



GOVERNMENT OFFICE  
FOR THE SOUTH EAST



**spending review**  
in the south east

2004



## Photographic contributions

DEFRA

Design & Web (GOSE)

Eyewire

George Abott School, Guildford

Isle of Wight Tourist Board

Phil Weedon

Portsmouth Technopole, Portsmouth

Slough Borough Council

Sport England

[www.third-avenue.co.uk](http://www.third-avenue.co.uk)

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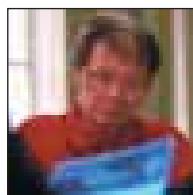
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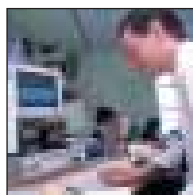
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# Regional Director's Foreword



**Paul Martin**  
South East Regional Director

We have prepared this supplement to our regular newsletter to provide a succinct summary and analysis of the Chancellor's Spending Review 2004 (SR 04) statement and subsequent departmental strategies published in July 2004 specifically focussed on its implications for south east England.

What clues do these strategies provide to future Government thinking – and how might these impact on our part of the country?

## Continuity

In many ways, SR 04 represents continuity with well established Government priorities, notably in the emphasis given to health and education. Few will be surprised that these services continue to benefit from sustained additional investment.

## Regional Emphasis Documents

But underneath this headline, it may be possible to detect some fresh developments. As part of the construction of SR 04, the Treasury invited each region to prepare a submission on regional priorities – not especially to bid for additional resources, but to suggest new ways of working that will get greater public sector value for the taxpayer. In the south east we prepared this Regional Emphasis Document (RED) in partnership with the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and the Regional Assembly, as well as a number of the principal local authorities and other partners in the south east. We evaluate in this supplement how far our RED appears to have had impact on the plans of spending departments. Whatever the impact of our regional contribution, debate and contributions to the spending review prior to its preparation must be an encouraging development.



## A regional approach

The regional dimension to SR 04 is prominent throughout the Chancellor's statement and the subsequent departmental publications. Regional Development Agencies continue to grow in their range of functions and budgets – as departments have sought to answer the question : "What activity currently carried out in Whitehall might better be done at regional level?" Lord Haskins' review of DEFRA and DTI's internal review of its structure and relationship with the regions have both responded imaginatively. In recent months, national organisations such as the Learning & Skills Council and the Housing Corporation have introduced a regional structure in recognition of the importance of congruity. The newly created National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has taken a similar regional approach. ODPM's 10 year local government strategy proposes a framework for governance which is national, regional and local as it becomes clear that regional working is part of the framework for public service delivery and works best with coterminosity. In a similar way, the Department for Transport's White Paper talks about making choices regionally and locally. The Government's plans to publish regional indicative budgets reinforces the point. This movement is partly about more effective decision-making and better use of resources, but is also about tackling regional disparities and narrowing the inequality gap which has geographic expression both within and between regions. In this context, the Government's decision to accept Sir Michael Lyons' recommendations and relocate at least 20,000 civil servants from London and the south east to other regions is not only about efficiency but the development of a different relationship between Whitehall and the regions.





## Localisation and personal choice

Localisation and the extension of personal choice is an equally prominent theme of SR 04. The ODPM, the Home Office, DfES, DEFRA, Department of Health and the Department for Transport have all bought in to the concept of Local Area Agreements which are explored elsewhere in this supplement. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) – which includes features called for in the SE RED – is conceived as a replacement for a multiplicity of overlapping targets, performance management regimes and associated bureaucracy so that Government can agree with local authorities and their partners the priority outcomes for their area. This “single conversation” will be orchestrated by Government Offices on behalf of departments. What does this imply for the south east? The region’s high standard of public sector governance and its energy to take on community leadership at the level of counties, cities and towns must mean that we are well placed to play a leading role on this agenda. Aside from LAAs, the importance of localities comes through a number of departmental strategies. The Department for Transport, for example, talks about “working with local authorities to develop shared priorities for transport”. The Home Office identifies an increasingly important role for local authorities and Crime & Disorder Partnerships in tackling anti-social behaviour. As part of its post-Haskins agenda, DEFRA is

identifying a local authority-led “rural pathfinder in each region”. In the July 2004 statements, personal choice – by the patient, parent, passenger – is not seen as an alternative to localisation but its necessary partner. As the ODPM 10 year strategy for local government says “Greater public influence over the delivery of public services will ensure they better reflect the community’s needs and preferences – including those of vulnerable and marginalized groups – and increase satisfaction in these services. Greater engagement will also enhance people’s sense of pride and involvement in their place”.

## Housing, growth and infrastructure

For the south east, housing and growth are key issues. They feature prominently in our Regional Emphasis Document. The good news in SR 04 is the excellent social housing settlement which will dramatically assist us in improving the provision of affordable housing. Increased investment in the four growth areas is welcome confirmation that the Sustainable Communities Plan is here to stay with resources to implement the Plan. The new £200 million Community Infrastructure Fund, jointly owned by the Department for Transport and ODPM, is a good start to help us unlock potential housing sites through up-front investment. On the policy front, the Treasury and ODPMs decision to introduce a new Public Service Agreement which addresses housing affordability begins to address Kate Barker’s suggestion that Government should increasingly concentrate on affordability – in the

rented as well as owner occupied sector – as a goal. This will have implications for future housing numbers in the south east, as the Regional Assembly and local authorities are encouraged to consider the reality of affordability in their area. The Regional Assembly's role in housing may be advanced further if ODPMs consultation on the future of the Regional Housing Board concludes that it should be located in the Assembly to lock in joint strategies and priorities with the Regional Spatial Strategy.

## Modernising the civil service

The Gershon agenda of back office efficiencies in areas such as IT, finance and personnel is now well established. The Chancellor's statement added additional efficiency savings which, in the civil service, translate into a reduction of some 84,000 civil service jobs. It is neither possible nor desirable for the civil service to maintain all its activities given this scale of change. The move to smaller, more strategic Whitehall departments is already underway. This must be accompanied by a radical re-think of how a smaller civil service can stimulate and encourage better public services – through a process of devolution to regions and localities, improved joint working across departments which are pursuing compatible agendas and a recognition that innovation and enterprise is best pursued as close to the customer, patient and learner as possible. As well as providing more resources to priority service areas, SR 04 provides a challenge to the public sector generally and the civil service specifically.



