Project Initiation Document (PID)

Summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>SWRSP/LESBs Integration and Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workstream reference</td>
<td>Local economy project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-region</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please list the local authorities (or public service bodies) that support this project:

- SW Regional Skills Partnership board details are as follows:
  - Juliet Williams - Chair, South West Regional Development Agency
  - Adam Chambers - Business Link
  - Barry Warburton - Engineering Employers Federation
  - Carleen Keleman - Objective 1 Partnership
  - Cllr. Christine Channon - Local Government Association
  - Claire McGuckin - Jobcentre Plus
  - David Noyce - HEFCE
  - Jim Neilson - South West Regional Skills Partnership
  - John Rogers - Sector Skills Council in South West
  - John Wilkinson - CBI
  - Malcolm Gillespie - Learning and Skills Council
  - Nigel Costley - South West Trades Union Congress
  - Peter Ashton - Federation of Small Business
  - Peter Cloke - Government Office South West
  - Professor David Baker - HERDA
  - Suzanne Bond - South West Regional Development Agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start date of project</th>
<th>November 2008</th>
<th>Anticipated end date of project</th>
<th>June 2009</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall budget detail</td>
<td>50% SWRIEP funding £20k</td>
<td>50% other funding (SWRSP) £20k</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summarise sign-off position for any other additional budget</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Jim Neilson in the first instance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsible SWRIEP Programme Manager <em>(if different from above)</em></td>
<td>Sue Smith</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved by (and date) Programme or Project Leader / Programme (or Project) Board</td>
<td>Name <em>(and authority)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved by (and date) SWRIEP Director</td>
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**Document History**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Dawn Neale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Version</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>13 November 2008</td>
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Section A: Project Definition

Background:

1. Background
   Each region has a Regional Skills Partnership [RSP] that is charged with putting employers at the centre stage in determining the skills needed to achieve a productive economy, whilst assisting individuals to gain the skills they need to be employed in the region. RSPs:

   “…should be the vehicle for ensuring that all the adult skills, business support, labour market and productivity services available at regional, local and sectoral level are mobilised to support regional priorities” (RSP Specification)

   “…ensure that the strategy for supply of skills, training, business support and labour market services is planned, managed and delivered in a coherent, collaborative way which reflects the priorities set out in the Regional Economic Strategies” (LSC/RDA Concordat)

The SW RSP is a strong partnership that enjoys considerable support from employer groups, and principal education, skills funding and delivery groups. The SW RSP leads on the development of regional skills priorities and also has the responsibility for the development of the ESF Strategic Frameworks for the SW; these set out the strategy for ESF spending within the region. RSPs will also provide advice on skills priorities for the RFA.

The SW RSP works through the operation of a Board, the Alliance [a wider reference group] and through a series of standing groups consisting of relevant partner organisations. The standing groups provide focus on regional skills priorities and initiatives.

The Leitch report on skills set out the skills challenge facing the UK; it also recommended the establishment of Local Employment and Skills and Employment Boards [LESBs] to, “…build on the progress that has been made in recent years between the Learning and Skills Councils, the regional development agencies, local authorities and other regional and local partners in agreeing shared priorities through regional skills partnership and the emerging sub-regional employment and skills boards.” (DCLG and BERR SNR Consultation document 31 March 2008)

The desire to establish LESBs is welcomed. It will help ensure that there is a coherent strategy for addressing local as well as regional skills issues and priorities.
The education and skills landscape is complicated and undergoing considerable change. Since January 2008 there have been 11 policy documents that relate to skills. Amongst other things there will be a need to:

- Join up skills work under LAAs and MAAs with the LESB proposals
- Work through the impact of the Machinery of Government changes with the demise of the LSC and the emergence of the Young Peoples Learning Agency [jointly chaired by the RDA] and the Skills Funding Agency
- Develop the skills component of the Single Regional Strategy [SRS]

Such developments have significant implications for local and regional skills actions. The RSP recognizes that this is an new area of work for the Local Authorities and wishes to support them in achieving the local actions required.

