

Prosperous Places: taking forward the review of  
sub-national economic development and regeneration

**The Government response to public consultation**  
**25 November 2008**





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# Chapter 1

## Background to the consultation

- 1.1 In Budget 2006 the Government announced that it would carry out a review of sub-national economic development and regeneration – commonly called the sub-national review or SNR. The review considered how to strengthen economic performance in England’s regions, cities and localities, as well as how to tackle persistent pockets of deprivation.
- 1.2 The review was published in July 2007 and – informed by its three key principles of ensuring policy is managed at the right spatial level, ensuring clarity of roles, and helping places to reach their potential – it set out a number of recommendations aimed at achieving four objectives:
  - empowering all local authorities to promote economic development and neighbourhood renewal, giving them added flexibilities and incentives to promote sustainable economic growth
  - supporting local authorities to work together, where they wish, across the sub-regional level to promote economic development, and providing them with the tools to do this
  - streamlining the regional tier outside London through simplified structures, streamlined decision-making and improved accountability
  - reforming central Government’s relations with regions and localities.
- 1.3 On 31 March 2008, the Government published a consultation document, *Prosperous Places: taking forward the review of sub-national economic development and regeneration*, to seek views on its detailed proposals to put in place some of the review’s recommendations. In particular, respondents were asked to comment on the process for developing new, integrated regional strategies that would build on, and replace, the existing regional economic and spatial strategies; the creation of a statutory economic assessment duty for upper tier and unitary local authorities; and the development of statutory mechanisms for collaboration on economic development by local authorities across sub-regions.

- 1.4 The consultation document was made available on the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and the Department for Communities and Local Government websites, as well as through a dedicated e-consultation website. In addition, to support the consultation, the Government Office in each of the English regions outside London held an event to hear stakeholders' views first hand.
- 1.5 The consultation closed on 20 June 2008. Over 500 responses were received from 599 respondees (many respondees sent joint responses with other respondees, with a number of them being associated with more than one of the responses received). A full list of the respondents is attached at Annex A and a full set of the responses is available on request.
- 1.6 The Government has now considered these responses – but it has not done so in a vacuum. The Government recognises that it is responding to the consultation during a period of significant challenge within the global economy. Following an initial downturn in the US housing market, the international economy has suffered a series of shocks which have exacerbated and accelerated worsening economic performance worldwide. While the proposed changes set out in *Prosperous Places* will not have an immediate effect, the current economic situation is clearly an important consideration for how the Government should implement the review. It has therefore been given careful consideration alongside the views of those who responded to the consultation and those who attended the consultation events.
- 1.7 It is clear that such economic challenges make the SNR more, not less, pertinent. Recent experience of economic turbulence has once again demonstrated the importance of local and regional organisations, such as the regional development agencies (RDAs), in the Government's response to such difficulties.
- 1.8 This response has therefore been formulated in the light of changing circumstances, but has retained the SNR's original purpose and focus on benefiting the sub-national economy in the long-term. It sets out the Government's proposals to introduce a more streamlined and refined framework for sustainable sub-national economic development in England. It also stresses the need for individual communities, localities and regions to have a greater say in the economic decisions that matter most – over jobs, employment and opportunity.
- 1.9 In particular, the Government believes that the proposals set out in the SNR for a new regional strategy provide a crucial element of the refined approach to sub-national economic development. The new regional strategy will:

- allow regions and localities to work together to produce a holistic and comprehensive plan for the development of their area, with economic development, housing, planning, energy supply and transport better aligned towards achieving sustainable economic growth, which is consistent with our commitments to tackle climate change; and
- provide a clear framework for investment which local, regional and central Government partners can work towards, ensuring greater agglomeration benefits and impact from spending.

1.10 It is important to recognise that the proposals outlined in this document do not mark the entirety of the Government's response to the SNR, nor its end. The Government has been working progressively since July 2007 to clarify economic development structures and empower local and regional partners through a range of aligned proposals. These include:

- *multi-area agreements and local area agreements* – the Government's introduction of multi- and local-area agreements has already encouraged local authorities to think further, and in more detail, about the economic issues which matter to their local areas. Multi-area agreements (MAAs) in particular have brought local areas together to focus on those economic issues which most affect them and to work in collaboration to address real economic challenges. Through the simplification of local-area agreement (LAA) targets, the Government has also acted to ensure that local authorities are less constrained by the reporting requirements of central Government;
- *Transforming Places, Changing Lives: a framework for regeneration* – this document set out Government's vision for regeneration for consultation. It set out proposals to bring partners together to tackle the underlying economic causes of decline by tackling worklessness, promoting enterprise, and giving people the skills to progress;
- *Regional Select Committees* – Parliament has now agreed proposals for regional select committees to provide the linkage between national and regional scrutiny;
- *business rates supplement, prudential borrowing and other financial mechanisms* – these are new freedoms and flexibilities which the Government has introduced to give local authorities and partners the opportunity to fund and prioritise expenditure on those economic issues which are most important. Through the forthcoming business rates supplement, the Government will also ensure that local areas have further choices over investing in their own economic success, with local authorities working more closely with their business communities to drive local economic progress; and

- *Regional Funding Advice 2008* – the regional funding advice (RFA) process has once again provided regions with an opportunity to inform the Government's view of what is most important to them – by asking regions, working with their localities, to advise the Government on how it can best utilise its finite funding.

1.11 Therefore, in this context, this document sets out how the Government, following its consideration of the consultation responses, the views expressed at the consultation events and the current economic situation, has decided to proceed with implementing the SNR. It also provides a brief analysis of the responses received to each of the consultation questions and explains the Government's next steps.

# Chapter 2

## Delivering the SNR – the Government's approach following consultation

- 2.1 In *Prosperous Places*, the Government set out its proposals for taking forward some of the SNR's key reforms and putting in place a comprehensive programme for their implementation.
- 2.2 Responses to the consultation, on the whole, strongly backed the aims and purposes of the review. Respondents particularly welcomed the proposals for a new single and integrated regional strategy in each region. They also supported the proposal that local authorities should have a new duty to carry out an economic assessment of their areas and the suggestion that the Government should facilitate stronger sub-regional collaboration between local authorities.
- 2.3 However, alongside this broad support for the Government's proposals, a number of respondents had concerns, particularly on the issues of accountability, governance, leadership and engagement.<sup>1</sup> The Government has listened to these concerns, as well as taking account of changing economic circumstances, and now intends to take forward refined proposals on:
- the creation of an economic assessment duty on upper tier and unitary local authorities;
  - ways for local authorities to set-up formal collaborative arrangements on economic development;
  - the production of the new regional strategy and reformed regional governance structures; and
  - the delegation of decision-making by RDAs to local authorities and sub-regional partners.

### Local authority economic assessment duty

- 2.4 The Government presented three options in relation to implementing the proposed duty on local authorities to carry out an economic assessment of their area. These were:

<sup>1</sup> For further detail on the issues raised by respondents, see chapter 3.

- *option 1* – primary legislation would be introduced to place a duty on lead authorities to carry out an assessment of the economic conditions of their area. The lead authority would be required to have regard to any guidance issued by the Government as to how they should prepare the assessment;
- *option 2* – as with *option 1*, there would be a requirement on local authorities to assess the economic conditions of their area. There would, however, be no requirement on local authorities to have regard to guidance issued by the Government. The legislation would instead set out a small number of priority areas that the assessment would be required to cover; and
- *option 3* – no new duty would be introduced and local authorities would instead continue to fulfil their current duties and make use of their existing powers to play a stronger role in economic development.