**Gus O'Donnell CB**

Permanent Secretary, HM Treasury

*"More than ever before the regions were asked to contribute, at an early stage, to the design and development of the Government's policies for the 2004 Spending Review. On behalf of the Treasury, I would like to thank GOSE who, together with South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and South East England Regional Assembly, submitted advice to the Government in the form of the South East Regional Emphasis Document. The Government has now published its response to the Regional Emphasis Documents. The Spending Review takes forward the Government's challenging programme of public sector investment and reform and sets stretching efficiency targets. We look forward to working with our regional and local stakeholders to implement this programme over the next few years".*



## Further information

To find out more details about what this means for the South East please look at the SR2004 website: <http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/>

# Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

This year's Spending Review was a critical time for ODPM and its policies. Last time around, the Chancellor had made over £600 million available for growth in the Thames Gateway and other Southern growth areas and it was important that the momentum of this significant investment was maintained. Partly, the new growth areas are about maximising the advantage and appeal of the South East to boost Britain's economic prosperity but partly they are about satisfying the high demand for houses in the most dynamic part of the country. So it was also important that the Spending Review channelled extra resources towards meeting the housing shortfall in the Region, in particular the shortage of affordable homes. With house prices increasing year on year at well above the rate of wage growth, waiting lists for social housing growing and homelessness on the increase it was encouraging to hear the Chancellor repeatedly promise to increase investment in the run-up to the Review.

The headlines are that there will be more money for housing – up by 4.1% per year in real terms – and a positive settlement overall for the Department. There will be a 50% increase in the rate of building of new social houses, equating to 10,000 new homes every year. This will be funded by £430 million of new direct investment, an expanded Private Finance Initiative programme and a more efficient use of funds. The Review also builds on the Sustainable Communities Plan by continuing funding for the Thames Gateway and the other growth areas and by setting up a new Community Infrastructure Fund worth £200 million over two years through which the Department for Transport and the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister will work in partnership to deliver key transport infrastructure programmes for the growth areas. One exciting new project flagged up during the Spending Review is the Thames Gateway Bridge, which could open by 2012 spanning the Thames between Beckton and Thamesmead. Although this is in the London part of the Thames Gateway the knock on effect of this galvanising infrastructure project would be



**Mavis McDonald DCB**

Permanent Secretary, ODPM

*"The increase in resources for the ODPM in SR04 recognised the importance of the Office's agenda to people's lives and laid the foundation for delivering our sustainable communities agenda. At the same time, of course, it has set us new challenges in delivering our strategic priorities.*

*For instance, a key challenge in the South East will be achieving a sustainable balance between housing supply and demand. We will need to use the extra resources wisely, including the extra money for new social housing and planning development grants to make this happen.*

*To ensure that people have decent places to live and access to better services as well as decent housing we will need to work together at regional, local and neighbourhood levels, and across traditional boundaries. Piloting a local area agreement, for example, in the South East will allow us to test new relationships, and will build on the increasing profile of GOSE.*

*At the same time, we will need to ensure that we are all equipped for these challenges by continuing to develop our skills and embed our Excellence in Delivery programme into our everyday work".*

a major stimulus to growth in North Kent and beyond. A planning application was submitted by Transport for London in July.

As well as housing, the Review boosts Government's commitment to neighbourhood renewal with an extra £525 million per year. There is more money for counter-terrorism work and to modernise the fire service, and 'liveability' gets a boost with a Safer and Stronger Communities Fund. Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) also get an increase in their budgets.

The budget also reaffirmed the additional resources (£425 million) distributed to local authorities through the Planning Delivery Grant. The aim is to enhance the resourcing of the planning system in a way that drives performance improvement and ensures delivery of our objectives for sustainable communities.

But the spending review is not just about money. It is an opportunity for Government to make key policy announcements and signal changes to the way public services are administered. This Review announced new Local Area Agreements, to build on the excellent progress made with Local Public Service Agreements, which have transformed the relationship between local and central Government. Local Area Agreements take the concept a stage further and will invite all local public service partners to get together to work out local priorities and targets and to agree incentives with Government. Regions are firmly in the lead on taking forward this policy and we are almost certain to get one or more pilots in the South East.

## Funding for local authorities resilience activities

The Government is doubling its contribution to local authorities resilience activities to £40m from April 2005. This is excellent news for local authorities and will significantly enhance their capacity to deal with the effects of a wide range of emergencies, whether caused by natural disasters, accidents or terrorism.

An announcement on the impact for each local authority will be made as part of the provisional local government finance settlement towards the end of this year.

This is part of a wider programme of substantial new investment in civil protection and counter terrorism.

The increase in funding for local authorities follows consultation with the Local Government Association to establish requirements, and reflects costs arising from the new Civil Contingencies Bill, the guidance and capability requirements by Government (e.g. Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN), smallpox, foot and mouth disease), and an assessment of the general 'pressures' facing local authorities in this area.

The agreements will be structured around three themes: children and young people, safer and stronger communities and health and older people.

## Local Area Agreements



Announced as part of the Spending Review, Local Area Agreements (LAAs) will be piloted in nine English local authorities next year. In these areas Councils and their partners will be given greater freedom to explore local solutions to local problems, funding streams will be simplified, public services joined up and organisations delivering services given more flexibility,

The agreements will be structured around three themes: children and young people, safer and stronger communities and health and older people.

Authorities and their partners will negotiate clear targets and outcomes for these areas with central government, but then will have the freedom to decide locally how best to achieve them. Local Public Service Agreements will form a key part of the Agreements, offering reward grants for performance.

Local Government Minister Nick Raynsford said at the launch:

*"We want to develop a new relationship between central and local government. We want councils and their partners to find local solutions to local problems. We want to cut red tape and bureaucracy. And we want the public to have a greater say on the issues, which concern them."*

*"Local Area Agreements represent a radical new approach in the relationship between local and central government. We are focusing on what is important: the outcomes in key areas. Central Government will set strategic priorities but will leave authorities and their partners to decide the detailed implementation."*

## Liveability and Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities

In the South East we are working with the pilot "Liveability" local authorities in Havant, Spelthorne & Medway. Together they have over £9.5m to spend in the period up to March 2006 on improving the quality of the local environment and addressing the 'liveability' of the area. This means tackling issues such as anti-social behaviour and disorder. Safe green and attractive public spaces have an important role, not just in improving the physical environment in our towns and cities, but also enhancing people's health and well-being, reducing crime and the fear of crime and increasing prosperity.

The Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities initiative brings together a range of Government policies, programmes and support under a single brand to promote action to improve the quality of life in every neighbourhood by making our streets, parks and other public places better. GOSE is actively involved in delivering this initiative and will disseminate good practice examples in due course.

## Safer & stronger communities fund

This Spending Review has seized the opportunity to move closer to a single community safety and liveability funding pot for local authorities. The Safer & Stronger Communities Fund plans to bring together a number of

existing Home Office and ODPM funding streams, and to administer them as part of the Local Area Agreement process. The new fund will be rolled out across all local authorities from April 2005.

The agreements will be at County level and will involve a range of local partners such as District Councils and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. Co-ordination will be important, for instance, in resolving how the individual targets that are being considered for the next round of Crime and Disorder Reduction strategies will combine into a single county-level agreement. A lot of detail needs to be worked through against a tight timetable for the agreements to be set up and funding arranged for April 2005. We will be working with community groups to consider how best to make a success of this new funding arrangement. Home Office and ODPM colleagues are working hard to finalise the list of funding streams that will be merged, including the Building Safer Communities fund and funding for anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood wardens, community empowerment and liveability. They are working also to clarify how the new fund will be administered.

So in conclusion this is a good settlement for ODPM and a good settlement for the South East. The Review will deliver more houses, more growth and more community development activity and reaffirms the importance of the South East to the country as a whole. And the new Local Area Agreements give plenty of scope for improved services, greater flexibilities and increased rewards.

# Department of Trade and Industry



Following the Spending Review (SR04) a streamlined Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) will continue to be the champion for business in Whitehall. DTI and the Office of Science and Technology (OST) have received a real boost with a 5.6% year on year increase in science and innovation budgets over the SR period. This amounts to an extra £515 million taking the overall science budget to £3.3 billion by 2007/08, an increase of £2 billion since 1997 showing the Government's commitment to make the UK one of the World's most competitive locations for science, Research & Development and innovation.

This new money is aimed at turning ideas and discoveries into new products and into more jobs greater prosperity for the UK. For example, universities will be incentivised to build on the progress made in commercialising their research and working collaboratively with business, through increased funding for the Higher Education Innovation Fund, which will rise to £110 million a year by 2007-8.

The South East, with its world class R&D base can only benefit from this enhanced focus.



**Sir Robin Young**

Permanent Secretary, DTI

*"The SR04 settlement is a vote of confidence in the DTI and the work we do internationally, in the rest of the EU, the UK, and with the regions. We remain on track with our vision of a leaner, higher, fitter DTI that works with regional partners to deliver high quality services to our customers and stakeholders. Examples such as the transfer of responsibility for things like Business Links regional delivery and R&D grants to RDAs reflect a growing confidence that DTI is striking the right balance between national and regional roles and needs".*



## A good settlement for RDAs

To ensure that businesses in different regions are catered for in a way that suits the specific requirements of the local economy, and thus help reduce disparities in economic performance, DTI is devolving delivery of many of its business support products to the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs).

From April 2005 RDAs will take on responsibility for delivery of Business Link contracting as well as delivery of the Grant for R&D (the successor to SMART) and for promoting enterprise in disadvantaged areas (the successor to the Phoenix fund).

In response to the findings of Richard Lambert's review of the links between universities and businesses, the RDAs will also have an enhanced role in supporting innovation and business-university collaboration; they will encourage a broader spectrum of businesses to develop productive links with the university base within and between regions. In the South East, we are working closely with South East England Development agency (SEEDA) and the Regional Assembly together with the equivalent bodies in London and the East of England to develop appropriate policy responses to this challenge.

RDAs will continue to build their capacity to promote science and innovation as a key driver of economic growth. The first steps towards this will be assessed through the RDAs new target and Performance Management framework, which will be finalised in late 2004. Each RDA will have a Science and Industry Council by the end of 2004 – in the South East we are ahead of the game given that SEEDA established the SE Science Engineering and Technology Advisory Council over 12 months ago.

As part of the Modernising Rural Delivery program, and in response to recommendations made in the Haskins Review, RDAs will also take on responsibility, with significant additional resources to help meet rural socio-economic objectives that were previously the responsibility of the Countryside Agency.

As a result of these many and varied new responsibilities funding for RDAs will increase from £234m to £483m by 2007-08 and SEEDA is expected to receive a significant increase to its budget. In addition, UK Trade and Investment (UKTI - the DTI agency responsible for Trade & Inward Investment) will increase its funding contribution to the RDA Single Pot<sup>1</sup> to strengthen regional inward investment capacity. The RDAs will also work in partnership with UKTI to ensure that locally delivered trade development services are complementary to the aspirations of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES).

A number of proposals from the South East Regional Emphasis Document are reflected in these outcomes including: devolution of further responsibilities (including Business Links and rural development responsibilities) to the RDAs; increased spending on science and innovation and the enhanced role of RDAs in supporting business-university collaboration; and further measures to reduce regulation.



**Pam Alexander**

Chief Executive, SEEDA

*"This is a good settlement for regional economic development and the growth of sustainable communities. We greatly welcome the emphasis on encouraging innovation and enterprise through support for science and for bringing excellent new ideas to the marketplace. We welcome the clear recognition that housing growth requires investment in infrastructure and planning, as well as support for jobs and skills.*

*"We are pleased that RDAs have been given new responsibilities and resources, notably for Business Link services and some rural services previously provided by the Countryside Agency.*

*"We look forward to working with our partners to use these new opportunities to ensure that all parts of the region have the opportunity to deliver to their potential for truly sustainable economic growth and community development."*

<sup>1</sup> Since April 2002, the RDAs are financed through a Single Programme. This replaced the funding programmes that existed previously, through which each contributing Government Department's allocation was made. Money from the contributing Departments (DTI, ODPM, DfES, DEFRA and DCMS) is pooled into one single budget known as the "Single Pot". The funding, once allocated, is available to the RDAs to spend as they see fit to achieve the regional priorities identified in their regional economic strategies and the challenging targets set by them in their Corporate Plans.



