

West Midlands Regional Assembly 2008-11 Business Plan & Budget

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Chairman's Statement

The West Midlands Regional Assembly is justifiably proud of what we have achieved over the last year and indeed over the last 9 years. I predict that 2008-09 will be one of the most challenging years of our existence, during which we will face some big delivery tasks for our core activities which government continue to emphasise the importance of; at the same time as we begin preparation for the implementation of the Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration published in July 2007 under which Regional Assemblies face the transfer of their functions by 2010. The challenge that this brings to both our staff and our partners is one that we are managing, and it is a measure of the success that we have brought to the region and the esteem within which we are held by our partners that we continue to be asked to take part in new initiatives.

Our last year was a successful one, culminating in the final publication of Phase One of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) revision, meaning that the work flowing from the Black Country study is now part of planning policy for the West Midlands. This proved the enormous value of the successful partnership that we have established with the Black Country Consortium and the success of the approach adopted in this part of the region. Also of note, across the whole region this time, was the work on RSS Phase Two. We submitted Phase Two revision, which was a tremendous undertaking for the regions planning advisers, both for our small in-house team and also for the wider local authority advisory team - I would like to play tribute to them all. Last year involved some delicate and some times downright difficult negotiation, some long hours and careful balancing of approaches and considerations, and a tremendous amount of intelligence, expertise and application of sense before we were able to get to the submission that we made to the Secretary of State in December. I must not forget the contribution made by the members of the Planning Partnership, who were able to take the advice of the officers, weigh it carefully and come up in the end with a response which I believe moved the region on considerably over the year. During this time we have made strenuous and I believe successful efforts to raise the profile and impact of these regional issues by making clear the link between the strategic approach and what eventually happens on the ground. This was borne out by the significant media coverage we received about the RSS, especially around the issue of housing numbers and what this may mean for the region overall, particularly its more rural areas. Across urban and rural areas we received strong support for the stance the Assembly eventually took, which was a carefully weighed perspective based upon many months of evidence gathering and careful evaluation of what that evidence means for the region. The outcome was a submission to Government that is strongly supported as a strategy which will enable all parts of the region to achieve their ambitions for strong and sustainable growth.

Phase Two is of course about far more than just housing numbers and the tremendous work which went on into the other areas it covers should not be forgotten; my thanks to those who worked on those areas as well, ranging from waste, to climate change, employment to transport. One hugely important factor which was raised repeatedly by all our partners, and which we have in turn emphasised strongly is the need to secure the infrastructure that is needed to deliver the housing growth. This is not just local infrastructure but also involves matters of regional and sub regional importance and the government must play its part in ensuring that enough investment is made available for the West Midlands to develop sustainable. Without the provision of such essential infrastructure the housing and economic growth we are planning for will not be achievable. It is as stark as that.

As the Assembly we have a democratic mandate which it is important for us to utilise effectively in areas of strategic regional significance and we will work to ensure that the importance of this is not lost in planning effectively for the West Midlands. This can show benefits in a number of ways. For example, at this time last year we were working with the RDA on the revised Regional Economic Strategy and we were pleased to see that the RDA took the opportunity to carry out extensive consultation events into their proposals. Its publication in December was deliberately worked to coincide with the launch of the RSS Phase Two submission and emphasised the close working that has gone on between our two organisations to ensure that both strategies are based upon a common evidence platform with full policy alignment. Our response to the RES Delivery Framework has built on the constructive working relationship we have with the RDA is designed to ensure, that what finally emerges will truly “do the job” for the region as it must do. I believe this joint approach bodes well for future working on the sub-national review agenda.

Last year was the first year in which I think the inevitable impact of climate change, took hold in most peoples consciousness as something which was not just “an environmental matter” but something of fundamental importance we needed to bring into our core workstreams. The Assembly, having started the debate at our conference in October 2006 really took the lead in establishing arrangements which led to the first regional wide action plan for Climate Change, contributed to and signed up to by all the regional bodies and endorsed by the regional minister, Liam Byrne MP. A mark of the profile and importance this had was the fact that well within the year following our conference, all local authorities in the region had signed up to a declaration about climate change and will be taking action to put this into effect.

Our scrutiny and strategic review work continued to impact on regional policy and delivery. The strategic review of Europe marked a real change in the way in which the West Midlands will work on European matters in the future; the impetus from the review leading to some effective plans which have already resulted in a new and more focussed strategy and the start of a different approach which is showing signs of early success. The review of Access to Finance, led by our very active business sector, was of importance in highlighting the reality of the way in which businesses on the ground experience the impact of policy decisions and we were very pleased both with the publicity this received and the positive impact it is having.

