



WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP

Delivering a sustainable and prosperous economy

WEST OF ENGLAND: ECONOMIC STRATEGY

DELIVERY PLAN

December 2006

The Delivery Plan sets out the key, priority initiatives and actions to be pursued by the Partnership over the next 3 years in order to bring forward the Strategy in accord with objectives. Whereas it is expected that the Strategy will be reviewed at 3 yearly intervals, the Delivery Plan will be reviewed and rolled forward annually.

BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS, PRODUCTIVITY AND GROWTH

OBJECTIVE 1: TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN COMPREHENSIVE AND CO-ORDINATED BUSINESS ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES ACROSS THE SUB-REGION THAT FACILITATE BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT, SURVIVAL AND GROWTH, AND IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS AND PRODUCTIVITY, IN WAYS CONSISTENT WITH SECURING A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND REDUCING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES.

- **PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Developing business advice and support services, including a comprehensive property and location enquiry handling service, 'tailored' to the sectoral and regeneration requirements of the West of England.**
- **ACTION:** *WEPO with Business West and SWRDA to prepare a review of current business support services in the West of England and an assessment of opportunities for enhancement.*
- **OUTPUTS:** *Proposals for enhancing current business advice and support services and thereby, prospects for: the retention and growth of key business sectors, and small and medium sized businesses; the establishment and growth of new businesses and inward locations; the resolution of the relocation requirements of local businesses, the use of environmental technologies; and, progress with regeneration schemes.*
- **TIMESCALE:** *Draft proposals for enhancement to be completed by April 2007.*

- **PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Developing and implementing an integrated programme of key sector initiatives.**
- **ACTION:** *WEPO with Bristol City Council to lead in clarifying current make-up and functioning of key sectors, and issues affecting current and future prospects. Opportunities for public support to be identified including arrangements for monitoring future performance and outcomes.*
- **OUTPUTS:** *A draft 'Review of West of England Key Sectors: Issues and Opportunities for Action' for consideration by partners. To be followed by a draft 'Recommendations for Action' setting out the specific tasks, resource requirements and organisational responsibilities, again for discussion by partners.*
- **TIMESCALE:** *Review of West of England Key Sectors to be completed by April 2007 and 'Recommended for Actions' by July 2007.*

- **PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Agreeing a protocol for co-ordinating business advice and support services and improving their effectiveness in delivering sub-regional priorities.**
- **ACTION:** *WEPO with Business West to draft an initial 'protocol' that reflects and clarifies the current role of the various agencies providing business support services and in particular, their expected contribution to the delivery of sub-regional priorities. To be revised to reflect outcome of review of Business Support services*

- **OUTPUTS:** A 'business advice and support protocol' that sets out the role of agencies.
- **TIMESCALE:** 'Protocol' for the delivery of current services to be agreed by partners in early 2007. 'Protocol' to be revised following completion of review of business support services.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT INNOVATION AND THE TRANSFER OF NEW TECHNOLOGY

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Strengthening links between universities and business

- **ACTION:** SWRDA to lead in promoting the S-Park: the Bristol and Bath Science Park. The University of Bristol to lead in developing the Bristol Science City Initiative.
- **OUTPUTS:**
- **TIMESCALE:**

OBJECTIVE 3: TO PROMOTE THE APPLICATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES, IN PARTICULAR ICT AND E-COMMERCE

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Expanding the West of England Broadband project.

- **ACTION:** Business West
- **OUTPUTS:**
- **TIMESCALE:**

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Promoting the early provision and application of new technologies in the West of England

- **ACTION:** Bristol City Council through the Digital Challenge project to promote the West of England as a national showcase for ICT innovation.
- **OUTPUTS:**
- **TIMESCALES**

SKILLS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE 1: TO MEET THE WORKFORCE AND SKILLS NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS AND REDUCE SKILL SHORTAGES

OBJECTIVE 2: TO RAISE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND BASIC SKILL LEVELS, ESPECIALLY WITHIN THE DISADVANTAGED AREAS OF BRISTOL AND WESTON-SUPER-MARE.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING FACED BY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Improving partnership working between employers, training providers and local communities

- **ACTION:** *LSC to lead the establishment of a West of England Workforce Skills Group to provide strategic direction and co-ordination of workforce skills programmes and initiatives through the preparation of a West of England Skills Strategy that identifies gaps in provision and training priorities, and an associated 3-year rolling delivery plan.*
- **OUTPUTS:** *A West of England Skills Strategy and delivery plan, updated annually.*
- **TIMESCALE:**

