

# OXFORDSHIRE JOINT STATUTORY SPATIAL PLAN SCOPING DOCUMENT AUGUST 2018

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# **Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Spatial Plan**

## **Scoping Document**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Councils in Oxfordshire have agreed to produce a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP), building upon the existing joint working and partnership arrangements through the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. The Oxfordshire JSSP will provide a strategic policy framework for Oxfordshire to 2050. This recognises and reinforces the commitment to the Housing and Growth Deal to deliver up to 100,000 homes over a 20 year period by 2031.
- 1.2 The JSSP will identify the number of new market and affordable homes, the level of economic growth and related infrastructure that is needed across Oxfordshire. It will then seek to place the required growth in a cohesive and sustainable spatial planning framework that will set the scene for a future round of Local Plans. This approach will allow district local planning authorities to subsequently establish detailed planning policies and site allocations at a local level.
- 1.3 The JSSP will cover the administrative county area of Oxfordshire. However, it will seek to address linkages to wider planning considerations, for example the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge Growth Corridor. The local planning authorities are:
- Cherwell District Council
  - Oxford City Council
  - South Oxfordshire District Council
  - Vale of White Horse District Council
  - West Oxfordshire District Council
- 1.4 The JSSP will also be prepared in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, which has a key role given its responsibilities for the delivery of key infrastructure and services such as transport and education, and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership which is leading on the production of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).
- 1.5 This Scoping Document aims to:
- Determine the geographical extent of the JSSP
  - Explain the policy context within which the JSSP is proposed and parameters for the JSSP
  - Determine the plan period for the JSSP
  - Set out the timetable, key milestones and procedures of the JSSP
  - Set out the proposed structure of the JSSP
  - Explain the robust evidence base which will be required to underpin the delivery of a sound JSSP
  - Clarify the linkages to other relevant work programmes
  - Explain the governance arrangements of the JSSP project
  - Set out the importance of communications and consultation to the project
  - Set out the JSSP team structure

### **2.0 Geographical extent**

- 2.1 The JSSP will cover the administrative area of Oxfordshire (all five constituent districts). The parties involved in the JSSP have committed to this process as they see the benefits of collectively

agreeing the level of growth, the broad spatial areas of that growth and in setting aspirations for place making at a strategic level. The JSSP also offers an opportunity to formally consider the infrastructure needs collectively, to align strategies, and form part of any application for infrastructure funding through the Growth Deal or other sources.

- 2.2 Planning on an Oxfordshire-wide scale gives added benefits to the plan. Many of the issues that a plan needs to consider are better dealt with at this higher level, for example Oxfordshire is a housing market area and functional economic area, people live and work across the county, everyday life is not restricted to district administrative boundaries. Some spatial planning issues for example Green Belt, biodiversity and transport can be dealt with at a district level, but will benefit from consideration at a higher level with a consistent approach across the authorities. The JSSP will also form valuable evidence of compliance with the Duty to Co-operate.

