



West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held at the Guildhall on
Tuesday, 21 April 2009 at 6:00 pm.

D. Kennedy
Chief Executive

Contact: Frazer McGown, Democratic Services Manager
fmcgown@northampton.gov.uk or tel;01604 837101

Agenda

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2009
(copy attached)
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
 - Personal
 - Prejudicial
4. MATTERS OF URGENCY
To consider any issues that the Chairman is of the opinion are
Matters of Urgency.
5. WORKING DRAFT SPATIAL PORTRAIT, VISION AND
OBJECTIVES
(copy attached.)
6. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
(copy attached)
7. CONSULTATION STRATEGY
(copy attached)
8. RISK REGISTER UPDATE
(copy attached)
9. THE CHAIRMAN TO MOVE:

“THAT THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING ON THE GROUNDS THAT THERE IS LIKELY TO BE DISCLOSURE TO THEM OF SUCH CATEGORIES OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED BY SECTION 100(1) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS ARE LISTED AGAINST SUCH ITEM OR ITEMS OF BUSINESS BY REFERENCE TO THE APPROPRIATE PARAGRAPH OF SCHEDULE 12A TO SUCH ACT.”

Agenda Item 2

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 17 February 2009

PRESENT: Councillor Tony Woods (Chair); Councillor Chris Millar (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Wendy Amos, Sandra Barnes, Jim Bass, Robin Brown, Richard Church, Stephen Clarke, Keith Davies, Bernard Ingram, Ken Melling, Paul Varnsberry, and Andrew Wilby and Mr David Dickinson

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Jane Hollis, Ben Smith, Andre Gonzales de Savage and John Townsend.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2008

Subject to the inclusion of Councillor Keith Davies as an attendee, the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee were signed by the Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. MATTERS OF URGENCY

None.

5. AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPD

The Interim Head of the Joint Planning Unit submitted a report that set out a draft supplementary planning document on the provision of affordable housing in West Northamptonshire for public consultation. A supplementary planning document was intended to provide interim supplementary policy guidance based on the saved Local Plan Policies of the three districts of West Northamptonshire until the adoption of the Affordable Housing Development Plan document and Core Strategy. The Director of Planning and Regeneration noted that the references on page 18 in paragraphs 5.23 and 5.28 to “ten to fourteen dwellings” and “between four and fourteen units” needed to be removed and the wording amended accordingly.

David Dickinson commented that the reconciliation between this draft document and the WNDC document was very good. He noted that the Government was likely to introduce a number of new policies in the next few years. WNDC had included a statement in respect of planning obligations should the Government introduce new policies so that they were potentially encompassed by the document.

In answer to a question it was noted work had been undertaken in respect of the evidence base for a rural threshold starting at four dwellings.

Councillor Wendy Amos commented that the document needed to reflect the intermediate

situation, ie the economic downturn, as targets, for example for shared ownership now seemed questionable. The Director of Planning and Regeneration noted that cascade clauses would be needed in Section 106 Agreements to provide flexibility of provision having regard to viability.

It was also noted that a consultation programme would be undertaken and members would be advised of what would be involved through a briefing note.

The Chair observed that the draft document enshrined the district councils' existing policies in terms of 35% and 40% thresholds and that further consideration would need to be given as to what standard to adopt in the light of any up-dated housing needs evidence. This would be taken into account in any new development plan document.

RESOLVED: That the draft SPD on affordable housing be approved for public consultation for a six week period to commence as soon as possible.

6. RISK REGISTER

The Interim Head of the Joint Planning Unit submitted a report that set out the key risks to the work of the Committee at this time. In answer to a question it was noted that future reports would include all the then current risks and the covering report would draw attention to issues on an exception basis.

RESOLVED: That the risk register and the role of members in managing risk be noted.

7. CHARETTE

The Interim Head of the Joint Planning Unit commented that the term "charette" historically had been applied to architects' work and was used to describe an intensive period of considering a design solution within a tight timescale for a particular project. In the modern context the technique was used to brainstorm a problem on the basis that no single individual could know all the answers. It brought a wide range of people together. In this case attendees had come from each Council and the WNDP in the form of senior officers or specialist officers. The process had commenced on 20 January 2009 and was scheduled to end in the next two weeks. The results of the charette would be sent to members and thereafter used for engagement with all groups including landowners and developers.

The objective of the charette had been to gain a collective understanding of the process and to identify gaps in the knowledge or evidence base. Maps, discussion guides and feedback had been used and the results would contribute to the plan-making process in defining the planning role; the relationship with the region and sub-region; issues in respect of towns and villages; and infrastructure and transport. All the information gained would be written up and provided some answers but also raised further questions. Some discussion had taken place around strategic choices and givens, national policies in respect of key settlements, key directions of growth and rural areas.

In answer to a question from Councillor Chris Miller, the Interim Head of the Joint Planning Unit commented that the work of the charette fitted in to the planning timetable and the current timing was right with the document process. The current economic situation needed to be taken into account and flexibility needed to be built into the plan, which would have a life of twenty to thirty years. It was clear that new build was not proceeding at the rate originally anticipated.

The Director of Planning and Regeneration noted that the charette would help convince any

planning inspector that a robust process had been gone through. He also noted that whilst targets would not change, over time, the trajectory of delivery would alter to take account of the economic situation. During March or April work on the Vision, Objectives and Spatial Portrait would be brought to the Joint Committee and following in April and May would be the start of a debate for the growth around Northampton, Daventry, Towcester and Brackley. Agreed options would then be included in the preferred submission, probably in November 2009. Any delays would be reflected in the risk register, reported separately to the Joint Committee. In answer to a question the Director noted that a briefing note would be produced for Councillors for discussion within their authorities in respect of preferred options to allow advance warning of what was being discussed.

Councillor Richard Church noted that the process should not deliver merely a package of preferred options to Councillors but should lead members towards those options, ie members needed involvement in the criteria for urban extensions rather than just receiving a list of where they could be. It was noted that this was inherently part of the process.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

8. PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT

The Interim Head of the Joint Planning Unit submitted a report that set out progress on the approved Local Development Scheme Programme and evidence based work streams to date and elaborated thereon.

In respect of the Northampton Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study in paragraph 1.14, the study would be published by the end of March. It was clarified that in the report to the previous meeting it had been stated that that the study would be completed by mid December 2008; this had been a reference to the completion of the first draft. This had been completed on time.

In respect of the Towcester and Brackley Landscape and Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Studies in paragraph 1.14, the study would be published by the end of April. It was clarified that in the report to the previous meeting it had been stated that that the study would be completed by mid December 2008; this had been a reference to the completion of the first draft of the report. This had been completed on time.

In respect of the West Northamptonshire Sports Facility Strategy in paragraph 1.15, it was noted that Sport England's concerns had been of a technical nature. It was now anticipated that the study would be completed by the end of April. Although later than anticipated this had no impact on the approved LDS milestones.

In respect of Pursuit of Evidence of Service Needs workstream in paragraph 1.16, it was noted that discussions had commenced with a variety of service providers including education and the PCT.

In respect of West Northamptonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in paragraph 1.18, it was noted that the Level 1 report would be issued by the end of February. The procurement process for the Level 2 report for Northampton was now underway. The Level 2 reports for Daventry and South Northamptonshire had been sent to the Environment Agency for checking. In the report to the previous meeting it had been stated that the Level 1 report would be finalised in December 2008. This timescale had not been met as a result of delays in receiving comments from the Environment Agency.

