

Review of Economic Assessment and Strategy Activity at the Local and Sub- Regional Level

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Executive summary

The Sub National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration includes a proposal that a statutory duty is imposed upon all local authorities to assess their local economies. This report identifies the scales and range of types of economic assessments at the local and sub regional level. It also examines the changing forms of sub regional structures and identifies tensions that need to be addressed in the development of future economic assessments and strategies.

Local and sub-regional economic assessments cover activity related to enterprise, labour markets, property, regeneration and community economic development. The types of assessment vary considerably, mainly due to the different types of local authorities and the variety of sub regional partnerships.

Identifying and mapping sub regional partnerships is difficult due to frequent changes and varied structures. The types of sub regional partnerships with an interest in economic assessments include bodies related to Regional Development Agencies, City Strategy Pathfinders, Economic Development Companies, City Development Companies, Urban Regeneration Companies and Local Enterprise Growth Initiatives.

Local authorities are engaged in economic assessments to different degrees. Variations in the types of local authority economic assessments include:

- Scale and capacity of authority: Larger unitary authorities have greater in house capacity and resources. Smaller authorities, especially rural ones, have less capacity.
- Requirement for action: Some economic assessment activity is required in relation to the development of Community Strategies and in relation to planning roles
- Funding availability: The process of bidding requires local assessment of the existing situation
- Nature of local economic challenges: The scope of assessment reflects local concerns
- Nature of sub regional /regional structures: Where they are developed, local authorities may leave assessment to sub regional bodies
- Local politics: Local authorities may be keen to retain strategic economic roles and be reluctant to cede power to sub regional partnerships

The depth of analysis in assessments and their contribution to strategy development varies. The study has identified examples of both comprehensive assessments using a range of indicators and, data sources and commissioned research, and more limited assessments that are centred on basic SWOT/scoping assessment. The similarity of strategy documents suggests that economic assessments and local specificity may not always be considered fully, raising questions over their strategy development capabilities.

Effective action requires integration and co-ordination across spatial scales. This study identifies examples of effective working as well as tensions between sub regional partnerships and local authorities. The City Region agenda presents particular tensions

between large urban and small rural authorities with the latter fearing a marginalisation of their interests. These issues are explored in detail in four case study regions.

Section 1 Overview

1.1 Objectives

The Sub National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration (SNR) includes a proposal that a statutory duty should be imposed upon local authorities to assess the local economy. The objective of this review is to better understand what the state of play is in terms of the scale and range of local level and sub-region economic assessments currently being undertaken by existing bodies operating at the sub-regional and local level.

To achieve this, this review will clarify:

- (a) the range of sub-regional bodies currently operating and their principal type of economic development activity;
- (b) the nature and scale of economic assessment and strategy activity that local authorities and sub-regional bodies are commonly undertaking;
- (c) the nature of the relationship between different spatial scales (local, sub-regional, regional) in the area of economic assessment and strategy activity.

1.2 Outputs

This review comprises two main outputs:

1. A comprehensive list of all sub-regional partnerships that are currently operating within the nine regions of England. This includes, where they have been identified, potential CDCs and other locally based economic development organisations that might develop into sub-regional partnerships. This list is included as Annex A.
2. A review of the economic development assessments and strategies that are currently being undertaken by local authorities (of differing types) and sub-regional bodies (of different types) within four selected English regions (North East; East Midlands; South West; London). The review comprises two sections: section one is an overview of findings; and section two comprises four regional reports. Each regional report comprises:
 - a. basic information on the breadth and nature of sub-regional partnerships within each region;
 - b. a series of short overviews of differing types of assessments;
 - c. an overview of the nature of local, sub-regional and regional level working with regard to the development of economic assessments and strategy;
 - d. identification of any examples of better practice.

1.3 Project Method

3.1 The compilation of a comprehensive list of sub-regional bodies operating in the sphere of economic development and regeneration across all nine English regions was achieved by

web searching combined with information obtained from a range of other sources and directories (e.g. Government Offices, RDAs, LGA, DCLG etc.). For the four regions studied in greater depth, this information was supplemented and checked via telephone interviews where possible. It should be noted that this work is exploratory and further analysis is required to understand the rapidly changing governance environment.

3.2 Review of sub-regional and local economic assessments. In order to understand the extent of important differences in governance arrangements and practice at the local and sub-regional levels, four English regions were selected (East Midlands, North East, South West, London). These regions were selected as the authors had recently completed research work in these regions (see North et al, 2007), and therefore had greater prior knowledge of the often complex governance arrangements in these regions. Information was obtained via web search, review of assessment and strategy documents and telephone interview with relevant officials/practitioners (around 10 in each region), supplemented by findings from prior research.

Local/sub-regional economic assessments were selected for review to ensure coverage of practice by different types of local authorities (e.g. urban/rural; large/small) and different types of sub-regional partnerships. Economic assessments were reviewed against a number of basic criteria which comprised: objectives; approach; content; time frame; geography.

Insights into the nature of relationships between different bodies working at different spatial levels were obtained from telephone interviews combined with findings from existing work (North et al, 2007a; 2007b). In seeking to identify examples of better practice in terms of the form and impact of economic assessments, the researchers were guided by the views of respondents. However such data is clearly only very impressionistic, and to attain robust insights would require a systematic and in depth evaluation that was beyond the scope of this review.

1.4 Context

1.4.1 Definition of local/sub-regional 'economic assessments'

In this review, the term 'local/sub-regional economic development' is used in its widest sense to cover all areas of activity related to enterprise, labour markets, land and property, inward investment, place promotion, business retention, innovation, technology, regeneration activity, community economic development and neighbourhood renewal, which is being undertaken at the local and sub-regional level.

The development of local economic assessments which support the development of local strategy and policy formation are pursued under a variety of terms. These include local economic assessments, audits, forecasts, analyses. This variety of names is reflected in a variety of form and content. Such economic 'assessments' may be comprehensive (i.e. an overview of all key elements of a local economy for a given locality) or more sectorally focused (i.e. labour market audits; property needs analysis; business support analysis; tourism development strategy etc.). This report will use 'economic assessment' as a generic term to cover all of these different types.

1.4.2 Local government and economic development

Within the English regions, local authorities (LA) have no specific duty related to local economic development and hence vary in the extent to which they pursue such activity. This variation reflects differences in the capacities between councils, their access to different funding streams, histories of intervention, the nature of local economic challenges, party political control, and the nature and development of sub-regional and regional arrangements.

There are major differences relating to the size of local authorities. Smaller District Councils tend to often only have a small team of no more than two to three people working specifically in economic development. In larger City Councils or County Councils, the capacity may be significantly larger. The large metropolitan cities and industrial northern cities where socio-economic deprivation predominates also have access to a larger set of funding streams with which to develop their activities. In contrast, in relatively affluent small town and rural areas there is often little or no additional money available for economic development.

In general the role of LAs in economic development activity has declined over the last decade. This is due to a combination of a lack of statutory requirement for action in comparison to other areas of LA activity, limited funding, reduced capacities and the development of activities at regional and sub-regional levels.

LAs and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) have a remit to deliver sustainable economic, social and physical development. To date activity related to economic development within LSPs has been relatively underdeveloped and shows significant local variation (ODPM, 2005). The introduction of LEGI and Local Area Agreements (LAAs) between local authorities and other key local partners has increased the level of attention given to economic development issues. The initial block(s) of funding earmarked for economic activities and assessment has increased the attention given to addressing the economic needs of deprived localities, with greater coordination of the targets and activities of a number of relevant agencies. Consequently much recent local economic and regeneration activity has been aligned to the neighbourhood renewal agenda.

1.4.3 Economic development focused Sub-Regional Partnerships (SRPs)

There is no formal tier of governance at the sub-regional level for economic development within England. However a wide variety of sub-regional economic bodies and partnerships now exist in all English regions utilising a wide variety of names. In this review the term 'sub-regional partnership' (SRP) will be used as the generic term for any partnership or body operating above the level of an individual LA and below that of the region which is involved in any area of economic development and regeneration.

The defining features of SRPs within England are their sheer diversity and profusion of forms, roles and names. This makes just attempting to list SRPs highly problematic. Annex A contains a comprehensive a list of the major economic development related SRPs within the nine English regions.

There are a number of problems in identifying such SRPs. Many undergo frequent name changes, existing partnerships are constantly evolving into different forms with different names, and many have structures where there are multiple but related bodies, which leaves it unclear which, if any, is the lead body. There are also judgement issues related to whether a given SRP is primarily concerned with economic development or other related areas (e.g. housing). Given these difficulties and the short period of time in which to assemble a list of SRPs, the list provided in Annex A is likely to have certain omissions. Furthermore, given the rapidly evolving landscape in relation to SRPs the list provides only a snapshot of the current situation.

The variations that characterise partnerships is apparent along a number of dimensions: geographic scale (from localised co-operation between two or more local authorities through to major city-regions); the role of different partners (e.g. from public sector led and dominated partnerships to those which are private sector led independent companies); their history and length of time they have been operating; the balance in their role between strategic and operational activity; and critically, the power and resources with which they operate.

Given this variety, it is useful to distinguish a number of key SRP types. These SRP types are not mutually exclusive and some SRPs may in practice combine several types:

- **SRPs as bodies related to Regional Development Agencies:** At the current time a large proportion of existing SRPs have been created, or developed out of existing partnerships, with the primary purpose of producing and delivering sub-regional economic development strategies and implementation plans that are closely linked to the RDAs' Regional Economic Strategies. These bodies therefore provide an interface between the RDAs and local authorities/LSPs in the development and implementation of the Regional Economic Strategy.
- The influence and responsibilities of these SRPs varies significantly, reflecting their lack of a statutory role, and is largely dependent on how the RDAs, along with GOs and Regional Assemblies, have sought to develop the sub-regional tier within any given region alongside the historical development of pre-existing partnerships. Certain RDAs adopted a strong sub-regional partnership model from the outset, devolving significant resources to this level. (e.g. North East). The sub-regional partnership model was also relatively well developed in the East Midlands, being the favoured response by the East Midlands Development Agency to the governance challenges resulting from the lack of regional cohesiveness. In contrast, despite facing similar challenges, the South West of England Development Agency preferred not to adopt a strong sub-regional model. However, the evolutionary nature of the situation is well exemplified here. Recent changes have seen the SW adopting a comprehensive two tier model of SRPs, whilst within the North East, previous SRP arrangements are undergoing change driven by the move towards the development of city-regions and City Development Companies.
- **City Strategy Pathfinders:** The DWP launched various pilot City Strategy Pathfinders in 2006 focused on developing more locally sensitive employment and training provision including a range of public and private sector partners. In many cases these City Strategies are being seen as a stepping stone towards developing SRPs that operate more widely than just employment.
- **Economic Development Companies/Agencies:** There are a number of economic development SRPs that have been the product of previous rounds of funding and partnership activity (e.g. EU Objective 1 and 2 Structural Funds, SRB, City Growth Strategies etc.). Again these are variable in form. Normally they operate as independent organisations with a variable mix of public/private partners, and focus on providing a variety of information, business support and training services informed by sub-regional needs. Many of these pre-existing partnerships have been transformed into SRPs used by the RDAs, and others are considering becoming CDCs.
- **City Regions:** The notion of the 'city region' has gathered momentum over recent years, particularly as part of the Northern Way, which has promoted the development of city regions among a number of Northern cities. The findings of the SNR combined with the proposals for the creation of CDCs has given development here added impetus. The status, development and scale of operation of city-regions and associated bodies is again variable, and is perhaps best developed in Manchester.
- **City Development Companies (CDCs):** CDCs are special purpose vehicles (independent companies) that bring together businesses, developers, local authorities and investors to drive economic growth across cities/sub-regions. The development of CDCs is still at an early stage of development following consultations earlier in 2007. There are a small number of CDCs in existence (Sheffield, Plymouth), and a number of other cities currently in the process of creating such bodies.

Annex A provides a separate list of cities where plans for CDCs appear to be relatively well advanced, although the precise status of their development is not clear. These are focused primarily among the major cities of the North and Midlands (e.g. Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Newcastle, Nottingham etc. as well as some smaller cities (e.g. Telford, Wolverhampton, Preston). Annex A also provides a list of bodies that have shown interest in the CDC concept, but where the extent and status of any development of CDCs is uncertain. This list is dominated by smaller towns and cities, particularly from the Southern and Eastern part of the country (e.g. Hastings, Reading, Chelmsford, Southend), where the appropriateness of this style of organisation remains, as yet, unclear

- **Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI):** LEGI was launched in 2006 to support enterprise and economic development related activity. To date 29 LEGIs have been designated, but many more local authorities have been involved in putting together bids. The initial funding provided for economic assessments and bid preparation is likely to have wider benefits than the LEGI programme itself. In a number of cases these bids involves local authorities working together in partnership, although others are just focused at the local authority level. All LEGIs are included in Annex A as involvement in LEGI bids can provide the basis for the development of SRPs.
- **Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs):** URCs are independent companies created out of a partnership between local authorities, RDAs and English Partnerships and other stakeholders, primarily focused on physical development and related opportunities. These often operate at the geographical scale of a local authority, but a number operate at a wider level. These are included in the list of SRPs as some might provide the basis for the development of future SRPs and CDCs, particularly as the CDC model is similar in key aspects to the URC one.
- **Urban Development Corporations (UDCs):** UDCs are non-departmental public bodies which are established under the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980. Since 2003 a new round of UDCs has been created as a mechanism to drive forward development in growth areas (e.g. Thurrock, East London, West Northamptonshire, Milton Keynes). UDCs are limited-life bodies tasked with a broad remit to secure the regeneration of their designated areas operating in relation to land and buildings, encouraging the development of existing and new industry and commerce, creating an attractive environment, and ensuring the provision of housing and social facilities.
- **County Councils:** County Councils form part of the local government apparatus within England, but operate at a sub-regional level across a number of District, Borough and City Councils. The extent of the role of County Councils in economic development varies. In some areas, County Councils provide the primary sub-regional units for SRPs (e.g. in the South West) whilst in others there role may be more peripheral. In this respect, much depends on the extent to which county borders relate to economically functional units or the boundaries of other SRPs. For example in the East Midlands, the county of Northamptonshire coincides with the SRP of the RDA and is a reasonably cohesive economic area which is not the case for the other counties in the region (e.g. Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire etc.)
- **Other SRPs:** In addition to the above there are also a number of other SRPs operating in fields closely aligned to the area of economic development (e.g. skills, housing, tourism, culture etc.) which may operate closely with the above SRPs or as more separate entities.

1.5 Local Authorities and SRPs: Economic Assessments and Strategies

The economic assessments produced by local authorities and SRPs are highly variable in their objectives, approach, content, depth of analysis and geographical coverage. This reflects the variability in local, SRP and regional arrangements already detailed.

The regional case studies of the North East, East Midlands, the South West and London presented in the second part of this document provide a series of brief reviews of economic assessments undertaken by local authorities and SRPs. The cases included were purposively selected to demonstrate a range of types of current assessment activity by different local and SRP bodies across England.

A number of general points emerge across the four regions in relation to economic assessments carried out at the local authority and sub-regional level. Most local authorities and SRPs produce/commission a range of different types of economic assessments rather than having a formalised single document. Economic assessments vary in their scope with some taking a broad approach and other focussing on specific issues such as employment, transport or enterprise.

The term economic assessment is interpreted in different ways and different terminologies are apparent. However within assessments the following four elements, which are variably present, can be identified: (1) basic SWOT scoping assessment; (2) assessment based on analysis of existing data; (3) especially commissioned data collection (4) consultation process on strategy derived from economic assessments.

1.5.1. Local authority economic assessments and strategies

The extent and nature of economic assessments and strategy development undertaken at local authority level is variable reflecting their variable capacities discussed earlier (see 1.4.2).

Many local authorities are not routinely producing detailed comprehensive local economic assessments and related strategies at present. There are however many local authorities that do undertake more comprehensive economic assessments. For example many, larger cities and large towns and most London Boroughs had some sort of local economic strategy. More common is for local authorities to produce local economic assessments of limited scope, reflecting some requirement to do so, and/or some more sectorally focused economic assessment reflecting a particular local concern or funding availability.

