group of planning policy leads from each Authority directed the technical work and put in place specialist topic groups. Formal sign off at each key stage was through each Local Authority through its own committee processes in line with the regulatory requirements.

## A3 North Kesteven District Council

The statutory instrument describes the member governance arrangements – a formal joint committee, with each of four partner councils nominating three members to serve on the committee.

The committee is supported by joint officer governance arrangements. A Central Lincolnshire Strategic Group meets monthly to oversee the work, with 2 senior officers from each council. The Strategic Group is supported by a Heads of Planning Group (on which all four councils are represented). The Heads of Planning Group has established task groups to co-ordinate activities within the project plan.

## A3 Daventry District Council

We have the following arrangements in place:

- Programme Board – consisting of senior level officers (directors or above) which gives direction to work streams and initial 'sign off' of reports to Committee.
- Business Sub-Group – Members of Joint Committee and Programme Board. This group meets in private and provides an opportunity to consider matters before they go to Committee.

- Joint Strategic Planning Committee – decision making body set up by statute.

### A3 West Dorset District Council

When we made the decision we had already agreed to form a joint planning policy team. Starting work on a joint plan was helpful in bringing this new team together. We did not set up additional governance arrangements for members, deliberately deciding that decisions would go through each council. We structured the plan with themed chapters followed by area chapters, and made clear at pre-submission and submission stages that the members of each district were agreeing the area chapters that related to their district.

### A3 Gateshead Council

With the joint working between the two authorities well established the decision to undertake the development of a joint Core Strategy between Gateshead and Newcastle was formally agreed in autumn 2009. This was accompanied by a Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum of Understanding, Newcastle Gateshead Joint Core Strategy and Joint Urban Core Area Action Plan (revised) May 2011 -was revised to include Urban Core Plan -attached. A governance structure was established from the outset of the joint working to ensure clarity around forming evidence and developing policies, clear and coordinated officer working and reporting mechanisms and transparent working between the two authorities. Joint officer team meetings and board meetings were held monthly under this governance structure. Issues where necessary were escalated to the Gateshead Newcastle Partnership. The Partnership meetings were attended by senior Councillors including opposition Councillors and senior managers from both authorities. The Governance of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan was given joint political as well as senior officer level co-operation through the Gateshead and Newcastle Partnership they were part of the decision making process for the joint plans as set out in the governance structure attached.

### A3 Nottingham City Council

Please see the Terms of Reference. Political leadership via the Greater Nottingham Joint Planning Advisory Board (JPAB). JPAB is a voluntary partnership with membership drawn from the relevant Portfolio Holding councillors. It has agreed Terms of Reference (attached), dedicated planning officer support and meetings are open to the public. It predates the Duty to Cooperate. JPAB meets bimonthly and is supported by an Executive Steering Group of senior officers from the member councils. Planning officers meet as necessary (often weekly) to agree work programmes, lead officers for individual work strands, and to review progress. Key stakeholders such as the Highways Agency, Environment Agency and Homes and Communities Agency are Observer members of JPAB.

**Q4 What staffing arrangements were put in place? Permanent? Secondment?**

A4 Broxtowe Borough Council

We had two dedicated members of staff to this task- fixed term roles (officers had previously worked for the City but were well known and respected by all). Fortunately paid for out of growth point. This job could simply not have been completed without this step. Under the JPAB was an officer "executive " group. This was the planning policy officers from each of the authorities. This group discussed agendas, dilemmas etc and made sure the work of the board proceeded smoothly. We found the allocation of lead roles was important. In our case we chaired the JPAB (Broxtowe) – this worked so no one felt threatened that the effort was a City takeover. A County planning offer chaired the executive group and the City employed the dedicated officer team.

A4 South Ribble Borough Council

It became clear in 2009 that a formal arrangement for the Joint LDF Officer Team was required to maintain the momentum of the work being undertaken. Other conflicting duties and staff turnover also reinforced the need to have a dedicated team. In April 2009 the seconded Team Coordinator role became a permanent post for 3 years. It was agreed that the 3 Central Lancashire Authorities would jointly fund this post in addition to the staff secondments. At this time the Central Lancashire Authorities with Lancashire County Council and Blackpool Borough Council were successful in securing Growth Point funding. The decision was then taken to use some of these monies to fund the appointment of 3 temporary posts for 3 years to progress the Core Strategy. A formal Memorandum of Intent was agreed governing the staffing arrangements and providing for equalisation of costs. In practice for example, a lead Authority may procure a piece of evidence base on behalf of the three authorities. At the end of a financial year there has then been an equalisation exercise. Accommodation for the Joint Team was provided by Lancashire County Council as part of their contribution to joint working.