In respect of the West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, in paragraph 1.25 it was clarified that at the previous meeting some additional viability

assessment may be required and which might need to be commissioned early in 2009. This work would be needed for the Joint Core Strategy. This work was not required for the Affordable Housing SPD as this document provided interim supplementary policy guidance based on the Saved Adopted Local Plan Policies. The scope of the viability assessment work was being considered.

In answer to a question, the Interim Head of the Joint Planning Unit noted that discussions with utilities were underway in association with WNDC. This would feed into an infrastructure plan that would include costings and planning steps. Councillor Sandra Barnes noted particular problems at Silverstone in respect of utilities provision and noted that some villages throughout South Northamptonshire and Daventry were not on mains sewerage. David Dickinson requested that the Brown- field Land Assessment also be included in the evidence base.

The Chair enquired whether this information could be made available to members via an online library and it was noted that the JPU website was being reviewed with a view to making many of the documents referred to available.

RESOLVED: That the progress on the approved Local Development Scheme milestones and the evidence based work streams be noted.

9. REVIEW OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING; PROPOSED CHANGES

The Director of Planning and Regeneration submitted a report that set out a review of the Memorandum of Intent in the light of progress experienced and recent decisions of the Joint Strategic Planning Committee so as to bring it up to date. He drew particular attention to paragraphs 3.1, 3.3 and 3.5. It was noted that the Director of Planning and Regeneration at Northampton Borough Council would be the line manager for the Head of the Joint Planning Unit. It was also noted that a financial protocol was currently being drafted.

RESOLVED: (1) That the proposed changes to the Memorandum of Intent as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be recommended to the constituent local authorities for formal approval.

- (2) That the Joint Planning Committee delegate to the Director of Planning and Regeneration at Northampton Borough Council in consultation with the Monitoring Officers of the constituent local authorities any necessary authority to make further and consequential future changes to the Memorandum of Intent prior to recommending those changes to the constituent authorities for formal adoption.

The meeting concluded at 19.05 hours.

Item No: 5
Date: 21 April 2009

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy – Working Spatial Portrait, Vision and Objectives
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REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF THE JOINT PLANNING UNIT

Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to use the spatial portrait , vision and objectives for inclusion in the Joint Core Strategy up to the production of the emergent strategy at which point these will require revision.

Recommendation

- 1.2 That the Joint Strategic Planning Committee agrees the working spatial portrait, vision and objectives.

Details

- 1.3 The Committee will recall that the members of the Joint Strategic Planning Committee took part in a workshop to consider the vision, objectives and principles for the Joint Core Strategy on 20th January 2009. Since that meeting work has been progressing on these fundamental elements of the Joint Core Strategy. The officer charette has influenced the revision in addition to the member workshop.
- 1.4 A revised version of the spatial portrait is attached at Appendix 1 whilst the vision and objectives are attached as Appendix 2. These remain working versions but agreement on them is sought to enable officers to move forward to the emergent strategy stage. They are likely to be subject to further revisions which will be brought back to members as they agree the emergent strategy for consultation purposes. It will be necessary to rationalise the number of objectives. However, for clarity at this stage on the number of matters addressed - the list is lengthy.

- 1.5 This material must be seen within the context of the Regional Plan and MKSM spatial strategies. As the strategy develops and becomes more precise so will the vision and objectives increase in precision for example to include the key infrastructure projects needed to deliver the vision. Therefore the version for the emergent strategy will be more specific to place indicating the areas to be regenerated, the directions of growth, and key villages if the selection of key villages is a policy choice made.

Implications

- 1.5 The spatial portrait, vision and objectives will be fundamental elements of the Joint Core Strategy that will determine the plan's effectiveness and legibility.

Appendix 2

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy – Emergent Spatial Vision

The spatial aspirations for the area have been combined into a single spatial vision for West Northamptonshire as follows:

West Northamptonshire in 2026 is an outstanding UK location of choice for diverse employment opportunities, with high academic and vocational educational attainment, high quality affordable housing and a superb quality of life. It blends the best of modern cultural urban living, enhanced by a network of green spaces together with high quality parks and gardens, with beautiful and tranquil villages and rolling landscapes. Its connections to other parts of the UK and beyond are a great strength and it is a national example of low environmental impact development in response to climate change.

Growth focused on and joined to the main urban areas has fostered a successful economy and expanding diverse and sustainable communities, supported by good social and integrated transport facilities and infrastructure.

Change is embraced. Northampton has a reputation as a great riverside City providing the focus and heart for its surrounding communities: well integrated and linked with its reinvigorated sister towns of Daventry, Towcester and Brackley. The four provide the urban centres to a wider, attractive rural scene.

Northampton City is the key economic driver at the cultural heart of the area fulfilling its role as the leading retail, entertainment, employment, health and learning centre based upon a thriving mixed economy and proud of its theatres, museums and professional sports teams and where all communities have access to opportunity.

Daventry is an invigorated historic centre with jobs at the cutting edge of environmental technologies and sustainable building methods, offering attractive retail and leisure opportunities and a sound commercial core.

Towcester is a successful, integrated and distinctive historic market town that serves the needs of its rural catchment area with a diverse economy, centred on a high technology business sector, and a vital town centre that supports the needs of its population and its rural hinterland.

Brackley is a vibrant, distinctive historic market town that is the major service provider for the residents of the town and the surrounding countryside. It provides knowledge based, research and high technology based jobs and leisure facilities as well as an invigorated town centre offering a range of retail opportunities.

All our towns have vital and vibrant centres, complementing their built heritage, with attractive retail facilities, a high standard of public realm, public transport priority and provide real alternatives to other surrounding towns. Their green networks are exemplary.

Our rural areas are places of beauty within an enhanced and diversified countryside containing a network of vibrant rural communities, strong in character, with good access to employment opportunities. Our villages are a focal point for local people to access affordable housing, facilities and services.

Our residents have easy access to a wide range of opportunities to fulfill their potential and contribution to the places and communities in which they live. Business is able to thrive with low environmental impact.

1. To deliver a high quality of life for everyone who lives, works and visits West Northamptonshire by regenerating, building and creating sustainable neighbourhoods and commercial centres, bringing opportunities to existing and new residents, visitors, businesses and investors.
2. To identify the strategic locations for growth to 2026 and deliver planned growth that adjoins Northampton, Daventry, Towcester and Brackley, that will benefit existing communities, and deliver regeneration. The regeneration and growth will be based upon the principles of sustainable development to create self sufficient communities and distinctive places for communities in line with the Milton Keynes and South Midland Sub Regional Strategy. These places to be nestled within a linked network of open spaces, providing for people, flora and fauna.
3. To show consideration for the Northamptonshire countryside beyond the growth areas and provide for its appropriate protection and enhancement.
4. To reduce the carbon footprint of West Northamptonshire and deliver development that has as small an impact on the environment (e.g. water usage and carbon emissions) as possible, hand in hand with the infrastructure to support it and to minimise the use of energy and encourage the development of renewable energy sources.
5. To build healthy sustainable rural communities by ensuring local development needs are met whilst enhancing the character and appearance of villages.
6. To support and encourage employment in rural areas, ensure that tourism is strengthened, agriculture and the rest of the rural economy is supported and changes within the rural economy are actively managed
7. To strengthen and diversify the economic base of West Northamptonshire, capitalising on its assets and location, and specifically facilitate opportunities for knowledge based industries (1) environmental technologies and creative industries (2) by enhancing the role of Northampton University, Moulton College and Northampton College.
8. To strengthen the role of Northampton as a major cultural and economic centre, and regenerate the centre and the neighbourhoods of Spring Boroughs, Spencer, Kings Heath, Eastfield, Briar Hill, Camp Hill, St Davids and Northampton East.
9. To enhance the role of Daventry, regenerating the centre and the neighbourhood of Southbrook.
10. To strengthen the roles of Towcester and Brackley to serve rural catchments by regenerating their centres.

