

## Proposed Comments on the Draft West of England Economic Strategy

## THE STRATEGY

Chapter	Page/Para	Current Content	Proposed Comment
4. The West of England Economy	Para 4.34	Within Bristol and Bath city centres, major regeneration schemes are bringing forward large amounts of new office space .....	For accuracy, this should read: <i>.....are bringing forward or provide potential for large amounts of new office space.</i>
	Para 4.8	Aerospace, insurance and professional and business services together support some 80,000 jobs. The media and creative sector comprises a diverse range of artistic, performance and communications related activity for which job estimates range from 14,000 to over 30,000. The attention given to the sector reflects the rising numbers of jobs in these activities and the presence of high profile industry leaders such as Aardman and the BBC Natural History Unit. Bath tourism reflects the significance of the City on the international tourism circuit. Finally, the inclusion of higher education reflects the scale of the sector- it supports about 13,000 jobs in the West of England- recent expansion and the benefits of the sector to the wider economy.	<i>Include reference to the dominance of specific industrial sectors in parts of the West of England, such as printing and packaging in the Midsomer Norton/Radstock area, and the resultant vulnerability of these economies.</i>
	Para 4.36	<b>Bath and Western Riverside</b>  Bath is important as a location for business and employment, and it's international profile is a key asset for the West of England .....	Change title to <i>Bath City Centre</i> .  Add section on Midsomer Norton Radstock area: <i>The wider Midsomer Norton/Radstock area provides for provision of new business accommodation. This includes the former Polestar and the Old Mills sites. A Business Plan for the Bath &amp; North East Somerset area outside Bath (Ernst &amp; Young 2006) highlights the need to view this area as a coherent whole</i>

			<i>and to focus on creating employment opportunities in the area.</i>
5. Key Challenges Facing the Local Economy	5.11	A high quality environment reinforces the attractiveness of the sub-region to investors and workers and hence, contributes to competitiveness. Unique environmental assets therefore, need to be safeguarded and enhanced. The quality and ‘vibrancy’ of the main urban centres, in particular Bristol City Centre, needs to be reinforced, and quality new development secured with historic environments sympathetically refurbished. Sustainable forms and patterns of development that promote biodiversity and minimise energy use, including travel by car, need to be secured. Support needs to be given to high quality urban design, the regeneration of outworn urban fabric, especially in town and city centres, and the conservation and enhancement of localities of particular value.	<i>Amend to read: The quality and ‘vibrancy’ of the main urban centres, in particular Bristol and Bath City Centres, needs to be reinforced, and quality new development secured with historic environments sympathetically refurbished to retain distinctiveness..</i>
6. The Strategy	Para 6.4	This section summarises the purposes of the strategy.	<i>There is no mention of tourism here although there are objectives and actions for tourism in the section that follows. Reference should be made to tourism and the link to the West of England Tourism Strategy</i>
	Para 6.4/p26	Major new opportunities for business expansion are identified in the city centres, at Weston-super-Mare and .....	Add city names for clarity: Major new opportunities for business expansion are identified in <i>Bristol and Bath</i> city centres, at Weston-super-Mare and .....
	P27	<b>BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS, PRODUCTIVITY AND GROWTH</b>  <b>OBJECTIVE 1</b> <b>To establish and maintain comprehensive and co-ordinated business advice and support</b>	

		<p><b>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.</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following business advice and support initiatives will be implemented:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .....</li> <li>• reviewing and prioritising the regeneration of disadvantaged areas, especially south Bristol and Weston-super-Mare, and communities adversely affected by job cutbacks; and,</li> </ul>	<p>Add a bullet point:: <i>Ensure convenient and efficient access to business advice services across the West of England</i></p> <p>It is suggested that this should be amended to read .....’ <i>and communities affected by economic restructuring and job losses, including the Midsomer Norton/Radstock area</i>’.</p>
	P28	<p><b>OBJECTIVE 4</b> <b>To promote and support regional and local purchasing.</b></p> <p><b><i>In support of this objective, the following initiatives will be implemented:</i></b></p>	<p>Add a bullet point: <i>Maximising local supply in relation to major development projects through the West at Work project.</i></p>
	p29	<p><b>SKILLS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE 1</b> <b>To meet the workforce and skills needs of employers and reduce skill shortages.</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following initiatives will be implemented:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving partnership working between</li> </ul>	

