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## **RVR1 – Devon and Cornwall, 31 January – 3 February 2010**

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Individuals Consulted: see appendix 1  
Programme of meetings: see appendix 2

Executive Summary

### **Regional Characteristics**

The characteristics of the region for the purposes of the PURE project have been highlighted in the regions RP. The project area is the Peninsula of Devon and Cornwall, two neighbouring counties in the South West of England with a combined population of 1,664,500, 1,135,000 in Devon and 529,500 in Cornwall. Both counties have a rural element, a strong maritime heritage, are tourist regions and important retirement locations. The Peninsula area embraces numerous heritage sites, national parks and some of the nation's finest tourist sites, notably the internationally renowned Eden Project. Devon and Cornwall share significant common features and have similar challenges and ambitions. In terms of administration, Cornwall has a single unitary authority whilst Devon consists of a County Council with 8 local government districts and 2 separately administered Unitary Authorities. Both Devon and Cornwall are actively engaged with the South West Regional Development Authority (SWRDA) and the Government Office of the South West (GOSW).

Whilst the area's attractiveness as a rural location is a positive feature, its distance and remoteness from the rest of England creates logistical problems for businesses wishing to access national and international markets.

The peninsula is characterised by unusual population trends by comparison to the UK overall:

- Higher than average numbers retired people many on low incomes
- In Cornwall, lower than average population density, and relatively small towns
- In Devon a faster growing and ageing population

Further in both counties there are above average numbers of people in the working population without qualifications and similarly without work and claiming benefit by comparison to the South-West as a whole, and lower than average pay. Some parts

of the area have a below national average rate of people with National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4 or above

Many jobs in the tourist industry are seasonal. Affordable housing is an issue for first-time buyers given the influx in recent years of affluent residents to one of the most attractive parts of the UK which has driven up property prices in these areas.

The economy is a mix of rural, tourist/seasonal jobs, significant public sector employment (Plymouth City Council being the largest employer) and a substantial quantity of small and medium sized enterprises. There has been a gradual decline in traditional sources of employment (fishing, Royal Navy dockyards, clay mining and harbours), which used to play a major role in terms of employment in the local economy. There are some economic differences across the Peninsula: whilst many of the smaller coastal towns depend heavily on tourism, Plymouth (the largest city in Devon) has a much more substantial manufacturing base. Similarly, Plymouth has low rates of self-employment compared to Cornwall, which highlights the importance of innovation in that county.

Major social issues include those related to the aging population enhanced by retirees and to the pockets of health inequality that exist across the area.

A number of environmental issues exist. Relative lack of good, reliable public transport links together with the need to commute some distance to work adds to pollution. The high influx of tourists has to be balanced against protection of areas of natural resources and the designation (of Cornwall) as a Low Carbon Area. Both counties are working closely with their universities in the development of energy generation by wave power.

There are long-standing cultural traditions and a range of festivals and other events as well as well known theatres and galleries. Much of this activity has links with the HE sector.

The HE sector in the area consists of the University of Plymouth, University of Exeter, Marjon University College, University College Falmouth and Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC) (a consortium of colleges and universities). CUC is a particularly interesting model of collaboration between universities in offering provision in a new campus where distinct offers are made by each provider with a common infrastructure and service support. It has been cited as an exemplar by the European Commission for Europe and has been visited by 3 Directorates-General of the EC. Additionally distance learning provision is offered by the Open University. In the course of the CDG's visit, we did not meet any representatives from Marjon University College, University College Falmouth or the Open University, which means that inevitably some gaps in overview of the current offer are evident in this report. Nonetheless it is quite evident that the HE sector is a key engine in driving the development of the region across a range of domains, and considerable evidence that the universities that we met take this role seriously, albeit with different emphases. The sector is viewed positively by a range of stakeholders, and is

perceived by many individuals as an important part of the reasons for individuals wishing to live and work in the area.

### **Areas of priority in Regional Engagement**

As reported in the RP, the following were identified as areas of priority for regional engagement in advance of the CDG1 visit:

- Both the University of Plymouth and the University of Exeter are strongly committed to **sustainability and environmental** responsible practice
- There are also examples of strong **collaboration** between the two universities ranging from the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry (PCMD) to the Combined Universities of Cornwall (CUC) partnership. Both of these initiatives demonstrate a wider commitment to partnership for the benefit of the wider region in terms of health/dental care and provision of education in Cornwall
- Both universities are also supportive of the Peninsular Partnership for the Rural Environment which has a strong link to **rural education and agriculture** in the wider South West region, although the agricultural colleges are experiencing major financial problems

Both universities are also strongly committed to **knowledge transfer and innovation**, working actively with **local and regional businesses** and **students**. They are also involved in a starting 2-year cross border project (PROTTEC: [www.prottec.eu](http://www.prottec.eu)) funded by the EU under INTERREG IVA. The project involves two partners from Brittany, France (Bretagne Valorisation and Ifremer) and three from southern England (University of Plymouth, University of Exeter and Marine South East). Geographically, the project covers Brittany, South East and South West England. It is mainly based on knowledge and technology transfer from academia to industry, particularly SMEs.