I started my introduction by saying how proud I am of what we have achieved over the last year and over our past life. I believe that this Assembly has shown that the arrangements we have here are effective and have worked; that we have overcome early problems, have achieved much with limited resources and are a valued part of true regional governance. It would be remiss of me as the Chairman of the Assembly, not to state that I am both proud and grateful for the contribution made by our members, partners and staff; that the mark of their devotion and care will be the way in which we continue to deliver to the challenging agenda set by government whilst facing up to a future which does not have an Assembly. My personal belief is that the proposals for the future of regional working presented in the Sub National Review are ill thought through, and do not take sufficient notice of the importance of the democratic process in delivering regional activities. Over the next year we will be working out what will happen to both the functions which will transfer to the RDA and how that will work post 2010, but we will also consider the other activities the Assembly has undertaken; activities which have been carried out with little cost to the public purse but with a major contribution to public benefit, which have involved intelligence, skill, perseverance and flair. As chairman of the Assembly it is those qualities which I most value and I believe the way in which we have applied them has served this region well.

David S Smith
Chairman

Key Achievements 2007-08

Corporate Governance

2007/08 was a busy year in terms of corporate governance for the Assembly, with a number of internal audit reviews of key activities being undertaken, all of which received either significant or full assurance. The Assembly has also been involved in significant regional activities such as city regions and has led on regional projects such as EU Connects and the Big Lottery Health & Well Being Project.

- Completed internal audits for Corporate Governance, Management Information & Budgetary Control, Performance Management, Central Accounting and Payroll.
- Assembly became a shareholder in the new Birmingham, Black Country & Coventry City Region Company.
- Commenced early stages of implementation of the Sub National Review with GOWM, AWM and Local Government, seconding our Director of Policy to lead the regional Transition Team at AWM.
- Secured funding for EUConnects and BIG Lottery Living Well in the West Midlands projects, with teams now based at the Regional Partnership Centre.
- Endorsement by Assembly of new RES, this followed extensive work with AWM to secure a refreshed and focused strategy for the region.
- West Midlands' submission on BERR Business Support Simplification consultation.

Communications

Our communications activity has been an integral part of the delivery of our core priorities and 2007-08 saw recognition of the Regional Planning Body's (RPB) increased profile within the Region. Our highly skilled but small communications resource enhances the value our activities bring to the Region and in particular it has;

- Led the communications activities to raise awareness of the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft Preferred Options
- Project managed the design and production of the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Preferred Option documents
- Coordinated the design and production of the RPB publications
- Organised and coordinated the Assembly annual conference
- Produced a communications strategy to inform much of the work in 2007/8
- Created better communication links with MPs and MEPs with the introduction of West Midlands News a quarterly e-publication that reports on the latest developments and news from the RPB

Regional Planning Body

The Planning Partnership oversaw some significant milestones in the development of the WMRSS in the West Midlands. Once again the achievements recorded owe much to the willingness of partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to play their part.

WMRSS Phase One Revision – The Black Country

Following the Examination in Public of the WMRSS Phase One Revision held in January 2007, a response was prepared to the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes. The final Phase One Revision was formally adopted by Government in January 2008.

- In conjunction with the Black Country Consortium, responded to the Proposed Changes which were published by the Secretary of State in September 2007
- Final WMRSS Phase One Revision issued by the Secretary of State in January 2008
- Provided informal officer views on the Issues and Options Consultation Report for the Joint Core Strategy being prepared by the four Black Country Authorities

WMRSS Phase Two Revision

Following the WMRSS Phase Two Spatial Options launch in January 2007, the Regional Planning Body signed off the final WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft in October 2007 for submission to the Secretary of State in December 2007.

- Development of the Preferred Option undertaken between April – October 2007, including a close alignment of emerging policies between the WMRSS Revision and WMES Review.
- Formal consultation events undertaken on the development of the Preferred Option to ensure stakeholder engagement.
- Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Regional Flood Risk Appraisal and Rural Proofing undertaken on the Preferred Option policies. New policies on Climate Change, Sustainable Construction and Sustainable Communities have been incorporated into the revised policies.
- Phase Two Preferred Option was formally endorsed by Regional Planning Partnership on 22nd October 2007 and submitted to the Secretary of State on 21st December 2007 with consultation period to follow.