2.5 Following consideration of the consultation responses, **the Government intends to legislate for *option 1*, whereby the new duty is created and underpinned by statutory guidance.** The Government has decided to take this approach as it believes it is important to set out some broad principles on the scope of the assessments to ensure that they have maximum impact and are of most use to local authorities and their stakeholders. The Government believes that it is better to set this out in guidance rather than in legislation and will consult on draft guidance. This guidance will be produced in the spirit of the Central Local Concordat and will be based on the model set out in *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities*<sup>2</sup>. The Government is also currently working closely with the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) to develop practical, sector-led guidance based on case studies.

2.6 *Prosperous Places* also explained that, in two tier areas, the economic assessment duty would fall upon the upper tier local authorities. **It is, however, the Government's intention to place a duty on those upper tier authorities to work closely with district councils in their area in completing their assessment. There will be a corresponding duty on district councils to co-operate with the upper tier.** This will ensure that counties and district councils work closely together in the preparation of the assessments and that both tiers are able to work from a consistent economic evidence base.

2.7 The Government will examine suggestions made in response to the consultation on additional information that could be made available to local authorities undertaking the assessments. The Government will explore with the Office for National Statistics and other data providers the feasibility of further improving datasets to support economic development – the principal constraints being

<sup>2</sup> *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities – Statutory Guidance*, HM Government, July 2008

the sample sizes of national surveys, as well as disclosure issues arising from administrative data sets.

- 2.8 *Prosperous Places* also stated that local authorities undertaking the assessments would be required to consult certain named bodies. It set out that local authorities would also be provided with the power to require information from those named bodies within a specified period of time. On reflection, however, the Government has decided to take a lighter touch approach. While forthcoming legislation will list those public sector bodies that local authorities will be under a duty to consult in preparing their assessments, **the Government does not intend to place a specific duty on these named partners to cooperate with local authorities in preparing the assessments.**
- 2.9 These bodies (with the exception of the Greater London Authority) are already subject to a duty under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to co-operate with local authorities in agreeing LAA targets and the Government believes that a further duty to co-operate is unnecessary. Further to this, these bodies are already engaged with local authorities in the context of their sustainable community strategy, as well as LAA negotiations and, in many instances, are represented on local strategic partnerships. Local authorities should, wherever possible, build dialogue on the economic assessments into this existing framework.
- 2.10 Local authorities will also be expected to consult with private sector and third sector bodies in preparing their assessments, as it is important that they engage with a broad cross-section of partners. The new duty to involve, set out in section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act and coming into force in April 2009, will support this engagement. This duty requires local authorities to take those steps they consider appropriate to involve representatives of local individuals, groups, businesses or other organisations likely to be affected in the exercise of their functions. Local authorities will need to take account of this duty in determining who they should consult on an economic assessment.

### **Extending the duty to London**

- 2.11 The Government put forward three options for how the duty might apply, or not, to London:
- *option 1* – a duty is placed on London boroughs to undertake an assessment of their local area, with a statutory requirement placed on them to consult with the Greater London Authority in preparing their assessment. Boroughs could discharge this duty individually or jointly with each other;

- *option 2* – a joint duty is placed on the London boroughs and the Greater London Authority to prepare an assessment. It would be for the borough and the Greater London Authority to decide the best way of discharging this duty, but it could be carried out on a pan-London or sub-regional basis, and
- *option 3* – no duty is applied to London.

2.12 Given the views expressed in response to the consultation document, **the Government intends to proceed with *option 1* – placing a duty on the London boroughs to carry out an assessment of their local area.** The Government will legislate for this, alongside the duty as a whole, in forthcoming legislation.

## Supporting sub-regions to collaborate on economic development

2.13 As the SNR set out, current administrative boundaries rarely capture cohesive functional economic areas, with housing and labour markets, for example, often cutting across multiple jurisdictions. As such, the need for effective collaboration between local authorities is clear.

2.14 In some areas, local authorities are already working in partnership across the wider sub-region, for example through MAAs<sup>3</sup>. In the SNR, the Government indicated that it wished to do more to support such arrangements, strengthen existing collaboration and encourage the creation of new partnerships. *Prosperous Places* outlined the Government's intention to legislate to allow for the creation of statutory sub-regional arrangements for economic development. The consultation demonstrated support for such formal arrangements, particularly highlighting the need for further integration at the sub-regional level on transport, skills provision and community regeneration. **The Government will therefore legislate to allow for the creation of statutory sub-regional authorities for economic development, these will be known as 'Economic Improvement Boards' (EIBs).**

2.15 These new boards will adhere to the original principles set out within *Prosperous Places*, in that:

- they will be based on collaboration between elected members of existing local authorities;
- they will not include any council tax precept;
- they will not impose additional net costs on local authorities; and
- they will provide transparent accountability for residents.

<sup>3</sup> See paragraph 1.10 above

- 2.16 The purpose of EIBs will be to improve economic development in the area covered and the overall economic conditions of the sub-region. However, the Government wishes to allow individual sub-regions the scope to propose the specific functions that could be exercised by the new boards. The legislation will therefore allow sub-regions the flexibility to propose their own functions, within the initial framework set out in legislation, and as approved by Ministers in each individual case. Sub-regions will also need to show, through an initial review of economic development across the area, that the functions proposed are appropriately delivered at that level and do not duplicate those best delivered by bodies operating at different spatial levels, taking account of issues such as market failure and efficiency<sup>4</sup>. The Government will also introduce the flexibility to add functions over time, as agreed between Ministers and the sub-region.
- 2.17 **The Government believes that the creation of Economic Improvement Boards should be voluntary in nature, with local authorities being able to 'opt-in' to the creation of an EIB if they so wish.** It should be noted, however, that it is proposed that once an Economic Improvement Board is established, membership changes – including local authorities wanting to opt out or new local authorities wanting to join – will only be possible with ministerial agreement.
- 2.18 The Government's expectation is that Economic Improvement Boards will evolve out of existing sub-regional partnerships, such as MAAs. However, there will be no requirement for any existing arrangements to be in place before an EIB can be formed. The process for establishing an EIB will be set out in forthcoming legislation.
- 2.19 As set out above, the Government wishes to allow participating local authorities the flexibility to determine the specific functions of an EIB. **The Government, therefore, does not believe that it would be appropriate to introduce an additional performance framework to cover the operation of EIBs or to use legislation to tie them into any existing target frameworks.** Instead, performance management arrangements for a particular EIB should be developed alongside the proposals to establish the board and should be aligned with existing local and sub-regional targets. For example, where an EIB is established across an area with an existing MAA, it would be appropriate for the agreed MAA targets to be adopted by the EIB.
- 2.20 Given the decision not to pre-determine any particular functions or performance framework for EIBs, **the Government feels that it is also not appropriate to introduce a duty on named partners to co-operate with the new boards.**

<sup>4</sup> Why place matters and implications for the role of central, regional and local government, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2008

### Multi-area agreements with statutory duties

2.21 To further increase the range of options for sub-regional cooperation, **the Government has decided to legislate to allow for the creation of MAAs with statutory duties.** As with existing MAAs, local authorities wishing to pursue such an agreement will nominate one authority – a lead authority – to be responsible for preparing and submitting the MAA. The Government will legislate to provide for a duty to be placed on named partners (including other local authorities in the area) to cooperate with the lead authority in agreeing targets, and a requirement for partners and the lead authority to have regard to those targets in the execution of their functions. This approach was referred to in the SNR and the intention is to broadly follow the model in place for LAAs, as set out in the Local Government and Involvement in Public Health Act 2007.

2.22 This new model for MAAs with statutory duties will be voluntary for local authorities. In addition, the current, less formal model for MAAs will be retained in order to give sub-regions as many options as possible for effective collaboration.