11. To provide quality housing that meets the current and future needs of all sectors of the community and delivers balanced and mixed communities.
12. To direct retail development to the most appropriate locations that support regeneration of the town centres.
13. To capitalise on the accessibility of the area to other parts of the UK in its economic development priorities and the development of networks.
14. To improve the links between jobs and people through improved transport systems and services.
15. To deliver a green network in West Northamptonshire that supports the health and well being of urban and rural communities as well as maintaining eco systems and increasing biodiversity, providing for usable open spaces and a range of attractive open environments.
16. To reduce the need to travel by private vehicle by delivering an integrated public transport system, achieve high levels of usage and design places to encourage this high level of usage.
17. To achieve high quality design that takes account of local character and distinctiveness and embraces sustainable construction methods and energy efficiency.
18. To ensure that social, community, transport and green infrastructure is delivered in step with all planned development to the highest environmental design standards to meet the needs of both people and businesses whilst addressing climate change.

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy – Working
Spatial Portrait

REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF THE JOINT PLANNING UNIT

West Northamptonshire Spatial Portrait

Summary

1.1 West Northamptonshire is an area set to receive a significant amount of growth with 62,125 homes and 37,200 jobs between 2001 and 2026. It requires considerable investment in transport, utilities, health and other social infrastructure to support this growth and ensure vital towns and rural areas. The people of the towns and villages that make up West Northamptonshire come from diverse social groupings and bring a wide range of skills and qualities to the areas economy and social life. The area has:

- Excellent connectivity to the rest of the country and mainland Europe, particularly by road contrasting with increasing congestion.
- Attractive rural rolling landscape typified by mixed agricultural use, woodland and country houses together with many rivers, lakes, reservoirs and canals.
- A strong defined existing settlement pattern with Northampton as the primary town, market towns and villages.
- A broad based and diversified pattern of employment with high economic activity rates.
- High house prices in the majority of the area and limited access to affordable housing
- Areas of high incomes and wealth contrasting with areas of significant deprivation particularly in Northampton and Daventry.
- Wide ranging cultural and sporting assets.

Location

1.2 West Northamptonshire is in the western sector of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-region. It is located in southern central England at the crossroads of the East and West Midlands and the South East regions.

- 1.3 West Northamptonshire covers a large geographical area made up of a diverse range of places including remote hamlets in sparsely populated areas, the historic market towns of Brackley and Towcester, the growing town of Daventry and the large, densely populated town of Northampton. Settlements in West Northamptonshire are influenced by and in turn influence many surrounding urban areas including Milton Keynes, Leicester, Banbury, Oxford, Bedford, Rugby, Wellingborough and Kettering.
- 1.4 Historically, West Northamptonshire's location has been both its strength and its weakness.
- 1.5 Both the Grand Union and Oxford Canals run north-south through West Northamptonshire. They provided important trade routes between London and the South, the Midlands and Northern England, and established a transport infrastructure pattern that remains today with both road and rail links through West Northamptonshire being predominantly north-south focused.
- 1.6 West Northamptonshire has strong north-south road links being on the spine of the M1, M6, M40, A5 and A43 but limited east-west road links with only the A45 and A14 although both of these roads provide important connections to the East of England including Peterborough and Cambridge and longer distance links to the Haven Ports and ultimately to Northern Europe and beyond.
- 1.7 Rail links are similarly north-south focused with rail passenger services available at Northampton Castle Station and Long Buckby rail stations on the Loop Line of the West Coast Main Line and at Kings Sutton rail station on the Chiltern Line. There are no east-west rail connections serving West Northamptonshire.
- 1.8 Due to this strategic location West Northamptonshire has historically experienced significant in-migration, particularly from London and Birmingham. Much of this in-migration was a result of Northampton and Daventry's planned town expansions in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.
- 1.9 Furthermore, as a result of these strong links, West Northamptonshire has benefited economically from the major centres of commerce and learning at London, Birmingham, Oxford and Cambridge.

The People

- 1.10 The combined population of West Northamptonshire in 2007 was 372,200 - accounting for around 8% of the total population of the East Midlands region. This is expected to grow by around 92,000 by 2026.
- 1.11 West Northamptonshire area currently has an above average youth population and a below average older population. Daventry and South Northamptonshire Districts have the highest proportion of school age population in the East Midlands. In the future it is expected that the area's growth will be characterised by increasing numbers of families with children and an ageing population, the latter reflecting national trends. The area's growth will be strongly led by in-migration from other parts of the country but also by significant local population growth with increasingly more births than deaths.

- 1.12 The percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic populations are significantly higher in Northampton in comparison to Daventry, South Northamptonshire and the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-region and East Midlands region as a whole.

The Towns and Villages

- 1.13 The settlement pattern is one of the principal town of Northampton in the eastern quarter of West Northamptonshire with the market towns of Daventry and Towcester roughly equidistant to the west and south west respectively. Brackley lies to the south of Towcester in the south west of West Northamptonshire. The rural nature of the area and dispersed network of almost 190 villages and hamlets provides the context for this settlement pattern.
- 1.14 Northampton's current physical form clearly reflects its significant size as an urban area with a current population of over 202,000 people (Office of National Statistics 2007 mid year estimate). Northampton has at its heart the town centre. In addition to the town centre, it has two existing significant district centres to the north and the east, at Kingsthorpe and Weston Favell respectively. There is also Mereway to the south west that provides a limited district centre role. Throughout the town there are a range of local centres that serve established neighbourhoods and communities. These neighbourhoods vary greatly in character reflecting the different phases and nature of Northampton's growth in the past. Some of the town's neighbourhoods are likely to experience sizeable and rapid change over the next 20-25 years as large-scale development takes place near or within them, whilst a lot of other neighbourhoods are likely to change more slowly and gradually.
- 1.15 Northampton serves as the area's employment, retail and cultural centre. Currently Northampton's town centre is experiencing significant retail competition from both out of town retail parks within Northampton itself, such as Riverside, St James and Sixfields, and from nearby centres such as Milton Keynes. In addition, in recent years economic activity has been dispersing to other parts of Northampton and away from the town centre. The town centre's revitalisation will be pivotal in providing the economic drivers for the wider region.
- 1.16 Daventry is a market town with a population of around 25,000. It is well related to the strategic road network. The town centre is currently underperforming due in part to strong competition from nearby towns, particularly Rugby and Market Harborough, and a lack of investment. The centre of Daventry is based around the historic Sheaf Street and High Street. The town experienced significant expansion in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of its designation as an overspill town for Birmingham and London although the level and speed of growth did not live up to expectations. The town is now set to experience a second phase of major expansion.
- 1.17 Towcester is the oldest town in Northamptonshire with a current population of about 10,000. The town has experienced significant housing expansion in recent years but without corresponding growth in jobs and infrastructure. Towcester has good road links with the A43 to the north and west forming a strong physical boundary to the town and the A5 running north- south through the town centre. These road links have had two consequences – high levels of out-commuting from Towcester and poor air quality within the town centre itself. To the east of

the town are the nationally protected Easton Neston Historic Park and Garden and Towcester Racecourse.