WMRSS Phase Three Revision

The WMRSS Phase Three Revision saw a successful start with the preparation of a Draft Project Plan which was formally launched for public consultation in November 2007.

- Progressing of technical work to inform the definition of the scope of Phase Three, including the issues to be covered in this phase
- Preparation of Draft Project Plan and launch for public consultation which took place between December 2007 and January 2008
- Analysis of responses to Draft Project Plan consultation and development of final Project Plan in the light of the consultation responses
- Development of Briefs to the Section 4(4) Strategic Authorities to seek their Advice which will inform the development of Options during 2008
- Commissioning of the Sustainability Appraisal

WMRSS Monitoring

Considerable work has taken place as part of the WMRSS Revision to strengthen the WMRSS monitoring framework and to further integrate monitoring into the Revision cycle via the strengthening of links between monitoring and implementation.

- Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) again published in line with statutory requirements and cited by DCLG as good practice in feedback to the English Regional Assemblies.
- Fundamental review of the monitoring framework as part of the WMRSS Phase Two Revision
- WMRSS Revision evidence base supported by the publication of Green Belt and Employment Land Supplementary Monitoring Reports.
- Housing Market Supplementary Monitoring Report further enhanced to strengthen links between Housing, Spatial and Contextual monitoring.
- Contextual Monitoring strengthened via input to WMRO State of the Region Report and WMRO input to WMRSS AMR.

WMRSS Implementation

Primary focus has been the preparation of the Draft Implementation Plan to accompany the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft submission documentation.

- Completion of the technical work required to underpin the preparation of the Draft Implementation Plan including an assessment of the Infrastructure implications of the Phase Two Revision Draft.
- Building on existing Good Practice the construction of an Implementation Plan and structures to incorporate Phase One and Phase Two requirements and reassure Government of the deliverability of the Strategy
- To ensure that Government initiatives such as City Region and Growth Points are appropriately incorporated into the strategy.
- Continue to work with a range of partners including Professional Institutes to promote increased awareness of WMRSS and further alignment of regional policies.

WMRSS Conformity

- Responded to all consultations in respect of Local Development Documents and regionally significant planning applications within statutory timescales. In April 2007 - December 2007 the amount of: regionally significant planning applications responded to numbered 28. The amount of pre Submission consultation Documents (i.e. Issues and Options and Preferred options) responded to numbered 23. The amount of Submission Documents responded to where a formal opinion of general conformity was given numbered 4.
- Revision of Planning Conformity Protocol and internal decision making processes completed and disseminated to Local Authorities in the Region.
- User friendly guidance for Local Authority Development Control staff produced and disseminated.
- One to one meetings held with numerous Local Authorities in connection with Core Strategy development (in conjunction with Regional Partners – GOWM, AWM and Highways Agency).
- Meeting deadline for the submission to Secretary of States on those Structure Plan Policies to be saved beyond September 2007. (Completed at end of 2006- 2007 but not reported at time of last Business Plan).

Regional Transport Partnership

During 2007/8 there was considerable progress on many of the transport priorities identified in the Business Plan and the Assembly co-ordinated the Region's response to the newly appointed Regional Minister's 'transport challenge'.

- The transport elements of WMRSS Phases One, Two and Three have progressed well;
- The Regional Funding Allocation transport process has been refined;
- An updated edition of the Transport Delivery Plan was published;
- The Region's views on the Local Transport Bill and the Eddington Report were clearly articulated to Government;
- Partnership working enabled the Region to make a positive response to the Regional Minister's 'transport challenge'.

Regional Housing Executive

During 2007 the Regional Housing Executive (RHE) function became well-embedded within the Regional structures and the four sub-regional Housing Market Area Partnerships continued to provide guidance to it, to enable the RHE to effectively formulate advice to Ministers and successfully deliver on a number of key responsibilities:

- Developed the Regional Housing Allocations Strategy for 2008-2011 – allocation of Capital Housing funding for local authorities and the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP)
- Monitored and reported to CLG on Capital Housing spend for 2006-2007
- Supported WMRSS Phase Two Revision process – commissioned a re-refresh of the affordable housing estimate required by the WM Region
- Supported the commissioning process for the Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAAs) being undertaken by the sub-regional Housing Market Area Partnerships
- Governments recognition of the Kickstart Partnership in the West Midlands and its range of services, particularly the model for equity loan / home improvement release