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Raising the responsiveness and flexibility of training and recruitment arrangements

- **ACTION:** *Jobcentre Plus to lead on the provision and extension of national (DWP/Jobcentre Plus) targeted employment and training programmes and complementary local and sub-regional programmes (eg West at Work).*
- **OUTPUTS:**
- **TIMESCALE:**

- **ACTION:** *DWP/Job centre Plus to develop and implement targeted programmes aimed at raising employment rates, particularly amongst older workers, disabled persons, lone parents, minority ethnic groups and recent immigrants.*
- **OUTPUTS:**
- **TIMESCALE:**

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Providing a high quality and comprehensive advice and guidance service

- **ACTION:** *Jobcentre Plus and Connexions*
- **OUTPUTS:**
- **TIMESCALE:**

OBJECTIVE 4: To help young people transfer from education to employment.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Increasing opportunities for work experience by persons aged 14 to 19, work related learning, vocational training and the number and range of apprenticeships.

- **ACTION:** *LSC with Connexions to secure the implementation and delivery of 14 to 19 Implementation Strategies and Plans and to seek improvements and extensions to the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme.*
- **OUTPUTS**
- **TIMESCALE**

BUSINESS SITES AND PREMISES

OBJECTIVE 1: TO PROMOTE THE PROVISION AND SAFEGUARDING OF A RANGE OF SITES AND PREMISES WHICH MEET THE FULL RANGE OF BUSINESS LOCATION AND PROPERTY REQUIREMENTS.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO SECURE THE PUBLIC INVESTMENT AND OTHER PUBLIC ACTIONS REQUIRED FOR THE CREATION OF VIABLE BUSINESS SITES AND AFFORDABLE PREMISES THAT ATTRACT PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS EXPANSION.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Maintaining comprehensive listings of available business sites and premises.

- **ACTIONS:** Local councils to provide up-to-date listings of available business sites. WEPO to maintain sub-regional summaries and a computer-based listing of business premises available for occupancy accessed on www.investwest.org
- **OUTPUT:** Up-to-date listings of available business sites and premises available electronically and as hard copy.
- **TIMESCALE:** Listings of business sites to be up-dated each April and made available by October each year. Listings of business premises to be up-dated on a continuous basis

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Preparing and maintaining a sub-regional schedule of strategic employment sites.

- **ACTION:** WEPO to maintain a sub-regional listing of strategic employment sites showing availability, constraints and actions required for development to commence, including the need for public intervention.
- **OUTPUTS:** Up-to-date listings and reviews of progress in bringing forward strategic sites and securing development.
- **TIMESCALE:** To be completed by April 2007 and up-dated at 6 monthly intervals.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Reviewing employment land allocations in local development documents taking account of 'First Detailed Proposals' and subsequent employment land studies.

- **ACTION:** Local councils supported by WEPO and further work on the Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy that takes account of up-to-date assessments of employment land demand and supply assessments.
- **OUTPUTS:** The provision of a range of employment sites in local development documents, supported by clear evidence of their relevance to local requirements that allows proposals for alternative uses to be resisted.
- **TIMESCALE:** Draft plans 2007. Adopted plans 2008.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Safeguarding allocated employment sites where necessary to meet the requirements of business.

- **ACTION:** Local councils will seek to retain existing employment sites

where there is evidence to demonstrate that the loss of the site would harm prospects for business investment.

- **OUTPUTS:** *The safeguarding of essential business sites in local development documents and in determining planning applications.*

TIMESCALE:

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Promoting public and private investment in business sites and premises, giving particular priority to strategic employment locations, key sectors and supporting planning and regeneration strategies.

- **ACTION:** *Local councils and SWRDA to continue to support the provision of business sites at Hengrove Park, Bath Western Riverside, and Weston-super-Mare (Locking Parklands). Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy (WEPO) and Local development documents (local councils) to consider the case for supporting further business development opportunities.*
- **OUTPUTS:**

INFRASTRUCTURE, REGENERATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE 1: TO IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION WITHIN THE WEST OF ENGLAND, ESPECIALLY AT STRATEGIC BUSINESS LOCATION.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Securing public investment in transport infrastructure and achieving a better geographical balance between the locations of new homes and jobs.

