

# **SOUTH WEST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

## **SCRUTINY PANEL**

**2 July 2004**

### **Tourism Regional Strategic Review Project Proposals**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To obtain Scrutiny Panel Members' agreement to the process for taking forward the next Regional Strategic Review which will focus on Tourism in the South West.

#### **2. Recommendation**

2.1 Scrutiny Panel members are invited to consider and approve the proposed project plan at section 5 of this paper.

#### **3. Background**

3.1 This is the second Strategic Review under the new scrutiny Protocol. The purpose of the Review process is to assess the way in which the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) is meeting the region's economic needs and the contribution of SW RDA and other regional partner organisations to the achievement of regional strategic objectives.

3.2 It is proposed that – as with previous Scrutiny exercises – this review is structured around a phase of information gathering, a regional workshop and concluded by a bilateral discussion between the Scrutiny Panel and SW RDA. The bilateral discussions will assess SW RDA's contribution in ensuring the success of the RES - both as a strategic catalyst and as delivery agent.

#### **4. Scope of Project**

4.1 The Strategic Review will focus on the commitment in RES 'to develop year-round, high value tourism'.

4.2 Although SW RDA has a clear strategic role, the Agency is not the prime provider of funds for tourism support in the South West. As with previous reviews, the Scrutiny Panel may wish to consider the contributions of a number of organisations to this work including:

- South West Tourism and Local Authorities within the region; and, at a national level,
- the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and Visit Britain (the agency funded by DCMS to promote Britain overseas as a tourist destination and to lead and co-ordinate England marketing).

- 4.3 The Review will examine the policy implications of this RES strategic objective and consider the implications of meeting this objective for high-value tourism alongside other regional aspirations and policy objectives – for example, the spatial options to be developed in the RSS.
- 4.4 RDAs are required by DCMS to produce Regional Sustainable Tourism Strategies and “to mainstream tourism into economic growth, to link tourism with transport strategy and to maximise tourism’s sustainable growth”. A key consideration of the Strategic Review will be to assess tourism’s long term impact on the region’s environment, society and economy. Sustainability South West has provided support throughout the scrutiny process over the last two years and, with Panel Member’s approval, will be engaged again to provide an independent perspective on sustainability considerations in this review.

## 5. Project Plan

5.1 It is proposed that the Strategic Review project is taken forward in three phases:

- |   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Preparation</b>  | July - September<br>2004 |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scoping / agree terms of reference</li> <li>• consider commissioning of research</li> <li>• written questions to be submitted to SW RDA</li> <li>• <b><u>Scrutiny Panel Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> September</u></b></li> </ul>  |                          |
| 2 | <b>Consultation and Analysis</b>  | September –<br>October   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• member-led interviews and visits</li> <li>• questionnaire and desk research /joint research with SW RDA</li> <li>• compilation of reading for Panel Members – including SW RDA’s response to written questions</li> <li>• <b><u>Workshop 21 October</u></b></li> </ul> |                          |
| 3 | <b>Bilateral discussions with South West Regional Development Agency</b>  | November                 |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agree framework for discussion and key themes at bilateral with Scrutiny Panel</li> <li>• <b><u>Bilateral discussions 30 November</u></b></li> </ul>   |                          |

5.1 The recent Broadband review continued a number of approaches which met with success. It is proposed that these approaches are refined and adopted in the coming Strategic Review.

5.2 In the Broadband review, Members agreed a programme of **interviews with key stakeholders**. The interviews proved successful in providing Members with insights into the subject area, collecting partner views on the work of SW RDA and helped frame future lines of investigation in Workshop and Bilateral discussions.

- *Panel Member's suggestions for further interviews are welcome. It is suggested that Panel Members may wish to interview representatives from businesses involved in the Tourism industry as well as local government representatives (perhaps through SW LGA) and central government support agencies.*
- *The Assembly's Social, Economic and Environmental Partners (SEEPs) have formed a group to consider tourism issues (Martin Ross chairs the group). Panel Members may wish to consider ways in which the SEEP group can contribute to the strategic review – perhaps initially by including Martin and other SEEP Members in the interview programme.*

5.3 In preparation for the Broadband Bilateral Discussions, the Assembly secretariat requested **key facts and figures from SW RDA**. This improved the timely flow of information between Agency and Assembly e.g. on funding and projects.

- *If Panel Members agree, draft questions will be circulated in August, considered at the September Scrutiny Panel meeting and, once finalised, sent to SW RDA for a response ahead of the October workshop.*

5.4 Recent scrutiny exercises have benefited from **research** commissioned jointly by Assembly and SW RDA. **Academic experts** have provided invaluable contributions to each exercise

- *If suitable joint research topics can be agreed, a draft commissioning document will be circulated in September for Panel Members' approval. Panel Member's suggestions for suitable academic support for the process would be welcome.*

5.5 **Questionnaires** have provided useful insights in previous scrutiny exercises.

- *If Members agree, a draft questionnaire - will be prepared for Panel Members' approval on 8<sup>th</sup> September and be sent to all Regional Assembly Members – for return before the Workshop.*

5.6 Panel Members may wish to consider speakers and invitees for the regional **Workshop** on 21 October. The use of a panel of speakers at the Broadband Workshop was considered a success and would be worth repeating.

- *Sir Michael Lickiss is the current Chairman of VisitBritain. Given his profile in the South West region, his attendance as a speaker would increase interest in the Workshop – and stimulate debate.*

5.7 It is also proposed that the process of follow-up to Assembly scrutiny reports is retained and that the Scrutiny Panel seeks a written response from SW RDA to the recommendations from the report that will be issued at the conclusion of this review - and also seeks ongoing progress reports to Panel Members.

## **6. Next Steps**

6.1 The Secretariat will seek to draw up draft Terms of Reference for this Review by the end of July 2004 and circulate by email for Members' approval.

**Andy Wilson**  
**Head of Scrutiny**  
**Tel No: 01823 425250**  
**Email: [andy.wilson@southwest-ra.gov.uk](mailto:andy.wilson@southwest-ra.gov.uk)**