### **3.0 Policy context and parameters**

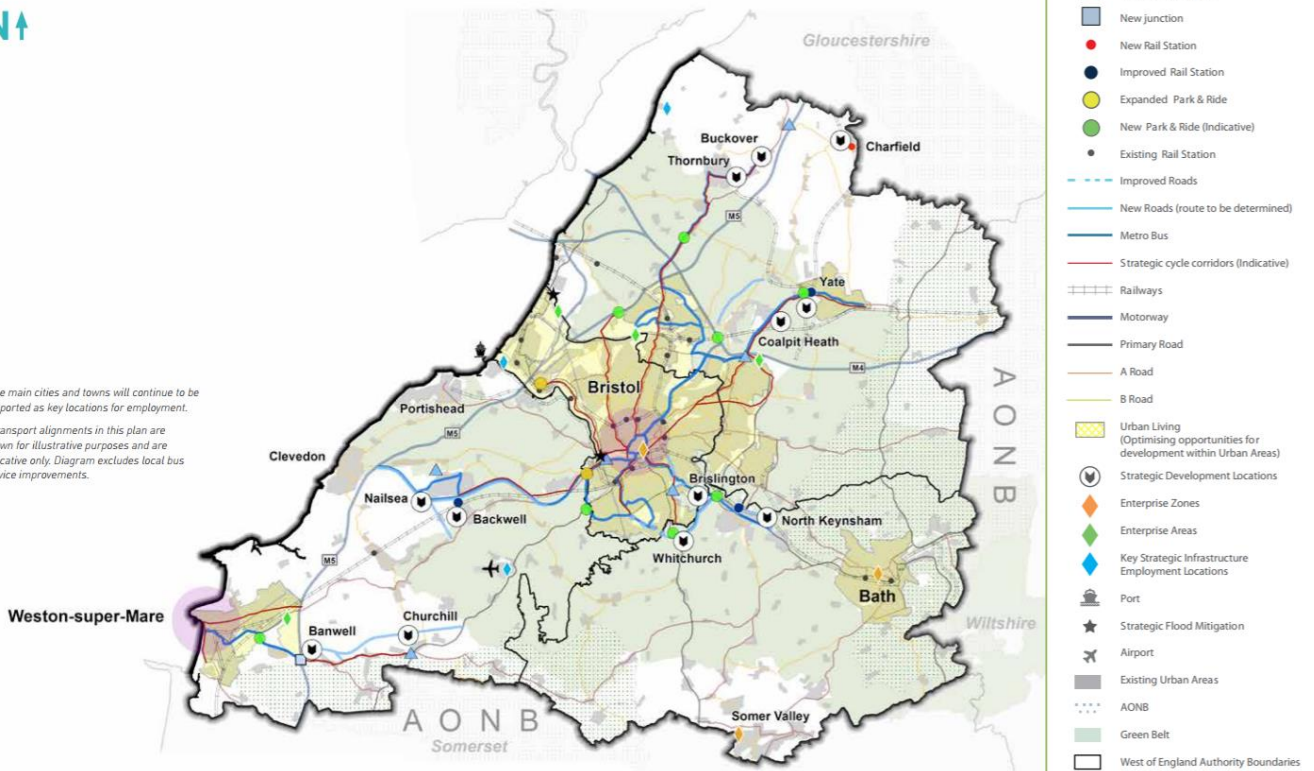
- 3.1 Each Oxfordshire district is committed through the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal to submitting a Local Plan for examination by April 2019. The districts are at different stages of Local Plan production, however each authority is well on the way to producing a Local Plan covering the period to 2031 or 2036. As stated in the Housing and Growth Deal Delivery Plan, 'The Oxfordshire authorities are committed to planning to meet the 100,000 housing requirement for Oxfordshire set out by the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) by 2031'. The Local Plans make provision for these homes and they allocate specific sites for development.
- 3.2 The JSSP will build on the foundations set by the suite of current and emerging Local Plans and look at the strategic planning issues for the period up to 2050. The JSSP will take into account the existing commitments made by this suite of plans through their site allocations as a baseline for the earliest part of the JSSP plan period.
- 3.3 The agreed Statement of Common Ground identified the following key matters for the JSSP to set out:
- An overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development in Oxfordshire to 2050
  - Identify the number of new market and affordable homes and level of economic growth needed across Oxfordshire
  - Identify an appropriate spatial strategy and strategic growth areas for new development based upon an understanding and appreciation of both the environmental quality and natural capital of Oxfordshire
  - Outline the strategic transport and other infrastructure that needs to be provided to support sustainable growth
- 3.4 The JSSP will be a formal Development Plan Document, prepared under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) which enables two or more local planning authorities to agree a joint Plan. It will form part of the development plan for each of the authorities in Oxfordshire and will be used in the formulation of more detailed plans locally and in determining planning applications where appropriate.
- 3.5 The JSSP will form the framework within which subsequent Local Plans will be drafted. Subsequent Local Plans will need to be in broad conformity with the JSSP and provide a detailed application of the strategic policies which it contains.