### **Responses to global financial crisis**

In the UK as a whole, the government has signalled significant cuts in the Higher Education budget in the coming financial year in order to cut the national deficit. The RP reports that there are concerns that this may lead to increased class sizes and a diminution of UK universities research and competitiveness and ability to drive innovation and enterprise in the knowledge economy.

### **Interim findings and advice**

#### ***Economic Perspectives***

Regional economic development issues were at the fore in discussions with a number of groups and individuals throughout the visit, including the Government

Office for the South-West, the Regional Development Agency, Devon County Council, Torbay Council, the Plymouth Development Company and the Plymouth Enterprise and Skills Board. Job losses in the public sector, the need for development of skills in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) area and to develop innovation and enterprise skills that are place-focussed were common themes in discussions. The notion that education has failed entrepreneurs was frequently expressed and articulated by the VC of the University of Plymouth. There is little doubt that the University of Plymouth and the University of Exeter, as well as CUC, give high priority to this aspect of engagement, although for all universities there remains the challenge of links with businesses and it was acknowledged that communication, particularly with SMEs tended to rely on personal contacts and local knowledge and this fragmented approach missed many SMEs in the area who might otherwise become engaged.. This challenge is of course reflected in Plymouth University's branding as the 'Enterprising University', which has been a business and social dimension (though these are not dichotomous). This is played out at various levels, including with current students (e.g. a student-run restaurant). At Exeter, schools are monitored annually in relation to their engagement, with a focus on research support and the development of long-term relationships rather than one-off consulting. Research plans of schools include monitoring down to an individual level with increasing concern with impact, reflected in the demands of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) of HEFCE. Exeter reported its involvement in Great Western Research with the Universities of Bristol and Bath, a unique arrangement in England supported by 50% by HEFCE and the RDA and 50% by business, which is training PhD students in the wider area of the RDA. Of the current 130 studentships, 41 are funded by SMEs.

An overview of key issues emerged from discussions with the South West Regional Development Agency, which covers an area from Swindon through to Cornwall. Established in 1988, the RDA with a budget of £130m (perceived as not enough by the RDA and reported by the University of Exeter as low by comparison with other regions) provides a means to unlock skills potential and seed innovative R&D with capital funding and revenue funding.

In the Devon and Cornwall area, underlying factors that informed actions as reported by a number of stakeholders included:

- The high number of SMEs with little common representation (a 'fractured business community' with no one voice according to one respondent)
- Instability of companies with limited capacity to grow, especially in Cornwall, and the need to create a strategy for growth
- Productivity levels below national level
- High qualifications level of population, but under-utilised in the case of the semi retired (wisdom mentoring was mentioned as a strategy).
- The continuing availability of ESF/ERDF funding in Cornwall with some £500m available under the 'competitiveness and convergence' strand (a 'last chance' to turn the county into a high knowledge economy from this source of EC funding). The university sector would be receiving around £100m of this funding

- A grant dependency culture, which may lead to complacency and a lack of competitiveness, which could become critical when, the grants dry up.
- High level skills requirements for the low carbon sector (marine, nuclear, eco-town developments (e.g. St Austell))
- The limited capacity of Sector Skills Councils to engage with business, and the potential of Business Link to be the primary Access channel.
- Multiple Employment and Skills Boards with responsibility for one sector area
- The need for investment in next generation broadband access.

The RDA works closely with universities, especially in regional associations of universities, with all HEIs as members. It supports a number of regional projects, including a knowledge exchange hub in the field of sustainability, PRIMARE, partly funded by ERDF and ESF.

The contribution of HEIs in the economic domain is consistently foregrounded, but its extent as within overall engagement depends on mission and perceived priorities and availability of funding programmes. HEIs to an extent have to shape their engagement with a certain amount of compromise in some cases. There is for example a perception from a number of stakeholder interviews that the University of Exeter is taking the lead on transfer of research expertise, whilst the University of Plymouth takes lead with SMEs. There is also a role for the FE sector in skills development at local levels. The Foundation Degree work tends at present to be the main vehicle for provision of vocational relevance from FE, but there is less activity from that sector in direct business development. With the disappearance of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the responsibility for FE moving to the County Councils, then it can be envisaged that there will be more local steering of FE's priorities in the future,

Many examples of links between the HEI sector and various initiatives in the two counties were cited in discussion with regional agencies.