- **ACTION:** *The local councils to prioritise the implementation of the Joint Local Transport Plan and the preparation of local development frameworks, and seek government support for the delivery of West of England transport priorities.*

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IMPROVE MOTORWAY AND RAIL LINKS WITH THE WIDER REGION AND OTHER PARTS OF THE UK, PARTICULARLY LONDON AND THE SOUTH EAST.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Securing investment in transport links with other regions, particularly London and the South East.

- **ACTION:** *Bristol City Council to develop its role as a member of the Core Cities Group in order to alert government about the particular transport concerns arising in the West of England and the investment required..*
- **ACTION:** *Partnership representatives to negotiate with government and the SWRA for support for the West of England business case and the transport investment priorities show.*

OBJECTIVE 3: TO PROMOTE AND FACILITATE THE GROWTH OF THE AIRPORT AND PORT

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Continuing investment in new and expanded airport and port facilities.

- **ACTION:** *SWRDA, WEPO and the local councils will continue to support assessments of options for securing investment in enhancing the Port and its capacity to handle increasing volumes of trade.*

OBJECTIVE 4: TO ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RANGE OF SHOPPING, CULTURAL, LEISURE AND SPORTING FACILITIES.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Investing in improvements to the range of shopping, cultural, leisure and sporting facilities, and visitor events

- **ACTION:** *Bristol City Council to continue to bring forward proposals for the renewal of the Colston Hall, for a new 'Museum of Bristol' at Harbourside and to support the continuing improvement of Broadmead; SWRDA to bring forward the proposed Arena at Temple Meads;*

North Somerset council to continue to promote major new shopping facilities at Weston-super-Mare Town Centre.

OBJECTIVE 5: TO PROMOTE THE REGENERATION OF URBAN AREAS, ESPECIALLY, THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE CENTRES OF BATH, BRISTOL AND WESTON-SUPER-MARE, AND NEW DEVELOPMENT THAT SAFEGUARDS AND ENHANCES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Preparing delivery plans, development briefs, development partnerships and marketing initiatives, as required to implement the draft RSS.

- **ACTION:** *WEPO and local councils to prepare delivery plans and development briefs that include identification of infrastructure and related funding requirements and the need for public support, to be carried forward by local development documents and the Joint Local Transport Plan.*
- **OUTPUTS:** *The further development of the Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy and the emergence local development documents.*
- **TIMESCALE:** *2007/8*

OBJECTIVE 6: TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF RURAL AREAS

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Reviewing the West of England Rural Strategy.

- **ACTION:** *WEPO to lead an up-date of the Strategy to include reference to recent changes with rural delivery, DEFRA's rural strategy and the implications of new structural funds.*
- **OUTPUTS:** *Up-dated Rural Strategy*
- **TIMESCALE:** *To be completed during 2007.*

TOURISM

OBJECTIVE 1: TO PROMOTE BATH, BRISTOL, WETON-SUPER-MARE AND THE RURAL AREAS AS TOURIST DESTINATIONS.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Preparing marketing campaigns and programmes.

- **ACTION:** *Destination management organisations (Bristol, Bath and Somerset) to develop and implement a rolling three year tourism marketing plan aimed at increasing visitor numbers and spend.*

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IMPROVE THE CAPACITY, RANGE AND QUALITY OF TOURIST ACCOMMODATION.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Identifying opportunities for addressing shortfalls in tourist accommodation and encouraging and supporting proposals for realising such opportunities.

- **ACTION:** *Destination management organisations to monitor accommodation stock, occupancy rates and identify shortfalls in provision and encourage and support proposals that address gaps in provision.*

OBJECTIVE 3: TO SAFEGUARD AND IMPROVE THE RANGE AND QUALITY OF THE CULTURAL, HERITAGE AND LEISURE ATTRACTIONS AND FACILITIES.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Promoting and supporting public and private investment in new facilities and attractions.

- **ACTION:** *The promotion of new cultural and leisure attractions in major regeneration/development schemes.*

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Encouraging the development and improvement of sports stadia and facilities, and exploiting the potential arising out of the 2012 Olympics.

- **ACTION:** *The establishment of a strategy for the development and improvement of sports facilities linked to the 2012 Olympics.*

OBJECTIVE 4: TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE HIGH PROFILE EVENTS AND FESTIVALS.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Developing a West of England strategy for events and festivals that secures co-ordination and for realises the potential for high profile events and festivals.