## Producing the regional strategy and reforming regional governance structures

2.23 *Prosperous Places* proposed that:

- legislation would be introduced to establish a new regional strategy in each region (excluding London<sup>5</sup>) that would build on, and replace, the existing regional spatial and economic strategies;
- RDAs would be given responsibility for regional planning and the executive responsibility for producing the regional strategy, working closely with local authorities and other partners, and submitting it to the Government;
- local authorities, acting collectively through new Local Authority Leaders' Forums, would input to the strategy development process, sign off the draft strategy on behalf of the region's local authorities, and scrutinise strategy implementation; and
- regions would be provided with the scope to collectively agree decision making structures and processes which best meet their individual regional needs.

2.24 The Government welcomes the strong endorsement received from the consultation for the new regional strategy and the benefits it would bring in energising each region, outside London, around a compelling vision of

<sup>5</sup> In London, the Mayor will continue to be responsible for preparing a suite of strategies for London, including its spatial development plan (the London Plan) and transport and economic development strategies.

sustainable economic growth<sup>6</sup>. Many respondents agreed that a single integrated regional strategy would ensure closer alignment between economic and spatial planning and would provide a vital means of prioritising the region's activity to drive forward economic development and regeneration.

- 2.25 Within this overall support, a variety of issues were raised. In particular, there were concerns, on the one hand, that a democratic deficit would result from giving the regional planning function to the RDAs. On the other hand, there were concerns about a possible weakening of focus on economic growth.
- 2.26 The Government has considered these arguments carefully and has also welcomed the proposal from the RDAs and the Local Government Association for sign off of the regional strategy to be a joint responsibility. The Government also acknowledges the excellent progress that is being made in many regions towards putting new arrangements in place. **In light of the consultation responses and the progress being made by regions, the Government has refined its plans for producing the regional strategy and ensuring appropriate regional governance arrangements.**
- 2.27 The Government's revised proposals are as follows:
- a genuinely collaborative approach between RDAs and local authorities is needed to produce the draft regional strategy and **the Government will therefore give the RDA and the Local Authority Leaders' Board (previously referred to as the Leaders' Forum) joint responsibility for the regional strategy, including its drafting, implementation plan and monitoring of its delivery;**
  - as a result, the key regional planning functions of the regional assembly will pass to the RDA and Local Authority Leaders' Board. Other residual functions will also pass to successor bodies as required and the need for regional assemblies will end. We will repeal any legislation relevant to the assemblies and transfer funding to successor bodies;
  - the Government recognises that some regions have already gone a long way towards agreeing arrangements for producing and agreeing the regional strategy. Where this is not the case, the Government expects RDAs and local authorities to show early progress towards reaching an agreement. **Where they are unable to reach agreement, or where one side acts unreasonably, the Government will take a power to allow Ministers to direct the process for producing the draft strategy, with the expectation being that the task of leading the strategy's development would then fall to the RDA. The Government will also be able to intervene where the Leaders' Board established for a region fails to operate effectively;** and

<sup>6</sup> 'Sustainable economic growth' refers to economic growth that can be sustained and is within environmental limits, but also enhances the environment and social welfare, and avoids greater extremes in future economic cycles.

- the Government will require that **the RDA and Local Authority Leaders' Board jointly submit an agreed draft strategy to Ministers**, but **where the RDA and the Local Authority Leaders' Board are unable to agree on a draft strategy to submit, Ministers will be able to direct them to submit statements detailing their disagreements and any papers that have been prepared.**

2.28 The Government believes that these proposals will allow for a more joined up approach to strategy making and governance within the regions. The proposals retain the RDAs' economic expertise and focus. Local Authority leaders, as democratically elected leaders of their communities, will bring that democratic accountability to the process. The Government believes that these proposals will form the basis for a stronger partnership at the heart of each region, which will be focused on the pursuit of sustainable economic development and effective sub-national delivery. More detail on these proposals is set out in the following paragraphs.

### **Local Authority Leaders' Board**

2.29 With regard to the development of a Local Authority Leaders' Board in each region, the Government has decided to retain broadly the criteria that were consulted on for the Local Authority Leaders' Forum, namely that the Leaders' Board should be:

- streamlined and manageable, able to make strategic, long-term decisions, and able to engage effectively with their region's RDA;
- representative of local authorities across the whole of their region – including representing key sub-regions, upper and lower tier authorities and the political balance of leaders; and
- comprised of local authority leaders and with sufficient authority to act on behalf of all the local authorities<sup>7</sup> in the region.

2.30 As has already been noted, the Government is aware that in some regions local authorities have already begun developing new ways of working with RDAs and other stakeholders. This is a helpful start, which the Government welcomes. Local authorities will need to formalise their proposals for the Leaders' Board in each region and set these out for the Government. They will also need to work with the RDAs to agree the structures that will enable them to jointly fulfil their responsibilities for the regional strategy as well as how those functions of the regional assemblies that continue will be dealt with. These arrangements will need to be developed in discussion with the Government Offices.

<sup>7</sup> Including National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority where relevant.

## Form and content of the regional strategy

2.31 **The Government believes that the form and format of the regional strategy should be for each region to decide, but the aim should be to produce a concise and succinct document**, which broadly covers:

- an overview of the key regional challenges over the strategy period;
- how sustainable economic growth can best be delivered, having regard to employment and the key drivers of productivity (skills, innovation, enterprise, competition and investment), as well as regeneration;
- a distribution of housing supply figures consistent with addressing the Government's long term housing supply targets as well as targets for affordable housing and achieving quality homes for all, including vulnerable and socially excluded people;
- how the region will tackle climate change, including managing the impacts of unavoidable climate change and achieving development in a way which is consistent with national targets for cutting carbon emissions;
- those areas within the region identified as priorities for regeneration, investment and intervention;
- strategic requirements and provision for transport, waste, water, minerals, culture, energy and environmental infrastructure, insofar as these are not already specified in national policy; and
- additional policy areas that the Leaders' Board and RDA in each region decide and which fit with the objectives of the strategy.

2.32 **The Government believes that the regional strategy should set the framework in regions outside London for the activities, plans and investment decisions of the RDA, the Homes and Communities Agency and other public bodies (eg Government agencies, Health Authorities etc.) in the region, local authorities and other regional partners, to ensure sustainable economic development.** It should set out which places and sectors should be priorities for development and investment, thus providing clarity and incentivising private sector investment in a region.

2.33 The level of detail may vary depending on the region or particular topic and will also cover appropriate sub-regional issues. This is initially a matter for the RDA and the Local Authority Leaders' Board, in consultation with other stakeholders, to determine.

2.34 Therefore, **the Government will:**

- **legislate to require each region in England, except London, to produce a regional strategy that delivers sustainable economic growth and contributes to sustainable development**
- **issue guidance on what the regional strategy would be expected to cover and on the strategy-making process**
- **provide greater clarity on national policy expectations, including reaffirming commitments to providing for long term housing needs; and**
- **legislate to require regions to produce an implementation plan to accompany the regional strategy, as well as undertake annual monitoring.**

### **Producing the regional strategy**

2.35 The Government wants to ensure that the process is as streamlined as possible, by:

- reducing the numbers of strategies required in a region;
- setting clearer objectives and outcomes for regional strategies up front;
- embedding Examination in Public (EiP) into the regional strategy making process; and
- giving guidance on timing of the process – the Government is considering whether to set statutory timetables.

2.36 The Government wants to allow maximum flexibility for the regions in deciding the process and structures for producing their regional strategy. It therefore accepts that there will be different detailed arrangements for preparing, consulting on and producing the regional strategy in different regions. The Government will, however, set out high level principles in legislation and guidance, as well as encouraging the exchange of best practice.