In Devon, for example, these included large infrastructure projects such as the University of Exeter's Science Park, where amongst other things seminars on renewables had been held for energy companies. Other examples in this environmental area are cited later in this text.

From the RDA perspective, there appears to be a disjunction in as much as they perceive that businesses are not viewed holistically by either HE or FE. So whilst HE tends to focus on research, development and innovation, FE tends to focus on skills development. It may that HE can help FE in the former field, and FE can help HE in the latter. It may mean that more joined up working both within the HE sector and across FE/HE can be achieved if existing networks are utilised more extensively, and it was suggested by the RDA that this might be a condition of funding within schemes such as ERDF.

Discussions with Devon County Council suggested that although good links exist with both University of Exeter and University of Plymouth, there is still a perception that

universities tend not to always act responsively to regional needs (even when part of a call-off contract for services), and sometimes stress the 'academic' over the engagement side of their work. Both universities were praised and criticised. Exeter, whilst commended for its strategic capabilities was viewed as not being concerned with 'what was happening on its doorstep'. Plymouth, whilst more grounded and responsive when asked to advise on the business supply chain, produced work that was perceived as 'too academic'. From the university side of course, they only have to point at their income streams to argue for foci that are not always directed to regional priorities. This was particular evident at Exeter where details of HEFCE funding streams were presented: support for business development is a small fraction of funding. Taken in conjunction with the reduction of overall government support and the priority given by government towards research and internationalisation, it is not surprising that these are favoured by some institutions over regional engagement in times of trying financial circumstances.

Other significant links involving DCC and the HEIs included work with the University of Plymouth to develop the "Devon Brand", and work with the University of Exeter to find graduate business partnership placement in the county's administration, developing work on Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, and the possibility of exchanges of staff between the university and the county.

Both universities reported a number of other specific initiatives. These included Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) leading in some cases to employment in businesses, student placements in businesses, and organising events, including workshops to discuss research ideas. A number of examples of KTPs were cited including KTPs related to 'super-yacht' design/refit in Falmouth to banking advice to Goldman Sachs from a 5 person SME in Penzance. At the University of Plymouth KTPs appear to be successful and were described *inter alia* as a means of 'unlocking Cornish potential'.

In this context, the concept of *über-KTPs* arose in one discussion. The term was used to refer to the potential notion of senior level exchanges of staff from universities to regions, and in later discussions was received supportively by Linda Gilroy MP. Models from other PURE regions such as Helsinki may be of interest to Plymouth.

Links with larger economic players were illustrated through a visit to Flybe, which in addition to running a major regional airline based on Exeter airport, is Europe's largest maintenance operation for aircraft. A number of interesting models of workplace learning from NVQ through FD to a degree were reported from the Flybe Academy, involving the University of Exeter and Plymouth, as well as Kingston University in London. The FD is taught through Master Classes with existing staff development events used within training and accredited. An interesting perspective on the role of universities arose in conversations with Flybe. There is a perception on Flybe's part that universities and colleges are not about delivering people into jobs, and they prefer to train their own people in-house, working with universities where accreditation is needed. However they do seek the research expertise of universities more directly and cited a number of examples of working with the University of

Exeter, for example for advice on Corporate Social Responsibility and the ergonomics of the office layout for their new building.

Events such as the Annual Business Planning Award held by the University of Plymouth with a 'Dragon's Den' type engagement are used to create stronger links to the business community. The university also has an ambassador scheme in its infancy. In Cornwall, the existence of a local campus creates visibility for the universities in terms of potential engagement with businesses. Also of significance across the region is the location of University of Plymouth staff in the FE colleges, thus providing further local access for businesses. Thinking in this regard appears joined up at the university with a view that a benefit-based package of services needed to be articulated to businesses that integrates a full range of offers across teaching, development and research. Literature describing these services is very clear, and there appears to be a highly responsive level of provision. There are still considerable challenges, however, especially in relations to start-up businesses. According to the Skills Board in Plymouth investment in business start-ups has had little effect in the past.

An interesting model of public sector collaboration at the University of Plymouth is a joint procurement scheme entitled 'Sell Plymouth' with the National Health Service. Some 500 people have attended events and this has led to £200k of business from the university to SMEs and more to the NHS. 'Sell to Cornwall' is now being developed.

