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**YOUR REF:**  
**OUR REF:** SW/THM/4062/05  
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Dear Mr Jenkinson

### **LTP SETTLEMENT 2003**

This letter contains the results of the 2004/05 local transport capital settlement, both for the whole of England (outside London) and for Devon County Council in detail. Attached are the details of your authority's 2004/05 allocations for major schemes, maintenance and the integrated transport (small schemes) block, as well as feedback on progress in implementing your local transport strategy as set out in your third Annual Progress Report (APR). An explanation of the principles and policies underlying this year's settlement, as well as a summary of the national picture can be found at Annex 1. An overview of the settlement in the south west regions is attached as Annex 2.

#### **APR Overview – Shared Priorities**

This year's round of annual progress reports, the third of the five year LTPs, showed authorities as a whole delivering an increased programme of work. Assessment of authorities' performance is increasingly turning to progress against outcomes – including those related to the shared central – local government transport priority.

The shared priority involves improved access to jobs and services, particularly for those most in need, in ways which are sustainable: improved public transport, reduced problems of congestion, pollution and safety.

In addition to the scoring of your APR, we therefore have a number of comments related to four subject areas relevant to the shared priority. For each we have, where possible, considered whether local authorities are on course to be achieve their targets and whether there appears to be more scope to deliver more.

Chapter 5 of the APR deals with shared priorities and this is welcomed.

You will know that Ministers are keen to take opportunities to reduce congestion. We recognise that this may not be an important issue for much of Devon. Whilst you have not been asked by the Government to produce a target for congestion, however, you produced a separate document entitled “Tackling Congestion in Exeter”, which is welcomed, as are the measures you have introduced to combat congestion into the city.

We would like you to consider how you can ensure that congestion does not increase in your area. Measures to increase bus patronage should be considered as a means of helping in this policy area. We would welcome a further exploration with you of the potential for further progress, including on bus priority, parking policy and travel plans, in order to tackle congestion.

Page 37 of your APR discusses **road safety** and from the table on pages 22 and 23 you appear to be on track to meet your target for both adults and children. Based on figures for the 85 local authorities, produced by Department for Transport, You appear to be broadly about on track to meet its targets to reduce the numbers of KSI casualties.

You provide 3 examples of measures to increase **accessibility** (pages 38 and 39) and the success of these is recognised and welcomed. Page 16 also examines accessibility in Northern Devon. The table of progress towards core national indicators states that you are on track to meet your target of 34.5% of rural households within 13 minute walk of an hourly or better bus service. You will be aware that we will be issuing guidance in the New Year to progress the Social Exclusion Unit’s proposals ‘Making the Connections’. We look forward to discussing with you how you can take forward these proposals in your future programmes.

Capital allocations to reduce the **maintenance** backlog are a major part of the local transport capital settlement. However, the allocations do need to be accompanied by appropriate levels of day to day maintenance. The Department will be scrutinising performance in reducing maintenance backlogs.

### **APR Assessment**

There is clear evidence to suggest that the authority is on track to deliver the targets outlined in the APR. Whilst your involvement in dissemination of best practice is clearly evident better links to changes in performance could have been made.

The APR is once again a high quality easy to read document – well written with good use of tables, photographs and maps. Delivery of schemes on the ground is very encouraging and the APR clearly demonstrates links to outcomes and local / national targets. You have spent your allocation and supported this with additional funding. It would be helpful to clearly identify non LTP sources of funding.

Reflecting the overall position and in comparison with other transport authorities we have assessed you transport performance as above average. We have included some comments at Annex 3 that highlight areas where we would like to see an improved performance. Attached at Annex 4 is an explanation of the methodology used to produce your transport plan score.

### **Details for your Authority**

Your total block allocation is £27.426 million for 2004/05. This covers all items of transport capital expenditure apart from major schemes. The total figure includes £18.151 million for maintenance.

Ministers have carefully considered the evidence of performance and delivery in your APR and the additional funding available. In the light of these factors, and reflecting your performance to date we are pleased to be able to allocate £9.275 million for integrated transport measures for 2004/05.

