



# **SNR and a sustainable Single Regional Strategy for the Northwest**

## **Presentation to the English Regions Network**

**May 2008**

**Steven Broomhead – Chief Executive**

# Today's Presentation

- **Recap on aims of Sub National Review**
- **Consultation and a new role for the Regional Development Agencies**
- **The Regional Strategy - New Challenges**
- **A Strategy for the Region**
- **Opportunities and challenges in the NW**

# Background - Sub-National Review

- **Align public spending more closely to economic priorities**
- **Increase focus on economic growth not about public sector structures**
- **Continue economic growth in tougher climate**
- **Consistent with devolving decision making**
  - Enabling not prescriptive
- **Clarify roles and responsibilities**
  - Priority setting and delivery at optimum spatial levels
  - Improve delivery and efficiency
- **Visibly strengthen local government role**
  - Enabling places to reach their potential

# SNR consultation

- **We need to encourage government to remember original aim: improved economic prosperity and neighbourhood renewal**
- **Integrated Regional Strategy is key to this**
- **Consultation covers 4 main themes:**
- **Regional decision making**
  - Delegation
  - Regional Funding Allocations
- **Strengthening role of LAs**
  - Duty to assess economic conditions
  - Sub regional working (MAAs etc)
- **Stronger regional partnerships for growth**
  - Leaders' Forum
  - Scrutiny
- **Regional Strategy**

# New Role for RDAs

- **Leading the development of a new single integrated Regional Strategy.** This will combine Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy to deliver a fully sustainable plan for the region's future economic development.
- **RDA to become Regional Planning Body** - currently performed by the Regional Assembly.
- **A revised tasking framework-** focussing on economic outcomes.
- **A more strategic and commissioning role** - delegation
- **RDAs also responsible for responding to economic shocks**

# The Regional Strategy

- **Set clear vision and priorities**
- **Spatially specific**
- **Developed with and signed off by Leaders Forum**
- **New approach to sustainability**
- **Linked to refreshed planning system**
- **Regionally specific, with clear delivery plan**

# Sustainability

- **New approach required**
- **Not as simple as growth vs environment**
- **Need to define a sustainable growth path and strategy**
- **Develop new government sustainability framework and new strategic environmental assessment**
- **RDAs committed to making it work**
- **Wide range of partners need to start thinking creatively**
- **Ensure RA expertise in this area is not lost**

# The RDA response

- **Include skills and transport**
- **Robust Regional Funding Advice, including skills**
- **Cross Boundary economic assessments**
- **Shared and agreed economic models**
- **Explicit link between spatial and economic**
- **Stronger evidence base**
- **Business involvement**
- **Sub-regions and local leaders**

# Opportunities & Challenges – Northwest

- **NWDA has been able to build on a good relationship with the Assembly.**
- **Regional Strategy Team and Leaders Group has the authority and capacity to drive the changes required**
- **Strong sub-regions**
- **NW already committed to align strategies**
- **We have a strong, shared vision.**
- **Need to ensure the existing policy expertise in RAs is not lost and focus is maintained**
- **Delegation through investment planning**

# Conclusion

- **Government has given us the opportunity to bring together the spatial and economic strategies to drive the sustainable growth of the region.**
- **We all have a role in making this work:**
  - RDAs in leading strategy development
  - Business in ensuring strategy reflects their needs
  - LAs and leaders' fora with democratic mandate, working across boundaries and pooling resources
  - GOs in representing Whitehall and pulling in departments and agencies
  - RA's in ensuring smooth transition and clarity on X-cutting issues
  - Wider stakeholders in shaping plans and delivery