Given the responses of some from regional authorities, it appears that information about what training opportunities and support activities exist for businesses was patchy. Nor was it entirely obvious that regional authorities had clear sources of economic intelligence over the next 5 years, or knowledge of where skills gaps are likely to be. There was some evidence of data being gathered in some areas, for example by the Plymouth City Development Company who have commissioned an economic intelligence study linked to a local economic assessment which has by law to be done. Furthermore, the Skills Board (PESB) is working with both the University of Exeter and Plymouth to capture supply and demand data for key areas such as health, and testing this data with employers. There were examples in some areas of various players being brought together in joined-up ways; for example in Plymouth the Enterprise and Innovation Board is bringing together principal stakeholders in skills and innovation. Nonetheless it seems that there are a large number of organisations with a common agenda and a degree of complexity that could be simplified, especially in rolling out intelligence to end-users. A good example of where this has worked well previously is the analytical work undertaken by Plymouth University in support of the Plymouth Strategic Partnership led by the City Council.

It was also evident from comments by the government office that other universities from the wider region also bring particular expertise in certain areas, for example, the University of West England in manufacturing and the Universities of Bath (e.g. Eco-town development as cited by the RDA) and Bournemouth in green skills.

The observatory function of SERIO at the University of Plymouth is an integral part of being responsive, although it has not taken on a wide regional role beyond Plymouth. Given that part of CUC's role is to provide a socio-economic observatory function, opportunities appear to exist to extend this function to Cornwall and other parts of the region.

### ***Social Perspectives***

A range of initiatives can be placed under this banner. These include social enterprise and widening participation of various kinds. Even so, some respondents felt that in some pockets of the region (e.g. Torbay) universities were seen by some residents as 'separate entities', 'distant' and 'not for the likes of us'.

### **Social Enterprise**

Of particular note at the University of Plymouth was the emphasis on **enterprise**, but this was not interpreted simply in traditional business terms. The aspiration to be an enterprise university appeared to be well-embedded, emerging as a discussion topic in a number of meetings with academics, students and stakeholder groups. It manifests itself in not only fostering traditional entrepreneurship, but also in a focus on creativity, socially innovation, social enterprise and volunteer work amongst students. The over-whelming ethos sought amongst students was one of 'can do'. A shift of emphasis since the economic crisis has created a huge interest in other types of enterprises amongst students; the now long-standing curriculum shift to an emphasis on the employability students encompasses the social enterprise dimension. In a meeting with student representatives it was very evident that they are in accord with this sentiment. They concurred with the importance of volunteering and this in itself fulfils multiple objectives both internal and external. Students receive credit within a 5-credit reflective portfolio and the volunteering itself links to engagement activities in widening participation, environmental sustainability, sport (coaching certificates based on working with community groups), and other areas of community engagement such as tea dances for the elderly (said to be particular of interest to mature students). The student union itself offers an award for community engagement and is working with the university to create a university badge for employability. The formalisation of such work by students is clearly a potentially important edge to have in the current job market for graduates.

Work concerning the development of social enterprises, businesses which apply their profit to social benefits rather than shareholder values, was described in detail with Jan Bennett from the University of Plymouth and Judith Reynolds of Co-Active, a Plymouth-based social enterprise support organisation (see <http://www.co-active.org.uk/>), which seeks to raise economic activity in deprived urban and rural areas. In this context the expressed need from Co-Active was for access to the university's resources by leaders of social enterprises. With the university's

commitment to social enterprise, collaboration with Co-Active provides a part of the social enterprise component for the curriculum.

The University of Plymouth has placed itself in a strong position nationally and following talks with UK National Council for graduate entrepreneurship, it is discussing becoming the lead organisation for social enterprise networks. Locally it is engaged with Devon School for Entrepreneurship (Dartington Trust) and has offered its facilities to the school.

Within the institution, there is a developing grass roots campaign to provide a package for staff and students to set up their social enterprise. Whilst the project is at a very early stage, there is ambition to offer summer schools, master classes and academic conferences on social enterprise. At same time programmes to develop accreditation for activities associated with social enterprise are being developed, including collaboration with international experts from Canada and Finland.