We regret to say that we are unable to support the supplementary bid for small scale integrated transport measures arising out of SWARMMS. The APR Guidance Third Edition states that only capital funding will be considered. Many of the measures listed in the bid appear to be revenue based. In addition there was insufficient detail provided on the proposed measures and their costs – as well as how the bid met the criteria listed in paragraph 61 of the guidance.

Your integrated transport and maintenance block funding will be allocated non-ringfenced SCE(R). You will therefore be able to spend it in accordance with your local priorities, although we would expect such spending to be in line with the objectives and strategies contained in your LTP.

### **Maintenance**

The allocation for capital maintenance for 2004/05 set out above, and as explained earlier, has been calculated on a formulaic basis and has taken account of the road and bridge maintenance data set out in your 2003 APR. The maintenance allocation your authority is £18.151 million.

Included in this figure is £1.600 million in respect of strengthening the Bideford Long Bridge. Allocation of this funding is subject to receipt of the necessary listed building consent.

### **Detrunking**

Ministers have carefully considered your bid in respect of capital works on the de-trunked section of the A39/A361. Ministers have carefully considered this bid and in light of the available resources we are providing £0.613 million for such works in 2004/05. This is in addition to your maintenance allocation identified above.

## **Existing Major Schemes**

### **Barnstaple Western Bypass**

We are making available £11.201m in 2004-05 for the Barnstaple Western Bypass. As you know we confirmed that we would provide sufficient resources for completion of the scheme up to a maximum of £30.414m. Our original commitment remains unchanged.

You have notified us of an £9.188m increase in funding over and above our previously agreed total contribution. Ministers will not make a decision on the case for additional funding until such time as the scheme is ready to be fully accepted i.e. the completion of the relevant statutory processes. At that stage you will need to provide justification for the increased scheme costs and evidence that you have done everything reasonably possible to mitigate such increases. You will also need to explain how far you are able to meet part of the cost increase because we expect authorities, given the flexibility provided within the LTP system to re-prioritise within your allocation to meet changing demands, including cost increases. In the meantime it would be useful if you kept us informed of any changes to the anticipated costs for the scheme. For the reason explained earlier, we can give no guarantees on meeting any cost increases over and above our agreed total contribution.

### **PTI 2000**

We welcome the continued development of this important project. Progress has been maintained over the last year and the partnership has continued to deliver. You will recall that this initiative will now be funded as part of each authority's block allocation. We understand from Traveline that your authority has agreed to contribute £0.118 million for this project and this is included in your overall integrated block allocation.

### **Conclusion**

I would like to express our appreciation of the valued work that your officers have undertaken in producing your 3<sup>rd</sup> APR and dealing with requests for more information since it was submitted at the end of July this year. I know that all my staff appreciate the immense co-operation that you have given throughout the year.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the relevant officer in the local transport policy section of DfT.

**Any Questions?**

Kathrine Haddrell will be glad to discuss any aspect of the settlement on which your authority may require further detail. Your staff may telephone Kath on (01752) 635155, but it would be easier to provide a clear answer to any complex questions if they are put in writing.

Yours sincerely

**James Llewellyn**  
**Regional Transport Team**  
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## **ANNEX 1 - THE NATIONAL PICTURE**

This year's settlement delivers a further step-change in funding promised in December 2000. This emphasises the Government's continuing commitment to the local transport system as a mechanism for delivering sustained improvement to the transport infrastructure and thus a real improvement to people's daily lives. Ministers would like to see local authorities seizing the opportunity presented by this extra resource to increase the momentum of delivery on the ground.

The Government therefore continues to deliver the promised sustained and predictable levels of investment. Ministers were pleased by the way most local authorities responded to the Settlement for 2002/03. There is strong evidence that most have now adjusted well to the increase in available capital funding. Levels of spend on small-scale integrated transport and road maintenance schemes were much higher than the previous year, and this was reflected by the increase in the numbers of schemes delivered. These schemes will even now be helping to improve people's lives on a day-to-day basis, from providing children with a safe and healthy way to get to school to offering genuine transport choice for people's journey to work. Authorities have reported further progress towards achieving targets and objectives with on average 60-70% of targets clearly on track to be achieved.