A4 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

The Joint Planning Unit currently has 7 Staff (FTE). Staff are employed by the partner local planning authorities on behalf of the JPU and managed in accordance with the arrangements in the Memorandum of Intent. The costs of employing staff are accounted for as part of the LPA's contribution to the JPU, with these being equalised at the end of the financial year.

The JPU was initially hosted and partly funded by NNDC (which was externally and separately funded). It is currently housed at the offices of East Northamptonshire council but retains an independent IT system. No charge for rent or service costs is made.

A4 West Lindsey District Council

At officer level local plan staff from each of the district councils were transferred into a "Joint Planning Unit" which is hosted by North Kesteven District Council. At the start of the process there was the equivalent of 14 FTEs in this unit. Since then the unit has been reorganised and the services of Peterborough City Council have been engaged to progress the adoption of the local plan. They have an established track record in delivery adopted local plans. They are doing this work "at cost" in order to keep their experienced local plans team together.

A4 Cheltenham Borough Council

We have deployed permanent staff into the Joint Core Strategy work and have also employed temporary staff as Programme Managers or to work on specific areas of activity (such as infrastructure or CIL). As mentioned above we have made extensive use of consultants as well as commissioning the County Council to carry out transport modelling (for which they charged). A decision was made approximately 3 years ago to co-locate the team for significant parts of their time and this has been highly beneficial to getting more of a team spirit going with the JCS team.

A4 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Each local authority provided officers to deal with specific policy areas, e.g. housing, employment, retail, and a number of "topic" groups were formed. A lead officer was identified for each group who reported back to the main Steering Group. In addition, a Task and Finish Group was set up to ensure the document met its key milestones and deadlines. No officers were formally seconded and it was unnecessary to recruit any additional staff, apart from specialist consultants.

A4 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Each Local Authority provided planning officer resource working as a team without the need for secondment.

A4 North Kesteven District Council

A shared Local Plans Team has been created, reporting to the Heads of Planning Group. It is directly managed by one of the Heads of Planning, on behalf of the partners.

The Local Plans Team is made up of planning policy officers directly employed, and capacity supplied by Peterborough City Council under a service level agreement. The arrangement with Peterborough has been in place since early 2014, having evaluated the benefits against the alternative of directly employing officers. The Peterborough team has experience of successfully supporting councils through the process, and the costs are equivalent to directly employed officers.

## A4 Daventry District Council

Initially it was a mix of permanent positions and secondments. After a while it was decided that it would be better if the unit was all employed by the same organisation – they are then all on the same terms and conditions etc. In order to spread the workload in the partnership each took on roles: eg one took on administration of Committees, finance etc; one took on employment on behalf of the partnership; one took on audit.

## A4 West Dorset District Council

Staffing was through the joint team being brought together as part of the partnership. A 10% staff saving was required as part of this process (in addition to management savings) and a further saving (of one FTE post) has been made through a service review since.

## A4 Gateshead Council

A "virtual" joint team was established through a form of "partner protocol". This did not involve co location and only entailed coordination and supervision by senior officers in each authority. This was based upon the MoU and working arrangements. Each identified workstream was "led" by an experienced officer from one authority and "supported" by an officer from the other authority. They were tasked with a series of outputs to an agreed timetable which was managed through the joint project team. This approach allowed a simple straightforward means of establishing a joint team in a relatively short term, transparent equality of responsibility, maximum flexibility of resources/expertise and the ability to quickly call in resources from other parts of the Council when required for example project management, communications. However this approach relied heavily on officer commitment to cooperate, resolve disagreements amicably and look at the "bigger picture" putting aside each authority's self-interest and ways of working.

## A4 Nottingham City Council

We were fortunate to have funding from the former government's 'Growth Point' programme, and this funded two posts for five years, with a further post for two years during the most intense period (Publication, Submission and Examination).