A number of issues emerged in this area:

- There appears in the University of Plymouth focus on social enterprise to be benefit for the external world, but work is in its infancy. A university mission with a commitment to community engagement will bring more social enterprises to the institution with mutual benefit, and the development of enterprising students may bring individual and societal benefits. However, research on the long-term benefits of a social enterprise approach is absent and here an opportunity exists to put a programme into place.
- Promoting activities in this area could be developed. The VC was quoted as saying that the University 'hides its light under a bushel, and then it hides the bushel'. The budget for promoting work in social enterprise was reported as being very small in comparison to marketing to potential students. More efforts might be made in promoting social enterprise work.
- It was recognised that sustained efforts need to be made over decades to embed practices within institutions, and the challenge was for university is to sustain these efforts in the long-term. Well-developed longitudinal studies of the impact of social enterprise working would provide a useful evidence base for sustainability.
- Clearly 'enterprise' is a brand that defines the University of Plymouth's approach, adds to its reputation, and potentially makes it a more credible organisation in the region.
- One surprising area of weakness appears to be the Plymouth Business School, which it was reported has historically underperformed in entrepreneurship programmes. It is hoped that a newly appointed Dean will develop this area more fully.
- Opportunities for further international working may lie close-by. There is a strong French social enterprise movement and the University of Brest, together with socio-economic actors and other Breton universities has aspirations to create a regional network for student entrepreneurship, with a special focus on social

enterprises. There may therefore be a good chance for a cross-border Interreg project as contacts have already been made.

### Widening Participation

Creating routes into Higher Education for communities who have traditionally not participated is a major part of engagement work in the region. This is manifested in a variety of forms, the most predominant model being the links with the Further Education Sector, and improved articulation between them. Many parts of the region, but in particular the urban centres such as Plymouth and rural areas in Devon and Cornwall, still have significant pockets of under-participation, a factor underlined by comments of Plymouth MP, Linda Gilroy, who commented on the strengths of both the University of Plymouth and Marjon University College.

Particularly prominent is **University Plymouth Colleges (UPC)**, a partnership between the University of Plymouth and local colleges to increase access to undergraduate level courses, and a full Faculty of the university. The main activity is 2-year Foundation Degrees at their local college (13 FE colleges, 3 Community Colleges, one private provider and the Royal Naval are all feeders), which are a vocational end in themselves and a progression route to the final year of a full honours degree at the University of Plymouth. UPC started in 1989 to improve learning opportunities in the region's scattered rural environment. There are more than 10,500 students UPC students, comprising one-third of all the university's students, and in 2009, 51% progressed to degree level programmes (in 2003 it was 30%). Some 35,000 students have graduated through this mechanism since 1989. Some 80% of students travel to their local centre within 20 miles of their home. Many study on a part-time basis and most are in work, some co-funded by employers. Clearly the activity is a means of providing local access to FE for those living in what were described as 'cultural islands' such as Torbay and North Devon. In Cornwall UPC is one of the main contributions to the Combined Universities of Cornwall (CUC) work via the FE sector, who do not independently provide their own HE level work. Cornwall College has some 1800 ftes and Truro and Penrith some 900 ftes.

In a HEFCE QA report the UPC model has been reported as exemplary. The university clearly attaches great importance and care to this work. There are bridging arrangements to support transition and special pastoral arrangements are put in place for articulating students to year 3 (described as having the characteristics of first years). All staff working in the regional centres are registered university teachers, and have the opportunity to take up staff development opportunities, including the new lecturer programme and are afforded access to all resources of the university.

Furthermore success is celebrated in localities with, for example, degree ceremonies in Truro Cathedral and processing through the street in Barnstaple.

Of particular interest is the offer of accreditation to private providers by UPC, for example the major local company, Flybe. Also reported by UPC were continuing professional development short courses, popular both with employers and individuals: a shell-type framework to obtain a generic degree based on accumulator of existing modules had been established. Bespoke programmes were also being created.

Some of the issues that arose in relation to this activity are as follows:

- For UPC, the lack of part-time final year options and the necessity of being located at the University of Plymouth for the final year
- The lack of use of ICT to deliver courses, which of course could be one of the solutions to the previous issue of lack of final year options
- The lack of a University of Plymouth experience, an issue raised by student representatives, who also raised the idea of creating a 'virtual student union' for these students
- Target numbers have been met within the FD programmes so the encouragement of greater numbers progressing may bring its own problems.
- Data on relative performance of students coming through this route and retention rates appeared limited in their availability, having only just become available in the university's data systems. In particular research on the career outcomes is unknown though some research in this area was reported as being underway
- Little level 0 work seems to be offered
- The problems of scale and the economics of bespoke programmes.

In addition, the University of Plymouth and The University of Exeter have been working with Exeter College to develop bespoke Foundation Degrees with Flybe for both Management and Leadership and Airside Operations.