In the South West progress has been made on developing a network of LESBs centered on the skills groups that have been emerging within Strategic Economic Partnership’s. These are in various stages of development. Some LESBs are in existence and are up and running and are getting to grips with the local skills and employment agenda; others are still relatively embryonic.

In this rather complicated landscape it is important that relationships and responsibilities are clear, and that there is a very practical and common sense approach to joining up on skills across the region. To this end the SW RSP has been engaging with LESBs in order to:

a. Support their establishment
b. Establish a simple working framework under which:
   i. LESBs are invited to consider how regional priorities can be acted on locally
   ii. The RSP is to consider what regional support can be given to locally identified priorities
   iii. The RSP and GOSW will consult the LESBs for the ESF Strategy refresh
   iv. The RSP will involve LESBs in the development of the skills component of the SRS
   v. Data and intelligence will be shared
   vi. The work of the regional standing groups, such as the Sectors Group, will be shared with LESBs

This model has the virtue of being straightforward, maximises opportunities to join up and have real impact; and has the minimum of bureaucracy.

Issues
Skills has now been identified as the no.1 issue by the CBI and by many other employer groups. In the current context of an increasing role for LAs and LESBs, plus the strengthened regional positions of RDAs and RSPs there is a good opportunity to have a real impact on the skills agenda across the region.

The model for regional/sub-regional working is a good one. What is needed now is a significant push to start delivering on the framework set out above. To do this some additional resource needs to be applied. There is the possibility of securing some additional funding from the RDA; however, given financial constraints this is likely to be rather limited.

What may be possible is to secure RDA funding for a jointly funded support officer to lead on this work, provided that co-funding can be secured.

**Project Scope:**

**Reasons for Undertaking Project:**

The project aims to:

Support the establishment of LESBS (where there is demand for private sector involvement) that:

- Have a good working relationship between local businesses and local public sector organisations.
- Are able to Agree local employment and skills priorities
- Are able to input into LAAs, MAAs and Sustainable Community Strategies

Achieve compacts between the SW RSP and LESBs which will facilitate the following:-

1. Integration of regional and local employment and skills priorities
2. The sharing of intelligence information and pertinent research
3. LESB input into: -
   a. ESF Strategy
   b. Regional Skills Strategy
   c. Regional Funding activity
4. RSP able to assist the LESBs in areas where they do not have the capacity, such as Sector Operations Group (SOG) activity, the RSP can help support and advise.

In General the project would aim to, ensure that all regional and local skills initiatives (current and planned) are aligned and communicated through the RSP and LESBs.

- To share best practice and knowledge exchange to ensure that all national, regional and local knowledge and information is fully exploited. The model will also ensure that best practice is shared between LESBs and provide a clear communication channel.
South West Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership Project Initiation Document (PID)

- Support LESBS to align themselves appropriately with local and regional employment initiatives.

- To enable the LESBs to work with the SWRSP standing groups in areas including:
  - 14-19 agenda
  - Brokerage
  - Business Support Simplification
  - Creativity and STEM
  - Demography
  - Employer Engagement
  - Enterprise
  - ESF
  - HE
  - Information and Guidance
  - Leadership and Management
  - Performance Monitoring
  - Sector Operations Group

All of the above activity will be achieved through the recruitment and subsequent activity of a project manager.

The RSP is currently only able to provide limited support to LESBS as it is a small and streamline organisation. The funding is required for costs to pay for a post to lead on the key activity which will have significant benefits for local and regional partners.