The type and scope of economic assessment undertaken is strongly influenced by a number of factors:

Scale and capacity of authority

Larger bodies (e.g. unitary city authorities and to a lesser extent County Councils) are more likely to have a well developed economic development function than smaller authorities. Many smaller LAs have a very limited in house capacity to develop strategy and undertake economic assessments. Where this activity is undertaken much of it is outsourced to consultants. Smaller local authorities increasingly rely upon SRPs to undertake this activity given this type of activity is often their primary purpose and that economic analysis at this level often makes more sense given the functional operation of local economies.

There is evidence of some recent improvement in the availability of local level socio-economic data. Many local authorities have developed, or are in the process of developing,

their own 'observatories' driven by the need for better sub-regional, local and neighbourhood level data for economic development and neighbourhood renewal activities. In terms of economic development, basic statistics related to the labour market are regularly available. However there remains a lack of good quality local statistics related to many other aspects of local economic development (e.g. business start ups and levels of private sector investment). More fundamentally, resource limitations constrain the ability for much in house analysis of such data.

Requirement for action

The lack of a statutory requirement to produce a local economic strategy/assessment is a key factor limiting LA activity in this field. Given limited capacities, LA economic development, regeneration and planning departments tend to focus their local economic strategic activity in relation to where there are requirements to do so.

The requirement of LAs/LSPs to produce a Community Strategy which has to address issues of 'economic well-being' requires a degree of local level economic analysis in relation to spatial patterns of deprivation. However, in general economic assessments carried out in relation to Community Strategies are of limited extent. The planning role of LAs also requires some level of economic assessment of the local context. However, again the scope is limited in extent. More generally, the planning function of LAs means that activity in relation to land and property remains one area where most LAs undertake some audit activity.

Funding availability and national/EU policies

Given limited resources and capacities, the nature and scope of local economic development activity is strongly influenced by the availability of additional funding sources which permits greater scope for action. In addition to funding, certain policies (e.g. City Strategies; URCs) also provide greater local flexibility which is also attractive to LAs.

Funding sources and policies that have been important in guiding LA economic and regeneration activity and stimulated economic assessment activity include: Neighbourhood Renewal; EU Objective One (e.g. in Cornwall); EU ESF funding; EU LEADER funding (in rural areas); LEGI; City Strategy Pathfinders; URCs; CDCs),

In bidding for or gaining support under these policies/funding sources, there is normally a requirement to undertake some degree of local assessment the scope for which is often set out by the funder. For example bids to be included in the LEGI programme required relatively detailed understanding of the local area, and a number of LAs commissioned specific research to support the development of bids, using resources allocated by CLG to all eligible authorities.

Nature of local economic challenges

Given limited resources and scope for action, LA economic development activity is often selective reflecting particular local concerns. For example in rural areas this might be related to diversification into tourism, the development of small market towns or lack of industrial/commercial units, whilst in urban areas it may be related to problems of concentrated worklessness. Local priorities result in economic assessments narrowly focused on particular local needs in order to support strategy development and action plans.

Nature of sub-regional/regional structures and arrangements

The nature and extent of sub-regional/regional structures differs significantly between different regions and areas of England. The SR level therefore provides an important differential context within which LAs operate. For example across the South West, where District Councils are predominantly small and rural, there is a set of localised SRPs

(comprising 2 or 3 local authorities and called Local Strategic Partnerships) in addition to larger SRPs operating at the county level. In contrast in the North West, SRPs are increasingly organised more around a city-region arrangement.

Where SRPs are well developed and active, LAs are increasingly likely to leave a considerable component of local economic assessment/strategy development to this level. However, the extent of their input into this process varies as does the extent to which local level activity is informed by such strategy in practice.

Local politics

Local economic development remains an important component of the local political arena, which results in many LAs being keen to retain a strategic economic role. LAs are sometimes reluctant to cede power and control to SRPs particularly given that the majority of SRPs are unelected, sometimes private sector led bodies, and often lacking in local accountability.

This is particularly the case for larger LAs. Thus in the East Midlands and North East the major city councils are seeking to ensure they retain a prominent role within the region/sub-region through the development of their own CDCs/SRPs, which ensures a degree of tension with existing SRP arrangements. In London many Boroughs see economic strategy as one means of asserting their power in relation to the city-wide institutions of the Mayor and GLA, notably in terms of outer London boroughs such as Bromley, Croydon and Barnet.

1.5.2. SRP economic assessments and strategies

Fundamental to the remit of most economically focused SRPs is a strategy and implementation role, thus the producing of some form or sub-regional economic assessment and strategy is a basic requirement of their operation. The extent, depth and degree of sophistication of the economic assessments produced is highly variable. In some cases these analyses are highly derivative, being largely guided in structure and data content by the wider Regional Economic Strategy. In contrast others may be more independent in focus and involve the commissioning of original research and analysis.

Differences in the nature and content of SRP economic assessments reflect the type of SRP and its particular needs and functions. The economic assessments undertaken by a UDC or URC, with their greater physical development focus, have a strong focus on land and property markets, whilst those of City Strategy Pathfinders concentrate on labour market analysis. The assessments produced by SRPs aligned to RDAs tend to be of a more generalised and comprehensive nature.

SRPs vary significantly in their capacities, both in terms of their internal resources and their ability to mobilise action from other partners. Most SRPs have limited internal resources with which to undertake assessments, particularly in terms of staff, and some are little more than umbrella organisations with extremely limited resources (staff and budget) of their own. The ability of SRPs to engage and mobilise the resources of partners, whether from the public, private or voluntary and community sector, is normally a crucial test of their effectiveness.

The overlap in coverage which emerges as a result of multiple SRPs and local authorities working to different geographical areas can lead to a degree of duplication, confusion and competition in economic assessment and strategy functions, as it does more widely across all elements of local economic development activity.

An interesting feature is the extent to which environmental and social sustainability considerations are being reflected in some assessments and strategies. For example, in the South West many strategies/assessments refer to 'sustainability' issues and a few to the need to address climate change by promoting 'the low carbon economy', alongside more narrowly defined economic objectives (increasing GVA, economic growth etc).

The extent of the similarity between strategies relating to places of very different economic and social contexts raises the concern that, in some cases at least, strategy may be related to policy fashions and aspirational objectives that may be unrealistic or even in conflict with other aspects of the strategy. Even where there have been economic assessments, the way in which these have been used to inform strategy is not obviously apparent. Strategy development needs to build on local economic assessments, with additional work in terms of analysis of long term trends and possible future scenarios, in order to identify a strategic direction and policy design. A central part of strategy development should also be a process of continuous learning through testing interventions, piloting approaches, and measuring and analysing impacts. This has been lacking in previous strategies as evaluations have not been robust and have been carried out too soon after the end of an initiative. Therefore existing strategies may not have the chance to learn from past experience.

1.6 Effective working across spatial scales

Within the current highly complex, rapidly evolving and fragmented system for the governance of economic development, there is a need for integration and co-ordination of action across the local, sub-regional and regional levels if effective action is to be achieved.

By selecting different regional contexts this brief review has been able to generate some insights into the working of particular regional and sub-regional arrangements with regard to economic assessment and strategy activity. Such insights are necessarily rather impressionistic and partial given the timescale of the review, however they do also build upon findings from other recently completed research (North et al, 2007a, 2007b).

Effective working

There are examples of more harmonious working across and within different spatial scales. Where this occurs this normally reflects a longer term history of partnership working and a conscious and active attempt to construct particular SRPs (e.g. in Manchester, Tees Valley) and/or where geographical borders or existing geographical units provide a relevant basis for economic action (e.g. Northamptonshire, Gloucestershire). Effective working is also aided when there is clarity and shared understanding with respect to the roles and responsibilities of different spatial levels in undertaking economic assessments and strategy formation.

Tensions within and between governance levels

There are a number of clear tensions evident within the current evolution of the economic governance system. The development of the city-region agenda is creating tensions within existing regions, SRPs and LAs. In the North East and the East Midlands, the development of the City Region agenda has produced a degree of conflict with the previous arrangements of SRPs, and different bodies are manoeuvring for position in relation to newly emerging arrangements. Smaller rural district council and small/medium sized towns in these regions feel particularly threatened by the move towards city regions fearing the potential marginalisation of their interests within an agenda dominated by large city interests.

Tensions also emerge from issues related to political power and legitimacy of action. Certain SRPs are distrusted by LAs who see them as ineffective and lacking in accountability and legitimacy and acting to remove powers from the democratic local political arena. Larger cities and county councils in particular have the power and resources to develop their own economic agendas outside of existing SRP arrangements if these are not to their liking.

Weakness of sub-regional level

The sub-regional level for economic development remains weakly developed in the English governance system. Whilst current developments are strengthening its role, it remains structurally weak in relation to local authorities, which derive their legitimacy from being democratically elected bodies, and to a lesser extent the regional level, which has seen its role and powers strengthened since the late 1990s. For example, within London, the SRPs remain very weak vis-à-vis the London Boroughs, the Mayor and GLA. Although SRPs in London have become better established and now have a clear implementation role, they remain highly dependent on the co-operation of the London Boroughs if they are to be effective.

The weakness of the sub-regional level means that certain local and regional bodies remain well placed to ensure they retain power within their existing spheres of influence, and 'see off' the latest policy fashion in support of the sub-regional level.

1.7 Examples of Better Practice and Effectiveness

1.7.1 Types of economic assessment:

There are a number of economic assessments which appear to be good examples of their particular types:

Local authorities

- *Wansbeck District Council* (North East) provides a very comprehensive assessment which draws upon a range of existing previously commissioned research material and analysis of NOMIS data undertaken to support the LEGL programme
- *Harborough District Council* in the East Midlands in their economic development strategy 2007-12 present a good example of a smaller town local authority producing a thorough comprehensive economic assessment.
- *London Borough of Waltham Forest* provides a good example of its type analysing key sectors and its relationship with the wider sub-regional economy.

SRPs

- *Tees Valley Unlimited*: a very detailed sub-regional economic assessment including overview and more detailed background documents, although does not analyse differences within the sub-region
- *Gloucestershire First* an active SRP in the South West with a comprehensive website documenting a detailed programme of assessments related to economic development and sector-based development work, which has attracted the interest of both regional and government departments.
- *Derby and Derbyshire SSP* Economic assessment and strategy provides a good example of an SRP producing a comprehensive analysis of the sub-regional economy but clearly based within the wider RES produced by emda.
- *City Strategy Pathfinder East and South East* (London) provides a strong analysis albeit one limited to the sub-regional labour market combining existing secondary statistics and additional survey work

1.7.2 Effectiveness

On the basis of reviewing documents and talking to a relatively small number of people involved within each region, it is not possible to make any informed judgements on the relative effectiveness of different assessments.

It is quite possible to produce a detailed and well informed economic assessment and strategy document that has little impact. Many LA and SRP assessments and strategies within a region can appear rather bland as they adopt a particular approach, perhaps in line with the RES, and fail to really engage with the specificities of the sub-region or local area.

The effectiveness of an assessment is ultimately rooted in how it forms part of an ongoing process of reflexive analysis which engages all the economic stakeholders within the area to advance a clear economic strategy that can be effectively implemented. To evaluate an assessment in this manner requires a longer term analysis which triangulates the views of multiple stakeholders.

A number of LAAs and SRPs have clearly had some success in using economic assessments as a means of developing new working relationships and arrangements and developing the political agenda (e.g. West London City Strategy Pathfinder; County Durham LEGI, Harborough DC, Northamptonshire Enterprise etc.). However evaluating the consequences of such changes for other stakeholders and whether these arrangements have led to effective local economic intervention requires more detailed, systematic critical analysis.

1.8 References

North, D., Syrett, S. and Etherington, D. (2007a) *Devolution and Regional Governance: Tackling the Economic Needs of Deprived Areas*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.

North, D., Syrett, S. and Etherington, D. (2007b) *Devolved Governance and the Economic Problems of Deprived Areas: The Cases of Scotland, Wales and four English Regions*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, (2005) *National Evaluation of LSPs: LSPs, Multi-Level Governance and Economic Development*, London, ODPM.

Section 2: Regional Reports

The North East

1. Local Authorities and Sub-Regional Partnerships

1.1 Local Authorities

There are 23 local authorities in the North East of England. In the larger urban areas of Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley, these stand as unitary authorities. In the more rural areas and market towns of Durham and Northumberland, there are District Councils that sit below County Councils. These areas are characterised by large geographic areas and low population density, although with concentrations of deprivation especially in rural coalfield areas of Durham and South East Northumberland. The district councils in Durham and Northumberland will be merged into single unitary authorities at the existing County Council scale in 2009

1.2 Sub-Regional Partnerships

There are 4 sub regional partnerships in the North East: Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham and Tees Valley, although boundaries of these partnerships and their roles are in transition as part of the City region approach. Tyne and Wear City Region will be replacing the Tyne and Wear Strategic Partnership and includes Tyne and Wear, parts of Northumberland and parts of Durham. .

Tees Valley Partnership is evolving into a City Region referred to as Tees Valley Unlimited. The new organisation will have a remit into North Yorkshire and parts of County Durham. This organisation will also manage a Multi Area Agreement (that will bring together funding from CLG, RDA, Housing, DfT). The secretariat will remain with the TV Joint Strategy Unit which was set up 12 years ago and has a staff of 50. There are also changes at the County council level. The Durham Strategic Partnership decided to merge with the Local Area Agreement in April 2007. The roles of county councils will also change as they become unitary authorities replacing the district councils in Durham and Northumberland in 2009.

1.3 Other related partnerships

MAA

These are emerging although in each part of the region, there is ongoing discussion concerning their geographical scope. It is not clear if they will cover city regions or existing boundaries of sub regional partnerships/county councils. Two interviewees in local authorities perceived them as funding conduits to local authorities, with little planning and strategic role

Urban Regeneration Companies

Sunderland Arc: only within parts of Sunderland, looking at selected sites for development especially along the riverside.

Tees Valley Regeneration: Aims to create investment opportunities for the long-term development of the Tees Valley region. It came into being in 2002 as one of the first wave of urban regeneration companies established by the Government across England. Shareholders are the five councils that comprise the Tees Valley, One NorthEast, and

English Partnerships, the national regeneration agency. In 2003, they merged with the area's inward investment arm – the Tees Valley Development Company (TVDC)

City Development Companies

Newcastle-Gateshead: at a preliminary proposal stage with three staff from ONE and GO. The remit would cover parts of Newcastle City and Gateshead Councils in order to have an urban core and economic capital for the region on both banks of the Tyne.

Cluster Sector groups (Regional/sub regional)

North East Process Industries Clusters (NEPIC), operates at the regional level but with particular emphasis on the Tees Valley area. Private and public sector members with a budget of £2m, half of which comes from ONE.

Other groups

Co Durham LEGI - Derwentside, Easington, Sedgefield and Wear Valley Districts
West Durham Rural Strategy and Action Plan
County Durham Area Tourism Partnership

South East Northumberland and North Tyneside Regeneration Initiative (SENTRI).

Bridging Newcastle Gateshead –A partnership for housing renewal
Newcastle Gateshead Initiative For marketing culture and increasing tourism, playing a central role in the 'Capital of Culture' bid.

Tees Valley Working Together – organisation with members drawn from local authorities, LSC, Job Centre plus, skill providers and trainers and a particular emphasis on the Voluntary and Community Sector. There is also an associated Tees Valley Skills and Employability Board (comes under the Tees Valley Unlimited)

2. Review of Selected Assessments and Strategies

2.1 Sub-Regional Partnerships

Working Together: Local Area Agreement for Northumberland 2006-09

<http://www.northumberlandtogether.org.uk/dms/docs/01%20-%20Northumberland%20LAA%20-%20Working%20Together%20-%20Mar%2006.pdf>

Name of organisation: Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Sustainable community partnership

<http://www.northumberlandinonet.org.uk/>

Type of strategy/assessment: A chapter of 4 pages devoted to economic issues. They want to look afresh at this but was waiting for Sub national review

Body that undertook assessment: Northumberland Infonet provides a range of information for the county and disseminates assessments carried out by consultants. The report draws from the State of Northumberland report produced annually.

Objectives/approach: The objectives of the strategy are outline the communities strategy for the next 14 years. It is part of the LAA requirements. There is no opportunity for depth of analysis with each part of the strategy based on previous work and the response of consultation. There is discussion of worklessness, deprivation, transport, enterprise and references to more detailed studies on each of these.

