

executive summary

Context

- 1.0 Nottingham City Council, as one of the Core Cities Group, has been asked to submit its "case" for how a greater partnership between itself and Government could enhance its competitiveness on a national and European scale.
- 1.2 Like a number of the other Core Cities Nottingham has chosen to meet this challenge by making its case based on engagement with two levels of economic geography. One level focuses on the key issues to be addressed at the "Core City" level, the other focuses on issues best addressed at the "City Region" level
- 1.3 Nottingham is unique amongst the Core Cities in terms of its economic and political landscapes. It has a travel to work area population of 750,000 spread across a conurbation administered by 6 local authorities with no history of former metropolitan governance (1 Unitary, 4 District and 1 County Councils). It also has a unique "City Region" economy which is genuinely "Tri-Centric" featuring 3 large cities with strong identities and both common and complementary strengths within the region. The Three Cities "Tri-City Region" encompasses nearly 2.4 million people and is worth nearly 5% of the UK economy. Here Nottingham is the only core city and a significantly larger regional centre than neighbouring Leicester and Derby but it is not overwhelmingly predominant.
- 1.4 In a landscape dominated by multi-layer, multi agency structures considerable progress has been made over the past 5 years to construct and deliver a step change in the competitiveness of Nottingham, the Three Cities and East Midlands Region as a whole. We recognise a further step needs to be taken if we are to move up a gear in terms of meeting the economic competition from peer cities and city regions internationally. This document represents a significant milestone in the development of serious

engagement and collaboration at both the Core City/Conurbation and City Region levels

- 1.5 Our current position is focussed principally in the spheres of economic development and broader placemaking. It is here that we have identified the greatest need for collaboration and the greatest degree of added value to be won from strong and pro-active engagement based on shared ownership and joint working where it is most appropriate. This is not "big bang" change but change which lays strong foundations for partnership and governance structures which are robust, flexible and capable of evolution.
- 1.6 We hope that partners and Government will recognise the proposals set out in this document as representing real progress and a realistic synopsis of the distance that we can and should travel in the short/medium term while unlocking further potential for continued development in the longer term.

1.7 Core City/Conurbation Level

- 1.8 Our case at the "Core City" level recognises the need for a greater level of partnership working and a greater coherence in delivery across the administrative and organisational boundaries across which the place people know as "Nottingham" is administered.

- 1.9 Chapter 2 of this document "**Showing the Way**" builds upon successful partnership working around transport and economic development and the two existing Local Area Agreements.

It identifies where a greater level of activity and leadership is needed at the "City"/"Conurbation" level of geography to move Nottingham further up the league of European Core Cities.

- 1.10 The shared vision is for **Nottingham to accelerate its economic repositioning to create a competitive city with an**

economy based on science and technology, demonstrating long term sustainability and thus addressing issues of social exclusion.

- 1.11 To achieve this vision three core themes are prioritised:

- Skills and Employment
- The Knowledge Economy
- Land, Transport and Infrastructure

1.12 Governance

- 1.13 To enable seamless conurbation-wide delivery and political transparency a new governance structure of a Greater Nottingham Executive will be created.

- 1.14 This entity will take the form of a Joint Committee of Local Authorities and draw on existing political leadership and contain legislation commensurate to its remit to ensure binding conurbation-wide decisions. This approach will not only be a better utilisation of existing powers but will also encompass new powers.

- 1.15 In summary we will *devolve up* from local government, powers relating to

- planning
- transport
- local area agreements

The Joint Committee would also seek to *devolve down* from central government, powers related to:

- skills and employment;
- fiscal measures and state aid;
- joint agency working.

1.16 The Conurbation Area Agreement allows us to share this vision and not only articulate how we intend to grow the opportunities but also how we intend to address market failures within our conurbation and why we need a new form of governance and now tools to undertake the job in hand.

1.17 City Region Level

1.18 A considerable amount of evidence has been drawn together over the past 3 years to reinforce our understanding that successful cities lay at the heart of successful and flourishing regional economies and that the success of these cities is driven by their ability to capitalise on productivity gains to be found through harnessing the economic potential of their City Region's. ^A

1.19 *Chapter 3 of this document "The Power of Three" - Draft City Region Development Programme and Business Case* has been developed jointly by the 6 principal authorities covering the "3 Cities Sub-Area" for the East Midlands Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies and their partners and stakeholders.

1.20 The relationship between the Derby, Leicester and Nottingham conurbations is an unusually complex and interdependent one. Three of the fifteen largest cities in England are located within 30 miles of each other. Substantial numbers of people travel between them for work, shopping, education and culture. The City Regions of Nottingham, Leicester and Derby overlap creating a sub regional economy that is genuinely "Tri-Centric", featuring 3 large cities with strong identities and both common and complementary strengths.

