Quality of Employment Opportunity Regional Strategic Review
SWRDA/SWRA Bilateral 29th January 2007 and Follow-up Interviews

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Members on the outputs of their Bilateral discussions with the SWRDA and subsequent interviews with key representatives.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that Members of the Scrutiny Panel:

(i) Consider the bilateral transcript and identify key issues and matters to be taken forward as recommendations for the SWRDA and other regional partners in conclusion of the review.

(ii) Give feedback on the main points and issues raised from follow-up interviews

3. Background

3.1 The bilateral discussions form a critical part of the review process between the Regional Assembly Scrutiny Panel and the SWRDA. The bilateral discussion on the 29th January 2007 was a roundtable discussion between the Scrutiny Panel and SWRDA Board members. As with previous bilaterals, Members led discussions in pairs on the agreed themes which set the agenda for the day. It offered Members an opportunity to draw together the key issues that have been identified so far through the course of the review.

3.2 Atypically, compared to previous Reviews, and at the request of Members, the January 29th 2007 bilateral discussions have been followed by a series of interviews to further inform Members of different perspectives on the issues raised and the SWRDA’s delivery on this topic. This deviation from the 2006-2008 protocol had been discussed and agreed with Members at their January 10th 2007 meeting and with the lead SWRDA Director.

4. Bilateral Reporting

4.1 Members agreed that the bilateral should be structured in relation to the three emerging themes, explored from the perspective of the SWRDA:

- Theme 1: Developing a common understanding of “Quality of Employment Opportunity and the SWRDA’s role in delivering on this aspiration
• Theme 2: The strategic role of the SWRDA in education and skills

• Theme 3: The role of the SWRDA in driving and sustaining quality of employment opportunity in specific sectors (Aerospace and Tourism)

4.4 The proceedings were recorded by officers owing to the initial delay in arrival of the employed stenographer. However, the majority of the discussion was captured by the stenographer and the resulting transcript has been received by the secretariat. As Members will be aware the transcript is made public under the terms of the Scrutiny and Strategic Review protocol between the SWRDA and SWRA. In the spirit of the protocol and good relations this transcript has been shared with the lead SWRDA officers to ensure that there are no records which will compromise commercially sensitive information or cause issues with organisations on which there may have been comment. The SWRDA have subsequently responded with amendments purely of factual or typographical nature. The full transcript can be viewed as Appendix 1 to this report.

4.5 The transcript provides rich material and insight into the SWRDA’s approach to delivering on “Quality of Employment Opportunity”. It provides depth to Members reporting on the topic, and breadth in terms of identifying the roles and responsibilities of other organisations and partnerships. Officers have studied the transcript and used this to inform the emerging recommendations prepared for Members in Paper D of this meeting.

5. **Bilateral Follow-up Interviews**

5.1 At the request of Members a series of follow-up interviews have been arranged with representatives of organisations identified as key to understanding different perspectives on the SWRDA’s role and function in delivering on “Quality of Employment Opportunity”. The interview schedule can be found as Appendix 2 to this report.

5.2 Given the proximity of these interviews to the Panel meeting it has not been possible to provide a summary of main points for Members to consider.

5.3 Members who have participated in the interviews are encouraged to share the information and knowledge gained. Officers will provide summary notes of the discussions and it is suggested that Members use this and the feedback from participating Panel Members to inform and refine recommendations in the Panel’s draft report in spring 2007.

6. **Next Steps**

6.1 Once cleared with Members, officers will arrange for the full transcript to be posted on the Assembly website in accordance with the Scrutiny Protocol 2006 - 2008.

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