

**South West Observatory
Operational and Research Group Meeting**

Thursday 16 July 2009
Western Power Training Centre, Taunton

MINUTES

1. Attendance

Rose Bird	GOSW
Hollie Bryant	West of England LIN
Annette Carr	SWENVO
Andy Dunne	SWO CU
Eleanor Field	SWRDA
Adam Fleet	Plymouth City Council
Janine Gamon	SINe
Lorna Gibbons	SWO CU
Anne Gray	Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole
Carrie-Anne Hiscock	Planning Module/SWRA
Darren Horn	SW Councils
Lou Maddocks	SWO CU
Karen McDonald	Glos CC/LIN
Ben Neild	SLIM
Mark Painter	Devon LIN
Ray Perrins	SWO CU
Lucinda Procter	Swindon Borough Council
Carole Sutton	Plymouth University (SERIO)
Vinita Nawathe (Chair)	SWO CU
Paul Haydon	SW Tourism (from Agenda item 6 onwards)
Hazel Sewell	SW Tourism (from Agenda item 6 onwards)

Apologies

Paul Moore	ONS Regional Presence
Eddie Smith	ONS Regional Presence
Jules Channer	Culture Module
Sarah Hardwick	SWO CU
Shane Vallance	RDA

2. Welcome and introductions

VN asked the group to introduce themselves and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes were agreed. The action matrix was then discussed.

Actions: See Matrix

Action 1. Forward planning and sharing of work programmes. This action is ongoing.

Action 2. SWO seminar series. These are in the process of being organised. Also see item 7

Action 3. Annual Report. This is complete and should be printed ready for the AGM in September. LINs and Modules were thanked for their contributions.

Action 4. Local Evidence Guide. There was concern that there should not be duplication of existing work, and that the Observatory should guide people to evidence sources through coordination and signposting rather than producing a new report.

Action 5. Supply chain research – Anne Gray and Eleanor Field had met to discuss this area of interest and would circulate a paper at a later date.

Action 6. LIN funding arrangements. A meeting had taken place and a menu-style approach agreed upon. Administrative arrangements needed to be firmed up – paperwork to be circulated.

4. Local Economic Assessment (LEA) Coordination work - Lorna Gibbons

LG updated the group on progress in coordinating LEAs across the region. A questionnaire has been sent to the Network and Economic Development Officers across the region. The aim of this was firstly to establish contact with each Local Authority (LA), find out where each LA is in terms of developing LEAs and to identify any capacity issues and data gaps. About half have been returned and they are being analysed. LG has been talking to other regions (eg the East and West Midlands) and SW LAs that have made a start on the LEA process (eg Swindon). She has been investigating examples of best practice and emerging key indicators for comparison and consistency. LG will produce a paper summarising progress soon, to send to the Network. Production of national guidance is waiting for enactment, which now looks like happening in October.

5. New Local Intelligence Networks (LINs)

- a) Plymouth (Adam Fleet). The Plymouth Analyst Network started on an informal basis about a year ago looking at data sharing protocols. They are now a more formal group and are developing a Data Arc – a web database where each member of the partnership contributes details of past and current projects, to enable data sharing and reduce duplication of effort. The next step is buy-in from the Local Strategic Partnership. More details would be available from Patrick Hartop.
- b) Swindon (Lucinda Procter). They have about 30 partners and one project, on cluster profiles. They also aim to improve data sharing across the group. More details would be available from James Griffin.
- c) SINE (Janine Gamon). Janine has just started at SINE, which is looking to draw common threads from lots of potential sources of data across Somerset and turn data into intelligence.

Action - James Griffin and Patrick Hartop to attend and present at the next ORG

6. Joint Research Project (SW Tourism)

The group were joined by Paul Haydon and Hazel Sewell from SW Tourism. Jane Hiller (SINE) had written a note on a potential joint research idea "Understanding the cultural/tourism economy at a local level". PH said that the outline was similar to work that SW Tourism have done, but at a more detailed geography. They currently look into the value of tourism to the economy at a District level. The most recent available data is for 2007, data for 2008 should be available by the end of this year. The Culture Module has expressed some interest in this project. JG pointed out that the SW was very varied in terms of types of tourism and that the first priority should be to determine the scope of any project. RB said that there was a potentially useful project, if focussed. VN suggested forming a scoping group.

Action – SWO CU to call for interested parties to take this forward (brainstorming session)

7. Policy Seminars for 09/10

The SWO Annual Conference theme has been agreed and was inspired by the title of the Sustainable Development Commission's paper "Prosperity Without Growth" (conference theme since confirmed as "Health, Wealth and Happiness: What makes a prosperous region?"). Leading up to the conference we want to have four Policy Seminars to be held as

Network Events, on the themes of (1) Energy (2) Land and Food (3) Population and (4) Skills for the future. If possible these should be hosted by LINS, with as many Modules contributing their expertise as appropriate. Gloucestershire expressed interest in hosting Land and Food (which they wanted to know more about) and Population (which they had expertise in). West of England suggested they could host Population or Skills and that Bristol might have good expertise in Energy.

Action – All to finalise programme. SWO CU to send partly filled out programme.

8. Self help / AOB

No any other business, common issues or problems were raised by the group.

9. Review of Actions/Close of meeting

VN thanked the group for their attendance.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 15 October 2009