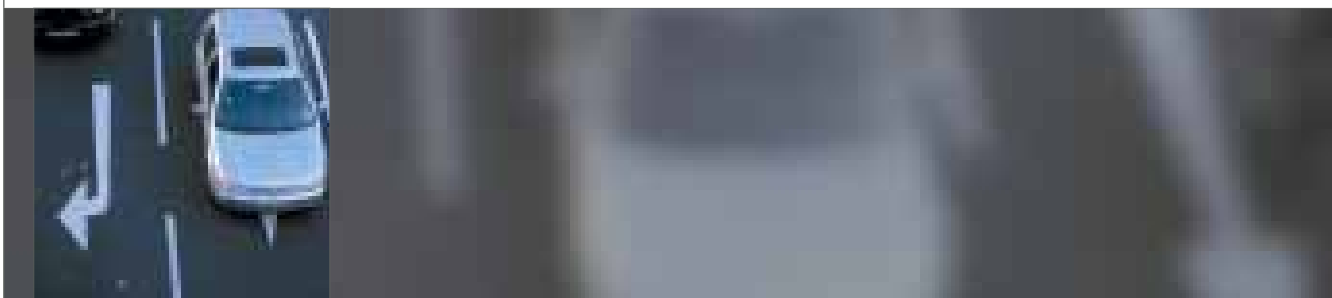
## Further information

To access more information on RDAs see:  
<http://www.dti.gov.uk/rda/info>

# Department for Transport

July was a busy period in the Department for Transport with the announcement of a long term strategy for a modern, efficient and sustainable transport system, backed up by sustained high levels of investment over the next 15 years. Both the White Paper and the SRO4 announcement display evidence that Government has been listening and responding to the views expressed by many in the region.

Secondly, improvements in transport management. The rail industry will be reorganised to improve performance, drive down costs and get better value from public spending, with a new structure where Government sets the strategy and controls public expenditure. Better traffic management will ease congestion on our road network. Where it makes sense, economically and environmentally, Government will



*The Future of Transport* White Paper builds on the progress that has already been made since the implementation of the 10 Year Plan for transport. Investment plans have been extended out to 2014-15 but the strategy looks even further ahead, to where we want to be in the next 20 to 30 years, and at the challenges we face in getting there.

The strategy is built around three central themes.

First, sustained investment over the long term. The spending review settlement honours the Government's commitment to deliver sustained improvements to transport networks. Spending by the Department for Transport will rise by an annual average of 4.5 per cent in real terms between 2005-06 and 2007-08. This includes an additional £1.7 billion transport reform package for the railways, over and above 10 Year Plan provision. 10 Year Plan spending has also been increased by £0.5 billion each year from 2006-07. This higher level of spending will then grow in real terms (by 2.25 per cent each year) through to 2015.

add capacity to our road network and, where it does so, steps will be taken to ensure that the benefits are locked in, and that the design is sympathetic to the environment. The White Paper also encourages local authorities to procure bus services through Quality Contracts, where this is linked to a wider strategy including bold measures to reduce congestion, or modification of rail services.

And thirdly, planning ahead. The long-term trends in travel are evident to all. We cannot build our way out of the problems we face and doing nothing is not an option. So Government will lead the debate on road pricing and will work with stakeholders to establish how and when pricing might provide the reliability and standards road users want.



A key issue is to ensure that the choices we face, together with their full costs and benefits, are well understood. To help achieve this Government has committed to sharing decision-making with regional and local stakeholders, and to ensure that regional and local planning is based on a shared view of priorities, deliverability and affordability. And at all levels of Government – national, local or regional – we need to ensure that transport decisions are taken alongside decisions on liveability, sustainable communities and other policy areas.

The sections in the White Paper on regional and local decision making, and on integrated decision making, resonate well with comments we made in our Regional Emphasis document. In the RED we proposed the formation of a Regional Transport Board, comprising the three principal regional bodies along with representatives of local highways authorities, the Highways Agency and Strategic Rail Authority, with a mandate to make recommendations on investment priorities and ensure their implementation.

In response, Government acknowledged that choices on regional and local transport investment are best taken when informed by local stakeholders and following meetings between DfT, DTI and ODPM, Government decided to pilot Regional Transport Boards in two regions, one of which is the South East. The pilot is now complete and DfT are evaluating the outcomes to determine how best to proceed. Within the South East the pilot has been the subject of much discussion and debate and a clear benefit has been that the profile of transport and particularly its interconnection with the

other areas of national, regional and local government activity has been raised.

As part of this new commitment to ensuring that better trade offs are made across different modes of transport, and across the parallel agendas of regeneration and housing Government will publish guideline budgets for English Regions, following consultation, in Budget 2005. As the White paper says “The aim should be to move towards deriving bottom up targets reflecting regional choices. For example, such choices might include a decision in any one region to prioritise reductions in the levels of congestion on key routes, the number of new houses to be built or economic growth”.

The wider benefits to the UK economy of transport improvements in the South East, particularly across the major ports and London, were emphasised in the RED, and the majority of REDs across the county referred to the need to ensure that the wider impacts on productivity are captured in the transport appraisal process. In response, the Department for Transport is now working with the Treasury, DTI and ODPM to improve the way that wider economics effects are captured in future appraisals.

We advised Government that to meet the ambitious targets outlined in the Sustainable Communities Plan in a sustainable way, the region would require additional investment over and above existing levels. In part as a response to this, and similar points made by other regions about the need for increased investment, Government plans to give delivery partners incentives to develop and deploy coherent innovative, local and

regional transport strategies that rise to the challenges identified in the White Paper. It intends to establish a new Transport Innovation Fund, to support the costs of innovative and coherent transport measures – which will include road pricing, modal shift, and better bus services. Details of the fund will be published by the start of the next financial year. Government has also made a commitment to support innovative mechanisms which raise new funds locally, another of the proposals contained in the South East's RED.

Also announced was the establishment of a Community Infrastructure Fund, created to enable closer integrated planning between transport and housing agendas in the Growth Areas and, as a result, of direct benefit to parts of the South East. The fund consists of £200m over the Spending Review period and whilst the fund sits with DfT for accountability, it can only be accessed by a dual key, which requires ODPM to be in agreement with the way in which it is spent. The fund is intended to compliment mainstream transport funding.

Many in the South East will welcome the Government's commitment to Crossrail, which, the white paper says "is vital to maintaining London's pre-eminence as a world class capital and business centre". Perhaps more controversial is Transport for London's proposal to manage the rail network across the capital and commuter services in the home counties in the South East and eastern regions. The Government has responded cautiously, suggesting that a period of consultation needs to take place to listen to local reaction to this proposal.

In summary the Spending review has addressed in broad terms many of the issues we raised in the RED, and the White Paper has provided a long-term strategy within which much of our work in the South East can be located.