The APR document or equivalent represents the main opportunity for local authorities to bring evidence of their transport achievements to the attention of Government. The 2002/3 Annual Progress Reports generally contained very useful evidence of progress. Many authorities provided highly impressive and persuasive evidence of their performance in their APRs. The APR documents, as a whole, were significantly more useful to our assessment of local authority performance than those for the previous two years. The Government greatly appreciates the efforts that have produced this improvement.

This letter contains individual feedback on your 2002/03 APR. It also contains details of your local transport score and how that was determined. This year, as mentioned in the 2002 decision letters and outlined in the 2003 APR guidance, ministers wished to focus on authorities' ability to deliver on the ground.

For this reason, we did not simply take the APR documents at face value, but scrutinised their contents closely. Often, a close examination of APRs led to concerns that authorities were overstating their achievements. Where we had such concerns, we considered alternative evidence and compared it to what the APR said. This was sometimes reassuring - but in other cases we did not feel able to give local authorities the benefit of the doubt. Authorities cannot assume that they can gloss over disappointing delivery, and still be rewarded.

Conversely, a handful of authorities failed to take the opportunity offered by the APR to demonstrate the quality of their transport performance - those APRs actually understated achievements or did not present them effectively. For these authorities, we also looked for other evidence to try to gain a clearer picture of their performance. In some cases, though, we recognise that we may simply be unaware of important evidence, and that the authority may therefore not have received the full credit their performance deserves. Affected authorities should address this by providing more effective evidence in APRs, or equivalents, next time.

Overall though, having considered the APRs and other evidence available to us, we are confident that performance in our priority areas - delivery of schemes and progress on targets and objectives - is generally satisfactory and improving. The majority of authorities achieved at least an acceptable level of performance. Ministers have therefore taken the decision to combine the bottom two classifications of 'below average' and 'well below average' into one single classification. We have described authorities in this classification as 'weak', because our assessment this year has revealed areas of underperformance that need to be addressed quickly. Government Offices will be working closely with those authorities over the next year to ensure that performance improves.

Authorities receiving a 'weak' classification, and that received an 'average' or better classification last time, should note that we are not necessarily suggesting their overall performance has declined year-on-year. However, our changed approach to scoring and assessment this year has revealed that these authorities are, in some key areas, relatively weaker than most other authorities. We will seek, in future Settlements, to recognise 'weak' authorities that focus on taking effective action to address the deficiencies we have identified.

Despite the generally encouraging evidence in the 2002/03 APRs, there remain some other areas of concern to be addressed (these comments do not apply to 'excellent' Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) authorities - see below):

- Three years into the LTP process, it is disappointing that some authorities are still having trouble meeting the requirements of the APR guidance. We do not ask for superfluous information that we do not use in the APR assessment process. Authorities that do not provide the information we ask for, and where necessary in the format we ask for it, risk losing credit by doing so.
- Regrettably, there still remains a significant proportion of targets where APRs provided no clear evidence of progress. As we are approaching the fourth year of the implementation of authorities' Local Transport Plans Ministers expect to see authorities collecting and analysing the necessary data to determine whether they are on track to meet targets. Where there is a risk that a target may be missed, the affected authority should describe how it is responding to and managing that risk. It will not be acceptable for authorities to include targets in their fourth APRs for which there is insufficient data, or insufficient evidence that data deficiencies are being addressed.
- Now that we are half way through the first LTP 5 year period we would expect a greater emphasis in the next APR on reporting of outcomes rather than outputs and how the outputs link in and support the LTP objectives.
- It is clear that some authorities tend to conceal or downplay any difficulties or problems that emerge as they implement their LTPs. We recognise that in the complex business of planning and delivering local transport improvements, the unexpected can happen. We therefore welcome honest explanations of how difficulties arose, what action was taken in response, and how lessons have been learned. Authorities providing full explanations of this kind can often demonstrate to us that they show effective planning and delivery in response to changing and difficult circumstances. There is no advantage in being evasive or

incomplete. Authorities facing emerging difficulties should contact their Government Office for advice as early as possible.