Regional Environment Partnership and Climate Change

This Partnership brings together all the significant environmental organisations in the West Midlands, and as such, it offers a tremendous resource to support the emerging climate change agenda and bring co-ordination to the many strands of the Region's environmental ambitions. The Assembly, via the Partnership, has taken on the role of Climate Change Champion and achieved the following:

- Developed the first Regional Waste Strategy for WMRSS Phase Two consultation.
- Produced the Green Infrastructure Prospectus and Scoping Report.
- Advised on River Basin Management consultation and established River Basin liaison.
- Developed the regional 50 year Landscapes for living project and new Biodiversity mapping for the region.
- Led regional approach on climate change policy and development of the first Regional Climate Change Action Plan.

- Completion of the first Habitat Regulations Assessment and Regional Flood Risk assessment for the WMRSS
- Produced draft policy on climate change ,sustainable communities and sustainable design and construction for WMRSS Phase Two
- Began work on the Regional Historic Environment Strategy.

Sustainable Development

The Assembly works closely with SustainabilityWM, to take forward the Sustainable Communities agenda. Significant outcomes for the year are noted below.

- Sustainability Appraisal of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revision.
- Study to Assess the Alignment of West Midlands Regional Assembly Priorities and Work Programmes with the aspiration to address climate change.
- Launch with AWM of the Sustainability Planning Checklist - a practical on-line tool for planners and developers which aims to improve the application of existing national and regional planning guidance, provide a higher degree of consistency for developers on the standards expected by planning authorities, and encourage the application of good practice in sustainable construction with a view to raising the quality of the built environment.
- With SWM and other regional partners, refreshed the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF) in line with Defra guidance.
- Developed overarching sustainable development policies on climate change, creating sustainable communities, and sustainable design and construction for inclusion in WMRSS Phase Two Revision.

Scrutiny and Strategic Review

Scrutiny and strategic review activity during 2007/8 has taken account of the impact of the RES review process on Advantage West Midlands and regional/sub regional partners. Accordingly only one scrutiny review has been completed within the year, that of Access to Finance, this was a business led review which has resulted in Advantage West Midlands implementing the 6 recommendations made for it. The Assembly also published the outcomes of the strategic review of the Region's Relationship with Europe which are also in the course of implementation.

The Assembly was invited by the Regional Director of the Learning and Skills Council to examine skills issues in the Region. The subsequent strategic review of Post 16 Education, Training and Skills was completed early in 2008 with the final report to be submitted to the Assembly and LSC in April 2008. Further wider regional work has included an independent assessment of the effectiveness of and need for the Regional Concordat which will be completed in April 2008.

Considerable work has been undertaken to explore the possible form and direction of future regional scrutiny and accountability following publication of the SNR. This has included discussion with different sectors and partners and has allowed the development of possible options to be debated by the region.

Regional Health Partnership

The Regional Health Partnership provides a regional mechanism for multi-agency dialogue around health and well-being to take place and facilitates action to address inequalities in health and ensure health issues are promoted and integrated as part of the wider regional picture.

During this period the Regional Health Partnership has:-

- Successfully bid for £6.8 million Big Lottery funding to support regional projects for mental well-being, food and nutrition and physical activity. The 'Living Well in the West Midlands' management team set up to manage the work on behalf of the Assembly.
- Carried out a full Consultation on the draft Regional Health and Well-being Strategy including events, analysis of the consultation responses, and integration into the final West Midlands Health and Well-Being Strategy.
- Produced the Final Health and Well-Being Strategy which was endorsed full Assembly on the 16th January 2008.
- Reviewed the membership of the Regional Health Partnership to ensure balanced representation and capable of driving forward the actions under the Regional Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Produced the first Draft Strategic Action Plan and presented to the full Assembly on the 16th January 2008
- Regional Health Partnership and WMRSS Health task group fed into WMRSS Phase Two Revision.
- Fed into the consultation and ensured alignment of the Regional Health and Well-Being Strategy and the NHS framework 'Investing for Health'.

