

Annex 2 – Towards a common understanding of the evidence**1. Towards a common understanding of the evidence**

- 1.1 For context, it is important to understand that most data analysis for planning/infrastructure in South East and East is undertaken at the local level following the abolition of regional strategies, whilst GLA continues to undertake London-wide analysis for the statutory, strategic London Plan and other Mayoral responsibilities. Further to discussions at the recent Wider South East (WSE) Roundtables, SSPOLG (the existing Spatial Planning Officer Liaison Group with officers from London, East and South East) has initiated a technical 'stocktake' exercise, which provides an overview of available data on various strategic issues in London, the East and South East of England. This exercise, which is ongoing, will help create a shared understanding of each area's evidence bases and highlight shared strategic priorities, such as demographic trends and transport infrastructure. It will also help to identify data inconsistencies between the three areas and any strategic data gaps where additional research may be required. To support common understanding of strategic data issues, an officer group could be established to help ensure partners are clear about the methodologies and assumptions used, and what this means for their local areas. There may also be scope for joint commissioning of additional research.
- 1.2 The following represents an initial overview of issues/opportunities that are being considered. This has been informed by the technical stocktake exercise. The Roundtables concluded that the initial focus of co-operation should be on housing & transport/infrastructure to underpin economic prosperity, and then on environmental quality. Progress and timescales for investigating these issues will depend on the availability of resources across the three areas:

- Population and household projections: The GLA is expanding its models to allow production of projection scenarios across England. This capability could facilitate more in-depth co-operation across the WSE, and GLA projections could be considered alongside ONS projections, which are traditionally/widely used by WSE local authorities.
- Employment and economic projections: GLA Economics is currently considering the feasibility of extending its employment projections to cover the WSE. It will be decided by the GLA within the next couple of months if this is possible. There are other economic models, including for example the East of England Forecasting Model. Officers could explore compatibility between different models.
- Current strategic growth locations: It may be useful to bring together on one diagram the strategic growth locations set out in Local Plans across the WSE.
- Transport modelling: TfL will engage the WSE on the new Mayoral Transport Strategy, and will share its latest information on commuting patterns. It may also be desirable to produce evidence for common priorities in terms of specific strategic transport schemes that could unlock growth.

In addition to the issues above relating to the emerging priority issues, existing work is also underway on:

- Minerals and waste: Discussions at SSPOLG indicate that better waste management data is required in particular on hazardous waste and construction, demolition and excavation waste. In terms of minerals better data on movements and destinations of aggregates needs to be surveyed. Existing technical advisory groups are likely to lead/co-ordinate this work.
- Water supply and flood risk: Initial discussions with the Environment Agency and the relevant Water Resource Groups are taking place.

2. Local Authorities working together

- 2.1. SSPOLG initiated a meeting in early 2015 between the Mayor of London's demography/housing experts and key Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) consultancies working in the WSE. The Mayor of London's concerns about the

CLG/ONS population/household projections were raised and his alternative approach to inform their future work on SHMAs within the WSE was explained. (The GLA projections show different housing demand than ONS projections as the two data sets treat the impacts of recession differently). The meeting was a valuable opportunity for experts to work together towards a better understanding of the demography and housing projections and it was agreed that this group will meet periodically to improve the understanding and co-operation between relevant experts from across the WSE to contribute to the development of more consistent evidence underpinning Local Plans.

2.2. Demography experts from the WSE have also been invited to regularly attend the GLA's Population Statistics User Group. This is a forum for local authorities, now offering those outside London the opportunity to engage with counterparts in London on demography issues. However, it has to be noted that there is only a limited pool of expertise within WSE local authorities due to its specialist nature.

2.3. There is of course further scope to explore joint opportunities in other areas, such as: economic development, transport and environment. SSPOLG could initiate this, but in the light of scarce resources this needs to be done in a focused and effective way. As part of considering effectiveness, the shared understanding of the data could also support bidding documents/investment discussions and could be shared with wider partners, such as LEPs.

3. Data made available by the GLA

3.1. SSPOLG was established in 2013, and since then efforts have been made to improve the common understanding of the technical data available to councils across London and the WSE. The GLA produces/analyses a range of London-wide data to inform the London Plan and other Mayoral responsibilities. Following the abolition of regional strategies outside London, little comparable data is available in the East and South East of England, where data is predominately produced/analysed at local level to meet local need.

3.2. The Mayor of London has made available strategic data on demography and related key issues with officer colleagues within the WSE. The most up-to-date GLA datasets and pieces of research are the following:

- Migration flows for each WSE district to/from London - for the years 2002 to 2014 and for 2013/14 broken down by age are available on the website referred to in paragraph 3.4. They reflect the Government's latest internal migration data for mid-2014. For further details please also see the following research report: <http://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/ons-2014-mid-year-population-estimates--london-analysis>
- Household projections for each WSE district for every year up to 2037 - also comparing those based on CLG's 2012 and 2008 Sub-national Population Projections are available on the website referred to in paragraph 3.4. However, GLA's own trend-based projections are only available for London. A key concern for many is that CLG's household projections are not based on longer-term (10-year) migration trends.
- Overview of LEPs' Strategic Economic Plans in the Greater South East (April 2015) – focuses on key housing and transport objectives and is available on the website referred to in paragraph 3.4.

3.3. Other related issues for example on GLA research into Barriers to Housing Delivery (a common concern) and the Mayor's 2050 Infrastructure Plan are also being discussed by the SSPOLG.

3.4. The papers of all SSPOLG meetings are available here:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/organisations-we-work/policy-and-infrastructure-collaboration-across-wider-south-east>

4. Full Review of the London Plan

4.1. The following sets out an indicative timetable for a Full Review of the London Plan, which is likely to be requested by any new London Mayor (election in May 2016):

- May 2016: New London Mayor
- Autumn 2016: London Plan initial high-level consultation
- Autumn 2017: London Plan consultation draft
- 2018/19: Earliest new London Plan Examination in Public
- 2019/20: Publish new London Plan at the latest.

4.2. Key components of the technical evidence required to underpin the development of this new London Plan are listed below. This list is not comprehensive and will evolve further over the next few months. The Mayor of London will endeavour to engage the authorities within the WSE as and when that is appropriate.

- Populations, household and employment projections
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Density study
- Opportunity Areas review
- Office, industrial, retail and Town Centre review
- Regional Flood Risk Appraisal
- Infrastructure Plan related outputs
- Spatial options modelling.