**Q5 How have you arranged for costs to be apportioned and funded?  
Did it help your Council save money or cost it more?**

A5 Broxtowe Borough Council

We were very lucky that the costs of the staff were paid for from growth point. We found that jointly commissioning the evidence base saved us hundreds of thousands of pounds. There simply is no other sensible way to procure the evidence that is needed to get a plan through the examination process. The idea of saving money was a powerful justification to the joint approach. We shared the cost of the (joint examination too. When we have had to fund things ourselves we have reached agreement fairly easily on how the costs should be apportioned in proportion to the benefits to be derived.

A5 South Ribble Borough Council

The Authorities have estimated that by working jointly, the saving to the authorities has been around a third of the cost of producing individual Core Strategies.

A5 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

The budget contribution for the forthcoming year is agreed at an autumn meeting of the CPO Steering Group (and, if necessary, Chief Executives) and feeds into the budget process of each of the partner authorities. The County Council does not contribute to the staffing costs of the JPU but funds transport related work. At the end of the financial year the in-kind and other costs are then totalled and shared between the four District councils. The County Council acts as accountable body for the JPU, managing its budget and procurement issues for a small annual charge.

Over the years, the JPU has been successful in obtaining external funding from sources such as Cabe, Arts Council, Environment Agency and, most recently CLG (site delivery fund). It has also contributed to the successful bid for CLG support for delivery of sustainable urban extensions in North Northamptonshire.

The JPU currently costs each of the partner LPAs £110k per annum (based on a three year work programme including the examination of the JCS). The attached note on the benefits of the JPU highlights the cost savings achieved through the JPU compared to each authority preparing its own core strategy.

A5 West Lindsey District Council

Set out in Ian's response.

## A5 Cheltenham Borough Council

We have apportioned money and the time contribution from officers more or less equally between the three councils. The total costs incurred by each of the councils (excluding any staff resource) has worked out at approximately £60,000 per annum. We have, in addition, looked to any opportunities which present themselves for government money or support of organisations such as the Planning Advisory Service to reduce the burden on each of the councils.

## A5 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Significant costs savings were achieved by the four local authorities working together. We commissioned joint evidence and only held one Examination in Public. It is estimated that we saved in the region of £1million between the four councils.

## A5 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

One Local Authority was the main accountable body and the costs were apportioned on a 25% split per authority including all evidence procurement and Examination costs. Our assessment has assessed that the saving amounted to approximately £1 million across the four Local Authorities.

## A5 North Kesteven District Council

Lincolnshire County Council makes a relatively small financial contribution to the costs of the Local Plans Team and the associated work of the committee. It also provides dedicated officer support for work on infrastructure planning and delivery. The majority of the costs are shared three ways by the three districts (equal shares). We estimate that the shared approach is saving each district council over £300,000 per year. We genuinely believe that the shared approach is delivering better planning at substantially less cost to each of the partners.

## A5 Daventry District Council

The costs are shared on the same basis as the voting rights at committee. Northampton, as the largest authority (by population) has 4 votes, Daventry has 3, South Northants has 3 and the County 3. In recent years the County Council has not funded the unit, so the cost has been covered by the three districts. It is hard to make direct comparisons between a conventional and joint arrangement. Clearly there are savings when evidence work is undertaken as a larger geographic area is covered, but there is also some duplication as the work undertaken by the unit has to be checked and run through internal processes at the districts.

## A5 West Dorset District Council

Costs have been apportioned between the two districts on a standard percentage basis agreed for the partnership. Both councils have had to



make provision for additional costs such as the planning inspectorate fees, in their individual budgets. There will have been savings through the joint staff team and joint examination, but it is difficult to quantify, as we had additional costs due to the inspector asking for further work to be undertaken during the course of the examination, so could not have predicted exactly what the separate costs might have been.

A5 Gateshead Council

The "virtual" joint team resulted in limited additional costs other than for external specialist advice to support the evidence base preparation. The "virtual" team identified an agreed evidence base the gaps and how these gaps would be plugged either with external support or in house. The presumption was that these gaps in evidence base would be filled in house using the pooled resources and expertise. The "virtual" joint team identified a notional total cost which both authorities agreed to commit to. All costs were shared equally. The workstream leads took responsibility for procuring and managing external support from consultants using their authority's in house expertise e.g. Procurement, Finance and invoicing the other authority for the 50% share of the costs. The process did save money in sharing costs for necessary evidence base, albeit there was no doubt extra in officer time due the inevitable complexity of resolving competing needs and demands of two "clients" who may pulling in different directions. A clear saving was in the examination cost which was halved.