### ***Engaging stakeholders***

2.37 **The Government is committed to stakeholder engagement as a fundamental feature of the processes for developing and delivering the regional strategy and there will be a duty on the RDA and Leaders' Board to consult and engage stakeholders. As part of this duty, the RDA and Leaders' Board will be required to prepare, and comply with, a published statement setting out how they will consult and engage with stakeholders and communities. The Government will provide further guidance on this issue.** We are aware of innovative and effective approaches in many regions for engaging with a wider range of stakeholders and want to build on these examples and share best practice.

2.38 It will also be important that there is a close dialogue on the production of the strategy and implementation plan between the RDA and Leaders' Board, and those central Government departments and their agencies whose programmes will impact on the achievement of its objectives, in order to ensure alignment of priorities and investment.

### ***Examination in Public***

2.39 The Government intends that early input by an EiP panel will be an opportunity to flag issues concerning the evidence base and to identify substantive issues of controversy at an early stage. The Government proposes to clarify in guidance the role of the EiP panel at different stages of the process, including proposals for an open session to give members of the public access to the panel.

2.40 **The Government will legislate for the EiP panel to report to the Leaders' Board and the RDA (as well as to Ministers), and would expect the Leaders' Board and RDA to consider the panel's recommendations and explain how they have done so before they submit the draft strategy to Ministers.**

2.41 In placing a joint duty on the RDA and Local Authority Leaders' Board to agree how to produce the regional strategy, the Government is giving greater flexibility to regions to determine their respective arrangements for decision-making. Ultimately, the success of the streamlined process will depend on the Leaders' Board and RDA working together in the interests of their region.

### **Regional strategy implementation plan**

2.42 **The Government has decided that it will legislate to require the RDA and Local Authority Leaders' Board to jointly produce an implementation plan setting out how the regional strategy will be delivered.** This would cover detailed matters concerning delivery. For example specifying the details of agreed public investment, which would not be included in the regional strategy itself.

2.43 The implementation plan will not be signed off by Ministers but the RDA and Leaders' Board will need to ensure that it has the buy-in of other regional stakeholders. However, the plan will not need to go through the same formal processes as the regional strategy itself. To ensure the alignment of regional priorities and the programmes of central Government departments and their agencies, those departments and agencies whose programmes will impact on the achievement of the regional strategy objectives will need to be closely involved in drawing up the plan, in order to ensure alignment of priorities and investment.

2.44 In addition, **the Government will require the RDA and Local Authority Leaders' Board to produce an annual monitoring report on delivery of the regional strategy.** This requirement is not intended to substitute for the regular performance and accountability reporting by the RDAs to BERR.

### **Scrutiny and accountability**

2.45 As set out above, the Government is giving joint responsibility for developing and implementing the regional strategy to the Leaders' Board and RDA. In view of this, the Government believes it is no longer appropriate for the Leaders' Board to have a separate regional scrutiny function.

2.46 However, as part of the *Governance of Britain* programme, the Government proposed the introduction of regional select committees to scrutinise regional policies in England. The Modernisation Committee of the House of Commons published its report on the issue in July this year, in which it made recommendations for establishing both regional select committees and regional grand committees<sup>8</sup>.

2.47 The Government responded to the report<sup>9</sup>, agreeing with the Committee's central proposals, which would be implemented on a temporary basis and reviewed at the end of the current Parliament. These proposals have now been debated by Parliament and it has been agreed that:

- regional select committees for each of the English regions (except London) will be established, but they should ensure their scrutiny does not interfere with existing lines of accountability and departmental select committee scrutiny at a national level;
- regional bodies and regional strategies will be the chief focus for the committees; and
- regional grand committees, comprising all MPs in the region, will meet once or twice a year, and will include an oral questions slot for the Regional Minister.

2.48 The Government believes that, subject to the views of the Committees themselves, these committees will be able to carry out the necessary scrutiny of the new regional governance arrangements, as well as regional strategy development and implementation.

2.49 Further to this, RDAs will continue to be held to account by Parliament, through the Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, and in accordance with their performance framework. The performance of local authorities, who are of course accountable to their electorates, will continue to be managed within the context of the local government performance framework.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmmodern/282/282.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm73/7376/7376.pdf>

2.50 Funding for developing the regional strategy will reflect whichever structure is agreed in the region and those bodies responsible will be accountable for the use of public funds in the normal way.

## Delegation of decision-making by RDAs

2.51 A key principle of the SNR was to ensure that, in areas of economic importance, decisions are made at the right spatial level, by devolving powers and responsibilities in line with economic outcomes. To support this, the SNR stated that RDAs would become increasingly strategic bodies, focusing on programme rather than project management. It proposed that, where outcomes were most effectively delivered at the local level, the RDA would delegate funding for programmes to local authorities to plan and deliver, rather than doing so itself. Legislation would be required to enable local authorities to do this.

2.52 The Government has examined the responses to the consultation and has also been working with RDAs and representatives of local government to develop further its own thinking on delegation and the appropriate accountability and financial framework. **The Government has concluded that, with the proposed joint approach between the RDAs and the Leaders' Board to producing the regional strategy and a joint approach between RDAs, local authorities and other sub-regional partners to investment planning for the strategy's delivery, legislation is not needed to deliver the spirit of the SNR reforms. Investment planning will allow local authorities and sub-regional partners to have a determining role in planning and delivering interventions which are most effectively delivered at a sub-regional level, although formal approval and accountability will remain as now with the RDA.**

2.53 The Government is committed to moving the RDAs to a more strategic, programme management role, and wants them to work in a strong, constructive partnership with local authorities and other sub-regional partners in planning and funding interventions and investment in their region to deliver economic outcomes. This will mean that RDAs will continue to deliver interventions themselves where it is appropriate for them to do so (eg where interventions are more appropriately made at regional level or where partners agree that the RDA is best placed to deliver them); otherwise they will commission programmes and projects from others (eg local authorities, universities, sub-regional partnerships etc.).

2.54 Partners will have considerable scope for planning how to deliver the outcomes sought through the commissioned work and if RDAs' and partners' appraisal processes are aligned then formal approval should be streamlined and not onerous. This approach will place greater responsibility for planning and delivering with sub-regional bodies but will also, through retaining formal responsibility with the RDA, allow them to preserve strong accountability for their spend and retain flexibility within their current 'single pot' budget.

2.55 To support this approach, **the Government will work with the RDAs, local authorities and other partners to develop an investment planning approach to delivering the priorities in the regional strategy. This will promote greater decision-making on detailed delivery at the local level by local authorities and other partners. Guidance will also streamline existing RDA appraisal processes so that they support RDAs' more strategic, programme management role and encourage greater freedom for local authorities and other partners in developing their proposals for delivery.**

# Chapter 3

## Analysis of responses to individual consultation questions

3.1 The consultation document asked 15 specific questions which respondents were invited to answer. The following section looks at each of these questions, summarising the views of those who responded.

**Q1. *How should RDAs satisfy themselves that sufficient capacity exists for programme management and delivery at local or sub-regional level?***

3.2 A variety of views were expressed on the detailed process for the delegation of decision-making by RDAs, including that:

- RDAs should not seek to introduce additional bureaucracy and should make use of existing performance frameworks such as the comprehensive area assessment;
- existing delivery arrangements should be used where they are already in place;
- local authorities' past track records in programme management and delivery should be taken into account; and
- the process should be independent and transparent and that an independent body, such as the Audit Commission, should undertake the assessments.

