

**West of England Partnership
25 March 2010**

2010/11 Draft Partnership Priorities

Purpose

To provide Board members with an opportunity to consider the draft priorities for 2010/11, prior to their consideration for adoption at the Annual Meeting in June.

Recommendation

That members give their views on the draft priorities set out in the Appendix.

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2010/11 Draft Partnership Priorities

Overall

- Make a strong case to the incoming government for infrastructure investment and increased local powers.
- Increase focus on the promotion of sub-regional objectives, priorities and outcomes, targeting specific audiences.
- Deliver Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) objectives and outcomes.
- Address sub-regional climate change priorities, including carbon reduction.
- Further strengthen financial, performance, project and risk management, Value For Money evidence and governance.

Transport

- Conclude Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) 3, including latest policies and initiatives.
- Progress development and implementation of Major Scheme Bids and promote these locally, regionally and nationally with Department for Transport.
- Negotiate the retention of the Major and Local Transport Scheme Funding and Programme; bid for resources from the new Urban Challenge Fund.
- Conclude the Memorandum of Understanding and Action Plans with the Highways Agency and with the Rail Industry, and progress the outcomes.
- Progress negotiations with First and other bus operators to improve service quality; support ticketing initiatives.
- Increase promotion of Joint Transport Executive Committee objectives and policies.
- Monitor the delivery of JLTP2 outcomes
- Achieve improvements to rail services (including increasing capacity to reduce overcrowding, maintaining the commitment to electrification and re-signalling) through negotiate with Government and the rail industry.
- Through engagement with the rail industry, achieve better rolling stock for services to, from and within the West of England, for guaranteed funding through the RUS for Yate turnback and Parkway 4th platform and for enhanced service frequency and reliability on the Severn Beach line.

Planning, Infrastructure & Housing

- Conclude the Joint Waste Core Strategy, following Public Examination, if required.
- By building on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, conclude a Supplementary Planning Document including:
 - infrastructure plan as a 'material consideration'
 - 5 year land supply supported by an evidence base, including Sub-Regional Housing Land Availability Assessment and Strategic Housing Market Assessment
 - urban design and sustainable building design and standards
 - green infrastructure.
- Conclude the Local Investment Plan, and design and implement a Local Investment Agreement under the Single Conversation.
- Conclude operational delivery and programme management arrangements for the Infrastructure Investment Plan, and extend the timescale covered by the plan to support Core Strategy delivery.
- Review employment land provision and deliverability, prioritising Locking and South Bristol.
- Engage with key sub-regional stakeholders to identify constraints and future development opportunities at Avonmouth Severnside.
- Ensure closer alignment of the planning and negotiation for all transport and other infrastructure requirements to support the effective delivery of development.
- Align the planning and investment of the sub-region and the Environment Agency in tackling flood alleviation and adaptation.
- Monitor and provide intelligence on social, economic, land use and demographic trends to assist sub-regional planning and delivery.
- Ensure the outcomes of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) influence the planned mix of housing types, tenures and affordability. Implement processes for keeping SHMA data up to date.
- Develop and co-ordinate a sub-regional housing strategy with the Heads of Housing.
- With the HomesWest Partnership strengthen the governance and monitoring arrangements for the delivery of affordable housing.
- Commission the new affordable housing delivery vehicle given the expiry of the existing HomesWest Partnership scheduled for 2011.

Skills & Competitiveness

- Conclude Sub-Regional Economic Assessment, including the identification of key sectors and locations.
- Develop and implement a strategy to identify and focus support on key growth sectors, Science City/knowledge economy and local employment sectors. Develop or work with existing key sector groups to address the following four priorities:
 - Skills
 - Sites and premises
 - Innovation and knowledge transfer and
 - Business support needs.
- Develop a West of England solution for marketing the sub-region as a world class location for business and provide a comprehensive web portal for information on business/inward investment opportunities, focusing particularly on key sectors and priority employment locations in the West of England.
- Develop the profile of Science City, SPark and the National Composites Centre and exploit opportunities for innovation programmes including specific knowledge transfer initiatives.
- Secure section 4 powers to secure authority to direct Skills Funding Agency funding through a West of England Employment & Skills Strategy.
- Pursue the MAA objectives of increasing intermediate and higher level skills and reducing worklessness, with the support of the short-term project team, through:
 - a plan agreed with Further Education providers in the sub-region for achieving level 2 and 3 targets;
 - a Work & Skills Plan to strengthen existing local authority programmes to tackle worklessness.