A5 Nottingham City Council

Growth Point funding was used for elements of work that were joint to all authorities, other costs were apportioned amongst participating Councils. There were significant cost savings through funding a single joint evidence base (Strategic Housing Market assessment, Employment Land study, etc). However, the preparation time was longer than might have been the case if each council had prepared a separate plan.

**Q6 Have you undertaken any post completion evaluation of the approach to assess its success (or degree of)? What did it tell you?**

A6 Broxtowe Borough Council

Winning the EMRTPI plan of the year was powerful validation of our efforts. I think our approach has been fairly exemplary. We are in the process of creating a legacy document, but in the scheme of things this work will not end - it will evolve to cater for the ever changing demands we have placed upon us.

A6 South Ribble Borough Council

Post completion analysis has not really been undertaken as to a degree the joint working continues. In 2011 some assessment of the project was undertaken as part of a submission to the RTPI Planning Awards, which resulted in an award being given in the Planning Process category.

A6 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

See attached note. The partner authorities remain committed to the joint working arrangements, although the precise nature of these will be kept under review to ensure that they continue to deliver required planning services in the most effective and efficient way.

A6 West Lindsey District Council

No, as the process has not yet been completed.

A6 Cheltenham Borough Council

The attached presentation makes some points about our learning and my planning colleagues will be able to expand on any of the points should you wish. To some extent our success criterion is simply whether we will have a plan which the inspector confirms as sound. If our plan is judged not to be sound then the entire project (including the joint working) may be at risk.

A6 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

It is important to undertake post adoption evaluation. The Black Country Core Strategy is still a robust document that conforms with the NPPF. We have also discovered that there are not just financial benefits to be gained from producing a joint document; there are major benefits for the staff too. Each local authority has slightly different expertise and levels of experience, so we were able to tap into that and learn from each other. Less experienced staff benefitted from doing more advanced work than they would otherwise and learned from experienced people in other authorities. The co-operation between the four local authorities has put the Black Country in a strong negotiating position with neighbouring authorities under the Duty to Co-operate.

## A6 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

There was an informal evaluation of the process which highlighted that the process was effective and flexible and that the process and governance arrangements and specifically the Joint Advisory Group were key to delivery of the plan on time. Evidence of its success is the continuation of joint working as set out below.

## A6 North Kesteven District Council

Not at this stage. On the current timetable, the Local Plan is scheduled for adoption by the end of 2016.

## A6 Daventry District Council

Our analysis reveals a mixed picture. There are benefits, the joint arrangement provides a real focus for plan making i.e. officers are not distracted by the day to day matters such as commenting on planning applications, giving evidence at inquiries and other corporate projects., so there is a real opportunity to progress a plan 'speedily'. However, the plan has involved the allocation of significant financial resources by the local authorities, and the plan making process has taken much longer than anticipated – and the down side of the positive point in the previous sentence – we only have the Core Strategy, not a myriad of policy documents. Part of the issue is being clear about who drives the programme (complicated by the fact that there is more than one authority involved).

## A6 West Dorset District Council

We have not yet completed the process so have not undertaken a final evaluation.

## A6 Gateshead Council

We are currently carrying out a post completion evaluation. Nevertheless the Inspector was clearly impressed with the degree of cooperation between Gateshead and Newcastle and the Duty to cooperate was the first issue addressed at the Examination in Public. This put the examination on a good footing to progress with the rest of the examination. The Planning Inspector found the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle provided an appropriate basis for the planning of the combined area. The Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan has now been adopted by both authorities. The Inspector also stated that the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan serves as a commendable example of joint working.

## A6 Nottingham City Council

Evaluation is ongoing, however, there is now a set of aligned Local Plans adopted across the Housing market based on consistent evidence.