Content: Chapter on economic wellbeing covers:

1. Being competitive

2. Unlocking our passion for learning and achieving
3. Fostering an enterprise culture
4. Opening up the opportunity to work

Time frame: Carried out in 2007 with a strategy until 2021

Geographical coverage: The County of Northumberland

Name of organisation: Tees Valley Unlimited

Type of strategy/assessment: Comprehensive business case including a detailed analysis

Body that undertook assessment: Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

Objectives/approach : The report's overall objective is to improve the economic performance of the Tees Valley through developing programmes to improve economic assets, improve urban competitiveness and tackle some of the main barriers to economic growth. It also sets out improved City Region governance arrangements

Content:

- Overview of key industrial sites and infrastructure
- Settlement patterns and functions
- Trends in GB per head over time
- Employment trends in different sectors over time
- Employment in different industries
- Business formation (VAT registration and deregistration) with a discussion of the limitations of this data
- Self employment rates
- Analysis of gross disposable household income over time
- Details of different types of benefits and claimants
- Economic Activity for men and women, analysis of long term unemployment rates
- Vacancies and skills
- Demography
- Economic challenges

Time frame: Carried out in 2006

Geographical coverage: The city region covers Tees Valley (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees), as well as parts of Sedgefield Borough Council in County Durham and North Yorkshire, However much of the analysis is only available for the Tees Valley area

Depth of assessment: A very detailed economic assessment that has been praised by the HMT/DCLG. The business case presents an overview of the assessment with a more detailed background document also produced. However, it does not examine differences within the sub region to any degree of detail in this document

Electronic link to document (if available) and or full reference [The Tees Valley City Region Business Case](#)

Name of organisation: Tyne and Wear City Region Business Case

Type of strategy/assessment: Business case document with economic assessment as an introductory section.

Body that undertook assessment: Partnership of local authorities, in Tyne and wear plus Durham CC, Northumberland CC, ONE and LSC.

Objectives/approach: To set out plans for the Tyne and Wear City Region. The strategy emphasises inclusive economic growth, quality of live in urban and rural areas, regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods, public transport systems, a strong business base, employment opportunities, skills and a wide range of cultural and leisure attractions

Content:

- GVA/head
- Economic activity
- Business population
- Employment density
- Average earnings
- Travel to work
- Car ownership
- Access to housing
- Skills

Time frame: Carried out in 2006

Geographical coverage: Tyne and Wear and parts of Durham, and Northumberland

The depth of the assessment: Assessment based on analysis of existing data and presented in summarised form

Electronic link to document: <http://www.thenorthernway.co.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=283>

Table 1. Selected Sub-Regional Partnerships

Name	Local economic assessments	Stated objectives/issues	Time frame	Geographical size covered/partnership type
Tyne and Wear Strategic Partnership	Tyne and Wear Economic Strategy	Economic growth, productivity, business formation, skills economic activity rates, transport , quality of places	2004-2024	Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland
Tyne and Wear City Region	Business case, OECD territorial review http://www.thenorthernway.co.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=283	inclusive economic growth, quality of live in urban and rural areas, regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods, public transport systems, a strong business base, employment opportunities, skills and a wide range of cultural and leisure attractions		Tyne and Wear, parts of Northumberland and parts of Durham
City Region Employment Consortium (Tyne and Wear)				Tyne and Wear, parts of Northumberland and parts of Durham
Durham strategic partnership/Local area agreement	Community strategy now being worked			Chester le Street Derwentside Easington, Wear Valley Durham City Sedgefield Teesdale
Co Durham Economic Partnership	will shortly be publishing its 3rd Economic Strategy (CDES) 2007-2012 http://www.countydurhampartnership.co.uk/cdsp/usp.nsf/Lookup/Durham%20Economic%20Strategy%202002_07/\$file/Durham+Economic+Strategy+2002_07.pdf		2002-7	As above
Northumberland Strategic Partnership	http://www.northumberlandtogether.org.uk/	Strategies for business support, incubation, worklessness and NEET		Alnwick , Tynedale Wansbeck Berwick upon Tweed, Blyth Valley , Castle Morpeth
Tees Valley Unlimited coming out of the Tees Valley Partnership	http://www.teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk/tvcr/reports/jsureport.pdf	to improve the economic performance of the Tees Valley through developing programmes to improve economic assets, improve urban competitiveness and tackle some of the main barriers to economic growth. Specific issues on Employment and skills, housing, tourism, transport, planning and Economic Strategy. Tees Valley Living, a partnership related to housing will be coming under TVU:		Darlington Hartlepool Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland Sedgefield I, Stockton on Tees

2.2 Local Authorities

Name of organisation: Wansbeck District Council

Type of strategy/assessment: LEGI Bid

Body that undertook assessment: Wansbeck District council, drawing on material from other consultants and Northumberland InforNet

Objectives/approach: To submit a bid for LEGI funding that was successful

Content:

- VAT registrations
- Business start up rates
- Self employment rates
- NNET rates, benefit claimants, job supply
- Aspirations of those out of work, perceptions of business support, barriers to start up, access to finance
- Experience of what works well

Time frame: LEGI programme from 2006-9

Geographical coverage: Wansbeck District only.

Depth of assessment: A very comprehensive assessment drawn on wide range of existing research material that had been commissioned before, as well as analysis of NOMIS data. The actual LEGI bid has been informed by commissioned research and consultations over the past year including:

- The business community workshops, questionnaire surveys, challenge groups supported through the Wansbeck Business Forum.
- A focus group of tenants in our business incubator
- Canvassed the views of 200 benefit claimants on their propensity to start a business and their views on perceived barriers.
- Held 'Future's workshops' with intermediaries, VCS, schools and business to consider the drivers of change, barriers to growth and opportunities.
- Established baseline attitudinal surveys of pupils in our schools.
- Undertook household, street and business surveys on the retail sector
- Sought views and support from our 6 Community Area Partnerships on emerging LEGI proposals.
- Sought views from regional businesses and intermediaries on perceptions of Wansbeck as a business location.

Electronic link: <http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/publications.asp?did=1879>

Name of organisation: County Durham LEGI

Type of strategy/assessment: LEGI bid document

Body that undertook assessment:

Objectives/approach: Submit a LEGI bid that was successful in the first round of bidding. Bid document provides a summary of the economic base that is an additional appendix

Content:

- Employment rates
- Industry overview

- Levels of productivity
- Demographics
- Business start up rates (VAT registrations but recognises limitations of this data)
- Business survival rates
- Gender and ethnicity of entrepreneurs/self employed

Time frame: 2006-9

Geographical coverage: Derwentside, Easington, Sedgefield and Wear Valley

Depth of analysis: Analysis of VAT registrations, NOMIS data, drawing on previous surveys of access to fiancé and business support in the North East. There were extensive consultations on the bid document

Electronic link: <http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/publications.asp?did=1806>

Name of organisation: Blyth Valley Borough Council, with Blyth Valley Action Team for Jobs, Blyth Valley LSP

Type of strategy/assessment: Labour market Analysis and responses to worklessness by Rocket Science and Cogent Strategies International

Objectives/approach: To identify a coherent set of activities and produce a practical work programme of action, to be owned locally and which clearly specifies responsibilities and timescales, which will help to enhance the availability of jobs and the accessibility of these jobs to local workless people

Depth of the assessment and data used: Assessments of existing data with very detailed analysis of sub sectors and different locations.

Content:

- Reviews the economic background
- Summarises past, present and possible future scenarios for labour demand, industry by industry
- Analyses the present pattern of labour supply, and how current patterns of involvement would project into the future,
- an examination of commuting and scenarios for future labour supply
- Combine this analysis with the insights and intelligence gained from stakeholder interviews and workshops to identify appropriate ways forward.
- Labour demand in each sub sector
- Labour Supply in terms of population, training, commuting
- Balance of demand and supply- unemployment and involvement in work

Time frame: Completed August 2006

Geographical coverage: Blyth Valley Borough Council

Electronic link:

<http://www.northumberlandinonet.org.uk/Media/Reports/OtherRep/BVWorklessness.pdf>

3. Overview of Economic Assessments/Strategies

Most local authorities and sub regional partnerships were found to be drawing a range of different types of economic assessments without having a formalised single document. The

term economic assessment is interpreted in different ways but the following four elements can be identified: (1) basic SWOT scoping assessment; (2) assessment based on analysis of existing data; (3) especially commissioned data collection (4) consultation process on strategy derived from economic assessments. The economic assessments vary in their scope with some taking a broad approach and other focussing on specific issues such as employment, transport or enterprise.

3.1 Sub-Regional Partnerships

Sub regional partnerships have carried economic assessments as part of their strategy development. Where a SRP is also a Local Area Agreement (LAA) they have to produce a community strategy, part of which includes an economic assessment. In Northumberland, this role was delegated by the County Council to the Northumberland Strategic Partnership. In Northumberland there has not been a single economic assessment document produced for the sub region as they are waiting for the guidance from CLG following from the Sub National Review. Once this is known, they plan to pull together the existing assessments and commission more work.

Economic assessments are also carried out as part of bid writing exercises, such as the Co Durham LEGI bid and the Tyne and Wear City Region Business Case. There is some reluctance to devote resources to economic assessments with one interviewee making a distinction between strategy and policy for influence and “getting bogged down in report writing”. Another member of a SRP working in a local authority stated that “there is no need for a strategy document because no one reads them ... strategy is based on relationships with partners and having flexibility”. There is further resistance when economic assessments are contested and recommendations are not accepted by some parties.

The process of reorganisation of systems of governance has created a degree of confusion in some areas as there are overlapping partnerships, particularly where there are City Regions that are larger than the sub regional partnerships that they are replacing. For example parts of several of the local authorities in Northumberland and Durham are also in the Tyne and Wear City region. It is therefore harder to define the geographic scope of any assessments, identify the baseline position and future targets. Furthermore the existing data is collected at a different scale to the city region using different administrative boundaries.

There is likely to be future confusion in areas where there are lots of groups carrying different activities. While this leads to duplication and patchy services, others are delaying any assessment work until there is more pooling of resources. This appeared to be more of an issue in Tyne and Wear than in the Tees Valley where there has been more of a tradition of close partnership working amongst the five authorities.

The OECD Territorial review and further analysis of the analytical services has identified the wide range of providers of information in the Tyne and Wear City Region (each local authority TWRI, NERIP and the Regional Health Observatory, universities and consultancies) but a lack of detailed understanding coming from this. The review by Crane House which involved interviews with 30 regional players involved in analytical work in 2006 identified the following hurdles:

Territorialism: the belief in some quarters that specific geographies are more important than others, leading variously to a narrowly metro-centric view, or turf wars between agencies, or to the ‘me too’ syndrome

Anti-intellectualism: the tendency for decision makers to think that they know the answers without recourse to evidence

“Initiativitis”: the proliferation of project specific solutions that address partial problems without connecting to a holistic view

Cynicism: spoiled expectations based on a constant supply of unevaluated projects preventing the emergence of a holistic solution

Quality of information: the tendency to contest the value of information in the belief that it follows the agenda of the funder of the agency.

3.2 Local Authorities

The extent of economic assessments by local authorities varies considerably. No case was found of a single economic analysis document and strategy that covered all aspects of the local economy. The assessments also vary in scales with much economic assessment carried out in particular neighbourhoods or settlements for some aspects such as retail services.

While some local authorities rely on sub regional partnerships to carry out assessment work, others have invested in a wide range of assessments. Most of the smaller local authorities were found to be relying on their own staff to pull together limited data on small range of data such as income levels.

The LEGI programme has resulted in a large amount of economic assessments across the country as all eligible local authorities were given resources for economic assessments. The impact of providing this resource should be available as part of the evaluation of LEGI by Regneris, although this was not reported to be available yet.

As with the sub regional partnerships, local authorities were found to be delaying making decisions about economic assessments while they were uncertain of future obligations. This uncertainty includes requirements coming out of the Sub National Review and the national evaluation framework for LEGI. There are also changes to the structure of local government with the Local Government Review. This is affecting District Councils in Northumberland and Durham with the existing local authorities merging into a single unitary authority in 18 months.

4. Working Across Spatial Levels: Local, Sub-Regional and Regional Relationships

The reorganisation of the governance in the North East region has created various tensions that shape the extent and types of economic assessments. As mentioned above, Northumberland is undergoing considerable changes with a move to a single unitary authority. This has led those in the local authorities to delay any decisions and feel that this longer term strategy work is “not our responsibility”. There is concern that these changes will lose the continuity of successful programmes at a local level.

The move to City Regions is also creating new tensions as new partnerships have to be developed and there is competition between local authorities. The extent of competition varies depending on topic and geographic area with competition being most explicit in terms of attracting inward investment. Respondents reported a greater degree of competition within Tyne and Wear, compared to Tees Valley where there has been a range of successful broker organisations that have brought the authorities together working as a trusted intermediary and facilitating a range of working groups of officials at different levels of seniority.

The moves to City Regions and to City Development Companies are also creating competition for different forms of sub regional governance structures. The re-working of boundaries results in some temporary overlaps and a shake up of governance and what some might call “creative tension”. There is some debate over the extent to which new forms of sub regional governance will affect local delivery. One interviewee reported that individual officials ensure that their ‘patch’ is not moved into and so can resist influence from the sub

regional level. The local authorities perceive these forms of governance as funding conduits: “They are pragmatic for delivery of funding... actual delivery has to be local and locally trusted, so each local authority in the MAA has its own development plan”. The process of economic assessments and strategy work is perceived as a threat to local flexibility by some interviewees in local authorities.

The move to City Regions is a particular threat to smaller rural district councils. The focus of economic assessments on concentrations of poverty in large cities may reduce the resources they have in their areas. They have found that they have had very little opportunity to influence these partnerships so far.

5. Examples of Better Practice and Effectiveness

Wansbeck District Council has carried out several assessments of worklessness, both on their own and in conjunction with Job Centre Plus. They have also commissioned a survey on the barriers to enterprise and carried out work in house as part of their successful LEGI bid and bids for other initiatives. In addition, they draw on work carried out by Northumberland Infonet, a sub regional organisation committed to providing different types of assessments.

Urban unitary authorities were found to be carrying out more economic assessment work as they have more resources and are more able to find funding to cover the costs. An example of good practice is Darlington Borough Council who carried out research in 2001 as part of their Darlington Gateway Development Framework, and reviewed it last year, bringing in external consultants. This was complemented by some economic sector analysis and was followed up with a citizen survey of 1000 people, and a consultation exercise (the Darlington Assembly) organised by the Local Strategic Partnership.

The Tees Valley City Region Business case is another example of good practice at a Sub regional level. They have produced a very detailed economic assessment that has been praised by the HMT/DCLG. They pull together a wide range of indicators and look at trends over time. The business case presents an overview of the assessment with a more detailed background document also produced. However, it does not examine differences within the sub region to any degree of detail in this document.

6. List of Interviews

Organisation	Name	Job Title
Regional Level		
Government Office North East	Tom Smyth	Head of division for Tyne and Wear
One North East	Mike Lazzari	Economic inclusion
Sub regional level		
One North East/ GONE	John Rundall and Chris Gill	Developing proposals for City Development Company
Durham Strategic Partnership	Ian Forcester	Lead for LAA support
Northumberland Strategic Partnership	John Litherland	
Northumberland County Council	John Hamilton	Economic Development Officer
Tees Valley Unlimited	John Lowther	Head of Joint Strategy Unit
Local Authorities		
North Tyneside District Council	Shona Duncan	
South Tyneside Council	Rick O'Farrell	Head of Regeneration, Enterprise and Asset
Sunderland City Council	Kevin Duncan	
Wansbeck Borough Council	Ray Browning	Economic Development Officer
Tynedale District Council	Andy Dean	Economic Development Officer
Redcar and Cleveland Borough	Ian Hotley	Economic Development Officer

Council		
Darlington Borough Council	Gwenda Lyn Jones	

London

1. Local Authorities and Sub-Regional Partnerships

LDA related sub-regional partnerships

These are as follows: North London Strategic Alliance, South London Partnership, West London Alliance, Central London Partnership, and Thames Gateway Partnership (see table below). The London Development Agency (LDA) is working with partners to develop sub-regional economic development implementation plans (SREDIP) to target the sub-region's labour market issues, business support needs and economic development requirements.

City strategies

Two City Strategies are operating within London (i.e. West London working and East/South East London strategy partnership). They focus on employment related issues and which are strategies to improve the level of employment within the sub-regions. These involve public and private sector actors and bodies particularly relying on JCP, and LSC. Their main aim is to improve delivery of services to tackle unemployment.