3.3 Some respondents noted that RDAs already commission a wide range of partners to deliver projects as well as granting a substantial proportion of their funding and delivery to local authorities or sub-regional partnerships. Further to this, some replies advocated an investment planning-led approach to delegation, with the RDA delegating delivery based on clearly identified priorities and outcomes as set out in the regional strategy.

3.4 Other replies, however, expressed concern about the capacity of local authorities to fulfil a strengthened role in promoting economic development and argued that they should be provided with the tools and resources to support this change. Some respondents also said that delegation should not be restricted to local authorities but should include a range of other organisations and bodies. The roles of district and parish councils were also mentioned, with some respondents expressing concern that they might not be sufficiently involved in the new arrangements

- 3.5 Overall, the majority of respondents advocated a non-prescriptive approach to delegation, arguing that arrangements should be sufficiently flexible to recognise the different models of governance.

**Q2. Do you agree that local authorities should determine how they set up a local authority leaders' forum for their region, and that the Government should only intervene if the required criteria are not met or if it failed to operate effectively? If not, what would you propose instead?**

- 3.6 The majority of replies received to this question agreed that local authorities should determine how they set up a Local Authority Leaders' Forum (now referred to as a Leaders' Board). However, almost all of the responses included qualifications about the need for the Leaders' Forum to be fully representative.
- 3.7 In addition to this, there were a number of comments about the need for the regional strategy to be jointly agreed between the region's local authorities and the RDA before its submission to the Government in order to secure the necessary democratic accountability for decisions on regional planning matters.
- 3.8 Some respondents, however, raised concerns about the ability of local authority representatives to reach an agreement on what was best for a region as a whole and about the lack of clarity over membership, the role and function of the Leaders' Forum and its relationship with other bodies such as the Homes and Communities Agency or local MPs.
- 3.9 The majority of replies agreed that the Government should only intervene as a last resort, namely if the criteria set out in *Prosperous Places* were not met or if the forum failed to operate effectively. The view was also expressed that if there was to be legislation to enable the creation and operation of Leaders' Forums, it should allow flexibility to accommodate different arrangements being developed as a result of the differing circumstances of each region.

**Q3. Are the proposed regional accountability and scrutiny proposals proportionate and workable?**

- 3.10 On the whole, of those who responded to this question, more disagreed that the proposals were proportionate and workable than those who agreed. In fact, in responding to this question a wide variety of concerns were expressed, for example:

- while the proposals for producing the regional strategy seemed clearer, the mechanisms to scrutinise them seemed more complicated and open to conflicts of interest;
- there was a perceived democratic deficit produced by giving responsibility for developing the strategy – and its ultimate sign off – to the RDA, and insufficient weight given to the sign-off by local authorities;
- that social, economic and environmental partners were being excluded from the arrangements;
- that the voice of business was being diluted, and that increased local authority power over regional economic planning would result in the regional strategy following the line of least political resistance rather than focusing on evidence-based policy-making; and
- that there was a need to ensure that the new accountability arrangements were robust and representative.

**Q4. Do you agree that the regional strategy needs to cover the elements listed at paragraph 4.13? Are there other matters that should be included in the regional strategy to help in the delivery of key outcomes?**

- 3.11 The majority of respondents who replied to this question agreed that the regional strategy needed to cover the elements set out in *Prosperous Places* – and a number of respondents noted that these elements needed to be driven by regionally specific issues.
- 3.12 A wide range of further suggestions were made by respondees but there was no consensus. For example, many argued that RDAs should be tasked with promoting economic growth and that the regional strategy should not become too focused on sustainable development. However, other respondents argued that the regional strategy needed to take a more holistic approach, with sustainable development at its heart rather than just economic growth.
- 3.13 Replies to this question also noted that the remit of the regional strategy needed to include cross-cutting issues; some suggested it should cover issues such as health and well-being, and equality and diversity. Others said that the strategy should give equal weight to rural and urban areas.
- 3.14 Many respondents pointed out that the evidence base for the regional strategy would be crucial and wanted to see wide stakeholder engagement from the outset. Most also welcomed the intention to keep the regional strategy as a succinct document, which would set out the region’s vision and that it should be supported by a statutory implementation plan.

**Q5. Do you agree with the way in which we propose to simplify the preparation of the regional strategy as illustrated in the figure (on page 35 of the consultation document), in particular allowing flexibility for regions to determine detailed processes? If not what other steps might we take?**

- 3.15 Responses to this question showed a high level of support for the process set out in *Prosperous Places* – most respondents welcomed the principle of a regional strategy with a simplified and accelerated process and some felt it looked more straightforward than existing arrangements. In addition, most replies welcomed the flexibility for regions to determine detailed aspects of the process. However, a number of respondents also wanted more clarity on the different aspects of the process to be set out in guidance – particularly with respect to stakeholder engagement, the new approach to examinations in public (EiP), and the process for signing off the strategy.
- 3.16 More specifically, many respondents had concerns about what they saw as insufficient engagement with stakeholders outside of the local authority sector – particularly during the early stages of the process.
- 3.17 With regard to EiP, while many respondents agreed with the Government’s proposals to involve the EiP panels earlier in the strategy development process, they were unsure how this would work in practice and called for the Government to elaborate on its proposals. In addition, a significant number of respondents were concerned about a potential conflict between the Government’s desire to streamline the process and the additional complexities that might arise from what was seen as a two stage EiP – the anticipated impact of this two stage approach on the overall timetable for revising the strategy was a key concern for many.
- 3.18 The majority of replies to this question welcomed the proposed flexibility over the timing of reviews of the strategy and a number of respondents said that this should be a matter for regions to decide. A small number of respondents commended the indicative two year timescale and many recognised the need to speed up decision-making, particular compared with current regional planning. However, most respondents felt that a two year timescale for developing a new strategy was aspirational rather than deliverable.
- 3.19 Strong views were expressed over the role of the Local Authority Leaders’ Forum from a diverse range of stakeholders. A number of respondents also thought that the Government had underestimated the complexity and the time implications of the two stage sign off process involving local authorities as well as the RDA.

3.20 Concerns were also expressed about the prospect of continuous cycles of strategy formulation and review, coupled with extensive scrutiny regimes, and what this might add up to in terms of additional burden on RDAs.

**Q6. Do you think that the streamlined process would lead to any significant changes in the costs and benefits to the community and other impacts?**

3.21 Respondents provided a variety of responses to this question. A number of replies, for example, pointed to benefits in terms of the potential for the regional strategy development process to be more efficient and result in better co-ordination of infrastructure planning, economic development, skills provision and housing supply – and to deliver greater benefit to communities.

3.22 On the whole, while many respondents felt that it would be logical to expect cost savings to follow a streamlined process, they considered the main benefits would be improved quality of policies and programmes as well as maintaining and enhancing stakeholder engagement and commitment.

3.23 However, it should be noted that a number of other respondents were unconvinced that the streamlined process would produce reduced costs or increased benefits. Several replies also commented that cost efficiencies should not be sought at the expense of involving a wide range of stakeholders in the strategy development process.

**Q7. Which of the options for the local authority economic assessment duty (or any other proposals) is most appropriate?**

3.24 The consultation revealed widespread support amongst respondents for the proposed new duty – with only a small minority of responses objecting to the creation of such a duty. In terms of views on how the duty should be implemented, there was a very even split between those favouring statutory guidance (*option 1*) and those preferring a number of priority areas for the duty to be set out in legislation (*option 2*).