- 3.6 All parties agree that whilst the JSSP will set out the level of growth, the strategy and areas for growth; the JSSP will not contain policies that cover detailed matters, including the allocation of land for development. This is supported by the NPPF which recognises that strategic policies should not extend to detailed matters that are more appropriately dealt with at a local level through neighbourhood plans or other non-strategic policies (paragraph 28 of the NPPF).
- 3.7 The JSSP's strategic policies will cover the following matters:
- County wide housing requirement figures
  - Affordable housing requirements
  - Identification of strategic growth areas
  - Strategic housing trajectory
  - Gypsy, Traveller and boat dwellers, needs and distribution
  - County wide employment growth figures
  - The spatial dimension of the Local Industrial Strategy
  - Retail hierarchy
  - Green Belt strategy and policies
  - Biodiversity and natural environment
  - Placemaking and built environment
  - Health and wellbeing
  - Green infrastructure
  - Strategic environmental allocations
  - Transport strategy
  - Infrastructure strategy
  - Energy framework
- 3.8 While the JSSP will set out strategic policies on these matters future Local Plans will set out the strategic policies on other matters, and also the local policies on these and other matters.
- 3.9 The JSSP will set out the identified housing requirement for Oxfordshire and the apportionment for each Local Authority area and identify strategic growth areas for housing and economic growth within each Local Authority area, taking account of the opportunities offered by infrastructure investment, environmental constraints and economic growth forecasts (aligned with the LIS).
- 3.10 Whilst the JSSP will determine the spatial strategy and strategic growth areas it will not allocate sites. The precise level of detail that this information will be presented in will be determined through the production of the plan. However, it is considered that for the JSSP to add real value to the process, to set a good framework for the Local Plans that follow, and for authorities to be able to resist speculative proposals that do not fit within the agreed strategy, the JSSP needs to go beyond global Oxfordshire figures and district based apportionments and be more specific by identifying strategic growth areas on a key diagram with associated housing / employment numbers. The following diagram is taken from the West of England Plan as one example of how this could be illustrated.

Figure 7: Appendix A: JSP Key Diagram



\*The main cities and towns will continue to be supported as key locations for employment.  
 \* Transport alignments in this plan are shown for illustrative purposes and are indicative only. Diagram excludes local bus service improvements.



## 4.0 Plan Period

- 4.1 The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal commits the JSSP to covering the period to 2050. This is a significantly longer period than is typical with a Local Plan and is important in this strategic context. It is more difficult to predict and forecast patterns and needs with certainty over an extended period and it is well accepted through examination that the level of detail and certainty of an evidence base supporting a plan will decrease over the plan period. It is considered appropriate therefore that the JSSP will address the time period in phases. For example it would seem logical to consider the period 2020-2030, then 2030-2040 and then 2040-2050 as phases of the strategy.
- 4.2 In terms of that first phase, 2020-2030, a significant amount of joint work across the Oxfordshire authorities has already taken place with a joint SHMA, Growth Board agreed apportionment of Oxford's unmet need and the post-SHMA work. All of this has fed into the current and emerging round of Local Plans. These Local Plans cover the period from 2011-2031/36. There is therefore a good deal of detail and certainty around the period to 2031/36 as plans and strategies are well advanced.
- 4.3 The next two phases of the JSSP 2030-2040 and 2040-50 will be based on a new evidence base produced specifically for the JSSP and will be used on part of the new round of Local Plans. The level of certainty around any forecasting will vary from topic to topic, but in general it is considered it will be possible to have a good level of certainty in data for the period 2030-2040 even if the level of confidence in the assessments for the period 2040-2050 is less certain. It is nonetheless vital to address the latter part of the period as a core part of the plan; it is this long-term vision where the JSSP adds real value to the traditional approach of plan making. This longer timeframe also offers the opportunity to take account of and harness the benefits that will come with long term infrastructure investment such as the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway.