Urban Regeneration Companies

Website search found that there are no URCs in London and interviews confirmed the picture with the exception of Croydon which is in the process of developing a URC. This will focus on physical regeneration and in particular on creating business space within the borough.

Urban Development Corporations

One UDC operates in London (i.e. London Thames Gateway Development Corporation) and focuses on finding sites for housing development. Barking and Dagenham economic development strategy proposes the creation of a UDC (also supported by the LDA) to develop Barking and London riverside.

Economic Development Companies (CDCs/EDCs)

Park Royal Partnership and Heathrow City have been identified as examples of EDCs within West London. They both run City Growth Strategies are business led partnerships and focus strongly on economic development type intervention. Park Royal Partnership covers Brent, Ealing and Hammersmith and Fulham. Heathrow City partnership is based in Southall (Ealing) but is actively engaged with businesses operating outside the borough. The City Fringe Partnership which covers the boroughs of Camden, Islington, Hackney, and Tower Hamlets can be considered an economic development company which has traditionally relied on SRB and European funding.

MAAs

A number of local authorities are considering MAAs including Haringey (North London) and Hounslow (West London) but a more active stance has been postponed in both cases. Most boroughs want to get used to LAAs before embarking on MAAs as these are both new structures for local authorities and need to be tested.

Other partnerships identified

Other sub-regional partnerships have been identified across London. These are theme related:

Transport:

North London Transport forum
West London Strategic Transport Group

Business interest groups:

North London business alliance
West London Business
East London Business Alliance

Voluntary Sector:

North London Voluntary Sector

Inward investment

South London Economic Development Alliance (SLEDA)

Housing

West London Housing Partnership

Social cohesion

West London Community Cohesion Group

Sector specific

West London Creative Industries steering Group

West London Tourism

West London Arts and Culture group

Four Greens: arts and creative industries in North London (including the boroughs of Haringey, Barnet, Waltham Forest and Enfield)

Olympics

West London Olympic Stakeholder Executive

ODA (Olympic delivery authority)

LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games)

Public sector sub-regional partnerships

West London Alliance

Other emerging partnerships

The identification of growth areas and community infrastructures in order to boost housing in brownfield areas is stimulating links between Haringey, Barking and Dagenham, and Redbridge.

2. Review of Selected Assessments and Strategies

2.1 Sub-Regional Partnerships

A) West London Economic development strategy and implementation plan (2007)

Name of organisation: West London Partnership

Type of strategy/assessment: economic development strategy

Body that undertook assessment: West London Partnership

Objectives:

1. Places and infrastructure: making sure that land use planning, transport and housing policies are integrated and promote a sub-regional approach to the supply and development of land.
2. investment in people: skills also reflecting London Skills & employment board strategy and implementation plan. Strong links with West London Working pathfinders. Workforce

development and training and specific training aimed at growing sectors within West London.

3. Investment in Enterprise: particular focus on supporting businesses owned by disadvantaged groups (i.e. ethnic minorities, women, people with disabilities). Particular focus on knowledge-based industries. However, transport and logistics also mentioned because strategic in the context of Heathrow airport.
4. Marketing and promotion: maintaining and enhancing West London's image as a place to do business and also as a place to live and work.

Approach(depth of assessment/data used): Assessment based on some secondary data analysis (ONS, IDBR, ABI etc). Limited use of an employment survey (from the LSC).

Content: There is clear attention towards regional priorities, particularly the EDS of the LDA. Investment in places, people, enterprise and marketing and promotion which reflect the same themes used by the LDA economic development strategy and Transport plan. In addition, the effort is towards strategic sectors logistics, media and creative industries, and tourism particularly focussed around key locations within West London such as Heathrow airport, Park Royal, Wembley and White City. Other elements include: the balance between employment and population growth; increased competitiveness through improving transport, supply of land and improving skills; connecting areas of economic growth with areas of concentrated unemployment; and reducing worklessness

Time frame: 3 years

Geography: Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow

Key issues:

- Strategy is rather general, it does not display any focus on a particular priority.

B) The North London Economic snapshot (2007)

Name of organisation: North London Strategic Alliance

Type of strategy/assessment: economic analysis

Body that undertook assessment: Centre for Economic and social inclusion (CESI),

Objectives: not mentioned

Approach (depth of assessment/data used): comprehensive statistical work on employment and worklessness with some enterprise and self-employment data commissioned by NLSA Centre for Economic and social inclusion (CESI). However, it does not have any evaluation of the statistical material.

Time frame: not given

Geography: Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, and Waltham Forest

Key issues: it might be used for future strategic design, but at the moment it is just a list of tables. An interviewee from the LDA did mention that LDA related sub-regional partnerships are at different stages of production of economic development strategies.

C) City Strategy Pathfinder East and South East London:

Name of organisation:

Type of strategy/assessment

Body that undertook assessment

Objectives

CS East focuses on maximising the benefits of the Olympics to residents in the surrounding boroughs in terms of the creation of employment opportunities. This CS receives significant funding (£13.5m) primarily from JCP, other funding from the LDA and the LSCs, and indirectly (via bending) from the ESF. Agreed objectives between partners have made this partnership particularly effective. No major problems have been reported by interviewee.

The East and South East London CSP brings together a consortium of the key partners in the area, including the five boroughs, Jobcentre Plus (JCP), the London Development Agency (LDA), the Greater London Authority (GLA), the Learning and Skills Councils (LSC) and local employers, East London Business Alliance. It also involves key partners, such as the Olympic delivery authority (ODA) and LOCOG.

Overall it aims to increase the employment rate, and tackle worklessness and child poverty

- Maximising benefits from the Olympics
- Solely on employment and labour market
- Lone parents into work
- Joined up services involving JCP and LSCs (Single point of access for people seeking employment)

Agreed strategic objectives between partners have secured collaboration. The partnership was judged as effective.

Approach (depth of assessment/data used): extensive use of case studies, focus groups and statistical material. There was some especially commissioned data collection for this. It brings together different reports.

Content: Strongly focussed on employers involvement which is seen as crucial for the development of effective employment

Time Frame: 2 years

Geography: Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest

Key issues: There is no link with the Thames gateway and partnership and it is not mentioned in the report. It does take into account what happens in terms of labour market issues at the regional level, but does not take into account other sub-regional work undertaken by other partnerships such as the Thames Gateway which is also strongly linked to the Olympic Games.

Table 1: Selected Sub-Regional Partnerships

<i>Name</i>	<i>Local economic assessments</i>	<i>Link to documents produced</i>	<i>Stated objectives/issues</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Geographical size covered/partnership type</i>
LDA related SRPs (*)					
North London Strategic Alliance (NLSA)	The North London Economic snapshot (2007)	http://www.nlsa.org.uk/files/nl-economic-april07.pdf	Employment Worklessness Skills Short section on economy	n/a	Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, and Waltham Forest; public, private and voluntary orgs.
South London Partnership	SREDIP has been produced but is not available online	n/a	n/a		Bromley, Croydon, Merton, Richmond, Sutton, Wandsworth, Kingston upon Thames,
West London Partnership	West London EDS and implementation plan	West London EDS and implementation plan (2007)	Places and infrastructure People Enterprise Marketing Based on statistical data from (ONS etc)	2007-2010	Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow
Central London Partnership	Not available online	n/a	n/a	n/a	Corporation of London, Camden, Islington, Mambeth Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster
Thames Gateway London Partnership	Sub-regional economic development implementation plan (2006)	http://www.thames-gateway.org.uk/uploadedFiles/projects/Industry_and_Economy/SRE DIPNov06.pdf	Diversification of the economy into high value manufacturing and environmental industries Regeneration of key brownfield sites Improving transport infrastructure Improving the level of skills and education		Redbridge, Havering, Barking and Dagenham, Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Lewisham, Havering, Bexley, Greenwich, Waltham Forest, and Dartford/LSC, universities, LDA
City Strategies					
West London Working	West London Working City Strategy Pathfinder (2007)	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfare-reform/business_plans/west_london.pdf		3 years roll forward	Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow
East and South East	East & South East London city strategy Pathfinder	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfare-reform/business_plans/east_london.pdf	Maximising benefits from the Olympics Solely on employment and labour market Lone parents into work Joined up services involving JCP and LSCs (Single point of access for people seeking employment)	March 2009	Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest/ ODA, LOCOG, London business alliance, JCP,
Urban Regeneration Companies	None in London but application are to be considered in Croydon	n/a	n/a	n/a	Croydon (?)
Urban development Corporations					
London Thames Gateway Development Corporation		http://www.ltgdcc.org.uk/uploaded/documents/ltgdccorporateplan200608.pdf	mainly housing		15 boroughs, some of which are outside London.
UDC in Barking and Dagenham	This has been proposed in the Barking and River bank that is in need of major physical re-development		Mainly housing	n/a	It may cover other boroughs

2.2 Local Authorities

Out of 33 London boroughs, 16 have been examined in order to understand to what extent local authorities have produced economic assessments. Three economic assessments from Barking and Dagenham, Wandsworth, and Waltham Forest are presented in more detail here.

A) Economic Development in Barking and Dagenham

Barking and Dagenham secured LEGL funding (£15.5m). It also benefits from major ERDF funding

Objectives: Help with building infrastructure for business growth including transport, built environment and ICT

- Taking into account the needs of businesses
- Sites, training and advice that business needs
- Benefits to the local community (social inclusion): building on social enterprise, ILMs, and local entrepreneurs
- Increasing access to local employment opportunities
- Local procurement to foster local economic growth

Approach (depth of assessment/data used): SWOT analysis. Some limited use of ABI data

Content: Focus on key growing sectors: Strong high tech manufacturing sector, environmental industries. Other key sectors include retail, construction, Attention to cross-cutting themes: education, skills, transport infrastructure, crime against businesses, business retention and inward investment, start ups Promoting social inclusion (social enterprise, ILMs, disadvantaged groups (ethnic minorities, and women).

Time frame: 3 years

Geography: borough wide

B) Economic Development Programme 2007-2009

name of organisation: Wandsworth council

type of strategy/assessment: economic development programme

body that undertook assessment: Wandsworth's economic development office

objectives: focus on small companies and young entrepreneurs skills

approach(depth of assessment/data used): short strategic document (eight pages), no SWOT or others. It is just setting out economic development priorities for the area in a bullet point format

Time Frame: n/a

geography: borough wide but particularly East Battersea, Roehampton where concentrations of unemployment are higher

C) Enterprise Strategy

Name of organisation: Waltham Forest

Type of strategy/assessment:

Body that undertook assessment: Waltham Forest

Objectives:

- Start up, business premises, one stop business advice
- Self-employment, increasing entrepreneurship amongst disadvantaged groups (BME groups, women etc), social enterprise
- Retail, leisure, personal services, ethnic minority food, and media industry (film and video production)

Approach (depth of assessment/data used): extensive secondary source data analysis (ABI, etc); MORI Business survey; SWOT analysis

Time Frame: 10 years

Geography: borough but wider links with Lee Valley and Thames Gateway

Table 2: Selected Local Authorities

Name	Local economic assessments	Link	Stated objectives	Time frame	geography
Barking and Dagenham	Economic development in Barking and Dagenham	http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/5-work/regeneration/pdf/economic-dev-strategy.pdf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help with building infrastructure for business growth including transport, built environment and ICT • Taking into account the needs of businesses • Sites, training and advice that business needs • Benefits to the local community (social inclusion): building on social enterprise, ILMs, and local entrepreneurs • Increasing access to local employment opportunities • Local procurement to foster local economic growth 	3 years	borough
Waltham Forest	Enterprise Strategy	http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/env-doc-entstrategy2006.pdf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start up, business premises, one stop business advice • Self-employment, disadvantaged groups (BME groups, women etc), social enterprise • Retail, leisure, personal services, ethnic minority food • Media industry (film and video production) • Improving transport, 	10 years	borough but wider links with Lee Valley and Thames Gateway
Camden	Camden Community Strategy (Economic development is one of the key themes, but it is not given priority)	http://www.camdentogether.org.uk/ccm/navigation/download-consultation-documents/jsessionid=6455F9F943F0BF0BA5E279AB3E781653.node2			Borough but key sites in Kings Cross, Kilburn high road, Holborn and Camden Town for led
Enfield	Local Development Framework	http://www.enfield.gov.uk/856/Local%20Development%20Scheme%202007%20to%202010.pdf			Borough
Southwark	Not a real strategy but different reports on employment and enterprise	http://www.southwark.gov.uk/YourServices/RegenerationSection/ecodev/			Borough
Haringey	draft of economic regeneration strategy	To be sent electronically		n/a	Borough mainly, but also forging links with Stansted airport and Upper Lea Valley
Harrow	Enterprise Harrow	http://www.harrow.gov.uk/downloads/ExecutiveSummary.pdf			borough
Lambeth	Economic development strategy	http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/4FEB5E18-F821-4F92-850B-BFE84E4BC7B5/0/EconomicDevelopmentStrategy.pdf			Borough
Brent	Economic development	Not available online,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing worklessness 	Indicatively	Borough

	strategy (Only 9 pages long but based on a extensive research)	but I can send it through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the level of entrepreneurship Business start ups Business growth and innovation Inward investment 	5 years	
Merton	Unitary development plan (contains some elements of ec dev)	http://www.merton.gov.uk/merton_unitary_development_plan.pdf			Borough
Tower Hamlets	Local Development Framework	http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/data/planning/data/planning-policy/downloads/aaap/core-strategy.pdf			Borough
Hillingdon	Hillingdon's strategy for a sustainable economy	http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/central/strategy/economic_strategy05.pdf			Borough
Hammersmith and Fulham	An economic development strategy for Hammersmith and Fulham	http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/Images/HFEconomicDevelopmentStrategy_tcm21-86303.pdf			Borough
Ealing	It is working on one				Borough
Wandsworth	Economic development programme				borough wide but particularly East Battersea, and Roehampton
Croydon	no but looking to produce one. Commissioning research to that end. Ad hoc informal docs. Have been produced				borough

3. Overview of Economic Assessments / Strategies

3.1 Sub-Regional Partnerships

All the 5 sub-regional partnership that are linked to the LDA and partly funded through it (i.e. 200K a year each) are working to develop a SREDIP. All of these have produced strategic documents (i.e. North London Strategic Alliance, West London Partnership, Thames Gateway London Partnership, South London Partnership, Central London partnership), but these vary in detail. The LDA intends to use these sub-regional partnerships to channel funding through them rather than dealing directly with the variety of sub-regional partnerships operating at the delivery level (e.g. City Fringe Partnership).

These sub-regional strategies seem to be the most important vehicle at the sub-regional level for a variety of reasons. Firstly, they are linked with a major funding body (i.e. LDA); secondly, they incorporate and represent important stakeholders operating at the sub-regional and local level. Thirdly, interviews with local authorities and the review of some of their economic strategies formally mention these sub-regional strategies as important in defining the most localised strategies.

The major issue emerging, however, is that the boundaries of these sub-regional partnerships are going to change and the Central London partnership will be divided amongst the other partnerships. An interviewee explained the changes proposed as a problem of collaboration between local authorities. The new boundaries will be set by April 2008. After the boundary changes sub-regional economic development strategies might change substantially to take into account major employment opportunities offered by central London. Stronger links will therefore emerge between Hackney, Camden, Westminster and North London sub-regional strategy.

City Strategies seem to emerge as an important player in tackling labour market issues at the sub-regional level. Interviewees recognised the need to tackle labour market problems at the sub-regional rather than local level. Haringey, for instance, mentioned that 15,000 people in Haringey are unemployed and it is not possible to create jobs within the borough for all these people. Hence, the links that this borough has established with the Upper Lea Valley, Stansted airport and other boroughs is a clear recognition of the sub-regional scale as crucial in order to tackle issues of unemployment. In addition, CS in East London have been given a considerable amount of funding (£13.5m) which is important in determining their relative position in relation to other strategies. Their involvement in the Olympics is also a crucial factor of importance. There might be scope to extent this to other parts of London involving an additional number of local authorities.