**Q8. *What additional information or support do local authorities consider valuable for the purpose of preparing assessments?***

- 3.25 Responses to the consultation revealed a broad consensus as to the need for consistency in the approach taken to preparing the assessments, particularly in the need for all local authorities fulfilling the duty to have access to consistent data sets. In addition, those replies to this question from organisations or individuals not part of the local government sector declared their willingness to make relevant data sets available for the assessments.
- 3.26 With regard to the information that should be used to underpin the assessments, many respondents called for the availability of broader data sets than those standard and statutory data sets that are currently available. A number of replies also asked that data made available should be more detailed and broken down to a local level. A number of suggestions were made with regard to other specific data sets that should be made available to local authorities undertaking the assessment.

**Q9. *How should lead local authorities engage partners, including district councils, in the preparation of the assessment?***

- 3.27 In responding to this question, many of the replies received argued that district councils should be closely involved in preparing the assessments because of the important levers they hold in relation to economic development – most notably their planning, housing and regeneration responsibilities. This view was strongly held among the majority of district councils who replied to the consultation.
- 3.28 In addition to this, many of the replies received from those outside of the local government sector argued equally strongly that those local authorities with the responsibility to fulfil the duty should engage closely with other stakeholders in their area – the business community was most often referred to here. It was also seen as important by many of the respondents that the lead local authorities should be transparent in their consultation and publish information on its progress on a regular basis.

**Q10. *Which partner bodies should be consulted in the preparation of the assessment?***

- 3.29 There was a degree of overlap between responses to this question and also to the preceding question. Respondents put forward suggestions for a wide variety of stakeholders that should be consulted in the preparation of assessments.

**Q11. Should any duty apply in London and, if so, which of the proposed models is most appropriate?**

3.30 Of the stakeholders with the most direct interest, London Councils – the body representing the 32 London boroughs – confirmed their support for the duty to apply to the London boroughs, rather than a joint duty with the Greater London Authority. Their response also stressed the need for these assessments to be carried out at a sub-regional level to reflect functional economic areas. In addition, the Greater London Authority also indicated its support for the duty to apply to the London boroughs rather than a joint duty on itself and the boroughs.

**Q12. Do you agree that there is value in creating statutory arrangements for sub-regional collaboration on economic development issues beyond MAAs? What form might any new arrangements take?**

3.31 The consultation revealed support for the proposal to introduce powers to allow Ministers to create statutory sub-regions. However, many of the respondents made their support for this proposal conditional on the process being completely voluntary in the first instance – there was no support for making statutory sub-regional arrangements mandatory.

**Q13. What activities would you like a sub-regional partnership to be able to carry out and what are the constraints on them doing this under the current legislation?**

3.32 Those respondents who answered this question were broadly supportive of statutory sub-regions taking on the responsibilities set out in the list included in the consultation paper. In particular, respondents highlighted transport, skills provision and community regeneration activity as requiring further integration at the sub-regional level. They also highlighted, however, the need for individual statutory sub-regions to be able to suggest additional areas which might be important locally.

3.33 In terms of constraints produced by existing legislation, respondents flagged a number of issues that they felt may undermine statutory sub-regions' ability to deliver; including:

- a lack of delegation from the regional/local level;
- a lack of accountability of the sub-regional level;
- a lack of capacity and expertise at the sub-regional level; and
- a lack of influence over strategically important issues (be they local or regional).

***Q14. How would a sub-regional economic development authority fit into the local authority performance framework?***

3.34 Responses to this question were broadly in favour of tying statutory sub-regions into the existing local authority performance framework. Views focused in particular on the potential for statutory sub-regions to be independent delivery arms and, therefore, the need to ensure their activity was aligned with local targets.

***Q15. Should there be a duty to co-operate at sub-regional level where a statutory partnership exists? To whom should this apply?***

3.35 The majority of those who responded to this question agreed that there should be a duty to co-operate placed on the partners involved in a sub-regional statutory partnership. Responses highlighted a number of organisations that it should cover, including: the Highways Agency; the Environment Agency; Network Rail; the RDAs; the Homes and Communities Agency; the Learning and Skills Council; local authorities; and local bodies such as schools, colleges, universities and primary care trusts.

3.36 Many respondents also felt that such a duty should not be applied in the first instance. Rather the expectation should be that partners would be allowed to manage issues within sub-regions themselves, and that any duty would only be applied in the event of a failure to engage.

# Chapter 4

## Next steps

- 4.1 As noted above, the Government plans to use forthcoming legislation to make the legislative changes needed to put in place the proposals highlighted in Chapter 2.
- 4.2 In addition to putting in place these provisions, the Government will be producing guidance to support RDAs and local authorities in making the new system work, including guidance on:
- the approach local authorities should take in producing their economic assessments;
  - the process for preparing, delivering and monitoring the regional strategy, as well as what the strategy needs to cover; and
  - how RDAs, local authorities and other partners can jointly develop an investment planning approach to delivery of the priorities in the regional strategy. This guidance will also streamline existing RDA appraisal processes so that they support RDAs' more strategic, programme management role and encourage greater freedom for local authorities and other partners in developing their proposals for detailed delivery.
- 4.3 Further to this, the Government Offices – with support from central Government – will continue to work closely with partners in the regions, particularly RDAs, local authorities and regional assemblies, to ensure that there is a smooth transition from the existing arrangements to the new systems set out in this document. In addition to the work of the Government Offices, the Government will also:
- provide a web-based compendium of advice in the form of transition FAQs, the first tranche of which have been produced and published alongside this document; and
  - establish a SNR transition steering group, with membership drawn from the English Regions Network, the RDAs and the Local Government Association, as well as a number of Government departments.

- 4.4 For their part, RDAs, regional assemblies and local authorities will be expected to demonstrate at an early stage that they have a change management programme in place, which sets out how they will implement the changes needed to institutions, relationships and processes. Government Offices will provide support to regional partners to ensure these change management plans are developed, implemented and monitored.
- 4.5 Finally, as part of that transition, regional partners will need to continue focusing on the commitment in the 2007 Housing Green Paper to reviewing regional strategies where necessary to secure the target of providing 240,000 new homes a year from 2016. This remains all the more important in the current economic climate to ensure that preparations are made to take advantage of future economic recovery.

# Annex A

## Full list of respondents

Academy for Sustainable Communities  
Accessible Retail  
Age Concern England & Years ahead  
Age Concern in Yorkshire & Humber  
Alison Walters  
Allerdale Borough Council  
Alliance Employment & Skills Board  
Alliance of Sector Skills Councils  
Alliance SSP  
Andrew Granger & Co  
Anna Doggart  
Anna Lewis  
Anne Robinson  
AOC North  
Apex Independent Ltd  
Arnold White Estates Ltd/ Hives Planning  
Arts Council England  
Arun District Council  
Arup  
Ashford Borough Council  
Association of Councils of the Thames Valley Region  
Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA)  
Association of North East Councils  
Association of Regional Observatories  
Aston University  
Audit Commission  
Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Babergh District Council  
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council  
Bassetlaw District Council  
Bawdsey Parish council  
Beatson Clark Plc  
Bedford Borough Council  
Bedfordshire and Luton Economic Development Partnership  
Bedfordshire County Council

Berkshire Association of Local Councils  
Berkshire Unitary Authorities  
Birmingham Chamber of Commerce  
Birmingham City Council  
Birmingham Science Cities Partnership  
Black Country Consortium  
Blackburn and Darwen Borough Council  
Bolsover District Council  
Boston Borough Council – Boston Area Regeneration  
Bosworth Borough Council  
Bracknell Forest Borough Council  
Bradwell Episcopal Area  
Braintree District Council  
Brantham Parish Council  
Breckland Council  
Bridging NewcastleGateshead  
Bridgnorth District Council  
Brighton & Hove City Council  
Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership  
Bristol City Council  
British Chambers of Commerce  
British Council of Shopping Centres  
British Property Federation  
British Telecom  
British Urban Regeneration Association  
British Waterways  
Bromsgrove District Council  
Broxtowe Borough Council  
Buckinghamshire County Council  
Buckinghamshire Economic and Learning Partnership  
Burnley Borough Council  
Business in Sport and Leisure  
Business Link North East  
Business in the Community  
C Barlow  
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council  
Cambridge City Council  
Cambridge Sub Regional Housing Board  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
Campaign for the English Regions (CFER)  
Campaign for National Parks  
Campaign to Protect Rural England  
Campaign to Protect Rural England – East of England