## 5.0 Timetable, key milestones and procedures

- 5.1 The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal commits the parties of the JSSP to a high level timetable for its production. The milestones for the JSSP as set out in the Deal are:
- Joint Project Board established under Section 28 – July 2018
  - Draft JSSP published for formal consultation (Reg. 19) – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019
  - Submission of JSSP – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020
  - JSSP Adoption (subject to examination) – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021
- 5.2 The procedures for developing a statutory development plan document are described in regulations. There are therefore several key interim milestones to build into this timetable. This results in a more detailed timetable for production of the JSSP which can be summarised as follows:
- Early Stakeholder Engagement – October 2018
  - Consultation on Preferred Strategy Options (Reg. 18) - February / March 2019
  - **Consultation on Proposed Submission Draft Plan (Reg. 19) - October / November 2019**
  - **Submission to the Secretary of State for examination - March 2020**
  - Examination - Expected September 2020 TBC
  - Receipt and Publication of Inspector's Report - December 2020 TBC
  - **Adoption - March 2021 (subject to examination) TBC**
- 5.3 It is important to recognise that once the JSSP has been submitted to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate), the responsibility for the timetable of the examination is no longer under the control of the plan makers but determined by the appointed Inspector. As such the later milestones are estimations based on experience of these processes and are not fixed through the Growth Deal agreement.
- 5.4 As required in the regulations, a Local Development Scheme (LDS) has been drawn up to set out and make public the timeline for the production of the JSSP. Each local authority will adopt the JSSP LDS. This will be adopted in addition to their own LDS which sets out the timetables for the Local Plans that individual authorities will be producing.
- 5.5 Another requirement of the regulations is the production of a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to set out the ways in which the plan making body will involve and consult with the public and stakeholders through the project. An SCI for the JSSP has been produced and this will also be adopted by each authority and will stand alongside their own SCIs.
- 5.6 The decision making bodies for the JSSP production are the five local planning authorities (see section 9 on governance). The individual Councils will be asked to formally approve JSSP documents as follows:
- Approve LDS – September 2018
  - Approve SCI (following consultation) – December 2018
  - Approve JSSP Preferred Options Document for consultation (Reg 18) – January 2019
  - Approve Submission draft JSSP for consultation (Reg 19) and submission to SoS – September 2019
  - Adopt JSSP – March 2021 (subject to examination)
- 5.7 The JSSP timetable is ambitious and reflects the commitment of the parties involved to delivering change for Oxfordshire. In order to keep to this ambitious timetable, and underline the joint

working approach taken, the individual authorities have agreed to hold co-ordinated council meetings at the above stages. All authorities will hold the relevant meetings within the same week (as far as possible) and consider a joint report from the JSSP project team.

## **6.0 Proposed structure of the JSSP**

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the structure of the document will comprise the following elements:
- (a) Introduction – Setting out the purpose of the document, Oxfordshire in a wider context, policy framework – the relationship of the JSSP to other documents and plans and the functional housing and economic market area.
  - (b) Spatial Portrait - setting a spatial context for the county and identifying issues and opportunities to be considered in the JSSP.
  - (c) Vision and Objectives – linked to the Sustainability Appraisal and evidence base.
  - (d) Spatial Strategy - overall quantum of development for housing and employment together with strategic growth areas and opportunities and the necessary strategic infrastructure to support this, including a key diagram.
  - (e) Delivery and monitoring – to include phasing of development, review mechanisms, monitoring, funding arrangements etc.
- 6.2 Early work on the JSSP will focus on the vision and objectives for the plan including the vision for Oxfordshire in 2050. The early stakeholder engagement will focus on these aspects; they will also form part of the first round of formal consultation (Regulation 18 - February 2019) which will also test options for the Spatial Strategy. A clear vision is key to engaging the wider community in the project and objectives form a vital part of the Sustainability Appraisal process for the plan and will help test the effectiveness of the project.

## **7.0 Supporting evidence base**

- 7.1 A bespoke evidence base will be required to support the JSSP. The list below gives an indication of the pieces of technical work that will be required as part of this evidence base. This list is not exhaustive; more pieces of work may become relevant or apparent as the project progresses. Some of these pieces of work already exist and can be relied on for the purposes of the JSSP with no or only minor updates. This list will be reviewed throughout the project as work progresses:
- a) Oxfordshire Local Housing Need calculation
  - b) Economic forecasting and job growth calculation
  - c) Transport strategy, assessment and modelling
  - d) Sustainability Appraisal
  - e) Habitat Regulations Assessment
  - f) Green Belt Review/Assessment
  - g) Other infrastructure assessments/update of OXIS
  - h) Flood Risk Assessment
  - i) Natural Capital Assessment (including biodiversity)
- 7.2 These studies will be collected in various ways to ensure that the evidence base is both robust and proportionate (at the appropriate level of detail), and that this is done in a cost-effective way. For example each authority already has a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), these are carried out to an established methodology and as such it may not be necessary to prepare a joint SFRA. However, other studies will require review and updating, and some new studies will need to be commissioned from specialist consultants. Where consultants are commissioned all draft briefs

will be reviewed and approved by officers of each district ahead of the competition process. Capacity funding from the Housing and Growth Deal is available to fund studies.

- 7.3 A Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment is one of a number of studies which will support the development of the JSSP. The JSSP Team and the partner authorities will be running a 'Call for Sites' as part of the plan process seeking submissions which will identify sites and broad areas for strategic scale housing and economic development within Oxfordshire. The sites and broad areas for growth identified by the Call for Sites will be assessed for their suitability for development and will form part of the evidence base to demonstrate the supply of development land for the period to 2050 in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.