1.21 The "Tri-City Region" represents a level of geography which is increasingly seen as one business location by businesses operating in the knowledge economy^B in terms of their site locations and catchment over which they draw their factors of production (workforce, supply chains, business networks).

1.22 Consequently Nottingham's core city vision (to accelerate its economic repositioning to create a competitive city with an economy based on science and technology), ***wil be greatly enhanced by the success of Leicester and Derby and the ability of all three cities to fulfil their growth potential.*** Our intent is to further enhance our collaboration building on the existing complementary strengths of the cities and what they bring to the Tri-City Region:

- Nottingham as a Core City and Science City;
- Derby as an Aerospace and High-Tech City;
- Leicester as the most culturally diverse city in the UK outside of London, developing as a centre for Space Science and Technologies.

1.23 Consequently it is our vision to:

Harness "The Power of Three" to fulfil the economic potential of the 3 Cities as locations for growth in the Knowledge Economy, in so doing increasing the contribution the Tri-City Region makes to regional and national economic growth and prosperity.

1.24 This vision will be delivered across 4 action areas where "Tri-City Region" level collaboration has been identified to deliver considerable added value to the offer of each individual city with spin offs for regional and national economic growth as a result:

- **Promotion and Positioning** (as a "Tri-City Region" of Economic Significance);
- **Economic Growth³** (especially in terms of productivity);
- **Connectivity Growth³** (both transportation and digital);
- **Community Growth³** (with specific focus on the Sustainable Communities agenda).

1.25 In describing our specific actions within this framework we outline the activities most appropriately planned for/delivered at the Tri-City Region level and should be supported by Government as offering a significant contribution to both regional and national economic growth and the creation of sustainable communities in the East Midlands. They also align with those of the emerging Midlands Way inter-regional strategy.

1.26 We have derived a range of 10 "propositions" to support our actions. These represent **discussion points** where we feel that an open dialogue with central government could add significant value to achieving our shared ambitions:

Promotion and Positioning

1. The establishment of an Integrated Tri-City Region Plan to be recognised by Government and represent the 3 Cities Sub Area's contribution to the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies for the East Midlands
2. Commitment to support the prioritisation of EU investment into Cities and City Regions
3. Commitment from Government to ensure that planned Whitehall relocations take place

Economic Growth³

4. The development of a national policy around the Science City Programme which links to the City Regions agenda
5. That regional and national economic impact be recognised within the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative process

Connectivity Growth³

6. A coherent National Airports Strategy which builds upon existing Airport Masterplans and sets out clear guidelines for the investment of public funding based on market demand for airport services
7. Assurance from Government that important transport infrastructure decisions will be taken in return for a sensitive and mature approach to dealing with the congestion impacts of economic growth and success
8. Prioritise the potential of rail connectivity in Growth Point Areas and the investment this requires

Community Growth³

9. State Aid regulations governing the operations of URCs and similarly constituted organisations could be reviewed
10. Working with us as our cultural programme develops to embed the value and learning from cultural collaboration into national policy as a driver of both economic prosperity and community cohesion

1.27 These are our objectives, but in realising them we believe our proximity to the Greater South East will ensure they also make a considerable contribution to national growth priorities. London supported

by the Greater South East should continue to evolve as a global economic powerhouse alongside a growing contribution from the 3 Cities area and other city regions in its surrounding regions.

1.28 Consequently we have positioned Chapter 2 of this document as our **City Region Development Programme** for the delivery of Midlands Way and to guide our development as a sub area within the Regional Economic and Spatial strategies. We propose it proceeds to develop as a recognised **Integrated Tri-City Region Plan**, reviewed every 2 years, drawing together our contribution to the East Midlands as a recognised “Sub Area” within both the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies.

1.29 Governance

1.30 Our 3 Cities partnership differs from City Region developments being explored elsewhere as we are explicitly not trying to rethink or upscale existing governance arrangements to cover a wider geography. Our focus is on the **coordination of delivery** in key areas such as economic development, transport and spatial planning.

1.31 These structures rightly reflect the needs and aspirations of **3 different city and hinterland contexts**. Here we will continue to build on strong leadership and effective city/conurbation/county governance, which reflects local identity and need. We will also strengthen partnership arrangements where necessary at that level (The Greater Nottingham CAA is one example of this).

1.32 Cities level coordination between these arrangements should take place where it is possible to derive real added value in terms of economic competitiveness and quality of life for residents and businesses across the whole 3 Cities sub area, and where it is in the interests of sustainability and regional economic growth.

A The area over which a city has economic, social, and cultural influence – which often extends well beyond the area of directly elected political influence

B Those which rely on knowledge and skilled processes to create the goods or services they produce. These have been shown to have a sustainable and growing future in the British economy which offers a competitive advantage to these businesses based on the high proportion of graduates and skilled workers within its labour market. These have been defined in our research as organisations employing a high proportion of graduates within the workforce