Campaign to Protect Rural England – East Midlands  
Campaign to Protect Rural England – Gloucestershire  
Campaign to Protect Rural England – Kent  
Campaign to Protect Rural England – North East  
Campaign to Protect Rural England – North West  
Campaign to Protect Rural England – South East  
Campaign to Protect Rural England – South West  
Campaign to Protect Rural England – Yorkshire and the Humber  
Carlisle City Council  
CEDOS/CSS  
Central London Forward  
Centre for Cities  
Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES)  
Centre for Public Scrutiny  
Centre for Urban and Regional development Studies (CURDS)  
CFE  
Chambers of Commerce North West  
Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)  
Chelmsford Borough Council  
Cheltenham Borough Council  
Cheshire County Council  
Cheshire East Council  
Chester City Council  
Chester Civic Trust  
Chesterfield Borough Council  
Chief Executives of Urban Regeneration Companies  
Chiltern District Council  
Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber  
Chris Wren  
Citizens Advice Bureau  
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council  
City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council  
City of Westminster  
City of York Council  
Clare Horrell  
Colchester Borough Council  
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment  
Commission for Rural Communities  
Commission for the Compact  
Community and Regional Planning Services  
Confederation of British Industry  
Congleton Borough Council  
Co-operatives UK

Core Cities Group  
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Economic Forum  
Country Land & Business Association Ltd (CLA)  
County Councils Network  
County Durham Community Transport Operators Forum  
County Durham Economic Partnership  
Countryside Management Association  
COVER-East  
Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership  
Crawley Borough Council  
Creating Excellence  
Crescent Search and Selection  
Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council  
Crowhurst Parish Council  
Culture East Midlands  
Culture North East  
Culture South East  
Culture West Midlands  
Culture Yorkshire  
Cumbria County Council  
Darchem Engineering Ltd  
Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership  
Derby City Council  
Derbyshire County Council  
Derbyshire Dales District Council  
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber  
Devon and Cornwall Business Council  
Devon County Council  
Devon Economic Partnership  
Directors of Public Health – West Midlands  
Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise  
Doncaster Council  
Dorset County Council  
Dorset Economic Partnership  
Dover District Council  
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Durham County Council  
EABFU  
East Cambridgeshire District Council  
East Herts Council  
East Midland 9 Cities and Counties Group (9Cs)  
East Midlands Acre Network  
East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership

East Midlands Business Forum  
East Midlands Development Agency  
East Midlands Environment Link  
East Midlands Heritage Forum  
East Midlands Regional Assembly  
East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum  
East Midlands Single Platform Voluntary and Community Sector  
East Midlands Universities Association  
East of England Business Group  
East of England Environment Forum  
East of England Regional Assembly  
East of England Regional Economic Partnership  
East of England Regional Partnership Group  
East of England Strategic Authority Leaders  
East of England Strategic Health Authority  
East Riding of Yorkshire Council  
East Regions Network ERN  
East Staffordshire Borough Council  
East Sussex County Council  
Edexcel  
East of England Development Agency  
EEF Northern  
Elevate East Lancashire Limited  
Elmbridge Borough Council  
EMFEC  
ENCAMS  
English Heritage  
English National Park Authorities Association  
English Regions Network ERN  
Environment Agency- Yorkshire Regional Flood Defence Committee  
Environment and Protection Advisory Committee  
Epping Forest District Council  
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council  
Equality and Human Rights Commission  
Equality South West  
Essex Association of Local Councils  
Essex County Council  
Essex Development & Regeneration Agency  
European Parliament  
EVDC Yorkshire & Humber  
Ewhurst PC  
Exeter and Heart of Devon Partnership  
Faithnetsouthwest

Fareham Borough Council  
Federation of Small Businesses  
Federation of Small Businesses East Of England  
Federation of Small Businesses, East Midlands  
Federation of Small Businesses – North East  
Federation of Small Businesses – South West  
Federation of Small Businesses – West Midlands  
Federation of Small Businesses – Yorkshire and Humber  
Fenland District Council  
Fishbourne Parish Council  
Forest Heath District Council  
Forest of Dean District Council  
Forestry Commission  
Freight on Rail  
Friends of the Earth England  
Furness Enterprise Ltd  
Gatwick and Diamond  
Gedling Borough Council  
Gentoo Group  
GIPSIL  
GLA Group  
Gloucester First  
Gloucester City Council  
Gloucestershire County Council  
Government Office for the West Midlands  
Great Barton Parish Council  
Great Yarmouth Borough Council  
Greater Cambridge Partnership  
Greater Essex Prosperity Forum  
Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Nottingham Partnership  
Green Party of England and Wales  
Greenwich Council  
Groundwork UK  
Guildford Borough Council  
GWE Business West  
Halton Borough Council  
Harrrogate Borough Council  
Hambleton District Council  
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association  
Hampshire Association of Local Councils  
Hampshire County Council  
Harborough District Council

Harlow District Council  
Haven Gateway Partnership  
Henry Cox  
Herefordshire Association of Local Councils  
Herefordshire Council  
Heritage Link  
Heritage Lottery Fund  
Heritage Lottery Fund East  
Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils  
Hertfordshire County Council  
Hertfordshire Prosperity Ltd  
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council  
Historic House Association  
Home Builders Federation  
Horsham County Council  
Howard Elcock  
Hull City Council  
Humber Economic Partnership  
Huntingdonshire District Council  
Inglis  
Institute for Public Policy Research North  
Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)  
Institute of Directors  
Institute of Directors, East of England Region  
Institute of Historic Building Conservation  
Institution of Civil Engineers  
Institution of Economic Development  
Jacqueline Walkden  
Jeremy Wire  
Joint Stakeholder Group of the South East Regional Assembly  
Kent County Council  
Kent County Council – Labour Group  
Kettering Borough Council  
Kington Town Council  
Kirklees Council  
Lake District National Park Authority  
Lancashire County Council  
Landscape Institute  
Leeds City Council  
Leicestershire Economic Partnership.  
Lewes District Council  
Liberal Democrats  
Lifting the burdens of Task Force

Lincolnshire County Council  
Lincolnshire Enterprise  
Liverpool City Council  
Living East  
Local Government Association  
Localise West Midlands  
London Borough Hammersmith and Fulham  
London Borough of Brent  
London Borough of Croydon  
London Borough of Enfield  
London Borough of Haringey  
London Borough of Lambeth  
London Borough of Sutton  
London Chamber of Commerce & Industry  
London Councils  
London First  
London Voluntary Service Councils  
Luton Borough Council  
Make Your Mark  
Maldon District Council  
Manchester City Council  
Mansfield District Council  
Martlesham Parish Council  
Mayor of London  
Max Cummins  
MENTER  
Mersey Dee Alliance  
Michael Johnston  
Mid Beds District Council  
Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce  
Midlands TUC  
Mike Cox  
Milton Keynes Economy and Learning Partnership  
MLA South East  
Mole Valley District Council  
Museums, Libraries and Archives Council  
National Association for AONBs  
National Trust  
Natural England  
NERIP  
New Forest District Council  
Newark & Sherwood District Council  
Newark Town Council