- It would be helpful to understand more about how transport is making connection with and supporting the wide range of social and economic initiatives being driven by other departments and bodies,
- Some authorities, despite feeling that their performance has been maintained or improved, will find that their classification is worse than expected, or worse than last year. This is of course because our assessment measures authority performance *relative* to other authorities, against a background of strong across-the-board improvement this year. The message is that authorities that want to maintain or improve their classification must strive for continuous improvement, and cannot afford to 'rest on their laurels'.
- We would encourage all authorities to seek to monitor effectively the success of the schemes they are delivering, and provide more concrete evidence of the impact of schemes in future APRs or equivalents.

As with last year, ministers have directed additional funding in the integrated transport block towards authorities whose APRs have demonstrated good progress across the board, but especially on delivery of schemes and achievement against targets. This is because we wish to target funding towards those authorities that can demonstrate their ability to make the best possible use of local transport capital funding. Furthermore, ministers have decided to make an additional bonus available to a number of authorities whose performance relative to other authorities has shown a particularly strong year-on-year improvement. Funding levels for the best performing authorities are substantially higher this year.

However, Ministers have also chosen in this settlement to begin to exact a financial penalty on those authorities that are performing poorly. For this settlement the penalties are relatively small and only affect a few. However, given that the outlook is that there will be fewer uncommitted resources in next year's Settlement, we are likely to want to reduce allocations of more authorities below the indicative levels, in order to free up funds for those who are performing better. We therefore give all authorities notice this year that if their performance in 2003/04 is disappointing relative to other authorities, they may receive substantially less than their indicative allocations for integrated transport for 2005/06.

### **'Excellent' authorities**

All authorities ranked as 'excellent' under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment process, that were not required to produce an APR this year, nevertheless chose to do so. We therefore assumed all these authorities were content to be assessed and marked on the same basis as all other authorities. Of the ten authorities affected, four showed a strong improvement relative to other authorities, three broadly maintained their relative performance, and three declined significantly.

'Excellent' authorities, particularly those disappointed by this year's APR assessment, will of course want to know how they would have been assessed had they chosen not to submit a full APR. We cannot give a precise answer for each authority - the situation did not actually arise,

so we did not need to construct a detailed alternative assessment methodology. However, we would certainly have assessed authorities on how well they had met the minimum requirements set out in the 2003 APR guidance. 'Excellent' local authorities were required to provide evidence of their performance in three areas - progress towards targets and objectives, delivery of schemes, and the effectiveness of the spending programme.

Where we had criticisms of 'excellent' authorities' performance in these areas, we would almost certainly have made similar criticisms, had they not provided a full APR. We would also have marked such authorities accordingly - in a way that attempted to reflect their performance fairly against all other authorities. We can therefore reassure 'excellent' authorities in this position that they are most unlikely to have lost marks, or associated funding, as a direct result of their decision to produce a full APR.

If an 'excellent' authority had provided insufficient evidence of its performance in the three areas listed above, the Department would have found it impossible to reach a view about that authority's performance across the board. Ministers would not have had sufficient evidence to consider the provision of performance-related funding to that authority.

The Department intends to have further discussions in the New Year with the Local Government Association and 'excellent' authorities. We would like to understand more about the reasons for all authorities choosing to produce a full APR in 2003, and would seek to identify possible ways forward for 2004 and the second LTP period.

### **Capital allocations for 2004/05 - The National Picture**

The total capital funding available for 2004/05 is £1.863bn. Ministers have decided that because slower than expected progress in delivering major schemes, and the difficulties currently being experienced by certain very large major schemes, that they could not justify providing the full £1.94bn previously announced - particularly in the light of wider pressures on other transport programmes. Ministers remain committed to providing authorities with the funding stability needed for their local transport programmes. They have therefore met in full all 2004/05 indicative allocations for each authority, except for four poorly-performing authorities.

In making their decisions, ministers have taken as their starting point the 2004/5 maintenance allocations announced in last year's settlement, and the 2004/5 indicative integrated transport allocations announced in the 2000 decision letters, plus the commitments arising from major schemes accepted in previous settlements.

