

The Draft East Midlands Strategy for the 2012 Games

The Response of the East Midlands Regional Assembly

1 What resource planning has been or will be undertaken in order to deliver on the 2012 strategy?

1.1 A significant challenge will be to deliver the strategy on the assumption of no additional resources. While this issue is not addressed in the draft strategy, at this early stage the Assembly appreciates that there will be little detail on resource allocation to deliver the strategy. Given the need for the alignment of partner resources to deliver this strategy, EMRA suggests that the region needs to optimise opportunities to cooperate and collaborate through maximising existing funding sources rather than diverting resources into competing between sub-regions. EMRA will support regional organisations in providing effective guidance and support, particularly in relation to transport, communication and planning and housing, for their sub-regional and local delivery partners.

1.2 The effective delivery of a regionally owned strategy is, of course, key. With the real benefits offered by our wide Member base, EMRA offers to actively support *emda* in the development of any subsequent delivery plan. This, together with the need for effective partnership management, highlights the potential benefits of the proposed Stakeholder Forum.

2 Do themes contained in the document encompass the full range of areas in relation to the East Midlands engagement with the 2012 Games? If not, what is missing?

2.1 The 8 key themes included in the draft strategy are consistent with the objectives of the IRS and its five agreed regional priorities for the region. While many of the strategic issues are contained within the document, there remain a number of important regional issues that are not effectively addressed by the draft strategy and the final version would benefit from a fuller consideration of cross cutting issues such as transport, communications and resource funding.

2.2 In particular, transport and infrastructure will be key to realising the potential of the 2012 Games for the region. The existing airport services will continue to offer easy access while the new St. Pancras rail link services will improve the connectivity between the region, London and Europe. However, it will be important that the new franchisee for the region's rail network accounts for the pressures of the 2012 Games when developing the new timetable for post-2008. With required improvements to the region's strategic road network, and given the limited time before 2012, regional partners are strongly encouraged to focus upon these issues.

3 Which themes require the greatest emphasis, and why is this so?

- 3.1 Business, tourism and sporting engagement (for both health & performance reasons) are likely to be the most important, bearing in mind that these are subject to greater influence by regional and sub-regional organisations and therefore can be measured against quantifiable targets.
- 3.2 The Cultural Olympiad may potentially have one of the most significant legacies but is also one of the more complex areas that will require careful planning at the regional and sub-regional level. The other themes, i.e. health, education and volunteering themes are similarly complex and much will need to be delivered at the local level.

4 Do you agree with the Proposed Areas of Focus for each theme? Please indicate if there are others that you would add or any that you would remove?

Business Opportunities

- 4.1 The business opportunities offered by London 2012 are significant and there will be strong competition for contracts. EMRA endorses the proposed area of focus that will add much to the strategy. Many of the measures rely on the effective delivery of business support, advice, information and guidance. Therefore, regular consultation with the business sector, particularly through the EMBF, is essential to determine whether the regional approach maximises the opportunities available. Consequently, EMRA supports the establishment of the advisory group of regional business leaders.
- 4.2 EMRA also welcomes the wider focus on China and India, hosts of the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the 2010 Commonwealth Games respectively. To exploit these business opportunities, EMRA encourages partners to build upon the existing strong business relationships, particularly those at the sub-regional level.
- 4.3 To promote greater awareness and understanding of the business opportunities, EMRA suggests that emda and partners undertake focused concerted media activity to encourage regional companies to successfully win contracts.

Tourism Development

- 4.4 In respect of tourism development, many of the specific packages are only likely to be developed once the opportunities for pre-Olympic training camps are firmed up. There are certain positioning opportunities including our historical heritage assets and the world wide interest in genealogy. If the East Midlands Tourism strategy can be realised (and the revised strategy will need

to specifically deal with the 2012 London Games) then 2012 will be highly significant for the future of the East Midlands.

- 4.5 With the expected increase in visitor numbers the Assembly supports EMT in its efforts to improve both the supply and quality of tourist accommodation.