**Exclusions (areas out of scope):** Not applicable

**Relationships with Other Projects:**

The project will link to all major regional skills and employment partners and stakeholders through the RSP Board. This will also include linking to the Local Authorities who will be instrumental organisations in the consultation and development. Through this partnership approach the RSP will ensure that local knowledge and need is included in local initiatives.
## Outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence (quantitative/qualitative)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All regional and local strategies are aligned to the RSP partnership - those of key stakeholders including local authorities and local area groups adopting and incorporating their needs. The benefit of this will be to ensure a coordinated approach is adopted which would ultimately lead to increased skills development on a local basis. This approach will also ensure that all stakeholders are communicated with and consulted.</td>
<td>All key stakeholders signed up to a Common Accord (or a compact, if appropriate) driven by the RSP and including local authorities and LESBS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Local businesses are able to liaise with local public sector bodies to ensure that all activity is demand led. | Survey will be conducted to ascertain the success of the LESBS: -  
  a. To include public sector bodies  
  b. Employers |
| Ensuring local strategy is influenced through the activity to reflect local employer needs in the context of the regional skills agenda | Strategies developed |
| Employer engagement is a coordinated approach for example Train to Gain and Job Centre Plus. | Developed approach agreed  
  Implementation of activity |
| Supporting the local authority to meet its targets specifically by aiming to increase local delivery for level 2, 3 and 4. | Increased activity locally |

## Outputs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Evidence (quantitative/qualitative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of the current activity in the SW</td>
<td>Summary review report</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| A programme of engagement with key stakeholders | Planned and timed programme produced  
  Participation in programme |
| A diagnostic process to identify issues for local authorities, regional partnerships and local employers. A wider awareness and understanding of the role of LESBS. This would include events focussing on key local employers and public sector organisations. | Positive publicity received  
  Number of events and feedback from events |
Section B: Outline Business Case
(at this stage only broad estimates of resources are required)

Top Level Summary of Benefits to be Gained From Project:

To improve the efficiency of the skills delivery system to move and systematically address the needs of employers and local areas.
To effectively fill gaps highlighted through the collaborative working arrangements.

Scalability / Repeatability

The programme will ensure that all relevant partners are included. This approach could benefit other national public bodies.

Top Level Summary of Costs/Resources:

Project management costs

Broken down as follows:-

- Salary (including 23% employment costs) £30k
- Travel and subsistence £4k
- Recruitment costs £1k
- Office costs £5k

These costs will be split between the SWRSP and LIFT funding as demonstrated below: -

Financial support to fund 50% of the costs thus providing support through to the end of March 2009. Costs to cover recruitment costs, employment costs, travel budget [given the nature of the work considerable travel is envisaged], a contribution towards events, plus a contribution towards support, overhead and office costs. Estimated at 50% x total costs of £40,000 = £20,000.

Cost Benefit Analysis (where applicable)

The project aims for long term benefits of ensuring the supply of skills more closely

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matches the needs of businesses and individuals. The benefits will be indirect and lagged but the potential could be substantial. This model will provide a case study for the other regions and ensure best practice is shared. More local businesses achieving NVQ’s and an increase in apprenticeship take up ultimately leading to an improvement in performance and efficiency.

**Sustaining the Change**

Following the initial 6 month trial the project will be evaluated at a 5 month milestone, to determine key learning and influence the next phase, if proven to be appropriate and of value.

**Section C: Resources:**
(governance structure, project team and third party.)

**Project Management**

The SW RSP is a company limited by guarantee and already contracts for its funding and for projects with partner organisations and with ESF.

The proposed project would be managed by a manager from with the SW RSP.

The project would be reported on through the SW RSP Board. It is also suggested that there should be monitoring meetings between the SW RSP and South West Councils.

No sum has been included above for a project evaluation, however, it is anticipated that there should be a SW Councils/SW RSP review upon completion.

**Project Board:**

The SWRSP Board will liaise closely with the local authority board re the project and its progress.

**Project Team (Responsibility and lines of authority):**

Project Leader – Jim Neilson in the first instance

The project manager post will be a new appointment and they will report into the
RSP Board. The Project manager will have administrative support provided by the RSP office.

**Third Party (Responsibility and lines of authority):**

Not applicable.

### Section D: QA Process

Quality Assurance of the project will be managed by the RSP Performance Monitoring standing group.

The RSP Performance Monitoring Group has been established to advise the RSP on its performance towards meeting its objectives. The group is made up by business representatives and research staff from regional strategic agencies. SLIM, the Skills & Learning Module of the South West Observatory chairs the group and provides secretariat functions.