Outreach with a focus on widening participation takes other forms in addition to links with colleges. Like many HEIs in England, the University of Plymouth is part of Aim Higher. It uses its widening access premium from HEFCE to target particular groups in the region with a view to raising aspirations and awareness amongst school pupils and improving attainment in schools where historically there have been low progression rates to HE. There are three particular target groups: firstly, groups with poor social mobility (low income, low SES and with other indices of deprivation): secondly, the disabled; and, thirdly, children in care. It was estimated by one respondent that the university would be active in at least one school in each county each week.

Some of this activity is manifested in activities for school-pupils at the university, and the CDG was able to observe an interactive session on e-safety for pupils, which has grown out of standard outreach work. In such sessions pupils are introduced to issues pertaining to social networking, cyber-bullying, hacking protection and identity theft, and workshops on e-safety are offered in schools. The university has also set up an e-safety ambassador scheme in 8 schools, and the South-West Grid for

Learning has asked that a toolkit be created for other schools. Further a self-assessment tool for e-safety for schools, developed by the South-West Grid for Learning, has been validated by the university. This activity appears to represent an interesting amalgam of awareness raising linked to WP coupled with the development of concrete products for the public sector.

Also targeted are adult returners and people from ethnic minority groups. It is estimated that directly or through working with partners, the university actively engaged with 40,000 people in 2008-9, activities varying from a half-day in a school to the year-long mentoring of a pupil. Most of the work is with young people themselves, but also includes working with those who influence them.

### The Elderly

Although there are parts of the regions (e.g. Torbay) with high proportions of older people this topic received relatively little attention. The semi-retired as previously mentioned were seen as a possible source of mentoring in the economic arena, but there appeared to be little or no focus on provision for an increasingly aging population. It was noted in the Briefing Paper that with an ageing population there may be long term pressure on health care services.

### Health Issues

Not explored in this visit, partly because of the constraints of time allowing site visits to most parts of the region, in particular to Cornwall campus sites, were issues pertaining to health. It was noted in the Briefing Paper that there are areas of health inequality across the two counties. This includes affordable dental provision. The Universities of Plymouth and Exeter have created the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry in Cornwall, cited as a significant example of successful regional collaboration at a remote campus. The Briefing Paper reports that 'it has created benefits for the county through increased access to affordable dentistry in some of the most deprived parts of the region, attracted inward investment and provided excellence in terms of training for students who are placed in the dentistry/health sector for their placements as part of their training'. This model of collaboration at regional level might be suitable for follow-up study and be cited as an interesting model for international attention.

### ***Environmental Perspectives***

This is a significant field of endeavour in the region with many activities cited by most parties that were consulted. Activities included:

- Research expertise at the University of Exeter at both the Centre for Energy and the Environment, the School of Business (skills for renewable energy development and the Centre for Rural Research (agriculture and climate change)

- The support of the South-West Energy and Environment Group, which funds the University of Exeter to provide support in zero carbon development with each of its members getting a time allocation for that support.
- The HEFCE-funded CETL (Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning) in the field of sustainable development at the Centre for Sustainable Development at the University of Plymouth funded for 5 years (£4m) bringing 14-18 research centres in the university together.
- PRIMARE, the Marine Institute, a joint University of Exeter and Plymouth involved in innovative research to develop marine renewable energy, most notably through work on wave power at Hayle funded by the South-West RDA. It also offers environmental monitoring and impact services, expertise on marine electrical systems, resource characterisation, marine operations and safe and economic operations as well as given attention to socio-economic issues.
- The University of Exeter's research expertise in environmentally sustainable building cited by the RDA, and as noted by Devon County Council above in skills for renewable energy, agriculture and climate change, and in zero carbon development.
- The Peninsular Partnership for the Rural Environment supported by University of Plymouth, the University of Exeter and Marjon University College Marjon.
- A Fair Trade day at the University of Plymouth
- A community garden development in the city of Plymouth led by the university linked to dance events and craft fairs, and linked to the Lord Mayor's day.
- Encouraging the community onto the campus of the University of Plymouth along green trails to develop awareness of sustainability issues

Sustainability is clearly being embedded within the University of Plymouth in an analogous way to enterprise through what was described as a holistic model of change, a *4C model* of Campus, Curriculum, Community and Culture. Thus sustainability is being embedded in internal behaviours and in commitments through quality labels such as ISO14001. Externally the University of Plymouth ranks highly in university green league tables alongside, for example, Bradford, Edinburgh and Gloucester. The challenge is to link sustainability and enterprise effectively, and to match internal developments and external engagement work. One respondent commented that in this field the university was 'outward looking, but not anticipatory enough'.