		<p>employers, public agencies, training providers, schools and local communities, in order to clarify and meet the workforce needs of employers and the training needs of individuals;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encouraging employer investment in training and workforce development;</li> <li>• raising the responsiveness and flexibility of training and recruitment arrangements by expanding targeted programmes including area/site based initiatives, sector and community based initiatives;</li> <li>• encouraging recruitment from non-traditional areas (eg over 50s);</li> <li>• providing a high quality and comprehensive advice and guidance service that enables workers to identify suitable jobs and training opportunities; and,</li> </ul> <p>improving housing affordability.</p>	<p><i>The support measures should refer to the West at Work project. It is suggested that the support measures should also include for targeted provision in communities experiencing economic restructuring and job losses.</i></p> <p>Suggest this is more appropriately located under Infrastructure, Regeneration and the Environment – see below.</p>
	<p>p29</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>  <b>To raise educational attainment and basic skill levels, especially within the disadvantaged areas of Bristol and Weston-super-Mare.</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following initiatives will be implemented:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extending literacy and numeracy programmes;</li> <li>• providing and developing community learning programmes; and,</li> <li>• accelerating provision of vocational diplomas.</li> </ul>	<p><i>The support measures should refer to the West at Work project. It is suggested that the support measures should also include for targeted provision in communities experiencing economic restructuring and job losses.</i></p>

			Objective 2 should refer to raising educational attainment in disadvantaged areas of Bristol, Weston-Super-Mare and <i>other pockets of under attainment</i> . It is suggested that the support measures should include <i>maintaining and developing areas of excellence in educational provision</i>
p33	<p><b>INFRASTRUCTURE, REGENERATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE 1</b>  <b>To improve connectivity and reduce traffic congestion within the West of England, especially at strategic business locations.</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following initiatives will be promoted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .....-improving access to Bath Western Riverside :</li> </ul>	<p>Add an objective and support measures under <i>this heading to enable balanced and sustainable communities through a mix of housing types and tenures, with an increase in housing affordability.</i></p> <p>This should be amended to read: <i>improving access to Bath City Centre and the key city growth site of Bath Western Riverside.</i></p>	
p34	<p><b>OBJECTIVE 5</b>  <b>To promote the regeneration of urban areas, especially the enhancement of the centres of Bath, Bristol and Weston-super-Mare, and high quality, new development that safeguards and enhances environmental assets.</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following initiatives and approaches to development will be encouraged and promoted:</b></p>		

	<p>p34</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• securing urban renewal and the conservation and enhancement of high quality and historic urban environments and the diversity of the natural environment;</li> <li>• securing infrastructure investment and new development in the centres of Bath, Bristol and Weston-super-Mare; and,</li> <li>• preparing development briefs, development partnerships and marketing initiatives as required to secure the regeneration of key sites, especially within and adjacent to Bristol and Bath city centres, in south Bristol and at Weston-super-Mare.</li> </ul> <p><b>OBJECTIVE 6</b>  <b>To improve the economic well-being of rural areas.</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following initiative will be pursued:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviewing the West of England Rural Strategy; and</li> <li>• implementing the Rural Renaissance Programme and other initiatives, aimed at supporting rural areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Objective 5 addresses regeneration of the urban areas, especially Bristol, Bath and Weston-Super-Mare, while Objective 6 seeks to improve the rural economy. It is suggested that <i>Objective 5 should relate specifically to the principal urban areas of Bristol, Bath and Weston-Super-Mare.</i></p> <p>Objective 6 should recognise the relationship between the market towns and rural area and be amended to read: To promote the regeneration of market towns and improve the economic well-being of rural areas. The support for this objective should include: <i>establishment of clear objectives and roles as a basis for investment in and enhancement of the market towns.</i> The reference to the West of England Rural Strategy should read: reviewing <i>and developing</i> the West of England Rural Strategy.</p>
	<p>p35</p>	<p><b>TOURISM</b>  <b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>  <b>To improve the capacity, range and quality of tourist accommodation.</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following strategic initiatives will be pursued:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identifying opportunities for addressing</li> </ul>	<p><i>The support work should include research to</i></p>