Europe

Working with partners to create a new Regional European Strategy and delivery structures for the region;

- Implementation of the recommendations from the Strategic Review of the Region's Relationship with Europe.
- Established EU Connects www.euconnects.org a service to help local authorities and other partners within the region increase their success rates in bidding for (non structural) EU funding under Lifelong Learning, Competitiveness and Innovation and INTERREG
- Developing the transnational strand of the structural funds
- Annual European event held at the Lighthouse, Wolverhampton, on the topic ' Human Capital: How what you know shapes your life'
- Developed the ESF Co-financing Plan with the LSC on behalf of the WMLGA, to include the appointment of a co-financing manager, with sole responsibility for working on behalf of the WM Local Authorities.

Equalities & Diversity

The Equalities and Diversity Partnership is leading this regional activity. The Partnership continued to be seen as a source of advice and support to other regional partners and activities. In 2007-08, the Partnership advised the RPB on WMRSS Phases Two and Three and AWM on the WMES Strategy and Delivery Framework to ensure that issues of community cohesion are factored into the development of revised/new policy options. It also:

- Held a Regional Leaders' Summit (and numerous consultation events with regional stakeholders) on equality and diversity issues, as well as the first Social Capital, Equality and Diversity Programme Conference.
- Worked closely with the new Equality & Human Rights Commission in its initial setting-up phase, including providing support and advice on related issues in regions.
- Contributed to the development of mainstreaming equalities in the work of the Third Sector, LAAs, Compacts etc. ensuring that Equality & Diversity (social cohesion) issues were recognised and addressed within Government policies and strategies at local, regional, national and European levels.
- Raised the profile of the West Midlands (and the UK) within Europe, working with WMiE in developing the social cohesion strand of the region's European policy.
- Maintaining a strong and credible Equality & Diversity Partnership within the region.
- Work with WMSPARS to ensure asylum seekers and refugee matters are appropriately addressed.

Rural & Forestry

The Assembly engages with and supports the WM Rural Affairs Forum and Forestry Forum via the range of activities described below. The fora, supported by Assembly staff, are giving input to the WMRSS Revision and RES review to ensure that both deal positively with rural matters and the natural environment is protected and enhanced.

- Adoption and co-ordination of the third year of implementation of the West Midlands Rural Delivery Framework;
- Established an effective rural agencies specialist task group, working with the Accord and WMRAF to rural proof high level strategies and policies.
- Resulting in significant input into WMRSS Phase Two and development of Phase Three, Regional Health & Well Being Strategy and Strategic Health Authority Strategy
- Pro-actively managed the business of the Rural Accord on behalf of the Partners & acted as focal point for advice and information by providing updates and reports for Rural Accord, Rural Affairs Forum, RAG, Rural Renaissance Working Group, Rural Shops & Post Offices & others.
- Supported the work of the Rural Accord and Rural Affairs Forum towards becoming carbon neutral.
- Specialist Seminar on Rural Proofing (December 2007) and Rural Conference on Sustainable Rural Communities (Nov 2007)
- Supported the work of the Rural Affairs Forum, in particular: lobbying to increase priority level of rural proofing in high level regional and local strategies and policy development
- Completed the third year of implementation of the WM Regional Forestry Framework.

- Prepared the WMRFF rolling Action Plan 2007-20010; facilitating and co-ordinating its delivery.
- Monitoring and evaluation; culminating in the production of the Annual Report 20056-20067.
- Established additional WM Woodland & Forestry Forum's specialist task groups, support to others carrying the work of the WMRFF forward.
- Improved links to the Assembly policy partnerships and WMRSS implementation.
- Leading the work, in conjunction with Welsh colleagues, to promote better collaboration between partners and organisations that operate both along and across the border between Central Wales and the West Midlands

Culture

The Assembly supports the Cultural Consortium in its work to raise the awareness and impact of the culture offer in the West Midlands. WMRA activities this year have concentrated on preparing the appropriate cultural input into Phase Three of the WMRSS Revision and continuing to maximise the benefits to the Region from the 2012 Olympics.

- Working with partners co-ordinated the development of appropriate cultural tasks and objectives for the WMRSS Phase Three Revision - Draft Project Plan.
- Led the co-ordination and commissioning of detailed technical work that will provide a strong, mutually supportive evidence base for the WMRSS Phase Three Revision, Cultural Strategy Review and emerging work for the City Region.
- Co-ordinated a West Midlands local authority response to the DCMS 'Lifting the Burdens Task Force Review' which was seeking to examine and then eradicate the unnecessary burdens that DCMS places on local government.
- Supported the development of the Black Country Urban Park Lottery Bid through membership of the 'Urban Park Steering Group' and used the Assembly's well established networks to encourage Region wide support during the voting process.
- Ensured the alignment between the WMRSS and other key Regional strategies by submitting detailed consultation responses to the WMES Review and the Visitor Economy Strategy Revision.
- The West Midlands continues to lead the Nations and Regions role for 2012 Games Cultural Programme and continues to maximise the benefits to the Region from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games.