**David Rowlands**

Permanent Secretary, DfT

*"Pressures on the transport budget have grown considerably over recent years. The Spending Review addressed these pressures with more money, with measures to bring costs back under control, and with a commitment to promote better decision making. The latter offers you, our partners in the South East, greater involvement in the choices to be made, informed by the publication of long term guideline spending for the region. The challenge for you is to engage with us and this agenda, and help drive out more sustainable travel patterns alongside economic and housing growth."*

# Department for Education and Skills



**David Normington**

Permanent Secretary, DfES

*"Our 5 Year Strategy, published just before the Spending Review White Paper, sets out an ambitious agenda for the department and for all our partners. I hope you will read it, for you all have a part to play. We are committed to developing even stronger partnerships, linking effectively with employers, and engaging with all of you who are on the front line of education and children's services".*

The Spending Review Settlement for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) was announced in the Budget earlier this year. Since then the DfES has published its 5-year strategy.

Its core aim is a population educated and skilled to levels that set the standard for the rest of the world with children and learners put first.

"Personalisation" and a focus on the system fitting the individual rather than the individual fitting the system are its central characteristic.

The strategy identifies five priorities:

- supporting the education and welfare of the whole child particularly those under 5;
- continuing the drive in primary education;
- widening choice and increasing achievement in 14-19 education and training;
- reducing the deficit in adult skills; and
- sustaining an excellent HE sector.





## Education and Welfare support

“One-stop” support will be available to all families through Sure Start Children’s Centres. There will be improved childcare arrangements and all 3-4 year olds will be provided with 12.5 hours of free “educare” (integrated education and childcare) for 33 weeks of the year. Children’s Trusts will plan and co-ordinate these educare arrangements and employers will be incentivised to fund and support educare.

## Continuing the Drive in Primary Education

Improving literacy and numeracy remains a top priority. The health and wellbeing of children will be supported through healthy eating, physical education and by encouraging children to walk or cycle to school. All children will also have the opportunity to learn a foreign language and play a musical instrument. Parents will have the opportunity to become more involved with

the schools and will be better able to understand school performance through new School Profiles. Extended schools will provide a range of services beyond the traditional education offer, including family learning opportunities.

## Secondary Education

At the heart of the reform of secondary education is the development of specialist independent schools with 200 Academies in place by 2010. Behaviour and attendance are vital for improving pupil achievement. Better teaching, a more interesting curriculum and truancy sweeps are just some of the ways to tackle this. Every secondary school will be refurbished or rebuilt over the next 10-15 years and will have the freedom to manage their assets, employ staff and forge partnerships. The “New Relationship with Schools” will cut the red tape involved in primary and secondary school accountability. All schools will be guaranteed 3 year budgets with year on year increases geared to pupil numbers.

## Widening Choice and Increasing Achievement

Mike Tomlinson (former chief education inspector) will set out in the autumn a vision for a reformed and personalised education system. A stronger partnership will be developed with employers, with a wider choice of vocational routes available to young people, including Apprenticeships starting at age 14. The Education Maintenance Allowance will be available for all eligible 16 year olds from this September. Partnership between specialist schools, colleges and training providers will be encouraged to ensure the widest possible choice and flexibility for learners.

A Green Paper, to be published in the autumn, will set out proposals for a new, integrated "Youth Offer". Building on the experience of Connexions and other existing programmes this offer for teenagers will include: exciting things to do and places to go; help, support and interventions for those "at risk"; and improved information guidance and personal support.

## Reducing the Deficit in Adult Skills

Guarantees for individuals, employers and providers form the basis of the approach to adult skills. Free tuition and remission from exam fees will be available to enable adults to achieve the equivalent of 5 good GCSEs (level 2). In the South East partners are trialing this "level 2 offer" prior to a national roll-out in 2005. The SE Regional Emphasis Document (RED) proposed that this offer should also be available for learners without a level 2 qualification who wish to "jump" straight to a first level 3 (A-level equivalent) qualification. This will be included in the South East trial.

Support will also be available through Union Learning Fund projects with better advice and guidance. Adult Basic Skills remains a key priority including a

major programme focused on offenders – another key theme highlighted in the SE RED.

Training programmes will allow adults to build up small units towards a full qualification and apprenticeships will be available to a wider age range. Sector Skills Councils will ensure that priorities for adult skills are clearly identified and that training is designed to tackle skills gaps. The successful Employer Training Pilots, of which there are two in the South East, will inform the way colleges and training providers work together in the future with employers, delivering learning at a time and place to suit both individuals and employers. Colleges will be encouraged to create more Centres of Vocational Excellence (COVEs) and develop the management training offer. The South East Action for Business College initiative builds on this to ensure a more business friendly service from the Further Education sector.

Greater integration of funding and planning of adult skills training is encouraged both in the Strategy and, more specifically, in the Treasury Response to the Regional Emphasis Document (Spending Review 2004). Again this was a key theme in the SE RED and partners in the SE are well advanced in plans to delivery this closer partnership working.

## Sustaining an Excellent Higher Education Sector

The Strategy confirms and builds on announcements made in the White Paper on Higher Education with upfront fees for students to be abolished and repayments linked to graduate wages, the poorest students guaranteed a non-repayable £3,000 pa, and any outstanding debts written off after 25 years. All money raised through variable fees will go directly to universities. Employers will take an increasingly active role in the development and delivery of Foundation Degree courses with 10,000 extra places funded over the next 2 years.

# Department for Work and Pensions



The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), responsible for the Government's welfare reform agenda, aims to promote opportunity and independence through a modern network of services to people of working age, employers, pensioners, families and children and disabled people.

Key themes in the South East Regional Emphasis Document (RED) most relevant to DWP were raising skills levels in the workforce, in particular to meeting the needs of employers and developing innovative approaches to respond to large-scale redundancies where they occur. On skills, Job Centre Plus (JCP) is working with partners through the SE Regional Skills for Productivity Alliance in particular to trial the entitlement to free learning for a first level 2 (5 A\*-C GCSEs or equivalent) in the South East, prior to its national launch, in 2005. This includes the possibility of a learner without a first level 2 "jumping" direct to a first level 3 (A level or equivalent) qualification, a key proposal in the South East RED. Jobcentre Plus will play a key role providing their clients with skills for sustainable employment and helping some of the most disadvantaged communities and individuals in the South East.