- 1.18 Brackley is also an historic market town. It has a population of about 14,000 and has also experienced extensive housing expansion over the last twenty years without the corresponding growth in jobs and infrastructure. Although Brackley does have greater employment opportunities than Towcester, there has been a demonstrable decline in the number of retail outlets in the town, and a rise in private car usage. Residents are now increasingly travelling to the neighbouring larger towns of Banbury, Oxford and Milton Keynes.
- 1.19 The social character and make-up of West Northamptonshire's villages has changed considerably over the last twenty to thirty years, whilst conservation has retained the core built character of many villages. Many traditional rural jobs have disappeared and residents are increasingly commuting long distances to urban areas for work. House prices have risen dramatically in the last ten years, which has meant that many village properties are now unaffordable for local people and remain so, even in the current economic recession. The overall appearance of wealth masks pockets of rural deprivation. The villages fall into distinct groupings where some have a wide range of services and facilities, in many villages the choice of services and facilities is limited, and some have no facilities at all.

The Economy

- 1.20 West Northamptonshire has a relatively healthy economic and employment base with above average labour market participation, both in terms of economic activity and actual employment rates. The rural areas of the sub region have a high proportion of working people, around 64% of the population and support an agricultural economy in addition to many small businesses. The greatest proportion of employment is seen in property and business services and public administration, education and health in Northampton and South Northamptonshire and in distribution in Daventry. The impacts of the recent recession are currently coming to light and true implications to be assessed in future.
- 1.21 Northampton's boot and shoe industry provided a strong economic base for the area for hundreds of years. Daventry and South Northamptonshire have historically relied heavily on the agricultural economy. These economies have effectively transformed from these agrarian and industrial trades to service and logistics based economies. However, agriculture remains an important sector for the rural areas and the leather industry still serves a wide, indeed international, market in boots, shoes and sporting goods.
- 1.22 Northampton has in recent years primarily been a centre for manufacturing and distribution but it increasingly fulfils an important role as a sub-regional office centre with a strong financial and business services sector that includes the headquarters offices of Barclaycard and Nationwide Building Society. This is supported by a strong public sector presence in the town that includes not only offices but other public services such as Northampton General Hospital. A research and development industry has also developed in Towcester centred around Silverstone Circuit. Daventry's economy has also diversified and now includes significant job numbers in manufacturing, retailing and distribution.

Indeed 8% of the jobs in Northamptonshire are in the distribution sector. The Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal rail port facility is of European, national and regional importance in the distribution of goods to markets.

- 1.23 As well as currently providing the home for the British Grand Prix, Silverstone Circuit accommodates a centre of excellence for motorsport, employment, testing, research, development and technology uses. The development of the Advanced Technology Park in the last four years has established Silverstone as a venue for technological research, with many high profile companies moving to the area to benefit from the excellent infrastructure facilities, the image and brand of the famous motorsport circuit. This part of West Northamptonshire itself is part of 'Motorsport Valley' which forms an internationally significant concentration of high performance engineering companies together with associated design engineering, research and development and related services.
- 1.24 Across West Northamptonshire employment in manufacturing ranges from 15-17% of the total in employment, distribution hotels and restaurants 17-18.7% and banking, finance and insurance 12-18%. Public administration, education and health employ 23.5-26%.
- 1.25 Economic activity is above regional and national benchmarks across West Northamptonshire and historically unemployment has been low creating conditions of almost full employment. South Northamptonshire and Daventry have an occupational structure biased towards higher paid work. The average earnings at 2006 showed Daventry as well above the national average, and South Northamptonshire at just above. However, South Northamptonshire has the highest disparity in the East Midlands between residence based and workplace based earnings with those living in the district earning significantly more than those working there (around £7,000). Northampton's occupational structure is more similar to the national profile and average earnings sit below the national average. However, there is potential to diversify the area's employment and local skills base in order to compete better on a national and international level now and in the future.
- 1.26 Daventry and South Northamptonshire both have a strong skills base and more than one third of the working population possess at least a first degree. However, Northampton has below average educational attainment (20% of working age people with no qualifications compared to 11.2% in South Northants and 11.6% in Daventry) (Dec 2007) and a poor skills profile that could act as a disincentive to investment decisions by householders and businesses in the area. In addition, retention rates in education post-16 are below average in Northampton and Daventry, which need to be improved to develop a more successful knowledge based local economy. The choice of higher and further education institutions within West Northamptonshire is growing. The University of Northampton, Moulton College and Northampton College offer a variety of courses, degrees and diplomas in a wide and varied subject range
- 1.27 The economic activity rates are high at 83-85%, Self-employment rates in Daventry and South Northamptonshire are well above the regional average at 10.8% and 14.3% respectively compared to 9% regionally, Northampton is just below the regional average at 8.6%. The proportions seeking work are low at 2.8 – 3% of the economically active population. (April – March 2008)

Housing

- 1.28 Above average owner occupation rates exist in Daventry and South Northamptonshire with a larger social rented sector in Northampton. Private renting is below the national average across West Northamptonshire. Up to date figures are being sought for the proportions of the dwelling stock that is unfit and the proportion of the public sector's stock that does not meet the decent homes standard. Some of the rural areas are the most expensive places to live in the area. Many settlements have few or no affordable homes and where there is existing stock, turnover is low. Consequently local young people cannot afford to stay in villages leading to an ageing population. In addition some villages act as dormitory settlements.
- 1.29 Despite recent falls, and benchmarking with other UK areas demonstrating a better affordability profile than many parts of the UK, average house prices in West Northamptonshire remain so high that there continues to be a need to ensure access to affordable housing in the area. Access to affordable housing is particularly limited in the rural areas but it is also an issue for much of Northampton. Young people, retirees, families, singles, and 'Key Workers' are a few of the groups who have been most affected by rising house prices and continue to find it difficult to access affordable housing.
- 1.30 The area contains strong social contrasts with all of the South Northamptonshire district falling within the 80% least deprived parts of the UK. Similarly, much of Daventry district falls within the 60% least deprived areas in the country with the exception of a small pocket of deprivation in Daventry town. Northampton Borough as a significantly urban area in contrast contains significant pockets of deprivation in the central and eastern area and this is particularly a function of income, education, health and crime. There are 16 neighbourhoods in Northampton identified as in the most deprived 20% in the country. There are a number of social and economic issues facing these neighbourhoods. Northampton is ranked in the most income deprived and employment deprived quartile of local authorities in England.

Health

- 1.31 Across West Northamptonshire most indicators of ill health suggest below average levels of illness particularly in Daventry. Levels of teenage conception are above average in Northampton and significantly lower in Daventry and South Northamptonshire. In Northampton much higher levels of schizophrenia health episodes are experienced than nationally. Life expectancy is above average in Daventry and South Northamptonshire and around the national average in Northampton.
- 1.32 In Daventry and South Northamptonshire there is a high proportion of the working population aged between 45 and 64, which means the population of pension age is set to double in these districts by 2028.

Culture, Leisure and Arts

- 1.33 Sport, leisure and recreation are important aspects of life in West Northamptonshire contributing to the tourism economy as well as the overall health and well being of the population. Northampton is home to a range of high

quality professional sports clubs including league Rugby Union, league Football and county Cricket, as well as amateur formal sports and informal recreation. Northampton's extensive network of parks and open spaces provides an important resource for both its residents and visitors. A range of indoor sports and leisure facilities including the Royal and Derngate Theatres, the Roadmender music and arts venue, the Fish Market gallery and Northampton Art Gallery and Museum complement these assets. However, current open space provision for children and young people is insufficient with respect to play space and outdoor sports provision in parts of West Northamptonshire.

