

West of England

Local Enterprise Partnership



Mr Chris Banks
Programme Officer
Bath & North East Somerset Core Strategy
c/o Banks Solutions, 21 Glendale Close
Horsham
West Sussex RH12 4GR

Tel: 01225 526090
Email: colin.skellett@wessexwater.co.uk

Date: 18 September 2013

I am writing to you because I think it would be helpful to set out the views of the West of England LEP in relation to the Core Strategies in the West of England

The West of England LEP Board has recently considered the current position of the Core Strategies in the West of England. The Board concluded that it was in the best economic interest of the West of England for the existing Core Strategies to be progressed without further delay. In reaching this decision, the Board particularly took into account the following points:

- 1 The primary focus of the Board is economic growth and job creation. It was agreed that the availability of housing and employment land and associated infrastructure is essential to delivering economic growth and jobs. However, the planning of housing development remained a statutory function.
- 2 The existing Core Strategies provide a significant increase in the housing provision and will provide a rolling five year supply of housing land. Conversely, not progressing the Core Strategies now will inhibit housing delivery.
- 3 Progressing the existing Core Strategies now will enable housing delivery to support economic growth, facilitate the development of necessary infrastructure, provide certainty for investors and developers and clarity for local communities. If approval of the existing Core Strategies is delayed, growth will be inhibited.
- 4 It is timely that the original projection of 95,000 jobs by 2030 be reviewed, particularly in the light of the recent recession. New projections on a more robust basis will shortly be available as part of the long term strategic growth plan.
- 5 The four Unitary Authorities are committed to working together and with the LEP to develop a long term sustainable housing strategy that is consistent with and will support the long term strategic growth plan being developed by the LEP.
- 6 The Unitary Authorities are committed to reviewing their Core Strategies on a West of England basis pursuant to their Duty to Co-operate.

I trust this will be taken into account in considering the Bath & North East Somerset Core Strategy.

Colin Skellett
Chair
West of England Local Enterprise Partnership