Two issues, only explored tangentially were:

- the extent to which regional needs analysis in the environmental area was systematically carried out
- the development of an international market for what appear to be excellent services, particularly those of Primare, which appeared not to have been determined, and which will be vital for economic sustainability.

A number of PURE regions, including potential ones such as Bornholm and South-West Florida may be interested in this aspect of the universities's work.

## ***Cultural Perspectives***

This area did not receive significant attention during the course of the review, although some notable activities were reported, and some further details are provided in the Regional Profile (e.g. Peninsula Art Programme (within the University of Plymouth's Faculty of Arts), the University of Plymouth's involvement in the Respect Festival and the University of Exeter's campus-based Northcott theatre (although this has been recently placed in administration due to financial problems).

At the University of Plymouth for example, the following activities were described:

- A public arts programme of event and lectures, including popular artists such as Beryl Cook and international performers such as Evelyn Glennie.
- Links with the creative and cultural industries sector at curricular level and in business development
- Cultural Exchange events e.g. the Ghana exchange

Additionally the CDG were able to visit a Creative Industries incubator at the University of Plymouth supported by the RDA and ERDF funding within which individuals were provided with work-spaces and a virtual office package to support business development in this field. The current target is 55 new businesses and 155 new jobs.

In this arena we clearly did not explore all other links that exist with important cultural assets in the region such as the Eden Project and the Tate in St Ives. It may of course be that these links are not well developed and that potential exists for development.

### ***Possible specialist sub-group cluster subjects (and possible partner regions)***

The region could be a member of all current clusters within PURE, and it will be up to the region to decide on priorities for focus.

Links with existing regions based around relatively small numbers of major conurbations and a large rural hinterland such as Buskerud, Varmland and Jamtland around issues pertaining to sustainability and tourism might be possible.

Links with Flanders and Northern Illinois around social issues concerned with WP, and in particular work with colleges would also be of interest. Many regions will be interested in the UPC and CUC models.

Equally many regions will be interested in the emphasis on enterprise, and in particular social enterprise at the University of Plymouth, and the role of service learning and volunteering as a link between internal institutional change and external engagement.

The KTP scheme, although UK-wide, appears to be working well in Plymouth and may be of interest internationally.

### **Possible examples of *good practice* that may be written up later**

Highlights include UPC, CUC, the Peninsula Medical School (in particular its regional health impacts), WP to schools (and the e-security work), the use of service learning, the embedding of social enterprise, various environmental initiatives, particularly around energy and green skills and the use of KTPs. Each could be written up as a case study

### **Initial use of and reactions to the *Benchmarking Tools***

Some advice on approach was given, but details were not discussed. This can be dealt with through follow-up support.

### **First indicative notes about a *Region Action Plan*.**

The following are indicative and not meant to be comprehensive at this point.

In relation to some activities thought might be given to monitoring of impact of some initiatives, for example in relation to UPC work related to performance and career progression (especially for FDs).

A relative weakness in the field of entrepreneurship programmes and the impact of business start-ups might be explored together with a more structured approach to identifying and engaging with business.

Exploration of potential international markets for work in the sustainability area, and generally reflection on how some activities will be sustained beyond the next tranche of ESF/ERDF funding.

How joined working between the various agencies concerned with business development can be promoted and how better intelligence can be systematically provided.

Consideration of possible cross-Channel links in areas such as

- Cultural events
- Knowledge exchange in the maritime area
- Social entrepreneurship
- Actions with elderly: foreign language study and arts

## Appendix 1 CDG and those consulted

### Contacts list – PURE visit – Feb 2010

**Note – Flybe contact, additional students and Devon County Council (Topsham meeting) to be added**

Contact	Organisation	Email address
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Gavin Carrier	Plymouth CDC	
Paul Glossop	GOSW	
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Sue Brownlow	Combined Universities of Cornwall	Sue.Brownlow@cuc.ac.uk
Heidi Hallam	University of Exeter	H.A.Hallam@exeter.ac.uk

## **Appendix 2 Programme of Meetings**

**31 January 20.30 – 22.30**

### **Initial Briefing Meeting between CDG and the following:**

- Professor Julian Beer, Director of Research and Enterprise, Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of Plymouth
- Dr Rebekah Southern, Acting Deputy Director of Research and Enterprise, Director SERIO, University of Plymouth
- Dr Jan Bennett, Head of Corporate Projects, Research & Enterprise