Sporting

- 4.6 It is noted that the regional 2012 strategy lacks reference to 'Change 4 Sport', the regional plan for sport, and is not explicitly referred to within the sub-themes of the consultation draft. Greater continuity might be achieved if the Olympics were used as a vehicle to augment 'Change 4 Sport's' objectives rather than looking to build a new strategy on top of this.
- 4.7 In considering sport, there are two important elements; sporting success and participation. Much of the emphasis is placed on success; individuals' and talent identification. Talent identification and development of performance pathways within individual sports takes time and a great degree of specialist knowledge and where there are sub-regional clusters of excellence in certain sports - these should be concentrated on.
- 4.8 The setting of 'medal haul' targets needs careful consideration. It is not felt that this is something the region can have a great deal of influence over in the time available, without considerable additional resources. In the case of British Cycling it took over 8 years for the National Governing Body to transform the sports performance from 17th in the world rankings to 1st by medals won in the World Championships 2007. Some academic research into Olympic cycles (e.g. Sheffield Hallam) suggests that increased efforts now may yield more medals at the 2016 games rather than in London. If this is correct then greater cooperation between governing bodies, professional sports clubs and inter-disciplinary establishments will be needed. The best placed organisation to do this is UK Sport. The Paralympics may, however, offer greater opportunity and this should be developed further through, for example, consultation and co-operation with the British Paralympic Association and the English Federation of Disability Sports. The region already has a strong record in this field and this would benefit from greater emphasis in the draft strategy.
- 4.9 The East Midlands has an estimated 10,000 sports clubs, many of whom are struggling for resources, volunteers and financial support. To promote participation, if the Olympics legacy concentrated on assisting smaller sports clubs then this would be of a long term benefit to the East Midlands.
- 4.10 Much of the other themes in the strategy, e.g. well-being and volunteering, build on the bi-products of sport. If the Olympic potential is to be realised then greater emphasis may be placed on the indirect benefits of getting involved in sport to balance the objectives of participation with those of sporting success.

Cultural Olympiad

- 4.11 The approach taken in this section of the strategy is entirely appropriate, developing and reflecting the East Midlands' diversity and richness and connecting this through existing mechanisms, partnerships and plans would be a sensible and realistic approach.
- 4.12 An interesting point for further discussion is what 'badgeing' arrangements will be in place to recognise, co-coordinate and market the Cultural Olympiad? Lessons may be learnt from previous national festivals and events, for example Millennium Youth Games. Naturally this will be an area for the Cultural Olympiad co-ordinator to consider as this role develops.

Pre-Games Training Camps

- 4.13 The Assembly endorses the approach taken. A representation of camps across the East Midlands, reflecting all sub-regional areas would considerably enhance the universal regional significance of the games. Support should be concentrated to ensure this is achieved.

Education

- 4.14 The consultation strategy has recognised where its support will be most effective, recognising the key role of GOEM, Sport England and Culture East Midlands. Opportunities to engage young people in activities in sport, culture arts and media would also be beneficial and working alongside Connexions and other Youth Services as well as schools could play a significant role in supporting this.
- 4.15 Explicit links to supporting the Higher and Further Educational involvement and co-ordination is extremely worthwhile and an area where Regional Stakeholder support should be brought to bear. In addition, the region already has many existing international links which could be used to promote the 'One World' theme.
- 4.16 Further activities that may be considered include languages training/skills (especially for those in the hospitality sector) and exchange visits.
- 4.17 The areas of Sports Science and medicine where the region does have some specialist facilities could be boosted.

Health & Well Being

- 4.18 The overarching aims of this are supported and are aligned with the objectives of 'Change 4 Sport' and agreed IRS priorities, in particular, 'reducing inequalities' and 'creating sustainable and healthy communities

throughout the region'. The draft strategy appropriately recognises that sustained success will come through the links to other public sector bodies involved in health promotion rather than a separate raft of activity. Promoting physical activity to underrepresented groups; lower income, black & minority ethnic communities, women and young people 'at risk' have been correctly identified but the strategy should also include older members of our community. It should be recognised that this aim is very challenging and partners should be specific in how this issue is to be addressed.