Skills

The Region's poor performance in respect of skills (although there are recent signs of improvement) is reflected in almost all indicators used to assess skill levels. The Assembly does not have a direct remit for skills however the Assembly has played an increasing role in positively influencing those agencies delivering improvements in skills.

- Began a dialogue between local authority children's services and economic development departments with FE colleges to join the Every Child Matters objective of Achieving Economic Well-being for Young People with the proposed economic development duty for local authorities.
- Worked to ensure alignment between the RES and WMRSS on skills issues.

- Ensured the Assembly has engaged in the work of the RSP at Board and officer level, including the development of the RES, its Delivery Framework and the Regional Skills Action Plan
- Worked with LSC and Job Centre Plus to coordinate ESF in the Region.
- Commended a Strategic Review of Post 16 education, learning and skills.

Economic Development

The Assembly has a key role to play in supporting regional level economic development and the work of the RDA. The Assembly also supports the Regional Economic Development Officers Group which has become the first port of call for liaison between Advantage West Midlands and local authorities on Economic Development issues.

- Proactively worked with AWM to align the revised WMES and the partial revision of the WMRSS.
- Worked at officer and Member level with the RDA to steer the development of the revised WMES.
- Signed off a revised WMES which has had the greatest level of consultation involvement to date.
- Worked with the RDA on joint regional response to the PPS4 consultation.
- Supported a proactive and professional Regional Economic Development Officers Group to become a hub for engagement on regional economic development strategy and implementation initiatives.

Urban Renaissance

Urban Renaissance is a key strand of the Regional Spatial Strategy and vital for the economic regeneration and restructuring of the West Midlands region.

- Engaged with the Birmingham, Coventry, Black Country City Region to ensure the partnership brings added value to regional and sub regional working in both urban and rural areas.
- Engaged with the work of the North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership to support development of a vision and set of action priorities, in line with the WMRSS and WMES, for the sub region.

Key Priorities for 2008-09 and beyond

Corporate Activity

Our priority for the next two years is the need to deliver on the core functions identified in the business plan whilst beginning the preparation, planning and ultimate transfer of statutory functions to AWM. To this end we will continue to work with our regional partners to deliver effectively, whilst developing transitional arrangements that ensure a seamless transfer of functions to the RDA within a timescale that is appropriate for this region.

- Continue to participate in the Government consultation and debate on regionalism; both as the West Midlands Regional Assembly and through the English Regions Network.
- Actively participate in City Region matters to ensure the City Region work supports the West Midlands regional approach to renaissance and growth.
- Take forward the findings of the Review of the Regional Partnerships and implement its recommendations with regional partners.
- Play an active role in the transitional planning processes.
- Continue to ensure sound Corporate Governance and stewardship of resources.
- Work with AWM to secure successful transitional arrangements and provide early influence to the Single Integrated Regional Strategy.
- Identify the critical factors and partnership working for the future; revise the Concordat following the planned strategic review.

2009-10 Priorities

- Progress the WMRSS Revision Phase Two and Three within the time frames agreed with DCLG.
- Ensure effective change management to enable 'business as usual' delivery of the business plan.
- Develop and plan transitional arrangements with AWM and partners.
- Take forward the Memorandum of Understanding with Welsh Assembly Government and WMRA by continuing to lead the work, in conjunction with Welsh colleagues, to promote better collaboration between partners and organisations that operate both along and across the border between Central Wales and the West Midlands.

2010-11 Priorities

- Conclusion of WMRSS Phase 3 Revision activities.
- Manage transfer of agreed functions to AWM.
- Manage the wind down of Assembly activities and hand over of non statutory work programmes to other partners.
- Develop and implement exit strategy for financial and legal obligations of the Assembly in its dissolution.

Communication & Engagement

Our Communication function supports and promotes effective consultation mechanisms and communication processes to support the Regional Housing Body (RPB) and the Regional Housing Executive (RHE), as well as supporting the delivery of other core activities.