**1 February**

### **09.30 PURE PASCAL Team Briefing with a range of project participants**

- Heidi Hallam, Stakeholder and Corporate Responsibility Manager University of Exeter
- Dr Rebekah Southern, Acting Deputy Director of Research and Enterprise, Director SERIO, University of Plymouth
- Dr Caroline Chipperfield
- Add

### **10.15 The Torbay perspective**

Suzie Burrow, Regeneration Policy Officer, Torbay Development Agency

### **10.45 Cornwall briefing**

- Professor Julian Beer, Director of Research and Enterprise, Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of Plymouth
- Sue Brownlow, Combined Universities in Cornwall
- Jane Chafer, Director, Marketing and Communications, University of Plymouth

### **12.45 The role of an enterprise-led approach – maximising innovation and partnership**

Each individual spoke for 5mins introducing their role and the contribution this area makes to the economic, social and/or cultural development of Devon and Cornwall.

- David Coslett, Dean of Arts, Pro Vice-Chancellor
- Caroline Chipperfield, Policy Adviser to the Vice-Chancellor
- Jon Lean, Plymouth Business School (*leaving early*)
- Professor Steven Furnell, Head of School, Computing and Mathematics (*Leaving early*)
- Simon Payne, Head of Plymouth Law School
- Professor Steve Gomez, Head of Work-based Learning
- Lynne Butel, Plymouth Business School

**13.45 Telephone conference with Linda Gilroy MP (Plymouth Sutton LAB)**

**14.15 Employment and skills**

- Graham Morris, Project Director Plymouth Employment Skills Board
- *David Draffan, Assistant Director of Development, Plymouth City Council (N/A)*
- Gavin Carrier, Chief Executive, Plymouth City Development Company
- Paul Glossop, GOSW
- *Andrew Lightfoot/Cllr Mumford, Devon County Council (N/A)*

**16.00 Sustainability, environment and marine**

*Conference Room, 18 Portland Villas*

- JingJing Xu, Lecturer in Maritime Law and Economics (Wave Hub)
- Professor Stephen Sterling, Environmental Education

**17.00 3D Design exhibition in the RLB – opening by Cindy Dalglish of Plymouth City Development Company, Development leader for the Creative Economy**

Tuesday 2 February

**10.30 South West Regional Development Agency**

- Jill Sheen, Head of Skills, South West RDA

**12.0 Devon County Council, Topsham**

**Add**

**13.30 University of Exeter**

- Sean Fielding, University of Exeter

- Mark Overton, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Exeter

### **15.30 FlyBE – An Exeter-based Air company**

- Simon Witts, FlyBE

### **3 February**

### **09.30 Co-active Ltd**

The role of social enterprise in the region

- Judith Reynolds, Co-active Ltd
- Dr Jan Bennett, Head of Corporate Projects, Research & Enterprise

### **10.45 University of Plymouth Colleges**

How this network of 17 partner FE colleges contribute to the growth of the region

- Dr Colin Williams, Dean, University Plymouth Colleges

**11.45** Met by Professor Steven Furnell and accompanied to Robbins Conference Centre with Sarah O’Leary and Vanessa Fitzgerald

### **11.50 Schools day organised by the School of Computing and Mathematics**

### **12.20 Widening Participation and schools outreach**

- Sarah O’Leary, Active in Communities
- Vanessa Fitzgerald, Widening Participation

### **12.45 The student perspective – employability and entrepreneurship**

- Tom Vennard
- James Redfern
- Gus Palmer
- Add

**13.45** Sharing knowledge, leading innovation and supporting enterprise in the region

How HE is sharing knowledge, research and expertise with business and supporting new/small businesses through the recession. Employability and skills for students, the role of SERIO, ECIF and KTPs.

- Professor Julian Beer
- Dr Andy Phippen, Senior Lecturer in Business Enterprise and Ethics
- Marc Lintern, Head of Student Development and Employability
- Emma Hewitt, Head of Knowledge Transfer and Business Development
- Lorna Bell, SERIO
- Eleanor Butland, Formation Zone
- Clare Tremlett, PRIMaRE

#### **15.00 Tour of Gateway**

- Marc Lintern
- Professor Julian Beer

#### **15.15 Tour of Formation Zone and meet some residents**

- Professor Julian Beer
- Eleanor Butland
- Emma Hewitt

#### **15.30 Tour of LINK**

- Professor Julian Beer
- Eleanor Butland
- Emma Hewitt

#### **16.00 Meeting with the Vice-Chancellor, University of Plymouth**

- Professor Wendy Purcell
- Caroline Chipperfield

#### **16.30 Final discussions**

- Caroline Chipperfield
- Rebekah Southern

