

Revised vision following discussion at the Cross Cutting Group

Notes:

- a) *words in italics set out the context and reasoning that underpin the changes to the draft vision. Some of this could form part of the supporting text within the South East Plan;*
- b) *in revising the draft vision the focus has been on producing something that is regionally specific, provides a spatial context and is measurable;*
- c) *the Cross-Cutting Group emphasised that the statements beneath the vision act as the “big messages” for the South East Plan – in effect that they act as the key focus for the Plan as a whole, giving a sense of the key priorities for the region;*
- d) *in terms of each statement there would be a need to have at least one indicator (in exceptional cases more than one) that could be used as a primary indicator for monitoring progress. We would have to be extremely strict on limiting the number of headline indicators and be comfortable in using proxy indicators to give the necessary sharpness.*

The Healthy Region

Through the Plan and other measures, the South East will show a sustained improvement in its quality of life over the period to 2026, measured by the well-being of its citizens, the vitality of its economy, the wealth of its environment and the prudent management of its natural resources.

Cross-Cutting Group were unhappy about the use of the “Healthy Region” as a tag-line considering that this gives a potentially confusing message, underplaying the importance of economic and environmental factors. The use of the term “well-being” is central to the work of local authorities and covers the full-range of social, economic and environmental factors. Having cut down the number of statements it was felt inappropriate to continue to use the sub-headings previously employed. In addition it was considered that some of the statements had implications that are broader than one individual sub-heading.

In particular, the region will achieve:

- A reduction in the disparity experienced across the region by raising the performance of the most deprived areas so that by 2026 ... (target to be developed)

To be measured using the IMD data – the domains that are included within the IMD are: income deprivation; employment deprivation; health deprivation and disability; education, skills and training; barriers to housing and services; crime; and living environment.

- An increase in the overall level of accessibility to essential services

To be measured using the core accessibility indicator; a new indicator produced on an annual basis by the DfT and which is a composite indicator along the lines of the IMD – the equivalent domains included access to primary and secondary schools; access to further education establishments; access to work; access to

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hospital services; access to GP services; access to a major centre (retail).

By focusing on these two indicators the vision and statements provide a clear focus on those issues previously identified under the “healthy citizens” at the time of the Spring Debate – with the exception of the housing element (see below). The regional specificity for the South East Plan would be provided by identifying indicative targets based on the indicators as they apply to this region, which can then be reported upon in the Regional Monitoring Report – there is a read across to both the IRF and the existing monitoring regime.

- More and better quality housing so that most individuals have access to a decent home

The Cross Cutting Group agreed with the need to maintain a distinct housing related statement supporting the vision. The change of emphasis from everyone to “most individuals” reflects the reality that in the timeframe of the Plan we will not fully address this issue. In terms of indicators to be used to monitor progress this may be the area where a potential affordability target sits, but there may also be a need to have an additional indicator focused on homelessness and/or waiting lists and/or completions..

- More prudent use and management of natural resources, including land, water, energy and waste, with the emphasis on reducing our use of resources, and increasing their reuse and recycling.

The Cross Cutting Group was keen to emphasis that there is an issue about ensuring that the issue of reducing the use of resources (possibly measured on a per capita basis) is emphasised. Reference to land could allow reference to be made to previously developed land.

- Better management of the impact of increased activity and development on the environment.

This statement combines a couple of the points used previously in a positive way. Aims such as an overall increase in biodiversity, management of the countryside, changes in farming practice could all be covered under this statement.

- Realising opportunities to improve the quality of the built and natural environment.

This would cover issues associated with the urban renaissance and renewal agenda as well reinforcing the emphasis on promoting the use of previously developed land and buildings. Indeed using the PDL indicator could form a proxy indicator of the improving the quality of the built environment, which if we get it right by implication reduces the pressure on the natural environment. Linked with the previous statement, there is a clear focus for natural environment. The Cross Cutting Group was very keen to use the term built and natural environment on the basis that it is

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easily understood by the public and emphasises the fact that the policy framework has a wide applicability.

The Cross Cutting Group considered that the point in the original draft vision relating to reducing the incidence and impact of flooding will be reflected within the policy framework set out within the Plan as required by national guidance.

- Steady and sustainable levels of economic growth, capitalising on the region's strengths and the opportunities to increase productivity.

The Cross Cutting Group considered that the point in the original draft vision relating to revival of priority regeneration areas is covered by this point and the one relating to addressing disparities. They considered that the points in the original draft vision regarding economic performance relative to neighbouring/comparative regions and the European dimension are adequately covered by the above point. They did not agree with making a distinction between general economic performance and the rural economy, on the basis that delivering this point, by implication, would require the potential of the rural economy to be realised.

- Providing for, and retaining, a broader educational and skills base across the whole population.

The Cross Cutting Group considered it important to emphasise the need to retain educational attainments and skills within the region. They also considered it essential to emphasise that a related issue is the need to broaden the skills base more generally.

- Improved levels of health amongst the region's citizens

The IMD only addresses issues of health deprivation; whereas the Plan also needs to promote a general improvement in the health of the region's citizens.

The Importance of Investment in Infrastructure

Delivery of the vision for the South East Plan, and in particular successfully addressing the key issues facing the region is dependent upon the effective and timely delivery of the supporting infrastructure.

The Cross Cutting Group considered that statement in the original draft vision relating to measurable improvements in indicators was self-evident. The group wanted to emphasise the infrastructure issue stronger and use it as a linking theme that pulled together the eight key points set out in the above statements. It would also cover off the point about transport infrastructure, which is also covered in part now by the point on accessibility. They propose that a final paragraph be added along the following lines.

**As revised following discussion at the
Cross Cutting Group
14 October 2004**