3.2 Local Authorities

Out of 33 London boroughs, 16 have been examined in order to understand to what extent local authorities have produced economic assessments. Out of the 16 boroughs, seven (i.e. Barking and Dagenham, Waltham Forest, Enterprise Harrow, Lambeth, Brent, Hammersmith and Fulham, and Wandsworth) displayed a more elaborate economic assessment. Within these, however, some have used more extensive research to underpin their strategy, others (e.g. Wandsworth) produced a plan with no mention of particular primary or secondary data analysis of the local economy. In addition, a number of other issues need to be highlighted:

1. There is no real clarity of what economic assessment means. Interviewees interpreted economic assessment in different ways. Some as related predominantly to planning, while others as 'local development frameworks'. Again, others thought it just meant a statistical analysis of the local economy.

2. Different borough strategies contain elements of economic development. These can range from just purely economic assessments based on commissioned work or analysis of secondary data sources (e.g. ABIs, ONS, IDBR etc) to more complex strategies based on analysis of secondary data, the description of key priorities and an implementation plan.

3. Other local authorities have different documents that include different elements of economic development. Camden uses a community strategy which contains elements of economic development but it does not give priority to this over themes such as housing, health, and the environment. To date Camden and Tower Hamlets make use of local development frameworks rather than a unified strategy. Others such as Southwark have different documents related to economic development (e.g. labour market, business support etc) but again do not have a unifying economic development strategy. Finally, unitary development plans also contains elements of economic development (particularly planning) and are in place in all local authorities.

5. The economic development strategies examined contain several similar cross cutting themes as expected (skills, transport, business support, inward investment, business retention etc) and focus on key sectors that are seen as a competitive strength of the area concerned.

6. The identification of LDA's priority areas has helped Waltham Forest to produce localised economic development plans. The same could be argued for Haringey with the City Growth Strategies.

7. A comment to be borne in mind from one of the interviewees is the need for local economic assessment to be undertaken at the local authority level rather than sub-regional level. This was mainly justified by the fact that SRPs are not seen as statutory bodies.

8. In South London, interviewee explained that there seems to be a tendency to develop economic development strategies as various boroughs realised that their areas need to create jobs within the locality rather than just being areas based on commuting to central London for work. South London and Croydon, in particular, have a lot of land that can be used for business premises. This realisation stems from the realisation that unemployment in South London is increasing despite the growth in the wider London's economy.

4. Working Across Spatial Levels: Local, Sub-Regional and Regional Relationships

4.1 Links between regional and sub-regional level

As mentioned above, SREDIPs are relevant to the relationship between the LDA and sub-regional partnerships. The fact that these were sponsored by the LDA ensures a high degree of integration between sub-regional and regional documents (EDS of the LDA in particular). The LDA only wants to work with these SRPs rather than other SRPs in each of the 5 areas (e.g. UDCs, EDCs etc). However, a range of problems emerged from interviews and documents examined. ECOTEC's review of SREDIPs found that the action plans were judged as unrealistic in their expectations. Secondly, the issue of funding has not been solved and again it was perceived that it would be naïve to think that SRP's can lever in partners' funding. In addition, one interviewee suggested that while their SREDIP was ready last year, no action has been taken by the LDA since. This presumably reflects the changes in the boundaries, but it might be that the LDA is no longer convinced by this structure/approach to economic development.

4.2 Links between local and sub-regional/regional bodies

4.2.1 Local and sub-regional

On the whole, interviewees mentioned strong links with LDA related sub-regional partnerships in developing their economic development strategies. Changes in the structure of sub-regional partnerships mean that jobs in central London can form part of the sub-regional plan for other sub-regional partnerships. In terms of North London, this means strong links will take place between North London boroughs and associated sub-regional partnership with Hackney, Camden, Westminster in Central London.

However, potential problems can arise from sub-regional and local strategies. In the case of East London, the Thames Gateway London partnership focuses on tourism, and the promotion of financial services, while Barking and Dagenham's economic strategy focuses on the development of high value added manufacturing, green industries, and construction. On the other hand, important differences between Barking and Dagenham sector focus and other local boroughs in the sub-region appear.

An interviewee mentioned the problem of securing coherence between strategies at the local and sub-regional level in terms of the different types of intervention needed at various spatial scales. Thus, for instance, transport and skills need to be taken on board at the sub-regional level, while worklessness and community development need to be taken on board at the local level.

4.2.2 Local and regional

By and large interviewees mentioned that local authorities' economic development strategies reflect the EDS and the London plan. Some tensions might, however, emerge in relation to land in terms of housing versus employment use. In addition, tensions exist in terms of focussing on competitive advantages of an area (e.g. logistics) which involves transport of goods to central London locations, and curbing air pollution which are both objectives of the LDA/regional level.

The use of people, and places in the design of local economic development strategies (Barking and Dagenham, Haringey) reflect the expressed attempt of these strategies to reflect the regional EDS which uses exactly the same words. Haringey does seem to actively pursue links at the sub-regional level, while Camden is relatively inward looking in this sense.

5. Examples of Better Practice Economic Assessments

Good examples of particular assessment types:

- a) **SRP: City Strategy Pathfinder East and South East:** This contains a strong analysis of the sub-regional economy, use of ad hoc survey work, and clear ideas as to what needs to be done in terms of improving labour market opportunities in deprived areas. However, it is only focused on labour markets.
- b) **West London EDS and implementation plan (2007):** this is a more comprehensive SRP economic development assessment/strategy, with some key sectors and areas identified and fairly clear focus. However, to some extent, all the SRP strategies/documents look similar, reflecting the fact that have been produced to meet a similar brief and cover the 'classic' elements of economic development such as business start up and growth, some branding of the area, inward investment, social cohesion (targeting disadvantaged groups).
- c) **London Borough of Waltham Forest** is a good example of its type, including a selection of key sectors and an attempt to include BMEBs, and links with sub-regional development growth poles (Lea Valley, Thames Valley corridor), as well as use of some business surveys to underpin strategy.

Impact of assessments:

Sub-regional level: Although the future of the **sub-regional implementation plans (SREDIPs)** is unclear, they are set to play a key role at the sub-regional level because of their link with the LDA and the funding streams flowing from it through sub-regional partnerships. **West London City Strategies Pathfinder** is also involve very prominent, including key actors within London (e.g. LDA chief Executive, Manny Lewis); a variety of large businesses and chief executive of local councils) and is promoting a clear vision of what they want to do in terms of addressing labour market issues in the sub-region.

Local level: Economic development strategies in certain **outer London Boroughs** (e.g. Barnet, Bromley, Croydon, Merton, Ealing) are being used to assert their own agendas within the wider London agenda, which is seen as too focused on the interests of inner London. There is increasing recognition of the need to development employment within these areas, to develop business space to retain and attract companies and avoid these areas being seen as only residential dormitories.

6 References

ECOTEC (2006) "Review of the LDA's sub-regional Engagement programme", commissioned by the LDA

7 List of Interviewees

Organisation	Name	Job title
Sub-regional level		
West London Alliance	Ian Nichol	Chief Ex
East London City Strategy	Rob Whitehead	LDA
LDA	Diane Burridge	LDA regeneration project manager
Local authorities		
London Councils	Dianna Neal	Head of Policy and Grants
Camden	Richard Miller	Business support, enterprise manager
Brent	Joanne Francis	Deputy Head of Regeneration
Croydon	Richard Wragg	Croydon Strategic Partnership
Harrow	Claire Codling	Senior Professional Development Enterprise
Haringey	Karen Galey	Head of Economic regeneration

The East Midlands

1. Local Authorities and Sub-Regional Partnerships

1.1 Local Authorities

Local councils in the East Midlands comprise the full range of county, city, borough and district councils and unitary authorities. The six county councils comprise Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland. There are four city councils (Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Lincoln), 16 Borough Council, 18 District Councils and 1 unitary authority.

The East Midlands as a wider region lacks cohesion in terms of its geography and in the absence of any clear sense of identity. It spreads from a southern area that forms part of the wider South East, to major former coalfield areas in the North, a rural East, and a central area with three major cities. Nottingham, Derby and Leicester.

1.2 Sub-Regional Partnerships

The main SRPs which have an economic focus comprise:

SRPs related to East Midlands Development Agency (emda): Strategic Partnerships (SSPs):

The RDA (emda) recognises seven SSPs which comprise: Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd; Greater Nottingham Partnership; Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LSEP); Alliance SSP; Derby & Derbyshire Enterprise Partnership (DDEP); Lincolnshire Enterprise, and the Welland SSP. The SSPs are an important part of emda;s strategy to operate at the sub regional level. The SSPs have been set up as companies with limited guarantee and operate on the basis of an appointed board. Their key role is to formulate economic strategies and assessments. [See Link: http://www.emda.org.uk/ssps/default.asp?nav=05](http://www.emda.org.uk/ssps/default.asp?nav=05)

City Strategy Pathfinders

There are two City Strategy Pathfinders in Nottingham and Leicester. These focus on integrating employment and social inclusion and improving employment rates. The Pathfinders involve various partners from the public and private sector and are led by Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council.

City Development Companies (CDCs)/MAA

There is ongoing possible development of CDCs in the three main cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby and also related discussion of possible MAAs. Northamptonshire Enterprises had also shown interest in the concept of a CDC.

Urban Regeneration Companies

The Leicester Regeneration Company (LRC) was set up in 2001 to encourage the economic and physical development of Leicester. It is funded and supported by emda, Leicester City Council and English Partnerships. LRC works to promote the redevelopment of areas in Leicester, to improve the image, environment and economic prosperity of the city (www.leicesterregeneration.co.uk).

Derby Cityscape URC has been established to advise and influence Derby City Council, EMDA and other interested parties on policies and programmes relating to physical

regeneration of the City centre. North Northants Development Company has been established as a delivery body for regeneration in North Northamptonshire.

Local Economic Growth Initiative(LEGI)

There is one successful LEGI involving Ashfield, Mansfield and Bolsover District Councils.

Urban Development Corporations

West Northamptonshire Development Corporation has been established as a delivery vehicle for promoting growth in the western part of Northamptonshire.as part of the Sustainable Communities programme.

3 Cities Partnership

This is a partnership established between Derby, Leicester and Nottingham with the aim of coordinating strategic initiatives in the area of housing transport and more recently a failed LEGI bid.

2. Review of Selected Assessments and Strategies

2.1 Sub-Regional Partnerships

Greater Nottingham Partnership Sub-Regional Investment Plan

Organisation: Greater Nottingham Partnership

Type of strategy/assessment: Development Strategy

Body that undertook assessment: Greater Nottingham Partnership

Objectives Key focus of strategy is around the following areas: developing Leadership; ICT; learning skills and employability; physical regeneration; tourism, leisure and culture; transport.

Depth/data used A variety of data sources are used such as ONS, ABI, LSC, transport etc with much use of data obtained from emda. It also draws upon assessment work undertaken by Nottingham City Council *Greater Economic Review* and Nottinghamshire County Council's *The State of Nottinghamshire 2005*.

Content There is clear attention to linking the strategy assessment to identified growth sectors such as science and technology, business and professional services, public sector and related services, retail and leisure and creative industries.

The assessment is subdivided into the following sections:

- Geography,
- Employment, Learning and Skills
- Enterprise and Business Support
- Innovation
- Transport and Logistics
- Energy and Resources
- Environmental Protection
- Land and Development
- Cohesive Communities
- Economic Renewal
- Economic Inclusion

Area Covered Nottinghamshire County Council area

Time frame 3 years (2007-10)

Electronic link: <http://www.gnpartnership.org.uk/documents/srip>

Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership Sub Regional Profile

Organisation: Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (SSP)

Type of assessment/strategy: Sub Regional Profile

Body that undertook assessment: Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership

Objectives The main purpose of the Review is to assist the Partnership with business and strategic planning, by highlighting both opportunities and challenges for the sub region. The document has three parts: the first part presents key facts and figures on population, economy, labour market, socio economic inclusion, infrastructure and environment and where appropriate the performance of the Partnership is compared with the region.

Depth/data used The assessment provides a comprehensive base line study drawing on ONS, NOMIS and SOA data, emda analysis as well as NUTS3 regional analysis for GVA data. The SRP has its own data observatory to support this type of activity within the sub-region, and this assessment draw upon a number of previous economic assessments carried out in the sub-region..

Content This baseline study covers population, economy and productivity, labour markets, deprivation and economic inclusion, housing and transport and the environment. It involves an analysis of the economy in terms of GVA as a measure of output and therefore productivity with some attempt to forecast GVA growth. Sector analysis is also undertaken in terms of dominant industrial structure with a case study of transport and equipment sector. Analysis of business stock has been undertaken, analysing openings and closures and using VAT registration data. Usual labour market analysis is undertaken including employment activity, unemployment, skills/qualifications with a brief analysis of earnings. SIMD data is used to measure deprivation in the area as a way of linking economic development issues to economic inclusion.

Time frame: 2007 onward.

Geography: covers local authority areas of Amber Valley, Derby, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash, High Peak and South Derbyshire.

Electronic link: http://www.ddep.co.uk/template_01.asp?PageID=20

Business and Jobs Led growth: Northamptonshire Investment Promotion Strategy

Organisation: Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited

Type of strategy/assessment: Investment Promotion strategy

Undertaken by: conducted by Tenon Techlocate consultants

Objectives: To present an investment attraction vision for Northampton and action framework

Approach: A systematic examination of various elements of Northamptonshire and its economic development and tourism frameworks to help identify capabilities and potential for attracting investment.

Content: Introduction/Strategic Context; Vision and Objectives; Target Markets; Marketing messages (adopting best practice and branding Northamptonshire); Strategy Approach – delivery & resources; Action plan

Data: Marketing related data and analysis. Builds upon two other reports: *Economic Baseline and Clusters/Sectors Analysis*, April 2003 by Roger Tym & partners and *Tourism Branding for Northamptonshire*, by Locum Destination Consulting

Time Frame: Immediate Action Plan over 3 years (published May 2003)

Geographical coverage: Northamptonshire

Electronic link:

http://www.northamptonshireobservatory.org.uk/docs/doc_Northamptonshire%20Investment%20Promotion%20Strategy%20-%20final%20rep..._133159150604.pdf

2.2 Local Authority Level

Harborough Economic Development Strategy 2007-2012

Organisation: Harborough District Council

Type of strategy/assessment: Economic Development Strategy

Objectives: To explain the Council's commitment, approach and activities to improve the well-being of the district, enable it to realise its economic potential and to encourage prosperity over the period 2007-2012. Also to guide and inform the Council's own business plan and provide a framework for supporting and influencing the priorities of other partners and bodies

Approach: Sets out desired outcomes against 6 strategic aims:

1. A diverse economy with a strong entrepreneurial culture and successful, competitive & innovative businesses that contribute to above average levels of long term economic growth.
2. An improved and more cohesive tourism product & profile, focussed around 'quintessential England'.
3. A strengthened economic role for Market Harborough and Lutterworth town centres with the economic objectives of other rural centres supported.
4. A range of readily available employment sites and premises within the district, in sustainable locations and with appropriate infrastructure to meet the needs of local businesses and to provide choice for appropriate inward investments.
5. An increasingly highly educated and vocationally skilled resident population and workforce, committed to lifelong learning, whose higher skills are more appropriately matched with the employment requirements of local companies to help to reduce net commuting levels.
6. Improved information, intelligence and relationships with key partners & partnership and local businesses.

Content Introduction/context; SWOT analysis; The Strategy, Short Term Action Plan 2007/8-2008/9; Resources; Monitoring Progress Review

Depth/data used: This is a comprehensive economic assessment produced by a small town council. A detailed economic profile is included as Appendix 3. Key profile data from a variety of sources on: population and social characteristics; business; employment and workforce; skills, education and training; land and commercial property; economic forecasts

Time Frame: 2007-2012

Geographical coverage: District of Harborough

South Holland Workspace Feasibility Study/14-19 Statement of Need

Name of Local Authority: South Holland District Council/South Holland LSC

Type of Strategy/Assessment: Two assessments: (1) Workspace Analysis; (2) 14-19 Statement of Need for South Holland Area

Body that undertook assessment: Consultancy/Learning and Skills Council Lincolnshire and Rutland.

Objectives for Workspace Study: To assess the need for a managed/nurtured workspace and starter type industrial units in South Holland.

Depth/data: detailed analysis via a demand audit which involved primary research to carrying out interviews with a representative sample of 59 businesses and a maximum of 50 employees.

Content: A comprehensive review of managed workspace throughout the region was undertaken to establish good practice as well as an analysis of land availability.

Timescale not specified.