**Q7 To what degree is planning policy done jointly and to what degree (if any) is it still done at a Local Authority Level?**

A7 Broxtowe Borough Council

All our planning policy officers are still employed by the individual authorities. However they have developed "lead specialisms" – so they decided between themselves who should lead on what, and so developed expertise and skill, which was then shared across the area. We felt members would get nervous about "losing" control of planning policy. I think it would be a good idea to create a central planning policy team-but in our case we have probably done this "virtually" – which worked as we did not get distracted by a formal reorganization.

A7 South Ribble Borough Council

The joint working arrangements between the authorities has continued in the preparation of a number of Supplementary Planning Documents and also in the preparation of the CIL Charging Schedule which was adopted in Sept 13. In terms of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPDs, each local authority has acted independently and prepared their own policy document but continued to work collaboratively on relevant issues. In particular work on gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople has been undertaken jointly with a new GTAA which will feed in to a joint Gypsy and Traveller DPD to be prepared over the next 12 months. The Joint LDF Officer Team was disbanded at the end of the 3 fixed term temporary posts. Outstanding work continued to be completed jointly by the individual authorities with a temporary secondment of a staff member to act as lead Officer.

A7 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

The Joint Core Strategy ("Part 1 Local Plan") and associated SPDs and evidence base are prepared through the JPU, working closely with the CPO Steering Group and Wider Team of policy officers.

The individual LPAs each maintain a policy team to feed into the joint work; to prepare the "Part 2" site-specific Local Plans and supporting SPDs; and to support local communities in producing Neighbourhood Plans. District colleagues will be able to provide more detail if required.

A7 West Lindsey District Council

The Joint Planning Unit is responsible for preparing the joint planning policy for central Lincolnshire. This is then approved/adopted by the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee which is made up of members from the constituent councils. However in order to ensure that the Joint Planning Unit is properly reflecting the perspective of each district there is input from officers working in the district's development management officers, housing policy staff, economic development staff, leisure policy staff etc. With the reduction in the size of the Joint Unit and the involvement of Peterborough this work at the district level, at least for

West Lindsey, has increased. We see this as essential as there is a need to ensure that this district gets the development in needs in the most appropriate locations.

A7 Cheltenham Borough Council

Planning policy at high level is done jointly across the JCS councils using the expertise of planning officers and other officers employed by the authority or by consultants. However each of the constituent councils will produce its own local plan with some of the more place-specific policies. We are alive to potential local plan conflicts cross-border on our urban extensions.

A7 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Post adoption of the Core Strategy other planning documents have been produced by individual local authorities. This is considered to be more appropriate as local sites, areas and issues specific to individual local authorities are addressed in these documents. However, we still have a continued commitment to joint working and are to commence the review of the Core Strategy in 2016. We also produce joint supplementary planning documents where appropriate. Most recently we have been working together to produce and deliver the Black Country Strategic Economic Plan and Local Growth Fund and the City Deal.

A7 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

The Local Authorities are currently working jointly on the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document and will continue to work together on implementation and review of the core strategy. An additional positive outcome has been the benefit to Duty to Cooperate discussions.

A7 North Kesteven District Council

Planning policy is prepared jointly by the Local Plans Team.

A7 Daventry District Council

The joint arrangements are responsible for producing the Core Strategy (now adopted) and its evidence base and the Annual Monitoring Report. Other matters e.g. the Part 2 local plans, SPDs etc remain with the local authority.

A7 West Dorset District Council

Planning policy work is done jointly as a result of the formation of the joint team.

A7 Gateshead Council

The joint working was for the preparation and adoption of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan. With the adoption of the document the

project has been completed. Nonetheless the "virtual" team and governance structure will continue to support each authority's respective Community Infrastructure Levy and Development Management and Land Allocation documents, which will be prepared separately. There are discussions around joint evidence, and sharing resources and knowledge to assist in these processes.

A7 Nottingham City Council

Strategic Planning is undertaken jointly via the JPAB, however each Council is responsible for development management policies and non-strategic site allocations via its Part 2 Local Plan.