### **Changes to the local government capital finance system**

Under the Local Government Act 2003, credit approvals will be abolished and a new prudential capital finance system will be introduced from 1 April 2004. ODPM are providing detailed guidance on the new system but one of the consequences of this change is that all capital allocations for 2004/05 and future years will be expressed in a different way.

From 2004/05 Government support for capital investment will be described as either Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue), known as SCE(R), or Supported Capital Expenditure (Capital

Grant), known as SCE(C). SCE can be further classified as either Single Pot SCE(R)/SCE(C) or ringfenced SCE(R)/SCE(C).

Previously, credit approvals from central government set the limit of a local authority's long-term borrowing, and attracted Revenue Support Grant (RSG) or Housing Revenue Account Subsidy (HRAS)) towards the financing costs of loans (interest payments and provisions for the repayment of principal). Under the new system (unless exceptionally a national limit is imposed), a local authority will be free to make its own borrowing decisions according to what it can afford. However, central government support for borrowing through RSG/HRAS will continue to be given on the basis of a named amount of capital expenditure which the borrowing will support. The local authority will take the totality of Government support, both SCE(R) and SCE(C), into account in setting its prudential limits for the forthcoming financial year.

The implications of these changes for LTP allocations are that our maintenance and block allocations will be issued as unringfenced Single Pot SCE(R). Major scheme allocations will be allocated as half grant contributions (TSG for road schemes and S56 grant for PT - as previously) and half ringfenced SCE (R). Where however an authority has been designated as 'good or excellent' according to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, they will receive the SCE (R) element of their major scheme allocation as Single Pot unringfenced SCE (R).

Major maintenance schemes will be funded wholly through ringfenced SCE(R).

### **Major Schemes**

We are earmarking a total of £459m for major public transport and road schemes in 2004/5, of which £147m is for fully-approved schemes and £312m is for schemes currently provisionally approved or which have been approved at this settlement.

Some 44 new major schemes were submitted for approval this year, of which 12 were schemes classified as 'work in progress' in previous years. As was the case in the last three years, all schemes have been assessed using the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA). In the same way as in previous years, we have categorised each new major scheme as accept, provisionally accept, work in progress, or reject. In total DfT is accepting or provisionally accepting 20 schemes in this Settlement.

Bids have been submitted for 133 of our 155 existing major schemes this round. We have carried out a detailed analysis of the bids, and progress so far on the schemes. Ministers have decided:

- i) Which schemes are on profile and the bids should therefore be supported in full;
- ii) Which bids are not appropriate and should be rejected;
- iii) Which schemes have cost increases, but the 2004-05 bids are appropriate and should be supported; and finally
- iv) Which schemes have cost increases, but the 2004-05 bids should only be supported in part.

Following these considerations, we propose to allocate £418m in respect of existing major schemes and in line with the new Prudential System they will receive further support as a mixture of grant and ringfenced SCE (R).

### **Single Capital Pot**

The allocations to be made to Passenger Transport Authorities (PTAs) for the integrated transport block fall outside the scope of the Single Capital Pot (SCP) because PTAs are single-service authorities. As SCAs no longer exist under the Prudential System, these resources will be issues as ringfenced SCE (R) support which is adjusted each year in the Local Government Settlement.

All other authorities will receive their funding for the maintenance and integrated transport block as part of the SCP. This is awarded as single pot SCE (R) -which is also announced each year through the Local Government Settlement. Authorities will have discretion to spend this funding according to their own plans and priorities. Subject to this, we expect authorities to continue to spend sufficient funds on transport to enable them to work towards, and ultimately meet, the objectives and targets contained within their LTPs.

All (100%) of the transport contribution to the SCP has been allocated on the basis of the indicative maintenance and small schemes allocations already announced for 2004/5, plus any additional amounts reflecting assessments of authorities' APRs, including decisions on any supplementary bids and additional funding to reward good performance. There is no 'discretionary element' this year.