- Consult and communicate on the RPB and RHE's key activities ensuring positive press and media relations
- Provide partners with timely information enabling them to engage in the activities of the RPB and RHE
- Continue to improve communications with regional MPs and MEPs enabling them to engage in the activities of the RPB and RHE
- Continue to raise awareness of the WMRSS
- Continue to support and project manage the design and publication of WMRSS publications/documents
- Develop a communications strategy to support the Assembly's 2008/09 Business Plan.

2009-2011 Priorities

Future years will be a roll forward of the core activities detailed in 2008-09 and ensuring effective communication with all staff, partners and stakeholders involved or affected by the transfer of statutory functions to AWM and the dissolution of the Assembly.

Regional Planning Body (Regional Planning Partnership)

The WMRSS provides the strategic framework for regional activity associated with the Governments Sustainable Development and Growth agenda. The activities described below reflect the Assembly's ambition to update the WMRSS, in line with Government guidance, to ensure that it supports sustainable development and growth. The Monitoring Report, Implementation Plan and the Conformity Protocol ensure that there is clarity of roles in respect to the plan, monitor and manage approach. All Assembly Partnerships will be involved in WMRSS Revision, and many partners will be involved in the Examination in Public. The Assembly will continue to work with the two City Regions and sub-regional partnerships to deliver the renaissance agenda in the MUAs. The Assembly will also provide an important input into the thinking and development of the new Single Integrated Regional Strategy set out in the Sub-National Review.

WMRSS Phase One Revision – The Black Country

To promote the implementation of the Phase One Revision through ensuring the proposals are taken forward through the Partnership structures, other strategies and plans and relevant funding and investment arrangements.

- Provide a formal general conformity view on the Preferred Option for the Joint Core Strategy being prepared by the four Black Country Authorities
- Promote the implementation through the conformity process and other mechanisms.

WMRSS Phase Two Revision

Following the submission of the Phase Two Revision Draft to the Secretary of State in December 2007, a letter was issued by Baroness Andrews indicating that GOWM would be asked to commission further work to look at options which could deliver higher housing numbers to provide additional evidence for the Examination in Public. The Assembly has indicated that it will engage constructively with the proposed study and has recommended that the consultation period be extended to the end of June 2008 to allow adequate time for stakeholders to be properly consulted.

A key priority for the Assembly (as the RPB) will be to consider the outcome of the further study and make an appropriate formal response to the Secretary of State within the context of the Phase Two consultation exercise, leading into the preparation for the EiP to be held in 2009.

- Formal response to the proposed further housing study to be commissioned by GOWM, including implications for Growth Points and Ecotown proposals
- Preparation and representation at the Phase Two Examination in Public
- Ensuring ongoing alignment with the work of the WMRES and the transition towards the emerging Single Integrated Regional Strategy
- Address the infrastructure implications of WMRSS Phase Two, (see WMRSS Implementation)

WMRSS Phase Three Revision

Following its formal start in 2007, the priority for the WMRSS Phase Three Revision will be the development of Options which are to be launched for public consultation in early 2009. Progress on Phase Three will in part rely on possible adjustments to the Phase Two timetable.

- Completion of outstanding technical work and analysis of the Advice received from the Section 4(4) Strategic Authorities
- Development of Options April-December 2008, including activities involving Assembly partnerships, officer groups, regional stakeholders and the public
- Conduct Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulations Assessment and Rural Proofing of emerging Options.

WMRSS Monitoring

- Implement the strengthened monitoring framework and links to implementation of WMRSS consequent to the Phase Two Revision.
- Integrate the emerging Phase Three monitoring requirements into the Monitoring Framework
- Further integrate monitoring of the WMRSS with other Regional Strategies and the activity of WMRO.
- Work towards the development of a monitoring system fit to incorporate the requirements of a Single Integrated Regional Strategy.

WMRSS Implementation

- Bring forward the structures and funding arrangements necessary for the delivery of the WMRSS.
- Address the infrastructure implications of WMRSS Phase Two and relationships with key funding streams.
- Assess the Implementation/Infrastructure implications of the emerging Phase Three Options
- To align Regional spend and incorporate Government initiatives (eg City Region and Growth Points) so that the Spatial Strategy is supported.
- Work towards the development of an Implementation Plan fit to incorporate the requirements of a Single Integrated Regional Strategy.

WMRSS Conformity

- Continue to implement WMRSS Conformity procedures to meet statutory requirements.
- Continue front loading meetings with Local Authorities and regional partners in respect of Core Strategies.
- With WMRSS Policy Leads, provide consistent advice to Regional Conformity Advisors and Local Authorities in respect of emerging WMRSS Policy as a result of the submission of Phase Two Preferred Option.
- Adapt procedures to any changes made by Central Government in respect of Local Development Frameworks.