**Q8 Has it helped or hindered you to achieve your organisation's objectives?**

A8 Broxtowe Borough Council

I will not lie and say it has been pain free! We were also lucky in that we were able to ride on the coat tails of the East Midlands regional spatial strategy which allocated housing numbers across our area – we took that division as our policy framework as it had a good evidence base behind it. We then kept updating the evidence base and did a fairly robust job in assessing our approach against housing hold growth projections – holding a workshop, positing options etc. We ended up holding to the original allocations, and this was found to be sound and justified. However it will be more difficult next time round when we have to arrive at our own numbers!!! Planning is a job that has to be done though. It causes sharp divides within authorities- in my balanced council building on green belt ( which we have had to do) is hugely contentious and divisive, so every step of the way has been fraught with political argument which has to be handled extremely carefully by officers ( and chief execs need to be fully on board with what's going on). Rushcliffe has had particular problems. When they jumped overboard it was because their members could not stomach the prospect of building thousands of houses in the green belt. However they then started to go it alone, and got as far as pre-examination and were told in no uncertain terms they would be found unsound, so had to come back on board. Decision making around election times is a nightmare! Getting everyone going at the same pace is also a nightmare. Patience is our watchword!

A8 South Ribble Borough Council

The JAC continues to meet quarterly but the Terms of Reference have been amended to reflect current circumstances. The most significant event has been the signing of the Preston and South Ribble City Deal, a project to facilitate the planned growth in Central Lancashire and secure 17,000 new homes and 20,000 new jobs by 2024. In effect the City Deal is providing a funding mechanism to provide the necessary infrastructure to accelerate the delivery of the residential and employment sites in the LD. I would suggest that the joint working on the LDF has been pivotal in achieving the Councils objectives. It has resulted in improved relationships between the authorities concerned, working towards shared goals, making the best use of limited resources. The joint working arrangements in place and the achievements made, have been an excellent precursor and demonstration of how the Central Lancashire authorities can deliver, which has more than likely influenced our success in achieving City Deal status.

A8 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

The production of a Joint Core Strategy has been important in delivering the corporate objectives of the partner authorities, providing a clear planning framework that has enabled North Northamptonshire to attract significant inward investment.

## A8 West Lindsey District Council

I think for West Lindsey District Council the jury is still out on this one. If the adopted plan is able to effectively direct development to the locations within the district where it will have the most beneficial impact (social, environmental and economic) then it will be deemed to have helped the council achieve its objectives. On the other hand if all it does is perpetuate some of the past (unsustainable) trends in development then it could well have hindered the things the district wants to achieve.

## A8 Cheltenham Borough Council

The high profile nature of the JCS and the experience of working across 3 councils has proved to be positive encouragement to all of the councils in taking forward related issues. Economic Development is an area where further collaboration is being discussed. I cannot immediately think of any area where it has hindered achievement of the councils' objectives.

## A8 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Joint working has definitely helped all four local authorities to achieve their objectives – continued growth and investment in the four Black Country boroughs.

## A8 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Not sure if there was an answer to this. Might be buried in the answers to the other questions.

## A8 North Kesteven District Council

The joint arrangements have helped the council to achieve its objectives.

## A8 Daventry District Council

Helped to some degree in that it has provided a larger than local perspective and it has addressed cross boundary issues (particularly the growth of Northampton), but it has taken much longer than we would have hoped.

## A8 West Dorset District Council

It has helped, rather than hindered, us to achieve both organisations' objectives: preparation of an up to date local plan was an important objective for both councils, and the joint plan will help the efficient working of the joint development management team.

## A8 Gateshead Council

The joint working has helped both authorities meet their objectives. The two authorities were already collaborating, and a joint Core Strategy was



a logical follow on. A co-ordinated policy between the authorities has led to a better planning outcome with an aligned delivery approach to strategic proposals and infrastructure. It was a process that addressed difficult decisions regarding where future development will go founded on a sound strategy and based on a robust evidence base.

A8 Nottingham City Council

It has assisted the achievement of each Council's objectives.

**Q9 How is your LEP involved, if at all?**

A9 Broxtowe Borough Council

Not really to be frank. However it would be a good idea to give them observer status. LEPs had not been invented when we started off!

A9 South Ribble Borough Council

The Lancashire LEP was set up in 2011, sometime after the joint working commenced and has had very little involvement in this process.

A9 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

Our joint arrangements were created significantly before the creation of LEPs and the position is complicated by the fact that some constituent councils are also part of South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP) as well as the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (NEP). The JPU works with both LEPs (through SEMLEP Planners Forum and NEP Housing and Infrastructure Strategy Boards) to influence/ secure input on plans and strategies and technical work.