The groups function is to: develop a monitoring framework for assessing RSP progress; to populate the framework with data; to analyse this data, providing accompanying commentary on progress towards objectives; and to identify gaps in knowledge or evidence and to recommend steps that may be required to plug such gaps.

### Section E: Project Plan

**Dates of Key Milestones:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Due date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project infrastructure in place</td>
<td>Recruitment/consultant briefed</td>
<td>November 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project plan developed and agreed with partners and stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SWRSP Proposal 13 November 2008
**Meetings held bi-monthly with partners and stakeholders including local authorities**

- Meeting minutes
- Inaugural meeting January 2009
- Subsequent quarterly meetings

**Formulation and agreement compacts between LESBs.**

- Common accord and TORS
- March 2009

**Regular inclusion in SW RSP skills letter**

- Skills letters
- Monthly

**Review of current situation**

- Summary report
- 27 February 2009

**A programme of engagement events with key stakeholders**

- Programme
- January 2009

**Awareness raising**

- Surveys
- March 2009

**Review of Project by Programme Board and decision on additional support**

- Submission of report
- Programme Board Meeting
- 7th May 2009
- 27th May 2009

**End of initial 6 month project**

- 30th June 2009

**NVQ achievements raised locally**

- LSC reports
- Progress to be reviewed June 2009
- June 2010

### Planned Completion Date:

The project will initially be for 6 months – 30 June 2009. However, the project will be evaluated for its effectiveness and achievements and if found to be of benefit locally and regionally further funding will be sought. Additionally and exit strategy will be reviewed at the 5 month stage of the project.

The focus of the review will be:

- a summary of actions undertaken by the project officer
- a summary of the current situation of LESBs in the South West setting out which have progressed to an operational group. This will include a brief benchmarking exercise against other regions
- Proposed future actions required setting out how this will make a difference for LESBs

This review will be supported by stakeholder views from the LESBs and Regional Skills Partnership

This information for the programme board review will be provided by the Regional SWRSP Proposal 13 November 2008
Skills Partnership.

Full Project Plan Attached? No

Section F: Project Reporting

Normal Reporting: Project manager reports to the SWRIEP Programme Manager and/or Project Board

Exception process: SWRIEP Executive Group and in the final instance SWRIEP Management Board

Section G: Project Communication Plan

The project manager will produce a case study as per the required template and this will be placed on the RSP web site and associated skills websites including the skills newsletter.

Activity will include: -

1. Engagement with key stakeholders including RSP, local businesses, public sector agencies, local authorities and key local employers. This will be through meetings and events.
2. Key messages will be produced for these varying audiences including messages for employers, RSP, local authorities and other public sector bodies. The key messages will highlight advice and guidance on getting involved in this partnership approach to working, benefits of this approach and highlighting best practice and knowledge networking.

Section H: Initial Risk Log:

The risks include: -

- Not securing satisfactory commitment from the full range of partners – however, this will be mitigated by developing the common accords and TORs to ensure all are clear as to their commitments and responsibilities. Also, activities will be communicated in order to receive positive PR thus raising the profile of all involved.
- The project manager leaving prior to the completion of the 6 month project. In this case a consultant will be appointed. This would have cost implications
which would need to be discussed with RIEP project board.

- The project manager will be constantly monitored to ensure that the project is effective and achieving the desired outputs and outcomes.

**Section I: Project Documentation**

**Type of documentation:**

All project documentation will be collected in a portfolio to provide evidence against the outcomes and outputs as stated in the proposal. Monitoring reports will be maintained by the RSP Performance and Monitoring standing group. A project closure report will be produced by the project manager highlighting key learning, best practice and potential case study generation.

**Where will it be kept?**

Appropriate documentation will be placed on the SWRIEP shared drive. All documents will be maintained centrally at the SWRSP office in Taunton.

**Section J: Other Information**

(Including reference to any previous decision making / panel meetings.)

If the post proves successful and of benefit to the LESBs the RSP will seek to find additional funding to continue the activity outlined. The RSP will seek additional RIEP funding following 3-4 months of project evaluation.