Geography Local authority area.

Objectives of 14-19 Statement of Need

The study analyses the disparity in the availability of accessible vocational provision for many learners in parts of South Holland.

Depth/data Combination of secondary and primary data the latter involving interviewing stakeholders.

Content Detailed study of learning provision through use of socio economic profiles and Skills Forecasting Model

Geography: South Holland LA area.

Assessment: These provide examples of economic assessments at the local authority level related to issues of specific concern (e.g. workspace provision and learning provision of 16-19 year olds) in the absence of any overview economic strategy

Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire – Economic Development Strategy

Organisation Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire

Type of assessment/strategy Local Economic development strategy

Objectives Centred around a Vision Statement that NE Derbyshire will have a diversified and increasingly 'knowledge based' economy. A number of companies will have successfully expanded out of the network of business and innovation centres and will be providing well paid employment for local people. The areas traditional strength in manufacturing will be maintained following the sectors shift into high value added activities. A skilled and creative workforce will attract new investment into the area.

Depth/data used Adopted comprehensive review of economy using wider variety of usual data sources (Nomis, SOA, GVA, LSC etc)

Content Snapshot view of local economy focusing on underperforming sectors and challenges relating to increasing economic inactivity. SWOT analysis used.

Time frame 2005 - 2015

Geography Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire

Nottingham County Council Economic and Employment Bulletins

Name of Organisation: Nottingham County Council

Body that undertook assessment: Nottingham County Council

Objectives To provide public and private sector bodies with up to date economic information

Content Information is available on the following:

- Unemployment Data
- Employment Structure
- Employment Land
- Coal Industry
- News on the Economy.

Unemployment information is produced each month for the United Kingdom, the County, Travel to Work Areas, Parliamentary Constituencies, Districts and Wards. Each quarter information is produced detailing the age of unemployed people and the period for which they have been claiming benefit. This information is held at Local Studies Libraries in Employment Bulletins.

The annual *Business Inquiry* is the most detailed data source on Employment Structure. it covers the United Kingdom, the county, Travel to Work areas, districts and wards. It is available for 1998 to 2005. Confidentiality restrictions apply to small areas.

Employment Land

Data for Nottinghamshire includes: database of over 200 Employment Land sites and over 500 related planning applications; employment Land take up, availability and projections are contained within the Economy Technical Report; an Employment Land Availability in Notts Report is available. It has 90 pages of maps and over 100 sites and 1,000 hectares

Depth/data: This is an example of the provision of ongoing data which is used sub-regionally and locally by a variety of bodies

Time Frame: ongoing

Geographic coverage: Nottinghamshire

3. Overview of Economic Assessments/Strategies

3.1 Overview of Sub Regional Partnerships

The East Midlands region is divided into 7 Sub-regional Strategic Partnerships (SSPs) which currently have responsibility for co-ordinating sub-regional economic development activities, under the umbrella of the East Midlands Development agency (EMDA). These SSPs currently produce regular (bi-annual) broad economic assessments. These SSPs are variously developed. Derbyshire has a well developed assessment and strategy, whilst Leicester is currently embarking on a review process. As these bodies are guided by emda, their economic strategies and assessments demonstrate common approaches in their use of data and in terms of themes such as transport, business development, deprivation and economic activity. However, the level of detail of assessments does vary considerably.

County Councils are also an important sub-regional actor. In the cases of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, the County Councils are very involved in LED activities, setting strategies and implementing the larger-scale land based projects. They are also at the forefront of LAAs and the establishment of county-wide LSPs. These County Councils are keen to take on more strategic LED powers, working directly with EMDA, and possibly leading to a reduced role for the current SSPs. In contrast, in the case of Northamptonshire, the SSP and County are coterminous which enables smoother joint working, allowing Northamptonshire Enterprises to be the lead body.

3.2 Overview of Local Authorities

At the local authority level there are varying degrees of economic development activity currently exhibited. A key driver for LA activity appears to be the availability of funding streams, such as those from LABGI, LEGI, the RDA and the EU in the form of Objective 2 and Leader+ funds.

Whilst larger urban authorities have dedicated teams, smaller LAs and partnerships have to rely on collating material and commission research as required. In these instances there is a need to systematise information and analysis sharing in order to avoid unnecessary consultancy costs, duplication. Although the opportunity to pool information and analysis between local authorities and the Learning and Skills Council is there, often this does not seem to be utilised at a local authority area.

The more sophisticated strategies by local authorities tend to be those involved with LEGI bids where more rigorous economic assessments are required (e.g. Ashfield, Bolsover and Mansfield) or where these LAs have been experiencing structural changes and there has been a need to analyse these in more detail (e.g. Chesterfield and NE Derbyshire).

There are also signs that some rural authorities are keen to develop their LED roles, particularly where there are Rural Action Zones and key rural economic drivers, such as combating rural poverty, diversification of traditional agri-businesses and development of tourism.

The larger city councils in the East Midlands are very active and, whilst they do not necessarily undertake broad large-scale LED assessments, they do undertake (sub-contract) a number of smaller scale assessments (e.g. related to inward investment programmes, land and premises audits, key sector strategies, creative industries and tourism strategies etc.). These contribute to the SSPs' broad assessments and also to specific LA level activities such as LSPs.

4 Working Across Spatial Levels: Local, Sub-Regional and Regional Relationships

4.1 Relations between RDA and SSPs

Emda the RDA provides a substantial amount of baseline data that is used by the SSPs although there has been some questioning about their ability to provide information tailored to the sub-regional and local levels. As the Derby and Derbyshire SSP state:

The Review of sub-regional research, carried out by *emda's* Research Team in 2006, highlighted that one of the most pressing needs amongst SSPs is for easily understandable, up to date statistics and information of direct relevance to their sub regions. While *emda's* Research Team aims to present data at sub regional level wherever possible, in documents such as *The East Midlands in 2006*, this has not

always done in a comprehensive way. The production of tailored SSP profiles aims to address this gap.

Because the SSPs are in essence a devolved arm of the RDA this facilitates a relatively smooth relationship and connection in terms of undertaking assessments, however some SSPs are more proactive than others in terms of utilising emda's research functions.

4.2 Relations between SSPs and local authorities

The relationship of SSPs and local authorities exhibit a number of tensions. Some local authorities are sceptical about the role and relevance of the SSPs and see them merely as another layer of bureaucracy and this certainly frames their approach to economic assessments. For example Derby County Council is very involved in LED and currently has a Regeneration Team of 12 as well as additional 6 project staff and outreach workers. DCC is increasingly taking a hands on approach with to mainstreaming LED activity, without heavy reliance upon RDA and EU funding. The county councils and large city councils have some ability to act independently although this is largely dependent on their ability to mobilise resources to commission and undertake in house research.

There are however some examples of cooperation. Rutland County Council for example works closely with the Welland SSP and through them into emda. Each local authority has some form of CED Manager/Officer and they are scheduled to meet in an informal manner each quarter. This is a fairly new partnership and they are attempting to share information about relevant economic issues such as market towns and tourism.

The development of the city-region agenda and the development of CDCs in the three major cities will inevitably lead to a shift of emphasis in the work of the SSPs, which currently oversee the LED activities in city and county authorities. With the formation of new partnerships it is likely that the city authorities will have a much more powerful role, than currently. However, these city authorities will, through MAAs, have to work with neighbouring authorities in order to tackle key issues such as transport, housing and employment. It is unclear how this will impact on the SSPs, but it seem likely that there role will be reduced to focus more on the safeguarding the economies of market towns and rural economies.

5 Examples of Better Practice and Effectiveness

Good examples of particular assessment types

- **Derby and Derbyshire SSP Economic Assessment:** this is a good example of a comprehensive analysis of the local economy with a clear presentation in terms of tables and diagrams.
- **Harborough Economic Development Strategy:** a good example of a comprehensive local economic strategy produced by a smaller LA.
- **South Holland Workspace Feasibility Study:** a good example where a small local authority commissions an analysis relating to a specific issue facing the local authority such as the availability of suitable business premises and land.

Impact of assessments

It is difficult to analyse the impacts of these assessments. For example the Derby and Derbyshire Sub Regional economic assessment is well crafted and feeds into the sub-regional economic strategy, but the extent to which it really drives partnership working and policy interventions around economic development is less clear. The Harborough EDS does appear to be part of wider process as the LA seeks to position itself in relation to developments in nearby Leicester.

An example of how assessment and strategy formation can feed into an ongoing partnership working process is provided currently by the *Leicester Shire Economic Partnership (LSEP)*. The LSEP is now preparing a first draft of the Economic Strategy for Leicester and Leicestershire and has so far held three consultation event - the latest attended by almost 80 representatives of the public sector. The multi agency group leading this work have asked LSEP to develop a strategy that shows the sub region has a clear vision with recognised priorities and tangible outcomes. Some key themes are emerging which include the importance of innovation, sustainability, image and identity, infrastructure, skills, wealth creation, leadership and partnerships.

6. List of interviewees

Organisation	Name	Job Title
SSPs		
Derby	Kevin Edwards	CEO
Northants Enterprises	Jez Goodman	
Alliance for Enterprise LEGI	Andrew Smith Ashfield DC	
Leicester Shire	Kishor Tailor	CEO
Three Cities	Una Key	Partnership Manager
Local Authorities		
Rutland	Kevin Butcher	Community and Economic Development Officer
Ashfield	Andrew Smith	ED Manager
South Holland	Brian Wakeley	Senior Officer
Leicester	John Wright	Senior Officer
Harborough	Sue Smith	CEO
Nottingham City Council	Barry Hornsey	Corporate Director
Derby County Council	Joanna Fisher	Senior Manager
Northamptonshire	Danny Brennan	Senior Manager
Nottinghamshire CC	Les Kightley	Senior Researcher
Derby County Council	Mike Brittain	Head of Regen Team

Table 1: Selected Sub-Regional Partnerships

Name	Local economic assessments	Link to documents produced	Stated objectives/issues	Time frame	Geographical size covered/partnership type
Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership	Within the Economic Strategy+	See Economic Strategy and Market Town, Derwent Valley Mills Assessments	Key priority is sustainable economic development and improving quality of jobs.	2007 on	SSP area
Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd	County, sub-regional Observatory, which provides web based data and also produces and mini 6 monthly Economic and Labour Market Assessment.	Underpins growth strategy	Linked to key priorities of jobs growth to sustain increasing population		County area/SSP and County Council
Leicester Shire Economic Partnership	Consultants are currently working on potential impact of a CDC in Leicester, land assessment undertaken as well bi-annual sub-regional economic assessments	Linked to possible CDC	Strategic economic regeneration for city and county.	Draft in 2007	SSP area
Three Cities Partnership	Assessments are combined analysis produced by respective city partnerships (Leicester, Nottingham, Derby)	Failed LEGI bid but RDA funding potential LEGI projects	Priority given to linking agendas such as housing, transport	Since 2006	Leicester, Derby and Nottingham LA areas

Table 2: Selected Local Authorities

Name	Local economic assessments	Stated objectives	Time frame	geography
Ashfield District Council	Economic Regeneration Strategy: available at: www.ashfield-dc.gov.uk	Developed in relation to LEGL bid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business crime initiative, including grant funding to SMEs • Enterprise support scheme grant funding • Inward investment, in partnership with Alliance SSP and Nottinghamshire SSP • Support for a national exemplar private-public skills initiative between the RAC and Ashfield school • Planning – the district is highly successful at making land available for commercial use and work closely with Nottingham City on this • Raising opportunities for retaining graduates in the local area through linkages to local businesses. 		Local Authority area
South Holland	Economic Development Strategy http://www.sholland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8065719B-BDA2-4D33-8FC7-5E6D1F187826/0/EconDevstrategyAug14th.pdf	Assessment undertaken with a wide range of relevant partners in order to generate the LA's economic strategy in 2007. Subsequently there have been specific focused assessments on office space and commercial land availability, childcare provision, FE/HE provision and tourism development - some are still being developed		Local Authority area
Leicester City Council	City Growth Strategy, tackling unemployment and poverty in deprived inner city areas, through growth cluster initiatives focusing on: retail, construction, food and drink, creative industries and technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership, vision and image • Demand-led workforce development • Innovation for success • Making connections • Capitalising on £3 billion public/private sector investment in the City. 	2001-2010	Local Authority area
Harborough District Council	In 2006 the district council undertook a full economic assessment, which has fed into the current Harborough District Local Economic Development Strategy 2007-2012.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diverse economy with a strong entrepreneurial culture and successful, competitive & innovative businesses that contribute to economic growth. • An improved and more cohesive tourism product & profile, focussed around 'quintessential England' which is supported by high quality visitor services and effective promotion & marketing. • A strengthened economic role for Market Harborough and Lutterworth town centres with the economic objectives of other rural centres supported. • A range (quantity and quality) of readily available employment sites and premises within the district, in sustainable locations and with appropriate infrastructure to meet the needs of local businesses and to provide choice for appropriate inward investments. • An increasingly highly educated and vocationally skilled resident population and workforce. • Improved information, intelligence and relationships with key partners & partnership and local businesses to enable the Council to undertake its place shaping role in terms of economic development, advocate for infrastructure improvements and to support informed decision making. 	2007-2012	Local Authority area

The South West

1. Local Authorities and Sub-regional Partnerships

A list of local and sub-regional partnerships and local authority organisations in the South West is provided by the South West Regional Assembly (SWRA) at the *Just Connect!* website:

http://www.justconnect-sw.co.uk/ngcontent.cfm?a_id=2708&tt=strategies#SREPLink

This list was last updated in early Summer 2007 and is therefore thought to be reasonably up to date and comprehensive.¹ Links are provided to 101 partnerships/organisations in all: 8 Sub-Regional Economic Partnerships, 43 Local Strategic Partnerships and 51 Local Authorities.

1.1 Local Authorities

There are 51 Local Authorities in the South West: 6 County Councils; 10 unitary authorities; 3 City Councils; 6 Borough Councils and 26 District Councils. There are 9 main 'city' authorities (i.e. the city councils of Exeter, Gloucester and Plymouth; the unitary authorities of Bournemouth, Bristol, Bath, Poole and Torbay; the district council of Salisbury). Hence the region is largely composed of rural authorities and towns (42 such authorities).

1.2 Sub-Regional Partnerships

In recent years the South West RDA has been encouraging local areas to review the structure, role, function and purpose of Sub-Regional Partnerships (SRPs), in light of the growing national agenda for partnership and local decision-making, and particularly against the structural background of Local Area Agreements. Their website identifies that, as a result of this exercise, the RDA is currently working with 11 existing or emerging *Strategic Economic Partnerships* (SEPs) across the region: Gloucestershire; Wiltshire county; Swindon; West of England (i.e. the wider Bristol 'city region'); Somerset; Dorset county; Bournemouth and Poole; Devon county; Plymouth; Torbay; Cornwall and the Scilly Isles (<http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/policy/effective-partnershi.shtm>). The *Just Connex!* website identifies 8 Sub-regional Economic Partnerships and 43 Local Strategic Partnerships, the latter being responsible for driving the implementation of Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements.

The South West RDA also supports partnerships through its regional initiatives and sector groups. The *Market and Coastal Towns* initiative, for example, recognises and supports the role of effective community partnerships in regenerating rural towns. Sector Groups established by the South West RDA include *South West Food and Drink*; *Marine South West*; *Tourism Advisory Group*; and the *West of England Aerospace Forum*.

1.3 Other related Partnerships

There are plans for a *multi-area agreement* across the sub-region of Bournemouth, Poole, Dorset – possibly led by the County Council.

Plymouth has a *City Development Company*

¹ A questionnaire was sent to all relevant partnerships and local authorities in April 2007 – returns from this were used to revise the list (communication with Stuart Todd, Regional Policy Manager, SWRA).

There is a *North Devon and Exmoor Regeneration Company* (<http://www.ndexreg.co.uk/econpart.html>)

Proposals are under discussion for a *Cornwall Development Company*, but these are still at an early stage.

CPR Regeneration - Cornwall's Urban Regeneration Company (URC) set up in November 2002 and focused on Camborne, Pool and Redruth, a continuous five-mile corridor of urban development along the inland western spine of Cornwall.