A9 West Lindsey District Council

Not answered.

A9 Cheltenham Borough Council

The LEP have been invited to all of the CBPB meetings since the LEP's establishment. There have been separate meetings with the LEP to discuss particular issues around, for example, the quantum and location of employment land. Notwithstanding this the LEP have not really given much regard to the infrastructure needs of the strategic sites supporting the JCS in its Strategic Economic Plan and thus an opportunity for a clear read across from the JCS to the SEP in terms of investment priorities has been missed. Annoyingly they have also been reluctant to confirm unequivocally that we have met the Duty to Cooperate.

A9 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

The Black Country LEP was not involved with the production of the Core Strategy as they had not yet been created. However, it is anticipated that they will be involved in the 2016 review.

A9 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Early preparation for the Strategy and Examination in Public were prior to the formation of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The presence of a joint core strategy helped with the creation of a LEP for the Black Country. The LEP have been engaged at a high level in discussions about the review of the core strategy.

A9 North Kesteven District Council

Not answered

A9 Daventry District Council

It hasn't been involved to any degree. The LEP is now involved in looking at housing delivery matters.

A9 West Dorset District Council

The LEP has been developing during the time of the local plan preparation so was not particularly involved early on, though the objectives set in the SEP have been the basis for the economic priorities set out in the plan, and more recently we have worked closely with the LEP on key proposals such as town centre regeneration.

A9 Gateshead Council

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) was established in 2011. Its remit covered the local authority areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland. There was no direct involvement from NELEP in the preparation of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan

A9 Nottingham City Council

Given the timing of most of the evidence base and the publication of the Aligned Core Strategies, the LEP has not been closely involved. However, the LEP is an invited observer to the JPAB meetings, and has been invited to specific meetings where necessary.

**Q10 Are there any significant lessons learned? What would you do again and what would you do differently?**

A10 Broxtowe Borough Council

I think as officers (and members) we all feel this way of planning makes absolute sense. Far more sense than sticking to organization boundaries. We all learnt a lot from learning what the issues are in other areas, and there was a lot of good practice sharing which was healthy. We found that it made sense to talk about transportation cross boundaries as well and latterly used the JPAB to take about cross boundary transportation issues as well, which also need planning. CIL approaches should sensibly be co-ordinated across the HMA I feel – we didn't quite manage to achieve this. It was quite helpful not to have leaders representing authorities on the group – but the portfolio holders instead (sorry leaders!). This meant we had people who had good knowledge experience and interest but not such high profile or political vested interests. They developed some strong friendships and all got along well together (they all represented different political parties). Our representative said its the most rewarding thing he's done (and he's been a member a long time). Obviously if we were doing this starting now we'd design our arrangements to fit in with combined authorities (which we're having in our area).

A10 South Ribble Borough Council

In terms of lessons learnt, probably one of the main factors is the ability to staff the team and ensure continuity. The preparation of the Core Strategy took longer than anticipated, more than the 3 years. A contingency plan and risk assessment is important to be undertaken. As mentioned earlier Lancashire County Council hosted the joint team and also provided their IT support. When the Team was disbanded there have been issues of compatibility with the transfer of the data base, Joint team records and web site hosting. These have been resolved but in hindsight better planning could have made this transfer much smoother. One of the key factors to the success of the Core Strategy has been the role of the Joint Team and the Coordinator. This has been essential to maintain momentum and delivery.

A10 North Northamptonshire Planning Authority

The attached paper sets out what we have learnt on the benefits of joint working. I set out below a few additional thoughts if you are thinking of going down this route:

- The JPU was initially staffed mainly by part-time and relatively short-term secondees from the LPAs. This wasn't ideal for the staff involved (who were pulled in two directions) or for the management of the JPU work programme. A more stable 'core team' was therefore established.
- Good working relations between the Chief Planning Officers of the partner authorities has been vital in maintaining the JPU through some

difficult times. The CPO Steering Group originally met only when decisions were needed but this was difficult to manage and the group now meets on the first Thursday of each month.

