

Assessment of options to resource the Joint Strategy

Option	Pros	Cons
1. Work on the joint strategy is split equally between the 4 authorities	<p>The joint strategy will start to be prepared within the shortest timeframe possible.</p> <p>Officers preparing the Joint Strategy will have the benefit of local knowledge, previous involvement in GESP and close ties with the evidence, stakeholders and Members.</p> <p>No additional cost.</p>	<p>No overall lead officer is in place to project manage the work, ensure consistency, etc.</p> <p>Due to timescales and approach to resourcing, there will be limited opportunity to explore different ways to present the Joint Strategy. It's therefore likely that the document would be prepared in a chapter format, similar to the GESP.</p> <p>It will require some authorities to pause work on their Local Plan for at least two months in order to resource the work.</p> <p>There is potential for major editorial/stylistic differences between the different sections, as they will be prepared by different authorities.</p>
2. Re-establish a dedicated team of officers from available resources.	<p>Officers preparing the Joint Strategy will have the benefit of local knowledge, previous involvement in GESP, and close ties with the evidence, stakeholders and Members.</p> <p>An overall lead will be appointed to project manage the work, ensure consistency, etc.</p> <p>There will be potential to explore different/creative ways of presenting the Joint Strategy.</p> <p>No additional costs unless recruitment is required.</p>	<p>Will require the redistribution of resources within existing teams and the reprioritisation of workload/review of Local Plan timetables. This is likely to result in delays to Local Plan preparation unless additional resource is brought in.</p> <p>Could take at least a couple of months to organise the redistribution of resources and amend Local Plan timetables, and/or externally recruit additional resource.</p>
3. Externally recruit a	A dedicated lead officer will project	Will create an additional resource

<p>Project Manager to lead the project and work alongside a group of officers from the authorities (who would provide support in a part time capacity)</p>	<p>manage the work, ensure consistency, etc.</p> <p>The supporting group of officers will have the benefit of local knowledge, previous involvement in GESP, and close ties with the evidence, stakeholders and Members.</p> <p>There will be potential to explore different/creative ways of presenting the information</p>	<p>cost, although funds are available in the GESP budget, The PM will need to initially be employed on a fixed term 1 year contract, but this might need to be extended if work is not completed within this timeframe.</p> <p>Will take several months to go through the process of job evaluation for a new post and recruitment.</p> <p>Still likely to require a reasonable level of resource from Local Plan teams to support the work, with potential knock-on effects for Local Plan preparation.</p>
<p>4. Completed an initial draft in-house, then engage a consultant to progress the work on behalf of the authorities, supported in a limited capacity by a group of officers</p>	<p>The supporting group of officers will have the benefit of local knowledge, previous involvement in GESP and close ties with the evidence, stakeholders and Members.</p> <p>The consultant could coordinate consultation, which is resource intensive.</p>	<p>Will create an additional resource cost, although funds are available in the GESP budget (Planning Delivery Fund).</p> <p>Will take a couple of months to go through competitive tender recruitment process – but could be done alongside a draft being prepared.</p> <p>There is potential for confused project management between the early and latter stages. Also, there is no dedicated project manager in place in the early stages (see options 1 and 2).</p> <p>There is potential for conflict between the initial draft and final versions, due to different people working on the Joint Strategy.</p> <p>Use of officer time in preparing the first draft will result in delays to Local Plan preparation.</p> <p>Consultants may not have the benefit of local knowledge, and will not have previous involvement in GESP or close ties with the evidence,</p>

		<p>stakeholders and Members. This can be managed to a large degree by ensuring that all Member-facing work is undertaken by officers and that PAG carefully steer the work of the consultant.</p>
<p>5. Engage a consultant to prepare the Joint Strategy on behalf of the authorities, supported in a limited capacity by a group of officers</p>	<p>There will be a dedicated project management to oversee the work.</p> <p>A consultant is likely to have additional skills and knowledge to improve the effectiveness of the Joint Strategy as a significant national proposition to government.</p> <p>It offers the potential to explore different/creative ways of presenting the Joint Strategy.</p> <p>Having a small group of officers supporting in a limited capacity should not affect Local Plan preparation.</p>	<p>Will create an additional cost resource, although funds available within the GESP budget (Planning Delivery Fund).</p> <p>Will take a couple of months to go through competitive tender recruitment process.</p> <p>Consultants may not have the benefit of local knowledge, previous involvement in GESP, and close ties with the evidence, stakeholders and Members. This could be managed to a large degree by ensuring that all Member-facing work is undertaken by officers and that PAG carefully steer the work of the consultant.</p>