The *New Swindon Urban Regeneration Company* was formed in 2002

2. Review of Selected Assessments and Strategies

2.1 Sub-Regional partnerships

Bodmin Futures Operational Plan 2006

http://www.bodminfutures.org.uk/media/adobe/s/9/Bodmin_Futures_Operational_Plan_2006_v3.doc

Name of organisation: Bodmin Futures (A not for profit organisation, established to undertake community interest projects under the guidance of the Bodmin and Surrounding Area (BASA) Forum, as part of the national Market and Coastal Towns Initiative)

Type of strategy/assessment: Operational Plan

Objectives: to play a leading role in 3 mutually interdependent areas: economic development; cultural and social development; BASA marketing

Approach: to play a leading role in parallel programmes of economic and cultural development that are interdependent and mutually supportive, e.g.: Creating and operating a combined conference centre and performance space; Marketing Bodmin and the surrounding area as a business location; Providing a waste management and recycling service to businesses

Content: Overall Strategy; The Main Programmes; Specific Actions Planned

Data: No data as such – mainly context of strategy and programmes and specific actions

Time Frame: not specified

Geographical coverage: Bodmin and surrounding area

Bristol's Community Strategy 2006 - Towards a Local Area Agreement

http://www.bristolpartnership.org/vision/strategy/community_strategy

Organisation: The Bristol Partnership

Type of strategy/assessment: Community Strategy

Objectives: Prioritises three areas of work: (1) to develop and secure delivery of a long term strategic framework for the city to achieve improved social, economic and environmental well being and contribute to sustainable development in the UK; (2) to regenerate neighbourhoods, tackle disadvantage and close the gap between the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and communities and the rest of the city; (3) to achieve performance commitments for Bristol, i.e. minimum standards agreed with government for raising education attainment, reducing crime, increasing life expectancy, improving quality of housing and increasing resident satisfaction with their neighbourhoods.

Approach: Builds on first Community Strategy for Bristol (2003) and consultation with citizens, agencies, businesses, politicians, communities and the voluntary sector. Presents a “clear and ambitious statement of long term strategic direction for the city”; agreed shared objectives for Bristol; a focus for action over the next three years; and a set of targets for each Aim for Bristol in preparation for the LAA. The five long term aims relate to: A thriving economy – to maintain and develop a competitive economy in what is a growth area; Learning and achievement; health and well-being; a high quality environment; balanced and sustainable communities.

Content: Section 1 - Long term focus 2006-2026 (includes vision and aims, principles of Bristol Partnership, profile of Bristol city, communities and regional/UK/global context); Section 2 - 1 Focus for action 2006-9 (five aims); Section 3 – Supporting information

Data: The whole document is relatively concise (27 pages). Supporting information and evidence is referred to in section 3.10-3.11 and includes results of surveys and consultations on other supporting strategies and plans; Bristol’s annual Quality of Life Survey; Bristol’s State of the Neighbourhoods database; information held by members of Bristol Research Network; statutory and local performance indicators collated by partners; the South West Regional Observatory; the South West’s regeneration centre (Creating Excellence) including Supporting Evidence for Local Delivery (SELD) project.

Time Frame: 2006-2026 and 2006-2009

Geographical coverage: Bristol and the Bristol City Region

Other strategies

http://www.bristolpartnership.org/vision/strategy/community_strategy/economy:

- Joint Local Transport Plan
- Regeneration Strategy
- Bristol Development Framework
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Bristol Economic Development Strategy
- Tourism Strategy

Strategy and Action: The Economic Development Strategy for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly 2007-2021

<http://www.economicforum.org.uk/economic-development-strategy.htm>

Organisation: Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Economic Forum (the over-arching economic development partnership for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, recognised and funded by the SWRDA as its Strategic Economic Partnership (SEP), and by the County Council as its economic development partnership. Also the economic arm of the Cornwall wide Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) which creates the Community Strategy (<http://www.economicforum.org.uk>)

Type of strategy/assessment: Economic Development Strategy

Objectives: A strategy to achieve the vision of “sustainable prosperity for all in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly”, following for guiding principles: (a) To establish Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as a knowledge economy and society; (b) to ensure environmental sustainability; (c) to remove economic and social disadvantage, foster cultural confidence and improve the well-being of people; (d) to establish Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as a place for wealth-creators and entrepreneurs and to improve economic value across all sectors. The Strategy and Action has been used to inform the development of the Post 2006 EU Funding Programmes, for example, Convergence and the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE).

Approach: The Strategy and Action will be delivered through 14 objectives grouped under three inter-connected themes: Theme 1 – Improve Competitiveness; Theme 2 – Develop People; Theme 3 – Enhance Connectivity and Place.

Content: Purpose, Context, SWOT Analysis, Vision, Themes and Objectives, Linkages between Themes, Objectives and Actions, Spatial Implications, Monitoring Framework, Strategy Development

Data: Level 3 – a substantial Evidence Review provided as separate 200 page volume, reviewing data on economic trends: population, labour market, economic performance, business composition and performance, tourism, skills and learning, deprivation indicators. Data compiled with help of County Council Intelligence department (LINC) and many partner organisations.

Time Frame: 2006-2021

Geographical coverage: Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Devon Economic Strategy 2007-2015 (about to be published – pdf copy of draft supplied)

Name of organisation: Devon Economic Partnership (DEP brings together a wide range of public and private sector organisations and agencies to focus on the economic issues of the county as part of the overall work of the Devon Strategic Partnership).

Type of strategy/assessment: Economic strategy

Objectives: To set the overall direction and framework for the development of the county's economy to 2015

Approach: Vision for Devon and Strategy developed from discussions at stakeholder meetings and an assessment of Devon's economic circumstances in the context of the latest national, regional and global economic trends and an analysis of future opportunities and challenges. Strategic priorities: achieving sustained investment in business infrastructure and communications; tackling worklessness and economic exclusion; providing co-ordinated support to unlock the economic potential of most disadvantage communities; developing and harnessing skills to achieve a competitive economy; encouraging business start-up, development and growth by promoting enterprise and improving productivity; promoting innovation and developing the knowledge economy; developing Devon as England's "greenest country".

Content: Context; Economic, demographic and social Profile; Economic drivers, opportunities and challenges; Strategy – Vision, guiding principles and strategic priorities

Data: Presents evidence in relation to a range of indicators and drawn from a variety of sources

Time Frame: 2007-2015

Geographical coverage: the administrative county of Devon, but recognises the importance of its economic interaction with other parts of geographical Devon – Plymouth and Torbay – but also adjacent counties.

Other reports (available at: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/business/regeneration.htm>):

Regeneration Role and Action Programme - prepared to clarify the role, activities and priorities of Devon County Council in relation to economic and community regeneration. The document sets out the context for the Council's work in this field, identifies the range of corporate resources contributing to regeneration activity and proposes priorities for attention for the five years from 2004 to 2008.

Also on:

Creative Industries

Social Enterprise

Community Development

Reports on agriculture at:
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/business/agriculture.htm>

Shaping our future' The Community Strategy for Dorset 2007-2016
<http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=17275>

Name of organisation: Dorset Strategic Partnership (DSP was formally set up in 2002 and consists of a wide range of organisations, agencies and other partnerships throughout the county)

Type of strategy/assessment: Community Strategy

Objectives: To promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Dorset and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (ie duty placed by Local Government Act 2000).

Approach: Strategy aims: To take forward the shared vision for Devon; give focus and direction to the energy, resources and strategic plans for all partner organisations and the negotiation of Dorset's next LAA; set out the particular needs of Dorset in order to influence regional and national plans. Takes into account national and regional plans and priorities.

Content: Context, Dorset's strategic agenda (characteristics and challenges), Thriving communities, Delivery

Data: Comprehensive body of evidence provided in separate document (75 pages): demography, environment, economy and labour market, deprivation, housing, transport, accessibility, health and well being, crime, culture, minority groups

Time Frame: 2007-2016

Geographical coverage: Dorset

Note: Two further related/supporting documents available at same web address: 'Will the Sustainable Community Strategy for Dorset help the county meet its sustainability challenges' (prepared by Sustainability South West) and 'Key issues and Priorities from Local Community Plans'

Gloucestershire Economic Strategy - 2003-2014
http://www.glosfirst.co.uk/docs/economic_strategy_2004_2014.pdf

Name of organisation: Gloucestershire First (the countywide economic partnership, bringing together partners in the field of economic development to contribute to an overall strategic plan for the county).

Type of strategy/assessment: Economic strategy

Objectives: to provide a strategic guide to the over-arching aims that represent the best interests for Gloucestershire's economic well-being. There are six over-riding themes: the need to address social exclusion and equality of opportunity; the desire for a more sustainable approach to development; the need to encourage innovation; the importance of added value; the need for a pragmatic approach to environmental protection; the value of partnership working.

Approach: Strategy draws together a consensus of ideas for the economic well-being of the County over the next decade or so (the 'Vision') and a 'route map' (strategic priorities). Aims

to be sufficiently flexible and robust and to encourage sustainability and to guide both the more detailed work of GF on sub-strategies (ie on rural economy, workspace, ICT etc) and the development of business plans for key partners, setting context for future action and delivery.

Data: Key economic indicators drawn from a range of secondary sources

Content: (1) Summary; (2) Background & Analysis; (3) The Strategy and its Delivery (Appendices include strategic objectives; regional planning guidance; SWOT analysis).

Time Frame for Strategy: 2003-2014

Geography considered in the strategy: County wide

Note: A Review Scoping Document has recently been produced as a prelude to revised Economic Strategy for 2006-2015. Identifies key areas of change: spatial planning challenges; job creation and retention; population changes; energy and climate issues; ICT developments. The Review summarises key influential documents which will be taken into account when revising the Economic Strategy.

Other relevant strategies, policies and assessments at:

<http://www.glosfirst.co.uk/publications.aspx> are:

The Urban Economic Strategy for Gloucestershire (Provisional) July 2007

The Rural Economic Strategy for Gloucestershire - 2007-2015 (Revised 2006)

Rural Economy Update Nov 2006

An Agricultural Strategy for Gloucestershire - 2000-2005

Gloucestershire Airport - Progress on Recommended Actions 2004-2007

Gloucestershire Airport Study - Executive Summary (2004)

Gloucestershire First Operating Plan - 2005-2007

Gloucestershire Food Vision Policy

Gloucestershire Workspace Policy Framework - 2005

Institute for Employment Studies Report on Key Sectors in the Gloucestershire Economy (2002)

Gloucestershire First also runs a sector-based Investor Support Programme, aimed at large and foreign-owned investors within the county and jointly sponsored by SWRDA, the LSC and Gloucestershire County Council. Interviews with senior industry leaders within the local business community are undertaken in order to identify the main barriers to future growth with key sectors. In addition to tackling every day challenges for many of these businesses, GF also promote work and initiatives undertaken by GF themselves and partners which are designed to provide practical solutions whether now, or in the longer-term.

Key sectors in Gloucestershire are: Advanced Engineering/Major Manufacturing Construction; Creative Industries; Distribution, Warehousing & Retail; Environmental Technologies; Finance & Business Services; Food & Drink Supply Chain; ICT; Leisure & Tourism

Gloucestershire First also produce a number of newsletters including: Gloucestershire Economic Bulletin; Gloucestershire First Newsletter; Business Awards Newsletter; Energy Strategy Newsletter; Broadband Newsletter.

Table 1: Selected Sub-Regional Partnerships

Name	Local economic assessment/strategy + link	Stated objectives/issues	Time frame	Geographical scope / partnership type
Bodmin Futures	Bodmin Futures Operational Plan 2006 http://www.bodminfutures.org.uk/media/adobe/s/9/Bodmin_Futures_Operational_Plan_2006_v3.doc	To play a leading role in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 mutually interdependent areas: economic development; cultural and social development; marketing Bodmin and Surrounding Area Forum • parallel programmes of economic and cultural development that are interdependent and mutually supportive 	Not specified	Bodmin and surrounding area
Bristol Partnership	Bristol's Community Strategy – Towards a Local Area Agreement: http://www.bristolpartnership.org/vision/strategy/community_strategy	(1) to develop and secure delivery of a long term strategic framework for the city to achieve improved social, economic and environmental well being and contribute to sustainable development in the UK; (2) to regenerate neighbourhoods, tackle disadvantage and close the gap between the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and communities and the rest of the city; (3) to achieve performance commitments for Bristol, i.e. re education attainment, reducing crime, increasing life expectancy, improving quality of housing and increasing resident satisfaction with their neighbourhoods.	2006-2026 & 2006-2009	Bristol and Bristol City Region
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Economic Forum	Strategy and Action: The Economic Development Strategy for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly 2007-2021: http://www.economicforum.org.uk/economic-development-strategy.htm	To achieve the vision of “sustainable prosperity for all in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly”, following the guiding principles: (a) To establish Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as a knowledge economy and society; (b) to ensure environmental sustainability; (c) to remove economic and social disadvantage, foster cultural confidence and improve the well-being of people; (d) to establish Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as a place for wealth-creators and entrepreneurs and to improve economic value across all sectors. The Strategy and Action has been used to inform the development of the Post 2006 EU Funding Programmes, for example, Convergence and the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE).	2007-2021	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly
Devon Economic Partnership	Devon Economic Strategy 2007-2015 (about to be published – pdf copy of draft supplied)	To set the overall direction and framework for the development of the county's economy to 2015. Strategic priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achieving sustained investment in business infrastructure and communications; • tackling worklessness and economic exclusion; • providing co-ordinated support to unlock the economic potential of most disadvantage communities; • developing and harnessing skills to achieve a competitive economy; encouraging business start-up, development and growth by promoting enterprise and improving productivity; • promoting innovation and developing the knowledge economy; • developing Devon as England's “greenest country”. 	2007-2015	County of Devon
Dorset Strategic Partnership	'Shaping our future' The Community Strategy for Dorset 2007-2016 http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=17275	To promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Dorset and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Strategy aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take forward the shared vision for Devon; • give focus and direction to the energy, resources and strategic plans for all partner organisations and the negotiation of Dorset's next LAA; • set out the particular needs of Dorset in order to influence regional and national plans. 	2007-2016	County of Dorset

Gloucestershire First	Gloucestershire Economic Strategy - 2003-2014 http://www.glosfirst.co.uk/docs/economic_strategy_2004_2014.pdf	To provide a strategic guide to the over-arching aims that represent the best interests for Gloucestershire's economic well-being. Six themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to address social exclusion and equality of opportunity; • the desire for a more sustainable approach to development; • the need to encourage innovation; • the importance of added value; • the need for a pragmatic approach to environmental protection; • the value of partnership working. 	2003-2014	Gloucestershire
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2.2 Local Authorities

Bodmin Town Centre: Baseline Review and Framework Plan, May 2007

<http://www.ncdc.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=19578>

Name of organisation: North Cornwall District Council (conducted by GVA Grimley International Property Advisors)

Type of strategy/assessment: Review and Plan

Objectives: Vision, Strategy and Actions to make Bodmin a successful retail and commercial centre and tourist destination

Approach: Plan produced by consultants guided by steering group of main local stakeholders

Content:

Review – baseline data on retail space supply/demand, forecast etc; office space (inc Beacon Technology Park); Tourism / leisure; residential property market.

Framework Plan – Context (economic, policy, projects, historic growth, physical appraisal, key issues); Aims (where would we like to be ? -); Strategy (what can be achieved and how)

Data: Draws in particular on council's own data on floor space + findings from public consultation

Time Frame: Consistent with Local Development Framework of next 20 years

Geographical coverage: Bodmin Town Centre

Bournemouth Vision 2026 – Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2011

[http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Library/PDF/Partnership/BROCHURE%20\(final\).pdf](http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Library/PDF/Partnership/BROCHURE%20(final).pdf)

Organisation: Bournemouth 2026 (a forum set up in May 2000 by the local authority and includes about 200 member organisations to help 'Build A Better Bournemouth').