## 8.0 Links to other work programmes

- **The Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy.** Oxfordshire has been invited by central government to develop a Local Industrial Strategy and to build an ambitious programme for long-term economic growth that will guide a step-change in how the County thinks about economic growth and investment. It is important that the JSSP Team continues to work with the LIS Team to explore how the two workstreams can be integrated and aligned to capitalise on synergies and to support Oxfordshire's growth. This will include exploring key strategic growth areas for Oxfordshire's development that can form part of the LIS and also discussing the key barriers and opportunities around delivering strategic sites.
- **Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan.** Oxfordshire County Council are working on a refresh of their Local Transport Plan (LTP4) that will take a fresh look at a transport vision, goals and objectives for the County. There is a need to ensure alignment between this and the JSSP to ensure that decisions are made that are correct for the County to guide its future growth.
- **Oxford to Cambridge Corridor.** Alongside the autumn budget 2017, the Government published its overarching vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor as an initial response to the recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission. The NIC identified an area that has the potential to be the UK's Silicon Valley nurturing innovative industries and promoting economic growth in the national interest also recognising that unaffordable housing is acting as a brake to economic growth. It recommended that a shared vision for the corridor is established and that work will need to plan for capturing its economic potential; place-making, including housing, cultural and community ambitions; and connectivity and infrastructure including new investments in and the opportunities presented by East West Rail and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. The JSSP has an essential role to play in responding positively to these recommendations and addressing these criteria and will need to contribute positively to a cross corridor vision. Highways England are now taking forward more detailed development of the Expressway proposals and have identified three potential broad corridors for its route which affect Oxfordshire in different ways. The JSSP needs to consider the current proposals and in turn the final preferred corridor when it is published in Autumn 2018 and detailed route option in 2019.

## 9.0 Governance arrangements

- 9.1 The JSSP is a core work stream of the Oxfordshire Growth Board as part of the Housing and Growth Deal, yet the decision making bodies for the production of a plan are the five districts as Local Planning Authorities. This section sets out the emerging governance arrangements for the project.



9.2 The Growth Deal commits to the establishment of a Joint JSSP Project Board to take forward the project under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). Section 28 of the Act provides the means for more than one Local Planning Authority to jointly produce a Local Development Document (the JSSP). While formal decision making power resides with the individual Local Planning Authorities arrangements can be set up under Section 28 to help the Councils coordinate the preparation of the JSSP.

9.3 Two groups will be set up to help guide the preparation of the JSSP, a Member sub-group, made up of Elected Members, and an officer project board made up of senior officers.

9.4 *Member sub-group:*

- Made up of members from the Districts and a County observer
- Will provide political advice and input into the work of the JSSP project team
- Representatives of the Statutory Agencies will be invited to participate in meetings as the agenda requires their advice and input
- Not a decision making group but will make recommendations to the Growth Board and to the individual Local Planning Authorities
- Meet on average quarterly with flexible programme to reflect the JSSP work programme
- Meet after the Officer Project Board

9.5 *Officer Project Board:*

- Made up of the relevant Heads of Service of the District Councils, including the JSSP Project Sponsor, the Growth Deal Workstream Lead, and representatives of Oxfordshire County Council, OxLEP, MHCLG, Homes England and other relevant bodies as required.
- Meet on average quarterly with flexible programme to reflect work programme
- Meet ahead of the Member Sub Group

9.6 *Provisional work programme and meeting dates:*

- September 18 – as part of the October project launch
- November 18 – help to refine the Regulation 18 document; discuss the jobs numbers and housing numbers for the plan period
- February 19 – during Regulation 18 consultation; start exploring the spatial expression of the numbers
- May 19 – help to refine the Regulation 19 document and prepare for the consultation
- October 19 – review consultation outcomes and refine the proposed Submission Draft Plan
- February 19 review of consultation outcomes on the proposed Submission Draft Plan

