

APPENDIX 1 (part one)

SUGGESTED RESPONSES TO AWM:

*Part one of the Appendix (below) provide a summary of part two which contains more information on the background and context to each question. Part Two also includes the appropriate excerpts of the Draft Strategy.

VISION

Q1: *Do you agree with the proposed vision? If not, what alternatives would you propose?*

Response: Yes, broadly agree with the suggested vision.

Q2: *Do you agree with the proposed headline measures of performance? If not, what alternatives would you propose?*

Response: Yes, the Council supports this approach.

BUSINESS

Q3 *For the **Business** section of the strategy, have we identified the right set of Objectives and Indicative Actions? What actions are you or your organisation likely to lead or be a significant partner in helping to deliver?*

Comment: Yes, the Council generally agrees with the suggested objectives and indicative actions for business, although it will be important to continue to offer business support in areas including innovation across all sectors and markets. There are also concerns regarding the effectiveness of the clustering programme.

WFDC role: Business support programmes in place including Business Start Up Grant scheme. The Council is also working in partnership to ascertain local business needs in specific targeted locations within the District. Other examples include WFDC working jointly with Envirowise and the Worcestershire Environmental Business Group to establish a local Resource Efficiency Club.

PLACE

Q4 *For the **Place** section of the strategy, have we identified the right set of objectives and indicative actions? What actions are you or your organisation likely to lead or be a significant partner in helping to deliver?*

Comment: Yes, the Council generally agrees with the suggested objectives and indicative actions for 'place' agenda. In relation to cultural and natural assets the authority would like to see specific reference to visitor attractions. Perhaps the objective could be slightly reworded to read: "Maximising our cultural offer, natural assets and visitor attractions"?

WFDC role: The Council is a key participant in a number of partnerships and with its regeneration, economic development and planning responsibilities has a major role to play in delivering the 'place making' agenda. In Kidderminster, the local partnerships cover some of the most deprived areas of the District. The Council has an adopted Kidderminster Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy and in partnership with key stakeholders will, during 2007/08, be preparing a more detailed 'regeneration prospectus' for the town. The Council is also working closely with Advantage West Midlands to deliver regeneration projects in Stourport and Bewdley as part of the Market Towns Initiative. The Authority also supports the idea of linking dispersed attractions through active involvement in the Destination Marketing Partnership i.e. Destination Worcestershire.

PEOPLE

*Q5 For the **People** section of the strategy, have we identified the right set of objectives and indicative actions? What actions are you or your organisation likely to lead or be a significant partner in helping to deliver?*

Comment: Yes, the Council generally agrees with the suggested objectives and indicative actions for 'people'.

WFDC role: The Council is a key participant in a number of partnerships. In Kidderminster, the local partnerships cover some of the most deprived areas of the District. Specifically, WFDC is working with the Oldington & Foley Park Pathfinder and Horsefair, Broadwaters and Greenhill Partnership to better understand and tackle the barriers that hinder the attainment of key skills and prevent individuals from achieving their full potential.

POWERFUL VOICE

*Q6 For the **Powerful Voice** section of the strategy, have we identified the right set of objectives and indicative actions? What actions are you or your organisation likely to lead or be a significant partner in helping to deliver?*

Comment: Yes, the Council generally agrees with the suggested objectives and indicative actions for a 'Powerful Voice' and recognises the significance of initiatives such as the Worcestershire Ambassadors.

WFDC role: From a visitor economy perspective, WFDC is involvement in Destination Worcestershire which is a key means of marketing the wider area. It also has proposals in place to work in partnership in other areas, such as the 'Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus' that will further seek to promote the regeneration opportunities presented by the area.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Q7 Across the four main sections of the strategy (Business, Place, People, Powerful Voice) have we identified the right balance of objectives? Should some areas

received greater or lesser emphasis? Have we struck the right balance in seeking a response to the global challenge of climate change?

Yes, WFDC is broadly in agreement with the overall approach

FOCUS

Q8 Have we identified the right focus for the strategy? If not, how should it be different and why?

Comment:

Yes, WFDC is broadly in agreement with the overall approach and supports the proposal to give the Strategy a “secondary spatial focus”. The Council are particularly supportive of the recognition of the role and needs of “*towns whose economies are undergoing, or have undergone, significant economic restructuring*” and specific recognition of Kidderminster in Appendix V is welcomed. In this respect, the District Council request that useful cross reference might be made more explicit here to the Regional Spatial Strategy and in particular Policy UR.2 (Local Regeneration Areas) and the network of ‘Strategic Centres’ highlighted in Policy pa11 (The Network of Town & City Centres). It may also be useful for the strategy to include clear cross-reference between the Foci and ‘Place’ component of the Strategy.

The Council also supports the continued recognition of identified Market Towns both within and outside the rural regeneration zone (Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley). It looks forward to working with AWM and other partners to develop the indicative actions and bring forward much needed further investment and resources into the area.

DELIVERY

Q9 What role should regional, sub regional and local partnerships play in helping to deliver this strategy? How could Local or Multi Area Agreements potentially be used to help improve co ordination of – and engagement in – economic development and regeneration activity between regional sub regional and local levels?

Comment:

Wyre Forest District Council is a leading partner in both the Wyre Forest Local Strategic Partnership and the Worcestershire Partnership. It recognises the important role of local and sub regional partnerships in helping to deliver the WMES. At a local level it may also be worth recognising the important co-ordinating role that local authorities can play through their regeneration, economic development and planning services.

Funding through the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement is already important in supporting the Horsefair, Broadwaters and Greenhill Partnership in its work to regenerate this part of Kidderminster. The continued use of funding through the LAA and other sources will support this and other strategies to regenerate other areas of the District.