A particular priority is closer working between JobCentre Plus (JCP) and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The National Employment Panel report *'Welfare to Workforce Development'*<sup>1</sup> published earlier this year made many recommendations for how this can be achieved including areas of public sector service delivery that would be significantly improved through active collaboration. In the South East, GOSE is supporting this closer working through secondment arrangements with JCP and the LSCs

The DWP Spending Review settlement builds on the creation and modernisation of Jobcentre Plus by supporting the development of new ways of focusing resources on those most in need of support. Building on New Deal, the Government has announced plans for devolving more responsibility for the allocation of resources to local managers to help them make more efficient and effective use of public funding and DWP will be developing and testing this approach in a number of areas.



## Further information

<sup>1</sup> Full report available from: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/mediacentre/pressreleases/2004/march/emp090304-wtwdev.pdf>

To access more information on JobCentre Plus see: <http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk>

# Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs



## Rural Strategy 2004

Spending Review 2004 was overall a good result for Defra, and the Treasury commented on the high quality of Defra's submission. Taken together, the settlement and meeting its efficiency targets will allow Defra to fund its key priorities, and reflects the importance that the Government is placing on the environmental agenda. Soon after the Spending Review announcement, Margaret Beckett announced the Government's Rural Strategy 2004, which sets out Defra's new approach to rural policy and delivery. This refreshed strategy is based on working in partnership at national, regional and local level and sets out Defra's rural policy for the next 3-5 years.

The Rural Strategy 2004 sets out three key rural priorities:

- economic and social regeneration;
- social justice for all;
- enhancing the value of our countryside.

The main elements of the new arrangements are to:

- devolve decision-making to regions, including giving increased funding for economic and social rural regeneration to Regional Development Agencies;
- streamline funding schemes, from the current 100 separate schemes down to a simple framework of 3 main funding programmes, to target: rural regeneration of communities and businesses; a competitive farming and food industry; and sustainable land management;

- create a new Integrated Agency comprising large elements of the current English Nature, Countryside Agency and Rural Development Service. The establishment of the Integrated Agency will require primary legislation, but in the meantime the three organisations will work very closely together in a confederation of partners, to a common vision and purpose, within an overarching sustainable development remit.
- create a New Countryside Agency by April 2005 which will be a small, well-focussed, new and distinctive body, to provide a strong voice for rural people and communities and strong and impartial advice to Government.

These arrangements reflect the government's wider devolutionary agenda and partnership working at regional and local level; and are aimed at improving effectiveness in the delivery of the three rural policy priorities (above), within a sustainable development framework.

In the South East, GOSE is already working with partners to develop a new partnership group that will agree the regional rural framework, that will guide rural priorities in the region. GOSE is also developing a rural pathfinder project involving a SE local authority. The pathfinder projects will test practical options for revised local delivery arrangements.

## Common Agricultural Policy

The Regional Emphasis Document supported the rebalancing of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) towards more integrated rural development and agri-environment. CAP Reform is now underway, and production subsidies to farmers are being replaced by a single farm payment, which will require, for example, certain environmental standards to be met. There will also be an opportunity for farmers to be supported further to help the more important habitats and species in the region.

## Sustainable Development

Spending Review 2004 includes increased investment in sustainable waste management and a new programme to support effective management of waste by business. GOSE will be working closely with Defra, regional and sub-regional partners to meet national targets on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and waste management.



**Brian Bender**

Permanent Secretary, DEFRA

*"Overall the settlement is a good result for Defra. The settlement clearly shows the importance the Government is placing on the environment agenda. This sets us firmly on course to achieve Defra's key aim – a sustainable future for everyone – and allows Defra to fund its key priorities. For example, energy efficiency and climate change policy will benefit significantly from Defra's 1.2 per cent real-terms increase, a sum representing £261 million per year by 2007-2008 which will also enable us to continue to work towards sustainable waste management, through improving recycling and minimising waste. The Government Office will play a key role in working with regional partners to ensure that regional strategies encompass these priorities. Defra will also continue to work in partnership with regional partners such as local authorities, and we will be looking for ways to strengthen the dialogue between us."*

# Home Office

## Safer and stronger communities

Spending Review 2004 (SR04) has taken the opportunity to co-ordinate community safety and liveability funding for local authorities and Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). The Safer & Stronger Communities Fund will bring together a number of existing Home Office and ODPM funding streams and administer them through a single mini-Local Area Agreement (LAA). The plan is to rollout the new arrangements across all local authorities from April 2005.

Home Office and ODPM are finalising the funding streams that will be merged, including the *Building Safer Communities* fund and funding for anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood wardens, community empowerment and liveability; and will be clarifying how the new fund will be administered.

Because funding for the new LAAs may come down at the county level, questions have been raised about how this might affect CDRPs, which are currently funded directly from the Home Office via GOSE.

LAAs are negotiated by Government Offices and GOSE is keen to maintain CDRPs in their statutory role absolutely at the centre of tackling crime in the community. This year sees CDRPs auditing crime and disorder in their areas and setting new strategies for 2005-2008, as they are required to do under the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*. It is these strategies which should determine the local priorities for crime reduction spending.

Because of that, the route by which the funding may come, as the LAA prospectus explains, should make little difference. We would expect to see much the same arrangements for matching crime reduction expenditure to national and local priorities, and there will be exactly the same need for close involvement by district, unitary and county councils, with the police, probation, health, fire and rescue and other services, in the work of CDRPs. The policy on drugs and crime reduction is not

being changed: it is only the delivery mechanisms that are being varied to provide more local flexibility.

Under the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*, in two-tier authority areas, district and county councils share equal responsibility for the CDRP. The existence of LAAs should encourage greater county council involvement in



CDRPs and clear the way to be more radical in tackling the causes of crime. It should mean that services like employment, youth services, education, race equality, housing and social services can play a more co-ordinated part in building safer, stronger communities than has been possible under more narrowly-defined funding arrangements.



Currently it is planned that the mini-LAA will be negotiated with all of the councils and their partners, including individual CDRPs, within upper-tier council boundaries (i.e. at unitary or county level). Two-tier authorities will therefore need coordination at county-level to resolve, for example, how the individual targets that are being considered for the next round of CDRP strategies will combine into a single county-level mini-LAA. The experience gained at county-level through the LPSA process with the community safety and liveability agendas should provide a solid foundation to achieve this without introducing significant delay or uncertainty.

### Safer communities

The main community safety Public Service Agreement (PSA) under SR04 is to reduce crime by 15%, and more in high crime areas, by 2007-08. This target provides more flexibility to partners who previously had specific PSA targets for individual crime types (e.g. domestic burglary or street crime).