		<p>shortfalls in tourist accommodation and encouraging and supporting proposals for realising such opportunities.</p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE 5</b>  <b>To generate additional business tourism</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following strategic initiatives will be pursued:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing new conference and exhibition facilities; and,</li> <li>• maximising the conference and exhibition opportunities provided by existing and proposed facilities.</li> </ul>	<p><i>quantify shortfalls in provision.</i></p> <p><i>The support work should include identification of opportunities through collaboration with the Universities, key sectors and international links.</i></p>
		<p><b>MONITORING AND INTELLIGENCE</b>  <b>OBJECTIVE 3</b>  <b>To keep under review requirements for business sites and premises, the potential contribution of existing locations and sites, and the need for new sites.</b></p> <p><b>In support of this objective, the following initiatives will be implemented:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintaining a sub-regional overview of requirements for business sites and premises, particularly at strategic locations, and for key sectors, knowledge based business and SMEs; and,</li> <li>maintaining a sub-regional overview of the current capacity to meet requirements for business sites and premises.</li> </ul>	<p><i>This should include reference to monitoring and review against the targets set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy.</i></p>

## DELIVERY PLAN

Page	Current Content	Proposed Comment
4	<p><b>SKILLS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE 1: TO MEET THE WORKFORCE AND SKILLS NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS AND REDUCE SKILL SHORTAGES</b></p>	<p><i>Actions should refer to the West at Work project, including its focus on skills for key sectors and maximising local training and job opportunities related to key site developments.</i></p>
7	<p><b>BUSINESS SITES AND PREMISES</b></p> <p><b>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.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> 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)</p>	<p><i>Amend to; .....Hengrove Park, Bath: Bath City Centre (incl.Western Riverside eastern end).</i></p>
	<p><b>INFRASTRUCTURE, REGENERATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE 4: TO ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RANGE OF SHOPPING, CULTURAL, LEISURE AND SPORTING FACILITIES.</b></p> <p><b>PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Investing in improvements to the range of shopping, cultural, leisure and sporting facilities, and visitor events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ACTION:</b> Bristol City Council to continue to bring forward proposals for the renewal of</li> </ul>	<p><i>Amend to include support for redevelopment of Southgate in Bath city centre and delivery of</i></p>



	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>the Future for Bath Vision.</i></p>
	<p><b>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.</b></p> <p><b>PRIORITY INITIATIVE:</b> Preparing delivery plans, development briefs, development partnerships and marketing initiatives, as required to implement the draft RSS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ACTION:</b> 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.</li> </ul>	<p>Amend to: WEPO and local councils to prepare <i>regeneration strategies</i>, delivery plans and development briefs .....</p>
	<p><b>TOURISM</b></p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE 1: TO PROMOTE BATH, BRISTOL, WETON-SUPER-MARE AND THE RURAL AREAS AS TOURIST DESTINATIONS.</b></p>	

	<p><b>PRIORITY INITIATIVE: Preparing marketing campaigns and programmes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ACTION:</b> 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.</li> </ul>	<p>There is a need to clarify what is meant by DMOs, particularly where the functions of marketing, city centre/destination management and skills/business development are not contained within one organisation. It may be more appropriate to state '<i>Destination management/tourism marketing and promotion organisations (Bristol, Bath and Somerset) to develop .....</i>'</p>
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