- 4.19 The costs of participation for lower income groups and families are a significant barrier and opportunities to highlight these obstacles and change the approach of delivery organisations are key to achieving success.
- 4.20 The Olympics could generate a number of useful case studies of physical activity in the workplace and the region could impress this opportunity back to LOCOG to encourage potential sponsors to adopt employee exercise encouragement programmes.
- 4.21 Alignment between the local, regional and national level is essential – particularly given resource constraints. Given the significance of Local Area Agreements to planning and delivery at the local level, and their focus on public health, obesity reduction and wider well-being concerns, the draft regional 2012 strategy (and any delivery plan) should therefore ensure alignment of its performance indicators with those of LAAs.
- 4.22 While 'well being' is addressed in the draft strategy, in view of its increasing importance, it is suggested that this issue merits further consideration. In particular, a theme that is not specifically addressed in the document is 'mental wellbeing', or perhaps more colloquially – fun! It is closely allied to the Regional Cultural Strategy objective 2.3 highlighted within the document but it could be simplified. The 2012 Games offers much opportunity to create a feel good factor and support self esteem. Regional identity and social capital can also be shaped internally, building on individuals' and communities' contributions towards making 2012 a success and their own satisfaction at achievement. This is partly identified in the health and tourism sections but could be given a higher profile. There is of course contention as to whether these themes can be factored in as a strategic aim; arguably they may be described as by-products from volunteering and participating in other ways. One method of strategic articulation might be through communication of certain key messages that are put out by regional partners.
- 4.23 In considering health and well being, the issue of increasing participation is relevant. We therefore reiterate the points made under Paras. 5.5 to 5.8

Volunteering

- 4.24 The consultation document recognises the critical issue of volunteering. There will be thousands of volunteering opportunities but demand is likely to exceed supply. The approach articulated in the draft strategy is appropriate –

using the Olympics and 2012 themes to raise the profile of volunteering in the Region. This is particularly important in developing the social capital and social cohesion objectives of the Region expressed within the RES and IRS.

- 4.25 Delivery of this objective creates organisational and management challenges that will need careful consideration. Previous policies to develop volunteering should be considered. Follow-up support for the volunteer would seem to be crucial in ensuring a legacy as is the effective communication of volunteering opportunities. The volunteering opportunities should be available for all sectors of society and particular consideration should be given to 'hard to reach' groups.

5 The Regional Stakeholder Forum

- 5.1 It is noted that the proposed Stakeholder Forum is still to be established. While EMRA supports the progress already made by *emda* and partners, the Stakeholder Forum is an important element of the regional 2012 approach and consequently EMRA are keen that progress is made on its establishment.
- 5.2 EMRA acknowledge the resource constraints in delivering the East Midlands Strategy for the 2012 Games and, working alongside *emda* and Sport England East Midlands, therefore offer to host the Stakeholder Forum on behalf of the region. Making effective use of our large and diverse Membership base, including all 46 Local Authorities and wider economic, social and community partners that are integral to the successful delivery of the 2012 Strategy, this proposal would avoid the need to establish a separate mechanism containing many of the same partners who are Assembly Members. It would be resource efficient to do this and would help to promote leadership and stakeholder engagement thereby delivering a genuine regional approach.
- 5.3 There are organisations that would need to be involved that are not Assembly Members. With sufficient liaison and planning this could be easily accommodated.

6 Connections to the IRS, RES and the Regional Spatial Strategy

- 6.1 Many of the objectives identified in the draft regional strategy for the 2012 Games directly contribute to the 17 sustainable development objectives of the IRS. Upon further refinement as suggested by this response, EMRA is confident that many of the objectives can, through a co-ordinated regional effort, be achieved.
- 6.2 The spatial impact of the 2012 Games in the East Midlands is likely to be much less than in London and the South East but there may be some questions which arise. Particularly relevant policies in the draft RSS are Policy 1 which sets out the Regional Core objectives, Policy 2 which sets out the regional approach to selecting land for development, Policy 4 which aims to concentrate development in urban areas, Policy 24 (Tourism), and Policy

40 which provides the Regional Priorities for Culture, Sport and Recreation. The most relevant core objectives are reducing social exclusion; improving the health of the Region's residents; improving economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness; and improving accessibility to jobs, homes and services. Clearly the emphasis is for major new sporting facilities to be located in accessible locations that meet regeneration, economic, behavioural change, and social objectives is very desirable, and should there be further opportunities to expand this aspiration, these would be welcomed.

- 6.3 Policy 40 is probably the most important in terms of providing the backdrop to Regional provision for 2012 as this refers specifically to the Olympics. The activities within the draft 2012 Strategy fits with this Policy. It points to the need for joint working where appropriate across administrative boundaries.
- 6.4 The importance and potential impact of the 2012 Games is reflected by its cross cutting nature and its obvious implications to a number of key regional strategies, particularly the RES and RSS. Building upon the success in ensuring alignment between the RES and the RSS, EMRA and *emda* should continue dialogue to ensure that the 2012 regional strategy delivers within the strategic frameworks effectively provided by the RSS and RES. This is of particular reference in the development of the RES component strategies and delivery plans e.g. tourism, business support, skills, education and training.