This means that CDRPs, currently preparing their strategies for 2005-7 to 2007-8, have greater freedom to respond to their local crime priorities whilst still delivering the required reduction in total crime. For example, some areas may be doing relatively well with their acquisitive crime levels but may be struggling with night time violence. They may decide to deliver most of their 'total crime' reduction through tackling violence. Others will need to continue cracking down on a number of fronts, which would collectively deliver the headline reduction.

SR04 promises year on year increases in the *Safer & Stronger Communities* fund to 2007-08. It also provides for an impressive increase in neighbourhood policing, providing nationally an extra 20,000 Community Support Officers (CSOs) by 2008. CSOs have already proven their worth in the South East in a range of circumstances, from rural communities to problematic urban areas, in particular with tackling anti-social behaviour and driving up reassurance. The new funding should allow those areas that have not yet taken full advantage of CSOs to catch up with their peers.





**John Gieve**

Permanent Secretary, Home Office

*"The Home Office received a good settlement in the Spending Review 2004. We are also committed to challenging objectives to change social behaviour and attitudes across all of our business areas: on crime and anti-social behaviour, on drugs, on immigration on race and so on.*

*We will only achieve these ambitious targets if we change the way we work in the centre to enable us to direct more resources to the frontline. The Government Offices are key to improving the way we engage with the people who can really make a difference - our delivery partners in local communities, such as the police, probation officers, local authorities and the voluntary and community sectors."*

## Stronger Communities

Promoting race equality and improving community cohesion are at the heart of the Government's vision of a fully integrated society that recognises and celebrates diversity. There will be a new *Commission for Equality and Human Rights*, and Government strategy for a new PSA on this will be led by the Home Office.

Communities are recognised as having a vital role integrating migrants into the UK, enabling them to make a full social, economic and cultural contribution. Central and local government working together with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) have demonstrated what can be achieved. To build on this SRO4 announced a new Invest to Save programme. *Invest to Save-Inclusive Communities* will provide a source of funding for the VCS in promoting language skills, employment and integration.

The contribution of both individuals and organisations is recognised. Supporting VCS organisations to develop stronger local communities, greater and more effective involvement of the VCS in public services, supporting more people to volunteer, engaging the corporate sector in meeting community needs, improving the funding relationship between the VCS and Government are all featured. These proposals are built on an understanding that the VCS can build social networks, community spirit and a sense of common purpose across communities so as to deliver improvements in health, education, employment and crime reduction. Clear links with the Neighbourhood Renewal agenda are recognised.

Over the coming year the South East will see many of these elements, like the mainstreaming of community cohesion and the continuation of the community cohesion learning network, coming through. The South East hopes to benefit from resources allocated to the *Future Builders programme* designed to build capacity and diversify the forms of funding in service delivery by the sector. A regional action plan and investment programme will be produced in the autumn outlining how the infrastructure supporting frontline voluntary and community organisations will be strengthened and its capacity built.

# Department for Culture, Media and Sport



Highlights of the Spending Review in relation to culture, media and sport include targets to increase children's and young people's active experience of sport. This target is to be run jointly with the Department for Education and Skills. DCMS, together with Department for Education and Skills and the Department of Health are also focusing on the rise in obesity among children under 11. Targets are in place to halt this year-on-year rise. Other targets we will be concentrating on include increasing the take-up of cultural and sporting opportunities by adults and young people aged 16 and above from priority groups and improving the productivity of the tourism, creative and leisure industries

The Department's budget will rise by £230m by 2007-08, an increase of 2.3% in real terms. This, together with efficiency savings of some £260m (including cashable gains) will be directed towards providing more and better opportunities for all to participate in culture and sport.

Particular aspects of the settlement of relevance to the South East include:

- Extending the Renaissance in the Regions museums programme to all nine English regions. In its first year (2003-04), the three regions piloting the programme reported a 28% increase in visits by school children. We are pleased to see that measures to extend the policy of free access for the main national museums and galleries (and the VAT refund scheme that helps to deliver it) to university museums have been included. The South East houses more significant university collections than any other region; many of those will stand to benefit from this initiative.
- The continuation of the Creative Partnerships (CP) programme, developing long-term relationships between schools in deprived areas and cultural/creative organisations, businesses and individual practitioners. The very successful Partnerships in Kent and Slough, and that currently being developed in Southampton and the Isle of Wight, will be joined (from 2005-2006) by a CP in Hastings and Bexhill.
- The continuing contribution by DCMS to Regional Development Agencies (including SEEDA), to promote economic growth in the tourism and related leisure industries. This funding will in future be channelled through the "single pot" mechanism to increase the flexibility to promote tourism more closely in line with the Regional Economic Strategy.

# Department of Health and the National Health Service



Spending Review 2004 confirmed the settlement for Department of Health and the NHS already identified in 2002. Essentially the overall NHS budget has increased from £33 billion in 1997 to £67.4 billion today, and rising to £92 billion by 2007/8.

This sustained investment should be set alongside a stream of sustained reform:

- 2000 The NHS Plan
- 2002 Spending review. Delivering the NHS Plan. Biggest funding increase of £40bn/year
- 2003 Building on the Best consultation to improve choice and responsiveness of NHS services
- 2004 Choosing Health? Public health consultation (March)

The NHS Improvement Plan (June)

Spending Review (July)

White Paper on Public Health (Autumn)

**The big themes for Department of Health** are devolution to the NHS (moving from performance management to management of the system including moving from the top down to bottom up (80:20 to 20:80) structure of management), the development of new relationships both centrally with other bodies (other Government Departments and the Regulators), and new relationships locally with local authorities and the private sector.

**The big themes for NHS** are providing high quality and personalised care. Including a maximum 18-week wait from GP referral to treatment, the availability of information on waiting times and quality of care, and a choice of four to five providers for planned care in 2005. By 2008, patient choice will be expanded to any provider meeting the Healthcare commission standards. A wide choice in primary care will also be available.

People with long-term conditions will be supported to live healthy lives through the following initiatives. By 2008, the Expert Patients programme will be rolled out. People with long-term conditions will benefit from the rapid implementation of NICE guidelines on cost effective drugs. There will be new contracts for GPs, rewarding those who deliver higher standards of care.

To achieve a healthier and fitter population the following measures will be introduced.