- **ACTION:** *Destination management organisations to lead in establishing a West of England events group to co-ordinate the calendar of events, market major events and establish new events.*

OBJECTIVE 5: TO GENERATE ADDITIONAL BUSINESS TOURISM

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Developing new conference and exhibition facilities.

- **ACTION:** *Destination management organisations with local authorities to commission research on the potential feasibility of developing a larger purpose built conference facility.*

PROMOTION AND INFLUENCE

OBJECTIVE 1: TO GENERALLY RAISE THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROFILE OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Preparing and implementing an inward investment strategy that:

- targets key sectors;
- supports the take-up of key sites; and,
- addresses shortages of local employment and locational disadvantages.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Preparing a 'marketing package' that comprises:

- promotional literature consistent with the inward investment strategy; and,
 - relocation packages.
- **ACTION:** WEPO to draft inward investment strategy for the sub-region and assemble supporting 'marketing package'.
 - **TIMESCALE:** 2007

OBJECTIVE 2: TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT AND POLICY DECISIONS IMPACTING OR LIKELY TO IMPACT ON THE WEST OF ENGLAND ECONOMY AND SECURE AN APPROPRIATE SHARE OF GOVERNMENT CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND REVENUE FUNDING.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Seeking closer links with government about the particular concerns arising in the West of England and the opportunities arising for encouraging business investment.

- **ACTION:** Bristol City Council to develop its role as a member of the Core Cities Group in order to alert government about the particular concerns arising in the West of England and the opportunities arising for encouraging business investment.
- **ACTION:** Partnership representatives to negotiate with government and the SWRDA for support for the West of England business case and the investment priorities shown in order to deliver growth, and address worklessness and skill deficiencies.

MONITORING AND INTELLIGENCE

OBJECTIVE 1: TO IMPROVE BUSINESS AND ECONOMY MONITORING SYSTEMS, PARTICULARLY FOR KEY SECTORS.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Improving access to economic and related data.

- **ACTION:** WEPO to continue to develop and enhance the range of data available through the 'IntelligenceWest' web site and its ease of use; to include quarterly up-dates of 'key statistics' and improved access to local area data; WEPO to prepare a West of England Economic Bulletin' summarising recent events of significance to the local economy, to be up-dated at 6 monthly intervals; to up-date the Annual Economic Review.
- **OUTPUT/TIMESCALE:** *Securing the improvements to 'IntelligenceWest' by April 2007, completing the Annual Economic Review' for 2006 and the first quarterly Economic Bulletin by the end of the year,*

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Reviewing the performance of key sectors and identifying issues of significance to their well-being and growth.

- **ACTION:** *WEPO to assess business structure of key sectors, including key products and markets, and the factors affecting future prosperity, especially scope for public influence.*
- **OUTPUTS:** *Completion of key sector reports and recommended actions.*
- **TIMESCALE:** *Completion by December 2007 and kept under review. Outcomes to be reported in Annual Economic Review.*

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Monitoring the delivery of the Strategy and progress in addressing the 'key challenges' facing the local economy.

- **ACTION:** *WEPO to identify contextual indicators and with lead partners, delivery targets.*
- **OUTPUTS/TIMESCALE:** *Contextual indicators and delivery targets to be agreed by partners by February 2007 and by the Board, by March 2007.*

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY SKILL SHORTAGES AND ANTICIPATE FUTURE SKILLS REQUIREMENTS.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Ensuring the assembly of labour market intelligence to aid the planning of training and the provision of guidance services, especially to younger persons and disadvantaged communities.

- **ACTION:** *LSC and Connexions to secure accurate and up-to-date information on the West of England labour market, occupational trends and skill shortages.*
- **OUTPUTS**
- **TIMESCALE**

OBJECTIVE 3: TO KEEP UNDER REVIEW REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSINESS SITES AND PREMISES, THE POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF EXISTING LOCATIONS AND SITES, AND THE NEED FOR NEW SITES.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Maintaining a sub-regional overview of requirements for business sites and premises, particularly at strategic locations, and for key sectors, knowledge based businesses and SMEs, and the current capacity to meet requirements

- **ACTIONS:** *WEPO to maintain a sub-regional overview of strategic requirements and locations and provide context to local assessments of requirements by the local councils.*
- **OUTPUT:** *Up-to-date assessments of requirements for business sites and premises, highlighting any shortfalls.*
- **TIMESCALE:** *Strategic assessment to be completed by April 2007. Local assessments to be completed in 2007.*