

Bath & North East Somerset

West of England Devolution Proposition
Members Briefing
20th January 2016



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Devolution

“The transfer or delegation of power to a lower level, especially by central government to local or regional administration”



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The West of England Proposition

*'A prosperous economy with a rising
quality of life for all'*



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The West of England



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Regional Strengths

- WoE generates some £28bn in economic output
- Strong historic performance:
 - Highest GVA growth rate 1997-2013
 - Demonstrated above average UK productivity
 - Home to a highly skilled / creative workforce
 - Highest population growth rate between the last 2 censuses



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Regional Challenges

- **Funding** continues to decrease
- **Post recession growth** has slowed to below national average
- **Productivity**, whilst higher than the national average, has not grown in line with the rest of the UK
- **Infrastructure deficit** – including transport and housing affordability – is threatening to hold back growth
- **Population growth**
- **Some areas with high deprivation**, coupled with issues of skills attainment and access to employment



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Objectives

The West of England's overall objective is one of sustainable
Economic growth and high quality of life

- £1bn infrastructure fund with (payment –by-results (PbR) deal)
- Devolved powers to maximise the impact of this investment
- 5% uplift in the economy in terms of both productivity and jobs



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The proposition

Place

- Tackle the infrastructure deficit (£1bn Fund)
 - Transport
 - Housing
- Potential to deliver a 5% improvement in the economy
- Payment by results deal

People

- Infrastructure alone is not enough
- Joined up approach to:
 - Tackle inequalities
 - Reduce worklessness
 - Enhance fairness
 - Create opportunity for all



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Governance

- A Combined Authority would be sufficient to deliver a joined up, devolved employment and skills programme
- A directly elected mayor requested by Government to provide democratic accountability for Payment-by-Results; Planning; Transport; Housing; and Supplemental Business Rates.
- WoE governance review is already underway



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Next steps

- WoE has made significant progress to build consensus
- Ministerial meetings to agree on principles of deal February and March
- Co-design of detail with HMT officials, especially around how to prioritise Joint Spatial Plan & Joint Transport Plan project on economic grounds



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