- Inequalities in health reduced by targeting people at greatest risk
- Death rates will be reduced (from 1997) by 2010
- From Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) and strokes in those under 75 by at least 40 percent
- From cancer in those under 75 by at least 20 percent
- From suicide and undetermined injury by at least 20 percent
- Significant reductions in the risks of infection from MRSA between now and 2010
- Choosing Health? Public health consultation will lead to comprehensive proposals for tackling obesity, smoking, and sexually transmitted infections

As set out in his first report to the Government in 2002, "Securing our Future Health", Derek Wanless, noted that achieving the goal of a population 'fully engaged' in improving its health, would be a major prize for the whole community. The 'fully engaged' scenario was one projected to deliver the best health outcomes at the lowest cost, and saving as much as £30bn per year by 2022- 23.

## The big themes for the South East

The Spending Review gives further prominence to the arguments set out by Derek Wanless in both his reports to Government: we need to spend more on cost-effective public health interventions if we are to achieve our health goals, let alone at reasonable cost.

The scale of inequalities across the South East is as great as in any English Region. Although the region remains one of the healthiest in the United Kingdom, as the Annual Report of the Regional Director of Public Health for 2003 noted, "The South East has a very large number of people who live in conditions which are not compatible with good health".

The Spending Review provides a further springboard for improving the health of the population across the South East region. The extra investment not just in the NHS but across all public services provides the basis for really solid, focussed partnership working, expressed clearly in Community Strategies, and in the form of really shared local objectives.

These will need to cover not just the most significant threats to health, of which health inequalities, tobacco and obesity are the biggest. They will also need to spring from the opportunities presented by the Sustainable Communities Plan in our work with planners, architects, and developers to promote the design and development of health promoting sustainable communities.



**Sir Nigel Crisp**

Permanent Secretary, DoH

*"This settlement is very good for the nation's health. It will support a further move by the NHS from being a sickness service to being a world class health service, fair for all, personal to each, and strong on preventing, as well as treating, illness. The historic increase in resources will help people to lead longer, healthier lives, through an increased commitment across Government to tackle public health problems. The importance of partnership at all levels - national, regional, and local is impossible to overstate."*

# Did Whitehall listen to the region?

For the 2004 Spending Review, each English region was asked by HM Treasury to contribute to design and development of policy by submitting a Regional Emphasis Document (RED). The South East's Regional Emphasis Document<sup>1</sup> was produced through an inclusive process involving not just GOSE, SEEDA and the South East Regional Assembly, but also a wide range of key public agencies, the business community and the voluntary and community sector.

The South East RED, submitted to Whitehall in December 2003, identified areas of public spending which we believe to be key to prosperity in the region, and ways in which funding could be delivered in a more efficient way. It described the key challenges facing the region and made specific proposals for addressing these problems. Many of the priorities the South East identified in the RED have been reflected in the spending review. HM Treasury published a response to all regions' Regional Emphasis Documents in July<sup>2</sup> and will follow this with a more detailed response later in 2004.

The South East RED emphasised the extent to which housing and growth are key issues for the region with Government programmes in housing, transport and skills development "essential to underpin economic and community development and for environmentally sustainable growth." We pressed the need for increased investment in infrastructure and public services in the region, in particular to support the delivery of sustainable communities in the specified growth areas (Thames Gateway, Milton Keynes, Aylesbury and Ashford), and the need affordable housing. We proposed the formation of a Regional Transport board. In all these areas we suggested a range of specific proposals for innovative mechanisms, flexibility and

improved use of existing resources that the South east wishes to investigate further with the Government.

We proposed improvements to address shortages of technician and equivalent skills in the region and to address the basic skills problems affecting more than 1 million people of working age in the region. And we emphasised the need for SR04 to reflect the exceptional potential of the South East to improve the UK's innovation performance by focusing additional spending on science and innovation, and supporting business-university collaboration. The principal regional bodies, together with local authorities and other public sector partners also set out in the RED their wish to work with Government towards an integrated target framework for the South East, proposing what we termed "consortium PSAs" as an approach to addressing a small number of multi-agency regional priorities.

The Spending Review has addressed all of these issues. Local Area Agreements and the proposed rural pathfinder project include many of the features of the consortium PSAs proposed in the RED; housing needs are addressed through the social housing settlement which will help improve provision of affordable housing; there will be increased investment in the four growth areas, particularly through the new £200m Community Infrastructure Fund; and the South East has already been able to pilot a Regional Transport Board. There is increased spending on science and innovation and enhanced roles for SEEDA in supporting business-university collaboration and with Business Links and rural development activity. SR04 also enables the region to take forward its work in overcoming the skills gap at technician level and tackling basic skills problems.



## Further information

<sup>1</sup> The South East Regional Emphasis Document can be downloaded from the website of the South East Regional Assembly at [www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/our\\_work/advocacy/emphasis.html](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/our_work/advocacy/emphasis.html)

<sup>2</sup> H M Treasury: 2004 Spending Review: Meeting Regional Priorities. Response to the Regional Emphasis Documents, July 2004

# Civil Servants – an endangered species?



Included in the Chancellor's Spending Review statement was a commitment to reduce, by 84,000, the number of civil servants.

This is part of a wider programme of efficiency in Whitehall - which includes ambitious savings in 'back office' support services such as HR, finance and IT and the planned relocation of at least 20,000 civil servants from London and the South East to other regions.

All of this will have the effect of making central Whitehall departments smaller, more strategic and focussed on managing the macro framework of public services rather than the micro target setting and performance monitoring. The introduction of Local Area Agreements is very much part of this thinking.

What impact will it have on the South East? Certainly the number of civil servants who live or work in the region looks set to fall, and departments that employ large numbers of civil servants, such as the Department of Work and Pensions, will see reductions. For the Government Office, our back office functions are likely to be managed on a wider scale to provide greater economy, and our staffing numbers will reduce alongside those of our sponsor departments.

But perhaps the biggest change is cultural: to move from micromanagement of process to macromanagement of outcome, to spend more time 'steering' and less time 'rowing'. This is about reconfiguring our relationships with our partners to move towards a framework of greater trust, more devolution, better performance management systems and improved communication.





INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Government Office for the South East  
Bridge House  
1 Walnut Tree Close  
Guildford  
Surrey  
GU1 4GA

Tel: +44 (0)1483 882255  
Fax: +44 (0)1483 882259  
e-mail: [reception.gose@go-regions.gov.uk](mailto:reception.gose@go-regions.gov.uk)  
web: [www.go-se.gov.uk](http://www.go-se.gov.uk)

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