- 1.34 Within South Northamptonshire, Silverstone motor racing circuit and Towcester Racecourse are premier sports facilities. The importance of high profile sporting events has the potential to draw people to the West Northamptonshire for such events and to relocate to the area. West Northamptonshire is home to main and branch lines of the 137 miles long Grand Union Canal that links Birmingham and London. In West Northamptonshire, the canal runs through picturesque villages and countryside as well as near to the centres of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester providing an under-utilised amenity and heritage asset unique to this area.
- 1.35 There are also many historic houses and parks and gardens, many of which are open to the public, throughout the area in both rural and urban settings, which add to the attractiveness and heritage of West Northamptonshire. West Northamptonshire's tourism potential is not yet fully realised but it does have the assets to make the area a successful leisure and recreational centre, something which is becoming increasingly important to residents and businesses.

Travel

- 1.36 West Northamptonshire is well served by motorways and the strategic road network. The M1 motorway as it runs north – south through the region and the M40 runs on the western boundary. The A14 is a vital East – West route linking the Haven Ports to the rest of the national road network. Both road and rail links are very strong between London, Milton Keynes and Birmingham whilst the east-west road and rail links are weaker with the exception of the A14. On a more local level, there are strong commuting patterns between: Northampton and Daventry, Wellingborough and Milton Keynes; between Daventry and Rugby and Northampton; between Towcester and Milton Keynes, Northampton and Oxford; and between Brackley and Banbury, Milton Keynes and Oxford. In short, the commuting and leisure trip patterns in the area are complex and often draw people out of their local area for services and employment.
- 1.37 Congestion is a central issues within West Northamptonshire. Railways are at capacity due to heavy use by both passengers and freight services, as are the A45 and M1 at peak hours. These routes will be further constrained by increased usage and demand that will accompany growth. Bus networks in West Northamptonshire are strongest within and between the towns. Public transport connections between rural and urban areas are generally limited increasing reliance on private vehicles; however there are reasonable inter-urban services.
- 1.38 Historically, car traffic in Northamptonshire has grown much faster than the national rate. The capacity of the road network to absorb additional traffic is limited. The growth proposed in the Sub-Regional Strategy is likely to lead to

traffic growth rates of up to 50% in the period to 2021. This can only be sustainably accommodated if there is a substantial modal shift away from travel by the private car. The use of alternative means of transport is low across west Northamptonshire. Whilst, this is in part due to the predominantly rural nature, even the main towns of Northampton has lower levels of bus patronage, walking or cycling than towns of a similar size.

- 1.39 Passenger rail services operate from three rail stations located within West Northamptonshire: Northampton, Long Buckby and Kings Sutton. Both Northampton and Long Buckby are located on a “loop line” which is part of the West Coast Mainline. However, this limits capacity and speed of services, both to London and to the Midlands and ultimately the North West of England. Kings Sutton offers direct services to Oxford, Banbury, Stratford-upon-Avon and London Marylebone from Kings Sutton Station. This pattern of rail infrastructure means that the only town in West Northamptonshire with a rail station is Northampton. This station is located in the centre of Northampton close to the central retail and commercial heart of the town. This means that the station is not easily accessible by surrounding communities, who often travel to other surrounding towns such as Wellingborough or Milton Keynes to access rail services.
- 1.40 Daventry town is served by Long Buckby and Rugby rail stations whilst the majority of Towcester residents travel to Milton Keynes by car to access rail services, and Brackley residents travel to Kings Sutton, Banbury or Bicester to access the rail network.
- 1.41 The principal settlements within West Northamptonshire have quite distinct commuting patterns. From Northampton, the M1 is easily accessible and, despite congestion, offers a quick route into Milton Keynes and London to the south and Coventry and Birmingham to the north. Out commuting to Milton Keynes and London is greatest from the south –eastern part of Northampton. Across West Northamptonshire as a whole out commuting is mainly drawn to the larger cities of Birmingham, Leicester and London.
- 1.42 Commuting patterns between all of the rural and urban centres and to London are complex. The largely rural districts of Daventry and South Northamptonshire contain higher than the regional proportions of people working largely from or at home. (11.8% compared to 9% regionally). The majority of people in West Northamptonshire work within their districts of residence. The percentage of residents that work outside Northamptonshire rises from 8.9% in Daventry District, through 10.8% for Northampton Borough to 32% for South Northamptonshire. The proportions of journey to work movements taken by public transport are low at around 6% for journeys between areas in West Northamptonshire.
- 1.43 The rural areas contain some communities that are relatively remote and have poor bus services.
- 1.44 There are several airports in the vicinity of the area including Coventry, London Luton, East Midlands, and Birmingham International. All of these airports are easily accessed by good motorway links and are within 50 miles of Northampton.

Birmingham International is the only airport with direct rail access from Northampton.

The Environment

- 1.45 Much of West Northamptonshire is characterised by a landscape of rolling hills dotted with picturesque villages and hamlets but the landscape character of West Northamptonshire is varied, reflecting the pattern of the underlying geology and effects of geomorphological processes. The highest parts of the county are located within the western perimeter of West Northamptonshire. The ridgeline following the crest of these hills defines the watershed separating the catchments of tributaries of the Severn and Thames rivers to the west, and the Nene and Welland rivers to the east, which drain into The Wash. This distinctive tract of elevated and rolling rural landscape forms the West Northamptonshire Uplands. The east of the area is characterised predominantly by the wide floodplains of the Nene Valley. This rich, fertile land provided by the river has influenced the rural characteristics of much of this area and historically ensured the prosperity of Northampton. The River Nene runs through the centre of Northampton. It has been central to the development of Northampton and is both an important natural asset and a contributor to flood risk.
- 1.46 West Northamptonshire comprises a range of settlements each with specific characteristics. Much of the area can be described as rural, and the built up areas, with the exception of Northampton, are developed at a relatively low density. The natural environment heavily influences the character. The area has 27 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and one National Nature Reserve. In each of the towns, listed buildings are almost exclusively confined to the town centres where much of the early development originated. The area in and around Northampton has a rich variety of natural and built environmental assets. It has an abundance of parkland and open spaces of recreational and biodiversity value, important areas of woodland and landscape, sites of historical importance – all of which are a major contributor to people’s good quality of life.
- 1.47 An extensive canal network forms an important component of the inland waterways, notably the Grand Union Canal from Cosgrove, in the southeastern part of West Northamptonshire, to Crick in the northwestern part, and beyond into neighbouring counties linking London to Birmingham. Flights of locks, tunnels, mooring sites and marinas are located along its length, for example the Whilton and Long Buckby Locks.
- 1.48 A number of reservoirs are located in the north and east of West Northamptonshire, providing important water habitat resources. The largest is Pitsford Reservoir, located between the villages of Pitsford and Brixworth, but other notable reservoirs are located at Ravensthorpe, Hollowell, Drayton and Daventry.
- 1.49 The numerous water filled gravel pits along the Nene Valley are notable hydrological features, and valued for their amenity and nature conservation interests and part of these gravel pits are being designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, due to their importance for migratory birds. These lakes are a dominant feature and influence the valley’s character.

The Carbon Footprint/ Climate Change

1.50 *Further information is to be gathered.*

Infrastructure Needs

1.51 The capacity of current infrastructure in West Northamptonshire requires further increases to accommodate the planned growth. There is a need to provide significant investment in transport, utilities (including trunk sewer improvements and increasing the capacity of water treatment facilities), health and emergency services together with other social infrastructure such as cultural, community, children’s play space, and library facilities to keep pace with the planned growth.