### **Integrated Transport Block**

The indicative allocations for the integrated transport (smaller schemes) block in 2004/5 totalled £520m. We are also allocating £68m net as additional funding for local authorities, according to their performance in delivering better transport. For the integrated transport block, the indicative allocations for the final year of the first LTP period (2005/06), announced as part of the December 2000 settlement, still stand.

### **Integrated transport supplementary bids**

In addition to the indicative and performance-based allocations, £71m is being provided in response to integrated transport supplementary bids made by authorities in their APRs.

Local authorities should be aware that because of the need to consider allocations as part of the overall settlement process, we cannot give any guarantee that additional resources for supplementary bids accepted this year will be provided in 2005/06. Beyond that, all schemes being taken forward through supplementary bids should be fully incorporated by local authorities' into their next Local Transport Plans, and they should make a case for continued funding of such schemes there. Local authorities should presume that from 2006/07 onwards, continued funding will only be provided for those schemes through regular integrated transport block allocations. The availability of block funding for such schemes will depend on the total level of uncommitted resource available for local transport at that time. However, we have noted those cases where supplementary bids sought funding over a number of years.

## **Highway Maintenance**

Indicative allocations for highway maintenance in 2004/05 were calculated by formulae and notified to authorities in the December 2002 settlement. These allocations are unchanged, but there are further maintenance allocations for 2004/05 as follows:

For some authorities

- newly identified strengthening and major maintenance on primary route structures
- newly accepted major maintenance schemes
- newly accepted exceptional maintenance schemes in smaller authorities.

Supplementary bids for highway maintenance were treated on their own merits, but it should be noted that those that argued simply for an increase not related to specific works were rejected. There were some bids for mitigation works to prevent incursion by road vehicles onto railways. In all cases these were insubstantial in relation to the authorities' available funding, and it was considered that if these works were pressing they should be given priority within that funding.

## **Street Lighting**

In its recent response to the Select Committee report on Local Roads and Pathways, the Government did not accept the Committee's recommendation that indicative allocations should be made within the LTP settlement for street lighting. However, the block allocation for highway maintenance, and other block funding within the LTP settlement along with other capital resources the authority may have available within its Single Capital Pot, may be used for street lighting purposes.

## **Fourth APR Guidance**

Revised guidance will be published not later than March 2004 to assist authorities in preparing their next annual progress reports. We will be seeking authorities' views on revisions to the guidance during January 2004. We intend to keep changes to a minimum, to reflect the fact that this year's APRs fulfilled our requirements in most cases.

## **Detrunked Roads**

£18.5m of capital funding for 2004/05 is being provided by ringfenced SCE(R)s to authorities which took responsibility for detrunked roads before 1 July 2003. Details for those authorities affected are included in their LTP decision letters. Authorities that receive roads on or after this date will receive capital funding resulting from their negotiated settlement with the Highways Agency. The Department will shortly issue a draft Grant Determination under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 for continued revenue funding of detrunked roads, including for roads due to be detrunked during 2004/05.

## **ANNEX 2 - REGIONAL OVERVIEW**

We are pleased that this year we are able to provide nearly £9m additional funds for our authorities on top of the indicative allocations. This resource should provide a real boost to investment in transport in the South West. We are pleased that this includes Objective 1 projects in Cornwall and measures to improve the Avon Ring Road in South Gloucestershire.

We received 6 major scheme bids this year. Two of these involved the resubmission of previously approved or provisionally approved scheme whose costs had increased significantly. We have decided to give “provisional approval” to the A354 Weymouth Relief Road. The A386 Plymouth Northern Corridor Scheme is classified as “work in progress” as there are a number of outstanding issues to be resolved before approval is given to this scheme. However this does not affect our previous commitment to provisional approval to diverting the A386 in order for the Runway End Safety Area at Plymouth Airport to be extended. We could not approve the scheme submitted by South Gloucestershire on the Avon Ring Road for major scheme funding as it did not meet the criteria for major scheme funding as set out in our guidance (see paragraph 77). However we recognise that this proposal could provide immediate benefits and have given resources to South Gloucestershire in this settlement for this project. The wider relationship between the Avon Ring Road and the rest of the Bristol conurbation will be included in the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study (GBSTS). Decisions on the three major schemes submitted by Wiltshire on the A36 and A350 are being deferred until after the outcome of the Bristol Bath to South Coast Study is known.