9.7 The table below identifies of the invitees to the two groups that make up the JSSP Project Board:

<b>Officer Project Board</b>		
<b>Partner</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
West Oxfordshire DC	Giles Hughes	Project Sponsor - Overall responsibility for ensuring that the project meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits. In addition same responsibilities as other Heads of Service.
Growth Deal	Deal Director	Provide direction and support for the JSSP Project Team and the link

		to the Growth Deal / Board.
Oxford City Council	Patsy Dell	Provide direction for the JSSP Project Team and the link to the corporate decision making processes of the Local Planning Authorities.
Cherwell DC	Adrian Colwell	
South Oxfordshire and Vale DCs	Adrian Duffield	
Oxfordshire County Council (Observer)	Rachel Wileman	Provide advice and observations, and coordination with wider Growth Deal activity
OxLEP (Observer)	tbc	
Homes England (Observer)	tbc	
MHCLG (Observer)	tbc	
<b>Member Sub-group</b>		
Partner	Member	Responsibility
Cherwell DC	Cllr Colin Clarke	Will provide political advice and input into the work of the JSSP project team.
Oxford City	Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	
South Oxfordshire DC	Cllr Will Hall Sub all con group members	Not a decision making group but will make recommendations to the Growth Board and to the individual Local Planning Authorities.
Vale of White Horse DC	Cllr Anthony Hayward Sub- all con group members	
West Oxfordshire DC	Cllr James Mills (Chair) Cllr Jeff Haine Sub Cllr Toby Morris	
Oxfordshire County Council (Observer)	Cllr Fox –Davies Sub Cllr Jeanette Matelot	

### **JSSP Liaison Group**

- 9.8 Work on the JSSP to date has been carried out by the Interim Project Team. This group is made up of a planning officer representative from each of the partner and observing bodies and has been meeting regularly to put in place the various project management documents and arrangements required to initiate the JSSP project. This work means that the JSSP Project Team is able to start from a good position with much of the scoping, project planning, and statutory requirements well underway.
- 9.9 With the establishment of a dedicated JSSP Project Team, it is proposed that the interim team, with their well established relationships and working arrangements is retained but adapts to form a Liaison Group for the project. This group would continue meeting on a regular basis but with a changed role, advising and performing a liaison function with the constituent authorities. The table below identifies members of the liaison group.

<b>JSSP Reference / Liaison Group</b>		
Partner	Officer	Responsibility
Cherwell DC	Alan Munn	Members of the Liaison Group will meet regularly to provide the key link between the JSSP Project Team and the authorities. They will bring key messages from their organisations to the JSSP Project
West Oxon DC	Andrew Thompson	
South Oxon DC	Holly Jones	

Vale WH DC	Andrew Maxted	Team and provide feedback to the Project Team on proposals and plans based on discussions within their organisations. They will help develop the agenda for the Officer Project Board and Member Sub Group meetings.
Oxford City	Richard Wyatt /Rachel Nixon	
Oxfordshire CC	Dawn Pettis	

## 10.0 Engagement and communication

- 10.1 It will be important to ensure that stakeholders are kept up to date with progress on the JSSP and have the opportunity to feed into the project. The SCI sets out the general approach to engagement and consultation. Formal consultation periods will be held at two key stages, Regulation 18 (February 2019) and Regulation 19 (October 2019).
- 10.2 Communications should be proactive, positive and high profile to reflect the wishes of the Board that public engagement and knowledge of the JSSP is at a high level. The project team will seek to maximise the use of digital channels for engagement, for example:
- Advertising – for example of key events
  - Social Media
  - Develop an interactive and engaging JSSP website, including a consultation portal
  - Commission highly professional video(s) to demonstrate the message on the website
  - Ensure that the opportunities on each partners website are maximised and that there is clear signposting to the JSSP website
- 10.3 The JSSP will be supported by a dedicated communications and engagement officer.

## 11.0 JSSP Project Team Structure

- 11.1 The JSSP Project Team will be responsible for co-ordinating and producing the work on the JSSP. Resources will come from 3 main sources:
- Core team recruited/seconded through the Growth Deal
  - Resources from the partner bodies (more specific task related and including the input of the Liaison Group)
  - Commissioned advice/expertise from external sources
- 11.2 A dedicated team resource is to be recruited to the project who will be able to fully focus on producing the work required. This team will be managed by Rachel Williams as JSSP Workstream Lead and will be structured as follows:
- JSSP Lead – Rachel Williams
  - 4 FTE planners – at a range of scales/grades
  - 1 Apprentice Planner
  - 1 FTE Communication Officer (already agreed as part of Growth Deal budget)
  - 1 FTE Project Admin Support