- The Memorandum of Intent has been an important document in securing commitment from partners. This has been aided in the North Northamptonshire context by the partners being happy to keep it simple and for funding and risks etc to be shared equally by the four LPAs.
- It is important that the JCS is 'owned' not only by the JPC, but also by other elected members at the partner authorities (as it is part of their Local Plan). This was not fully achieved with the first JCS, resulting in difficulties with some subsequent plans and planning applications. With the review, greater effort has been made to keep elected members informed and the partner councils have put Leaders and/or other senior members on the JPC. The requirement in the Joint Committee Order relating to quorum effectively gives the partner councils a veto if they do not support an aspect of the JCS. This can be problematic in delaying decisions but has ensured that the Joint Committee's decisions are made by consensus.

A10 West Lindsey District Council

Not answered.

A10 Cheltenham Borough Council

Given the context of major changes in national planning law and guidance, high levels of controversy surrounding any spatial proposals and 3 councils wishing to retain the final say over any plan it is difficult to see what, fundamentally, we might have done differently. It is possible that some investment early on in the process in team building with key planning and programme officers could have been helpful. The LEP could have assisted more as described above and our County Council, whilst represented on the CBPB and the MSG has tended to be passive rather than to champion the JCS process (my impression is that the County Council wanted to distance itself from any of the political fall-out). Some of the things which contributed to progress are as follows:

- A good Programme Manager who was able to mediate between councils and individual planning officers to achieve consensus.
- The personal involvement of the 3 Chief Executives in the CBPB and (when necessary) in MSG.
- The involvement of Neil McDonald of the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research whose excellent advice got us to a conclusion on OAN.
- The appointment of an independent chair for MSG.

- When things were looking particularly difficult, arranging visits to the JCS area by DCLG officials and prominent former inspectors and also a visit to London by Leaders and Chief Executives to meet the then Planning Minister, Nick Boles.

A10 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

The key areas for success are: a clear vision; a clear mandate from chief officers; keeping structures, processes and documents simple and importantly, pragmatism and a willingness to compromise.

A10 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

The importance of good project management (with a clear project lead officer) and robust governance arrangements cannot be overstated. These need to be set out at an early stage. Political leadership and support is paramount.

A10 North Kesteven District Council

Not answered

A10 Daventry District Council

Be clear about the scope of the work of the arrangement from the outset. Be clear about who drives the work programme and how they are empowered by the partnership. Be clear about how the arrangement interacts with the partner authorities, and that the arrangement is delivering for the partner authorities.

A10 West Dorset District Council

We have not yet completed the plan and cannot therefore make final conclusions on the lessons learned. Preparing a joint plan has certainly reduced time taken in drafting, consultation and examination, compared with the same process for two individual plans. It also had major benefits for meeting the duty to cooperate, in particular because it enabled agreement between the two councils on issues relating to development around the boundaries of the two districts, and on the distribution of housing numbers between the two areas. One major risk is that if one council wishes to make significant changes following consultation and the other does not, the programme for both is affected. It is particularly important for a joint plan therefore that members understand that at publication stage, they should be committed to the plan and confident that sufficient consultation has taken place at the earlier stages, so as to minimise this risk. It also helped our process significantly that we had a fully joint team working together, and that we had carried out joint work previously on much of the evidence base.

A10 Gateshead Council

We are currently carrying out a post completion evaluation and it is

difficult at this stage to identify what would we do again and what we would do differently. However the following would be a pre requisite prior to joint working

- Agreement on the common difficulties and a shared vision and objectives for the future -our approach included the preparation of a Bridging Document to bring together each authorities Sustainable Community Strategies.
- Commitment to strong political and senior management to joint working.
- A culture of cooperation between authorities and officers.
- Assurance to abide by an effective governance and project management structure.
- An allocation of sufficient resources -officer and budget.
- A commitment to an evidence based approach and taking difficult decisions that may not be in the interests of anyone authority.
- A commitment to a joint clear consultation strategy with joint strong and succinct messages.

#### A10 Nottingham City Council

The funding available through the Growth Point initiative was invaluable, as it enabled the establishment of a dedicated team to manage the plan preparation process. The JPAB itself took time to bed down, but provided a forum for Member and officer debate. There have been disagreements concerning the distribution of housing across the area, but having an established body through which to conduct dialogue has enabled these difficulties to be resolved.