Item No: 6
Date: 21 April 2009

**WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Programme Monitoring Report

REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF THE JOINT PLANNING UNIT

Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the progress on the approved Local Development Scheme programme and the evidence base workstreams to date. Appendix 1 contains key milestones and meetings of this committee and its sub group whilst Appendix 2 outlines the rest of this report in simple chart form.

West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme Milestones

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

- 1.2 The next milestone for the Joint Core Strategy in the approved Local Development Scheme is the publication of the Joint Core Strategy in November 2009. This is also known as the pre-submission stage. The Joint Core Strategy preparation is on target to meet the next milestone.
- 1.3 The Regulation 25 consultation letters were posted out in early January to everyone on the Joint Planning Unit's consultation database (over 2,300 individuals and organisations). Details of the consultation were also available on the Joint Planning Unit's website. This part of the Regulation 25 consultation closed on the 5th March 2009. 52 responses were received in total relating to a range of different topic areas including Infrastructure, Employment and Economy.
- 1.4 Work is continuing on the spatial vision and objectives. The preferred strategy is being drafted during April and May together with synthesis of the alternatives explored at the officer charette in January and February. The preferred strategy document will include the options that are not favoured.

West Northamptonshire Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

- 1.5 The Affordable Housing SPD will provide interim supplementary policy guidance until the Joint Core Strategy and the West Northamptonshire

Development Contributions and Affordable Housing DPD come into effect. The SPD will be based on the Saved Adopted Local Plan policies.

- 1.6 The deadline for comments on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was the 23rd March 2009 and two responses have been received to date. The next milestone for the Affordable Housing SPD in the approved Local Development Scheme is consultation on the draft SPD that will take place from the 9th April 2009. The SPD preparation is ahead of target.

West Northamptonshire Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing Development Plan Document (DPD)

- 1.7 The first milestone for the Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing DPD in the approved Local Development Scheme is commencement of preparation of the DPD and consultation with the statutory bodies on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal. This milestone was achieved on 30 January 2009, and the DPD is on target. The intention is to bring in further consultancy assistance on this project as a stop gap prior to full recruitment of the team.

Progress on Evidence Base Workstreams

- 1.8 The names in brackets below are references to consultancies engaged in the delivery of the evidence base workstreams.

1.9 **Green Infrastructure and Environmental Sensitivity Studies:**

Northampton Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study [Living Landscapes] – This study has now been completed, sign off and launch on the WN JPU website. An email informing all members of the Strategic Planning Committee and each of the Local Planning Authorities that the study is complete was sent out to this effect.

Towcester and Brackley Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Studies [Quartet Design] – The draft study went out for consultation with each of the key environmental stakeholders and the Local Authorities within West Northamptonshire and those adjoining the study boundary. The deadline for consultation is on the 3rd April 2009; to date two responses have been received. This study is on target to be completed on time.

1.10 **West Northamptonshire Sports Facility Strategy [Synergy]**

The majority of concerns raised by Sport England have now been addressed and it has been agreed that 'subject to a few modest amendments, the strategy can be accepted as a useful framework for the assessment of future sports facilities needs'. The project will be completed by the end of April 2009 and although later than anticipated, this has no impact on the approved LDS milestones.

1.11 **Pursuit of Evidence of Service Needs [Being Prepared In-House by the JPU]**

This is the collection of evidence of service needs, projections and plans for education, health, social services, etc. Discussions and the sharing of information are ongoing with a variety of service providers including education,

the water companies, energy providers, cultural services, emergency services etc.

1.12 **Joint Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal [Environ]**

The consultants are currently updating the Scoping Study. This work is on target.

1.13 **West Northamptonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

The Level 1 SFRA for West Northamptonshire has been completed, accepted by the EA and sign off. The full Assessment is available on the WN JPU website and an email informing all members of the Strategic Planning Committee and each of the Local Planning Authorities was sent out to this effect.

The draft Level 2 SFRA for Daventry District and South Northamptonshire District was sent to the Environment Agency for comment in Mid February 2009 for comment. The Environment Agency has said that comments will be made available by the 6th April 2009. This project has been delayed.

The invitations to tender for the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Northampton have been sent out and the closing date for responses passed. The short list will produce a suitable consultancy to complete the work.

1.14 **West Northamptonshire Outline Water Cycle Strategy [Halcrow]**

It is now expected that the Phase 1 study will be published in April 2009. This has run over time. Scoping of the Phase 2 study is now underway.

1.15 **Rural Accessibility**

The assessments and modelling will commence shortly. Northamptonshire County Council, using their existing work on accessibility, can undertake this work in house.

1.16 **Strategic Urban Design Appraisals**

Strategic urban design appraisals are valuable to frame the strategy with respect to urban form, public realm and place making. The JPU is currently scoping any further work that may be required given that a range of studies are already in existence.

1.17 **Northamptonshire Strategic Employment Land Assessment [Atkins et al]**

This study is not progressing to timetable. The request for sites letter was sent to landowners, developers and commercial agents. The deadline for responses was the 27th February 2009 and the responses are currently being processed. The consultants contracted by NEL have reported slippage in the programme. Interim reports are being sought by early May at the latest to ensure this does not impact on the programme. Results are being shared with the JPU as they emerge.

1.18 **West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) [Being Prepared In-House by the JPU]**

Site identification and surveying is now concluding. Consultation with the technical members of the SHLAA Panel will commence shortly. Public consultation on the draft SHLAA report will then follow in May 2009.

1.19 **West Northamptonshire Retail Study [CACI]**

There was a short delay in finalising the study which has now been signed off.

1.20 **West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) Update [Consultants to be commissioned shortly]**

Three tenders have been received for the update to the West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment and these are currently being considered by the SHMA Steering Group. This study is on target.

1.21 **Transport infrastructure risk assessment**

The Highways Agency and NCC are undertaking a risk assessment on options with respect to transport modelling to inform the preferred strategy consultation. The modelling is to be provided by mid May with risk assessment in April.

Appendix 1

Key Milestones and Meeting dates - West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

Interim Head of WNJPU 2/04/09

6 th April 2009	Working spatial portrait, vision, objectives and principles to Business Sub Group
21 st April 2009	LDF Programme Board – emergent strategy update
21 st April	Working spatial portrait, vision, objectives and principles to JSPC for agreement
28 th April	Member and Officer workshop on emerging options and decision making criteria
5 th May	Emergent strategy discussions Business Sub Group
12 th May	Member and Officer Workshop on emergent strategy
2 nd June 2009	Emergent strategy to JSPC for approval for consultation
16 th June	Programme Board – agenda TBC
30 th June	Member and officer workshop on next stages
14 th July	Business sub group – agenda TBC
4 th August 2009	Consultation results and refinements to strategy to JSPC for approval
25 th August	Programme Board – Agenda TBC
8 th September	Member and Officer workshop – Agenda TBC
16 th September	Business Sub Group – Agenda TBC
29 th Sept 2009	Pre Submission Joint Core Strategy to JSPC to be agreed for publication
6 th October	Programme Board – Agenda TBC
7 th October	Business sub Group – Agenda TBC
20 th October	JSPC – Agenda TBC

November 2009 Publication of pre submission Joint Core Strategy

- 3rd November Member and Officer Workshop – Agenda TBC
- 10th November Business Sub Group- Agenda TBC
- 24th November Initial report on consultation on Pre Submission Joint Core Strategy
- 5th January Consultation results and amendments discussion at Programme Board
- 12th January Member and Officer workshop on consultation results and amendments
- 19th January Discussion on Pre Submission consultation and Final Submission Document to Business sub group
- 26th January Report on Pre Submission consultation and Final Submission Document to JSPC for agreement

March 2010 Submission of the Joint Core Strategy

Item No: 7
Date: 21 April 2009

**WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF THE JOINT PLANNING UNIT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER NBC

Consultation and Communications Strategy and Action Plan

Report for Discussion

Background

- 1.0 The purpose of this report is to highlight the approach that the Joint Planning Unit intends to take to public consultation, dealing with key parties such as landowners and to the briefing and communication with Councillors. It is intended to serve as a discussion document at the Joint Strategic Planning Committee to consider realistic approaches to resource and timetable.

Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Joint Strategic Planning Committee agrees the document in principle.

Strategic approach

- 1.2 Consultation and involvement will be very important to shaping a robust and deliverable plan and much has already been achieved with respect to engaging with key parties. By engaging stakeholders throughout the process it is possible to reflect local needs and conditions whilst importantly building understanding about the key issues, challenges and constraints.
- 1.3 The consultation strategy that is proposed for the Joint Core Strategy is based on building awareness and understanding of the plan and engaging key audiences in informed dialogue as far as timetables allow. An important element of the process will be feeding back to stakeholder audiences on the consultation responses.

Aims of the Consultation and Communication

- 1.4 The consultation process for the Joint Core Strategy has several key aims:

- 1.4.1 **Identification of key audiences** - the Joint Planning Unit team has been compiling a database of 'interested' individuals, groups and organisations as they emerge through consultations. A new consultation tool has been launched called 'Limehouse' which provides an on-line web based consultation access. 'Limehouse' makes it very easy (as long as once has access to the internet) to respond in detail to specific aspects of documents. The key audiences to engage with include:
- Joint Strategic Planning Committee
 - All Ward Councillors
 - County Councillors and WNDP Board
 - All Town and Parish Councillors
 - Key officers in partnership with the Joint Planning Unit – Chief Executives, Directors, Planning, Regeneration, Transport and Housing
 - Key partner services (e.g. infrastructure services)
 - Statutory stakeholders (as outlined in planning guidance e.g. Highways Agency, Environment Agency, Natural England)
 - Local Strategic Partnership
 - Developers and landowners
 - Directly affected communities
 - The 'general public'
- 1.4.2 **Raise awareness of the process** - ensure that the audiences are aware that the planning process is being undertaken and provide information about the timing and how to engage in the formulation of the plan.
- 1.4.3 **Provide a structured and meaningful method of engagement** – the action plan looks to provide meaningful and effective engagement using existing networks and forums where possible.
- 1.5 The table below outlines the proposed approach for discussion.

Briefing and Cascade within the partnership

- 1.6 A critical matter for the partners is to ensure effective briefing and cascade of information between the officers of the Programme Board and councillors on the Business Sub Group and JSPC (beyond written reports). In addition, briefing and cascade of information from the JSPC and JPU to the rest of the Councillors in the constituent councils is extremely important and will be increasingly so as the emergent strategy is close to publication. The publication of the emergent strategy should come as no surprise to any Councillor.
- 1.7 Whilst the JPU officers can produce written briefings for all (see below) the matter of how individual councils work with their full councils to keep them properly informed is a matter for discussion and agreement and must be managed within the realistic human resource available.

Time period → Stage/ group ↓	Since issues and options 2007	Prior to Emerging Strategy Up to June 2009	Emerging Strategy Publication June 2009	Prior to Pre submission June 2009 – November 2010	Pre submission Publication November 2010
All (including public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Group meetings One-to-one meetings Workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 25 letter Indicate the expected date for publication of the Emerging Strategy Electronic monthly newsletter – news, progress, future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press release /briefing on day of publication to all local press Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Electronic monthly newsletter – news, progress, future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing paper / newsletter – monthly Indication of expected date for publication of Pre Submission Strategy. Electronic monthly newsletter – news, progress, future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press release /briefing on day of publication to all local press Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Electronic monthly newsletter – news, progress, future
JSPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member / Officer workshops: 20/01/09, 25/02/09 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee meetings Member / Officer workshops: 28/04/09 emerging options & decision making criteria),12/05/09 (emerging strategy), Member briefing paper / newsletter – monthly Specific briefings as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Committee meetings Member / Officer workshops: 30/06/09 (next stages) Briefing paper / newsletter – monthly Specific briefings as necessary Papers published 26 May 2009 for Joint Strategic Planning Committee 2 June 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee meetings Member / Officer workshops: 08/09/09 (agenda TBC), 03/11/09 (agenda TBC) Briefing paper / newsletter – monthly Specific briefings as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee meetings Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Member / Officer workshops: 12/01/09 (consultation results and amendments discussion) Briefing paper / newsletter – monthly Specific briefings as necessary
All councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member Workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JPU Briefing Partner councils/ WNDC briefings to own councils. Member briefing paper / newsletter – monthly and special briefings following key events 2 x all Councillor events before going out to wider consultation (between 12-22 May) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Briefing paper / newsletter – monthly Specific briefings as necessary Each local authority carry out individual councillor events / briefings with own officers as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JPU Briefing Partner councils/ WNDC briefings to own councils Briefing paper / newsletter – monthly and ad-hoc special for key events All Councillor event before going out to wider consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Briefing paper / newsletter – monthly Specific briefings as necessary
Key officers in partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one discussions Charette process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Board Meetings One to one discussions as required 'Virtual office' between partners Emerging Strategy workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Board: 21/04/09 Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Board: 16/06/09 (agenda TBC), 25/08/09 (agenda TBC) One to one discussions as required Virtual office between partners Pre submission workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal)

Time period → Stage/ group ↓	Since issues and options 2007	Prior to Emerging Strategy Up to June 2009	Emerging Strategy Publication June 2009	Prior to Pre submission June 2009 – November 2010	Pre submission Publication November 2010
Key partner services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one meetings Project Steering Groups for key studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar / virtually with follow up meetings or surgeries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal)
Statutory bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one meetings Project Steering Groups for key studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one meetings Project Steering Groups for key studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one meetings Project Steering Groups for key studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal)
LSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations at LSP meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) events (4 LSP's) to fully brief and discuss the emerging strategy and fit with Sustainable Community Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Presentation at regular meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSP Event to fully brief on the emerging strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal)
Developer / landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one meetings Seminar for Issues and Options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar One to one meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar One to one meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal)
Directly affected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at group meetings e.g. Parish Councils, Residents Action Groups etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic monthly newsletter – news, progress, future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Hold series of public events with significant amount of associated publicity material – to be further defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold series of public events with significant amount of associated publicity material – to be further defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal notification of the start of consultation (consultation portal) Hold series of public events with significant amount of associated publicity material – to be further defined

Item No: 8
Date: 21 April 2009

**WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Risk Register

REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF THE JOINT PLANNING UNIT

Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to report on the Risk Register for the Joint Planning Unit. This is found at the appendix.

Joint Planning Unit Risk Register

- 1.2 The attached register highlights the key risks to the work at this point in time. The expectation is that the probability of the risk occurring will change over time. The scores differ from the previous reports on the risk register due to a change in the use of software. The lowest possible score for a risk is 4 (low probability and low impact) whilst the highest possible score is 20 (high probability and very high impact).
- 1.3 The register sets out the current measures to manage the risks (control measures) together with actions being taken to avoid the risk occurring.