We are pleased to be able to fund exceptional maintenance bids for North Somerset, Torbay, Devon and Poole. In addition we are funding detrunking maintenance work on the A39 in Devon and Cornwall.

We were pleased with the improvements that many of our authorities demonstrated in their APRs, particularly by Torbay and South Gloucestershire. However the general quality of other APRs in the region was weak relative to an improving national picture. We will be working with authorities through the year to help them submit improved APRs next year.

Over the next year, and particularly following the publication of guidance, authorities will start preparing their second LTPs. This should fit well with the current review of the Regional Transport Strategy which the Regional Assembly are undertaking. However we are very concerned that the message given last year that second LTPs should be based on sub-regional studies to assist in the delivery of RPG does not appear to have been taken forward. The GBSTS has now commenced and this will assist authorities in the Greater Bristol area in taking forward RPG. However unless there is a clear link showing how LTPs will assist in delivering the region’s spatial strategy the case for transport funding for our authorities will be weak.

Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset have asked, in their APR, for advice on whether it is might be appropriate to enlarge the area of their current joint LTP. We would support this initiative where it will assist in the implementation of integrated programmes to meet the transport needs of this part of the region. Where there are significant cross boundary movements the development of joint plans may be the best approach and authorities should consider joint working across the best area to address their problems. We would also encourage other authorities in the South

West who have significant cross boundary issues to consider whether they could be better addressed by a joint LTP with neighbouring authorities.

The four former Avon authorities have asked if it would be appropriate for them to submit a joint supplementary bid to take forward the “*need to support rural access to key services and the need to improve travel awareness initiatives*”. Both of these areas were issues highlighted by the SWARMMS study. They see value in bring these forward in advance of the GBSTS.

We fully recognise the importance of these policy areas and, following the Social Exclusion Unit’s report “Making the Connections”, will be publishing guidance on how accessibility should be address in the 2<sup>nd</sup> LTP. As a result it is not clear to us that a joint approach on these topics should be encouraged in the Avon area more than anywhere else in the region. We would however see the GBSTS as a vehicle to progress joint working at both a strategic and local area and might see more value in a clearer and more robust joint approach in other areas such as parking policy, both on-street and off-street and bus priority measures including strategic park and ride.

We will be studying the valuable secondary evidence of cycling delivery provided by the English Regions Cycling Development Teams. We will compare this evidence to the evidence reported in APRs, and will discuss our findings further with ERCDT regional co-ordinators and local authorities in the New Year. We would like to ensure that any problems identified by ERCDTs are investigated and, where necessary, addressed.

## **ANNEX 3 – DETAILED APR FEEDBACK**

### **Delivery of Schemes on the Ground**

You have delivered a wide ranging and impressive range of schemes across the County that is broadly in line with your plans, with 95% of planned schemes delivered.

Examples of schemes have been linked to local and national targets. It would be useful in the next APR if the targets were listed in full in the main report to give a clearer sense of how each scheme would contribute to meeting them. You imply that where outcomes have not been measured they will be in the future but do not say in all cases how or when this will be done and this should be addressed in the next APR.

Two major schemes have been hampered by events outside your control, Barnstaple Western Bypass and the A380 Kingskerswell Bypass Scheme. It would have been helpful to have more information about the delay and in particular potential cost increases. This should be remedied next year.

### **Progress Towards Targets and Indicators**

Whilst 4 out of the 7 relevant core indicators are “on track” to be met, there is some concern about the lack of evidence for bus patronage in particular.

Progress towards local targets is very good, with 68% on track to be met– although it would be useful to see more evidence of changes in travel behaviour – for example as a result of school and workplace travel plans.

### **An Effective Spending Programme**

You have provided a concise report of the spending programme. All of the 2002/03 allocation was spent, along with additional funding and most of the discretionary element from the Single Capital Pot. Non-LTP sources of funding were not identified and this issue should be addressed in the 2003/04 APR. The LTP Performance Management System seemed to be a very useful way of monitoring targets.