Type of strategy/assessment: Sustainable Community Strategy

Objectives: Sustainable Community Strategy – to identify and address challenges facing Bournemouth; to develop a shared vision and action plan; to encourage all partners to ensure that their strategies and plans work towards achieving the vision; to identify and seek support to deliver the goals identified

Approach: 5 themes: (1) Investing in people; (2) a thriving economy; (3) safer and stronger communities; (4) a sustainable environment; (5) health and well-being

Content: Key issues and actions organised under above the 5 themes

Data: Some key figures presented – but note that Strategy is particularly informed by the Economic Development Strategy for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole 2005-2016 (see below)

Time Frame: 2005-2026

Geographical coverage: Bournemouth

State of the Devon Economy

http://www.devon.gov.uk/state_of_the_devon_economy.pdf

Name of organisation: Devon County Council

Type of strategy/assessment: Economic assessment

Objectives: Presents data on the Devon economy + SWOT analysis to inform policy making and applications for funding

Approach: see above

Content: Population and growth; earnings and earnings variations; the economic base; productivity and variations in productivity; deprivation, skills (and variability) unemployment, self-employment; knowledge economy audit; sectors and clusters

Data: see above

Time Frame: n/a (produced in January 2006)

Geographical coverage: county of Devon (excluding Plymouth and Torbay – now unitary authorities)

Plymouth's City Strategy and Action Plan 2004-2009

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/citystrategy>

Organisation: Plymouth 2020 Partnership (Plymouth's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) - and its many partners, including the City Council)

Type of strategy/assessment: Strategy and Action Plan

Objectives: Plymouth's Community Strategy – sets out vision, strategy goals and targets for Plymouth

Approach: Presents 8 goals (and related targets): Dynamic Local Communities; Improving the quality of life in local neighbourhoods; a prosperous economy; a clean and sustainable environment; high quality buildings places and spaces; a safer, healthier city, improving learning and skills; our character, diversity and culture.

Content: (see above)

Data: Hardly any data (social or economic) presented in this document

Time Frame: 2004-2020

Geographical coverage: City of Plymouth

A Community Strategy for Swindon 2004-2010

<http://www.swindon.gov.uk/community/community-strategy.htm>

Organisation: Swindon Borough Council

Type of strategy/assessment: Community Strategy

Objectives: Community Strategy for a better quality of life in Swindon based around a vision and six major themes and 26 priorities

Content: Swindon Strategic Partnership, Key Facts, Findings of consultation, Cross Cutting Values, Matrix, Summary of themes and priorities

Data: Presents key facts about Borough of Swindon and related to six themes

Time Frame: 2004-2010

Geographical coverage: Borough of Swindon

Swindon Economic and Market Review 2006:

<http://www.swindon.gov.uk/business/business-support/business-economicinformationandanalysis>

Organisation: the Council's Economic and Cultural Directorate working with the SWRDA

Objectives: Review of economic performance and key indicators

Approach: Draws on a range of sources + presents a SWOT analysis

Content: Economic performance, Key indicators, for Swindon, M4 corridor and the South East, Future economic growth, SWOT analysis of Swindon Borough Economy, Energy

Data: see above

Time Frame: dated January 2006

Geographical coverage: Swindon Borough + context of M4 corridor and South East

Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership (SSEP) was established in 2006 to lead on the delivery of the headline Local Area Agreement aim "to assert Swindon as the UK's Best Business Location". SSEP is directly charged with delivering the Economic Development and Enterprise block of the LAA, which has involved coordinating enterprise and business support activities. It is led by the private sector alongside all of the main players involved in economic development from the public and community sectors, plus other projects that are "recognised as having the opportunity to transform Swindon's future".

<http://www.swindon.gov.uk/swindonsp>

Community Plan – Turning the Tide for Torbay 2007-2027

http://www.torbay.gov.uk/draft_community_plan_2007-2027.pdf

Organisation: Torbay Council and Strategic Partnership

Type of strategy/assessment: Community Plan

Objectives: Builds on Community Plan launched in 2004 – brings together views of residents as well as representatives from the business, community and voluntary sectors. Presents a vision for Torbay over next 20 years to unlock Torbay's potential and drive forward its economic prosperity, with prosperous communities with a higher quality of life and improved access to jobs.

Approach: Vision is directed by four key themes: Pride in the bay, Stronger communities, Learning and Skills for the Future and the New Economy. Particular emphasis on skills base and creating a 'can do' entrepreneurial culture.

Content: see above (a short document – 18 pages)

Data: some summary key statistics presented on p. 16-17

Time Frame: 2007-2027

Geographical coverage: Torbay

See also: 'Improving Torbay's economy – towards a prosperous Torbay action plan, October 2006

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/rd-actionplanreview-economy.doc>

Table 2: Selected Local Authorities

Name	Local economic assessments/strategy + link	Stated objectives/issues	Time frame	Geographical scope / partnership type
North Cornwall District Council (conducted by GVA Int. Property Advisors)	Bodmin Town Centre: Baseline Review and Framework Plan, May 2007 http://www.ncdc.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=19578	Vision, Strategy and Actions “to make Bodmin a successful retail and commercial centre and tourist destination” Plan produced by consultants guided by steering group of main local stakeholders	Consistent with Local Development Framework of next 20 years	Bodmin Town Centre
Bournemouth 2026 (estab by LA + includes c 200 member organisations)	Bournemouth Vision 2026 – Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2011 http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Library/PDF/Partnership/BROCHURE%20(final).pdf	Sustainable Community Strategy – to identify and address challenges facing Bournemouth; to develop a shared vision and action plan; to encourage all partners to ensure that their strategies and plans work towards achieving the vision; to identify and seek support to deliver the goals identified. 5 themes: (1) Investing in people; (2) a thriving economy; (3) safer and stronger communities; (4) a sustainable environment; (5) health and well-being	2005-2026	Bournemouth
Devon County Council	State of the Devon Economy http://www.devon.gov.uk/state_of_the_devon_economy.pdf	Presents data on the Devon economy + SWOT analysis to inform policy making and applications for funding. Content: Population and growth; earnings and earnings variations; the economic base; productivity and variations in productivity; deprivation, skills (and variability) unemployment, self-employment; knowledge economy audit; sectors and clusters	Not specified (published January 2006)	Devon county
Plymouth 2020 Partnership (Plymouth’s Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) - and its many partners, including the City Council)	Plymouth’s City Strategy and Action Plan 2004-2009 http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/citystrategy	Plymouth’s Community Strategy – vision, strategy goals and targets for Plymouth. 8 goals (and related targets): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dynamic Local Communities; • improving the quality of life in local neighbourhoods; • a prosperous economy; • a clean and sustainable environment; • high quality buildings places and spaces; • a safer, healthier city, improving learning and skills; • Plymouth’s character, diversity and culture. 	2004-2020	City of Plymouth
Torbay Council and Strategic Partnership	Community Plan – Turning the Tide for Torbay 2007-2027 http://www.torbay.gov.uk/draft_community_plan_2007-_2027.pdf	Community Plan - Presents a vision for Torbay over next 20 years to unlock Torbay’s potential and drive forward its economic prosperity, with prosperous communities with a higher quality of life and improved access to jobs. Vision directed by four key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in the bay • Stronger communities • Learning and Skills for the Future • the New Economy. Particular emphasis on skills base and creating a ‘can do’ entrepreneurial culture.	2007-2027	Torbay
Swindon Borough Council	A Community Strategy for Swindon 2004-2010	Community Strategy for a better quality of life in Swindon based around a vision and six major themes and 26 priorities Presents key facts about Borough of Swindon and related to six themes	2004-2010	Borough of Swindon

	http://www.swindon.gov.uk/community/community-strategy.htm			
Swindon Council Economic & Cultural Directorate working with the SWRDA	Swindon Economic and Market Review 2006: http://www.swindon.gov.uk/business/business-support/business-economicinformationandanalysis_	Review of economic performance and key indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic performance, • Key indicators for Swindon • M4 corridor and the South East • Future economic growth • SWOT analysis of Swindon Borough Economy, • Energy 	Not specified – dated January 2006	Swindon Borough + context of M4 corridor and South East

3. Overview of Economic Assessments/Strategies

The most comprehensive work is being done at the higher sub-regional level (i.e. county level), including Economic Development, Community and Sustainable Community Strategies, often based on supporting economic and related (e.g. environment, infrastructure etc) assessments/reviews. An interesting feature is the extent to which environmental and social sustainability considerations are being more generally reflected in assessments and strategies (i.e. most refer to 'sustainability' issues, a few to the need to promote 'the low carbon economy'), alongside more dominant/narrowly defined economic objectives (increasing Gross Value Added, economic growth, creating a 'knowledge economy'). The extent to which diverse objectives (which may in some cases be unrealistic or even conflicting) are genuinely considered and reconciled within specific regional contexts requires deeper analysis than has been possible here. There is a danger of aspirational objectives being unrealistic and possibly conflicting with other parts of a strategy. For instance, it would be worth further examining the aim of the Economic Strategy for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly to become "a knowledge economy and society" in terms of its realism and how it is reconciled with other objectives, particularly in the light of recent academic debates.²

Local Authorities, particularly the larger ones, continue to play a key role, although sometimes devolving lead responsibility to a separate partnership. With regard to staffing/resourcing of assessments/strategies, work is usually led by a core team within the lead partnership organisation / local authority (often small - 2-6 fte), but generally also drawing on resources from a range of partners and sometimes specialist agencies / consultants.

As might be expected, there is much less in the way of comprehensive published assessments/strategy to be found at the level of rural district and town councils. Typically, however, there will be a page on the council's website summarising its role in business / regeneration / economic development and some description of this, with contact details for key officials (e.g. see for Carrick District Council: <http://www.carrick.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2804>). Also in Cornwall, Penwith District Council introduces its economic development work by referring to its Community Strategy aims and specific focuses (<http://www.penwith.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=6582>). This webpage also incorporates a link to Objective One for Cornwall and Scilly (<http://www.objectiveone.com/>) indicating the extent to which economic development in this area is driven by this programme/ source of funding. An Integrated Area Plan for the District identifies a number of socio-economic objectives and a team is actively working with a number of community groups to develop and deliver a range of projects supported by Objective One funding, as well as a number of other funding bodies.

A final point to note is that some interviewees referred to a recent high level of activity with respect to changing boundaries of local government; in some areas this clearly having an impact on the nature of partnerships and partnership working.

4. Working Across Spatial Levels: Local, Sub-Regional and Regional Relationships

In recent years the South West has seen considerable development and improvement in local/sub-regional partnership working. This appears to have been particularly influenced the SWRDA and the Integrated Regional Strategy introduced by the Regional Assembly. The SWRDA convenes a regional Strategic Economic Partnership Forum. At the local level, a

² See, for instance: Morgan (2004).

lead Executive Director is supporting the relevant Area Director and Head of Operations in day-to-day engagement and dialogue with partnerships in their respective areas.

The Integrated Regional Strategy, *Just Connect!*, was launched by the Regional Assembly in November 2004. The IRS encourages individuals, organisations and partnerships across the South West to address the region's five agreed key aims:

- To harness the benefits of population growth and manage the implications of population change
- To enhance our distinctive environments and the quality and diversity of our cultural life
- To enhance our economic prosperity and quality of employment opportunity
- To address deprivation and disadvantage to reduce significant intra-regional inequalities
- To make sure that people are treated fairly and can participate fully in society

Some insight into how local/sub-regional levels are working together and their effectiveness was provided by interviewees. Key points/issues to emerge are that:

- The Regional Economic Strategy has been key reference point for local/subregional assessments/strategies.
- There is a high level of participation in forums involving neighbouring authorities and sub-regions.
- The forum convened by the RDA for all chairs of the Sub-regional Economic Partnerships has proven to be a powerful consultation tool.
- Assessments and strategies are more driven by the need for clear evidence and also guided by the outcomes of consultations with partners and the general public than by the influence of funding opportunities.
- Some specific examples were given, however, of strategy being influenced by particular funding streams (e.g. in Gloucestershire: funding for rural businesses affected by foot and mouth and flooding; an EU etowns bid which failed – but aiming to put another into EU).
- All interviewees reported very positive experiences with respect to the effectiveness of economic strategy and partnership working and noted real improvements very recently. One such comment was: "There is a lot of good work going on and a willingness on the part of many different organisations to work together. I haven't picked up much negativity".

There were some concerns and more critical observations however:

- There are not enough resources available for economic assessment / strategy development, although the situation has improved recently.
- There is still too little sharing and cooperation between different LAs and agencies. One interviewee observed of neighbouring LAs that "they often don't seem to get on well together [...] They will meet in the same room and talk together but don't share enough on the details, for instance with respect to best practice...."
- There needs to be much more coordination and less waste in relation to the more strategic issues and more dissemination of 'best practice'. There is still too much overlap and repetition in relation to some types of more strategic studies, such as climate change policies which are likely to be the same for different towns and not in need of separate projects and associated consultancy costs.
- LAs are often reluctant to contribute to projects that span boundaries but which will ultimately benefit them (the example was given of an unwillingness to share the cost of consultancy for an energy strategy which extended over a number of LA boundaries)
- Disappointment was also expressed at the limited amount of guidance on best practice in economic assessment/strategy and also evaluation templates from RDA. RDAs need to share more best practice (or 'better practice'), both within the region and with other RDAs.

- Reference was made to the considerable variations across the region and the perceived dominance of the main urban centres with respect to funding at the expense of the more rural areas.

Some further insight is provided by a recent study commissioned by the South West Regional Assembly was aimed at identifying practical examples of integrated regional strategy, including at local and sub-regional levels, and providing an update on the region's progress towards achieving the aims of the Integrated Regional Strategy:

South West Regional Assembly (2007) *Evidencing the Practical Application of the Integrated Regional Strategy*, Report prepared by Jeff Ligo and Karen Godfrey: http://www.justconnect-sw.co.uk/media/IRS/IRS_Practical_Application_Report_with_Preface.pdf

Key findings from this study are:

- There is a large amount of partnership working going on in the region, which addresses the aims of the IRS. The plethora of partnerships identified as working in an integrated way is testament to the growing maturity of the region.
- The overarching nature of the IRS has been undermined by strategic and policy developments at the national and regional levels since its publication, most notably in relation to the national sustainable development strategy *Securing the Regions' Future* (2006) which is not reflected in the IRS (although such priorities are reflected in more recent regional economic and spatial strategy).

5. Examples of Better Practice and Effectiveness

Caution needs to be exercised in identifying single exemplars of 'best practice' and effectiveness, given the limitations of this study. There is a danger in making such judgments on the basis of the necessarily limited evidence available on websites and a small number of key informant interviews. One concern is that publicly available documentation may focus on 'box ticking', mechanically responding to perceived national/regional policy imperatives rather than interpreting such imperatives in the context of the specific needs of the region/locality. It is important to note that it is the processes of public consultation and policy formulation and implementation which lend substance to economic assessment and strategising. At the same time, however, and very recently, the South West does appear to have had a particularly positive experience in this respect.

It is perhaps unfair to single out individual 'best practice' examples. However, Gloucestershire First appears to be one of the most active and effective sub-regional partnerships with a comprehensive programme of economic development and sector-based development work, which has already attracted particular interest from both regional and government departments.

It is also worth noting that examples of the application of integrated regional strategy judged to represent 'best practice' are presented in the recent report for SWRA (2007) *Evidencing the Practical Application of the Integrated Regional Strategy*. The examples include: the Bristol Partnership (including with respect to Employment and Enterprise Cluster Working); Community First (the community council for Wiltshire); Olympics 2012 (Dorset Strategic Partnership, Team South West, the Dorset Working Group for the 2012 Games, and West of England Working Group for the 2012 Games); Gloucester Strategic Partnership (Great Gloucester Debate, 'Talking Rubbish' Village Agents for Older People); Learning South West; the National Trust; North Cornwall District Council; Swindon Borough Council.

6. References

Morgan, K. (2004) 'Sustainable Regions: Governance, Innovation and Scale', *European Planning Studies*, 12(6), 872-889

South West Regional Assembly (2007) *Evidencing the Practical Application of the Integrated Regional Strategy*, Report prepared by Jeff Ligo and Karen Godfrey: http://www.justconnect-sw.co.uk/media/IRS/IRS_Practical_Application_Report_with_Preface.pdf

7. List of interviewees

Organisation	Name	Job title
Regional level		
South West Regional Assembly	Stuart Todd	Regional Policy Manager (Implementation & Integration)
Sub-regional level		
Gloucestershire First	Catherine Farrell	Partnership Development Manager
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Economic Forum	Lucy Harris	Forum Manager
Local authorities		
Bournemouth Borough Council	Lorna Hunt	Bournemouth 2026 Co-ordinator
Torbay County Council	Bernard Page	Policy and Partnership Manager
Swindon Borough Council - Economy & Cultural Development Directorate	Matthew Spencer	Economic Projects Officer
Devon County Council	Andrew Lightfoot	Economy Unit Manager