Highlights

- 1.4 Recruitment (Risk 1) – the process of providing job descriptions and agreeing the precise form of the recruitment process has been fraught with difficulties. The lack of preparedness within the partnership to manage the complicated human resource matters and contractual issues in a timely manner, coupled with delays to the commissioning of initial work on the job descriptions and a period of illness of the Interim Head of the Joint Planning Unit (JPU) slowed matters significantly. Finally, disagreements with respect to agreeing the final process of slotting the current post holders in the team into appropriate positions and ring fencing of posts for recruitment have been matters of disagreement. The lessons to be learned relate primarily to the importance of all authorities ensuring that all relevant staff are up to speed on their need to respond rapidly within this partnership and for officer attendance at meetings to be at an appropriately senior level to make decisions. The partnership as it continues to strengthen will learn to act more quickly to follow the ‘majority’ view in respect of officers’ operational decisions so as to avoid programme delay.

1.5 Failure of external bodies to meet deadlines (Risk 9) the particular risk now relates to the evidence provided by the Strategic Employment Land Assessment which is commissioned by (Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd) NEL with JPU and constituent authorities sitting on the public sector the steering group. There is a significant delay to the programme on this contract which consultants insist is now unavoidable. The consultants now expect to report in mid May which will be just prior to emergent strategy publication. NEL and the JPU have agreed a programme of early release of information as it emerges but the final integrated analysis may still be too late for this stage in the plan. It will not in itself halt the process but all parties will need to be mindful of this matter. The delays are not only of inconvenience to ourselves, but also the development industry. The expectation is that the final report can be used to more thoroughly inform the plan. Officers at NEL and the JPU are working closely to compensate for this gap in information.

Recommendation

1.6 That the Committee Group notes the changes in the Risk Register, and the actions being put in place to moderate the impacts.

JPU Risk Register

As at 09/04/09

APPENDIX- WNJPU Risk Register

Risk Nc	Risk Description	Consequence	Current Control Measures	Risk Manager	Prob	Impact	Rank	Risk Mitigation Actions	Action Manager	Due date
1	Failure to recruit to posts	Too high workload on staff in post. Poor quality work leads to failure of soundness, pressure on existing staff leads to delay in preparation.	Current retention and recruitment packages	Karen Moore	4	4	16	2.1 .Implement effective recruitment and retention procedures	Susan Bridge	31-Mar-09
								2.2 Recruit further temporary consultancy	Karen Moore	13-Apr-09
2	Quality of evidence to date found seriously lacking	Delay to programme. Risk of plan being found unsound	Regular checking of quality through contracts and with peers.	Karen Moore	3	4	12	1.1 Carry out quality check via key officer workshops	Karen Moore	28-Feb-09
								1.2 Preparedness to commission further evidence rapidly	Karen Moore	ongoing
3	Legal challenge or similar investigation due to lack of consultation/ communication, lack of robust evidence, unsatisfactory Inspector's Report, litigious nature of today's society	Part of adopted CS may be struck out.	GOEM liaison. Previous Counsel Advice. Learning from other authorities	Karen Moore	3	4	12	3.1 Implement Training Programme for staff	Karen Moore	30-Apr-09
								3.2 Improved engagement to ensure evidence base is robust	AJ Gray	6-Apr-09
4	Failure to satisfy the soundness requirements of PINS due to the complexity involved.	Delay before plan can be adopted. Some steps may need to be undertaken again.	Learning from other authorities. Good practice. PAS template. Effective and robust evidence base	Karen Moore	2	5	10	4.1 Appoint counsel	David Bailey	6-Apr-09
								4.2 Use of PAS Soundness Self Assessment Tool Kit	Karen Moore	28-Feb-09
5	Failure to consider the comments of stakeholders and the community because of lack of engagement/ communication. Not offering, through engagement, robust options/ issues to the community.	Fail at least one of the tests of soundness. Delay in the preparation of the Core Strategy.	Tracking system for responses	Karen Moore	2	4	8	5.1 Produce and implement a Communications and Consultation Strategy	AJ Gray	6-Apr-09
6	Failure to identify and produce robust evidence base.due to lack of resources. Not understanding what evidence is required and how to interpret it into the CS.	Fail soundness test at LPI.	Existing good/ bad practice (Inspector's reports). PPS/PPG requirements. Liaison with other organisations and agencies. SEA/SA process	Karen Moore	2	4	8	6.1 Introduce system for keeping up to date with good/bad practice from Inspectors Reports etc	Karen Moore	31-Mar-09
								6.2 Introduce effective management and quality control procedures	Karen Moore	31-Mar-09
								6.3 Appoint counsel	David Bailey	6-Apr-09
7	Failure to properly engage with members.	Potential delay in preparation of Core Strategy. Adverse impact upon Housing and Planning Delivery	JSPC. Agreed procedures for lines of member communication. Individual	Karen Moore	2	3	6	7.1 Extend workshops and seminars	AJ Gray	6-Apr-09
								7.2 Information to all members	AJ Gray	ongoing

JPU Risk Register

As at 09/04/09

Risk Nc	Risk Description	Consequence	Current Control Measures	Risk Manager	Prob	Impact	Rank	Risk Mitigation Actions	Action Manager	Due date
								7.3 Produce and implement a Communications and Consultation Strategy	AJ Gray	6-Apr-09
8	Changes in political mandate of any partner authority due to Elections, change of policy or personnel.	CS progress delayed as strategy/content is reconsidered. Direction if not resolved in satisfactory and timely manner.	Plan ahead for elections. All member awareness of issues and policy formulation	Karen Moore	3	3	9	8.1 Carry out all member training	Karen Moore	15-May-09
								8.1 Schedule key decisions to take account of elections	Karen Moore	31-Mar-09
9	External bodies not meeting their deadlines. due to conflicting objectives or timescales. Unsatisfactory relationships. Failure to extract intelligence from external parties	Delays in process. Possible failure of soundness test at LPI.	Relationship building within partnership e.g. Charette process	Karen Moore/all partnership members	4	4	16	9.1 Share detailed programme with partners and key stakeholders - publish on website	Karen Moore	6-Apr-09
								9.2 Agree interim measures to release key information early e.g. SELA, SFRA 2	Karen Moore	30-Mar-09
10	Poor internal and external communication due to lack of project plan, failure to take account of stakeholders, time pressure.	CS progress delayed, particularly through internal and external fire fighting.	LDS SCI	Karen Moore	2	3	6	10.1 Develop and implement a Communication Strategy	AJ Gray	6-Apr-09
11	Failure of Joint Planning Committee to make timely decisions	Potential delay in preparation of Core Strategy. Adverse impact upon Housing and Planning Delivery Grant.		JSPC Programme Board	3	4	12	11.1 Extend workshops and seminars	AJ Gray	ongoing refer above
								11.2 Information to all members	AJ Gray	ongoing
								11.3 Produce and implement a Communications and Consultation Strategy	AJ Gray	6-Apr-09
								11.4 Carry out all member training	Karen Moore	15-May-09
12	Failure of the constituent authorities to finance the JPU/budget exceeded	Unacceptable delay. Missed deadlines	Approved JSPC Committee Report	JSPC Programme Board	2	4	8	12.1 Budget taken forward to authorities budget rounds	JSPC Programme Board	1-Jan-09
								12.2 Operational budget devolved to JPU manager	Karen Moore	28-Feb-09
								12.3 Commence quarterly meetings of SNC to monitor	Karen Moore	28-Feb-09

KEY

Probability

- 2 low
- 3 medium
- 4 high

Impact

- 2 low
- 3 medium
- 4 high
- 5 very high

JPU Risk Register

As at 09/04/09

Date Completed
31/03/09
31/03/09
31/03/09

JPU Risk Register

As at 09/04/09

Date Completed
31/03/09
30/03/09
01/01/09