We are pleased to see that all of the points raised in the 2002 settlement letter have been addressed.

### **Evidence of Improvement**

You have addressed all the issues raised in last years settlement letter.

### **Consultation, Best Practice and Presentation**

You have been engaged in best practice activities but do not give clear examples of how learning from others or how performance has changed as a result. This should be included in the 2003/04 APR. As last year, your APR was very well presented with good use of pictures, maps and diagrams, and the text clear and concise throughout.



## **ANNEX 4 – APR SCORES**

### **Use Of Scores**

This year, assessment of Annual Progress Reports has produced a transport plan score for each Local Transport Plan area. We have given each authority a performance classification, according to their score - 'well above average', 'above average', 'average' or 'weak'. Our score also informs ministers' decisions on the level of integrated transport funding that each authority should receive. The scores also provide a useful summary for the Department of your performance in developing and delivering your local transport plan.

### **Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)**

As noted above, there is no “discretionary element” this year. A local authority's performance classification forms one component of the transport element of the CPA ‘Environment’ block. Other components of the transport element are performance as measured by transport related BVPIs, and the outcome of any transport-related Best Value inspections which the Audit Commission has undertaken for your authority. The other elements of the ‘Environment’ block are land use planning and waste management. The results of this year's CPA refresh were announced by the Audit Commission on 18 December. Further details of the methodology can be found on the Audit Commission's website, at:

*[www.audit-commission.gov.uk/cpa/downloads/STCCEnvironment.pdf](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/cpa/downloads/STCCEnvironment.pdf)*

The table at the bottom of page 2 of this note is now out of date, as the categories of 'well below average' and 'below average' do not apply this year. All authorities whose transport classification was 'weak' in fact received 1.75 points towards their CPA score - points for other classifications remained the same.

### **Performance Funding**

Ministers, when making decisions on how much extra funding each authority should receive in order to reflect their performance in implementing their local transport plan also took the local transport score into account. This year, for the first time, four local authorities were allocated less than the indicative figure given in 2000. Some authorities also received extra funding to reflect a dramatically improved performance this year.

### **How Your Score Was Determined**

In 2002, your authority's performance was assessed using your second APR (covering 2001-02) and the criteria contained in Annex D of the *Guidance on LTP Annual Progress Reports Second Edition*. The overall scores were determined using a combination of 2002 and 2001 scores to reflect the fact that the 2002 APR was reporting on the first full year of the LTP process.

This year the scores are derived from our assessment of performance in 2002/03 alone, and the evidence contained in APRs. Our assessment criteria closely reflected the five criteria set out in Annex F of the “Guidance on Local Transport Plans Annual Progress Report 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition”. The three criteria that ministers decided would be their key priorities reflected ministers' key

priorities for this year (delivery of schemes, progress towards targets and an effective spending programme) and were given a relatively high weighting. Your authority was scored according to standardised scoring guidelines for each criterion. Your scores for each criterion were then added together. Your score below, as affirmed by ministers, is expressed as a percentage of the maximum possible score.

As last year, the scores for all Local Transport Plan areas authorities have been determined relative to each other. Most LTP areas (43) fall into the 'average' category, with 21 in 'above average', and 11 in 'well above average'. Overall performance appeared to improve in 2002/03, and in recognition of this, the 'well below average' and 'below average' categories have been combined into a new category of 'weak'. 10 authorities fall into this classification.

To allow authorities to consider their performance on an absolute basis as well as this relative basis, we are again this year providing percentage scores as well as a relative category. However, in view of significant changes in scoring and assessment methodology this year, authorities should not assume this year's score is directly comparable with last year's. Authorities may find it useful to know that this year, scores ranged from 38% to 87%.

### **Your Score**

Your overall score, determined as described above, was **80%**. It means that relative to other transport authorities you fall into the "**above average**" category.

When determining your firm LTP allocations for small schemes in 2004-05, Ministers have taken account of your overall score, with a focus on evidence of your performance, delivery and improvement demonstrated in 2002-03, as well as the case made in your 2003 APR for any additional funding.