Newcastle City Council  
Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council  
NFU South West  
NHS – Strategic Health Authorities  
NHS – Yorkshire and Humber  
NIACE  
Nissan – Sunderland Plant  
Norfolk County Council  
North Devon District Council  
North Devon+  
North East Assembly  
North East Chamber of Commerce  
North East Derbyshire District Council  
North East England Cultural Sector  
North East Environment Forum  
North East Derbyshire District Council  
North East Rural Affairs Forum  
Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited  
North Kesteven District Council  
North London Strategic Alliance  
North Norfolk District Council  
North Somerset Council  
Northumberland National Park Authority  
North Tyneside Council  
North West Business Leadership Team  
North West Environment Link  
North West Housing Forum  
North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships  
North West Regional Health Sector- NHS NWr  
North West Rural Affairs Forum  
North West TUC  
North West Universities Association  
North Wiltshire District Council  
North Yorkshire County Council  
Northampton Borough Council  
Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited  
Northern Business Forum  
NorthWest Business Leadership Team  
Northwest Regional Development Agency  
Norwich City Council  
Nottingham City Council  
Nottinghamshire County Council  
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

NW Sustainable Farming and Food  
One North West  
Oxford Brookes University  
Oxford City Council  
Oxford Innovation  
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils  
Oxfordshire County Council  
Partnership for Urban South Hampshire  
Peak District National Park Authority.  
Peel Holdings  
Peter Baines  
Peter Carder  
Peter Hooper  
Peterborough City Council  
Planning Officers Society  
Plymouth City Council & Plymouth Local Strategic Partnership  
Plymouth Primary Care Trust  
Prudential Property Investment Managers Ltd  
Reading Borough Council  
RDA National Secretariat  
Regeneration East Midlands  
Regional Action and Involvement South East  
Renaissi  
Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors  
Robert Palgrave  
Rochford District Council  
Rocket Science UK Ltd  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council  
Royal Institute of British Architects  
Royal Society for The Protection of Birds  
Royal Town Planning Institute  
Rugby Borough Council  
Runnymede Borough Council  
Rushcliffe Borough Council  
Rutland County Council  
SABIC UK Petrochemicals  
Saffron Walden & District Friends of the Earth  
Salford City Council  
Salisbury District Council  
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough  
Sandwell Primary Care Trust  
School for Policy Studies  
Selby District Council

SETsquared, Bristol  
Sevenoaks District Council  
Shaping Norfolk's Future  
Sheffield City Council  
Sheffield City Region Forum  
Shelter  
Shropshire Association of Local Councils  
Shropshire County Council  
Shropshire Local Strategic Partnership  
Skillfast UK  
Skipton- East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership  
Slough Borough Council  
Social and Environmental Partners – South East England Regional Assembly  
Social Dialogue Forum of SEEDA  
Social Enterprise Coalition  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council  
South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Somerset County Council  
South Downs Society  
South East Councils  
South East Diamonds for Investment and Growth  
South East Economic Partnerships  
South East England Development Agency  
South East England Regional Assembly  
South East England Regional Assembly – Joint Stakeholder Group Responses  
South East England Regional Assembly – Social and Economic Partners  
South East England Regional Assembly – Town and Parish Councillors  
South East Enterprise  
South East Forum for Sustainability  
South Gloucestershire Council  
South London Partnership  
South Norfolk Council  
South Somerset District Council  
South Staffordshire Council  
South Staffordshire Partnerships  
South Tyneside Council  
South West ACRE Network  
South West Chambers of Commerce  
South West Councils  
South West Forum  
South West Historic Environment Forum  
South West Regional Assembly  
South West Regional Development Agency  
South West Rural Affairs Forum

South Yorkshire Police  
South Yorkshire PTE  
Southend on Sea Borough Council  
Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities  
Sport England  
St Edmundsbury Borough Council  
Staffordshire County Council  
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council  
Stevenage Borough Council  
Stockton Council  
Stoke-on-Trent City Council  
Stowe by Chartley Parish Council  
Strategic Health Authorities  
Suffolk Association of Local Councils  
Suffolk Coastal District Council  
Suffolk County Council  
Suffolk Development Agency  
Sunderland City Council  
Sunderland Partnership  
Surrey County Council  
Sussex & Surrey Associations of Local Councils  
Sussex Enterprise  
Sustainability East  
Sustainability South West  
Sustainable Development Commission (SDC)  
Sustainable Uttlesford (LA21)  
Sustaine  
Swale Borough Council  
Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership  
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council  
Tandridge District Council  
Taunton Deane Borough Council  
Technology Strategy Board  
Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit  
Telford and Wrekin Council  
Tendring District Council  
Test Valley Borough Council  
Tewkesbury Borough Council  
Thales  
Thames Water Utilities Ltd  
The Alliance  
The Campaign Company  
The National Housing Federation  
The Northern Way

The Planning Inspectorate  
Three Rivers Housing Association  
Thurrock Council  
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council  
Torbay Council  
Torrige District Council  
Tourism South East  
Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA)  
Trades Union Congress  
Tribal Consulting  
Turo Technology LLP  
Transforming Telford  
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council  
Tyne and Wear City Region  
Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority and Nexus  
Tyne and Wear Housing Partnership  
UFI  
Universities UK  
University of Bristol  
University of Durham  
University of Hertfordshire  
University of Leicester  
University of Liverpool  
University of Northampton  
University of Warwick  
Upper Beeding PC  
Vale Royal Borough Council  
Voluntary Sector North West.  
VONNE (Voluntary Organisations' Network North East)  
Warrington Borough Council  
Warwickshire County Council  
Wavehill Consulting  
Waveney District Council  
Waverley Borough Council  
Wealden District Council  
Welwyn Hatfield Association of Local Councils  
West Berkshire Council  
West Cumbria Strategic Partners  
West Devon Borough Council  
West Lindsey District Council  
West London Alliance  
West Midlands Business Council  
West Midlands Constitutional Campaign  
West Midlands Education Business Links Group

West Midlands Higher Education Assoc.  
West Midlands Labour Party  
West Midlands Regional Observatory  
West Midlands Rural Affairs Forum  
West Midlands Shire Counties  
West Midlands Sub National Review Strategic Transition Group (STG)  
West of England Partnership – Bath and North Somerset  
West Sussex County Council  
West Sussex Economic Partnership  
West Sussex Joint Planning Board  
West Yorkshire Housing Partnership  
West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan Partnership  
Whitefriars Housing Group Limited  
Wigan Council  
Wildlife and Countryside Link  
Wildlife Trust  
Wildlife Trusts East of England  
Wildlife Trusts in the South East  
Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership  
Wirral Council  
Wolverhampton City Council  
Woodland Trust  
Worcestershire County Council  
Worcestershire Partnership  
WWF-UK  
Wycombe District Council  
WYPTE (Metro)  
Wyre Forest District Council  
York and North Yorkshire Partnership Unit  
Yorkshire & Humber Chambers of Commerce  
Yorkshire & Humber Regional Police  
Yorkshire & Humber Regional Forum  
Yorkshire & Humber Regional Forum on Ageing  
Yorkshire and Humber Regional Planning Board  
Yorkshire and Humber Rural Affairs  
Yorkshire and Humber Regional Rural Community Councils  
Yorkshire & Humberside Housing Forum  
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly  
Yorkshire and Humber BME VCS Regional Panel  
Yorkshire and Humber Fed. of Small Businesses  
Yorkshire and Humber Historic Environment Forum.  
Yorkshire and the Humber TUC  
Yorkshire Culture  
Yorkshire Forward

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