2009-2010 Priorities

WMRSS Revision

A key priority in relation to the WMRSS Phase Two Revision will be to provide an RPB input into the final stages of the process. It is anticipated that the Panel Report on the Examination in Public will be published in 2009. The RPB will analyse the report and consider any implications arising from the Panel's recommendations. The RPB will subsequently consider and respond to the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes with a view to ensuring that the Region's views are adequately reflected in the final Revision document.

As regards the WMRSS Phase Three Revision, the RPB will be consulting on the Options and in the light of the consultation responses developing the Preferred Option which will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal for submission to Government in late 2009. Subsequently, the RPB will prepare for and provide an input into the Examination in Public which is anticipated in mid 2010. In bringing forward the WMRSS Revision, it will also be important to establish links with the emerging Single Integrated Regional Strategy and ensure policy alignment and integration.

(Note: the above target dates for Phase Three may need to be reviewed in the light of any adjustments to the Phase Two programme).

WMRSS Monitoring

In 2009-10, the current "routine" work will need to continue: the preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report is a statutory duty of the Regional Planning Body and therefore the associated data collection, analysis and reporting will need to be carried forward. However, as the Region moves forward towards the preparation and subsequent monitoring of the Single Integrated Regional Strategy, it will be necessary to ensure that the current arrangements and structures are adapted to ensure future adequacy and maintenance of current high standards

WMRSS Implementation

Phase Three of the Revision will be completed towards the end of 2009 and the Regional Planning Body will be pushing forward with its implementation in line with proposals in the Implementation Plan. This will require considerable commitment from the RPB and its partners including local authorities, statutory agencies, business and others, to bring forward delivery mechanisms and associated necessary funding. Additionally, Phase Three Implementation issues will need to be integrated into the Implementation Plan. Consequent to SRN and the Single Integrated Regional Strategy development, coordinated implementation will need to bring together the various delivery mechanisms in place to ensure that these are appropriate to future needs.

WMRSS Conformity

In 2009 -10, the current routine work will need to continue as Local Plan Authorities continue to produce Development Plan Documents and consult the Regional Assembly on planning applications of regional significance. However, as the role of Regional Planning Body will transfer to the Regional Development Agency, it will be necessary to ensure that the current arrangements and structures are adapted to ensure future adequacy and maintenance of current high standards.

2010-2011 Priorities

WMRSS Revision

It is anticipated that in 2010 – 2011 the WMRSS Phase Two Revision will have been completed and the transition of the Regional Planning Body's role to the Regional Development Agency will have occurred. The RPB's priority will therefore be to work towards the implementation of the revised policies and ensure that they are integrated in the Single Integrated Regional Strategy. The EiP into the WMRSS Phase Three Revision is expected to be held in mid 2010. This ongoing work will also need to be integrated into the Single Integrated Regional Strategy.

(Note : the above target date for the finalisation of Phase Three may need to be reviewed in light of any adjustments to the Phase Two programme).

WMRSS Monitoring

In 2010-2011, the current "routine" work will need to continue: the preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report is a statutory duty of the Regional Planning Body and therefore the associated data collection, analysis and reporting will need to be carried forward. However, by this stage the focus for monitoring will also need to encompass the Single Integrated Regional Strategy.

WMRSS Implementation

Consequent to the SRN and the Single Integrated Regional Strategy development, coordinated implementation taking forward the RSS Implementation Plan will be managed under the RDAs new role and responsibilities.

WMRSS Conformity

In 2010 – 2011 the transition of the Regional Planning Body's role to the Regional Development Agency should be completed. Arrangements and structures agreed during 2009 – 2010 should be implemented to ensure the RDA is able to give an opinion of general conformity with the Single Integrated Regional Strategy to Development Plan Documents and planning applications of regional significance that it is consulted upon.

Regional Housing Executive

Looking ahead to the 2008-2009 period, the RHE will continue to focus its activity towards the progression of the WMRSS Revision process and upon preparations for a partial Revision of the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) during 2008-09. The fostering of increased partnership working at the sub-regional level will also be particularly prioritised by RHE, to ensure that local authorities are able to meet the Government's new expectations in terms of adopting a strategic approach to housing delivery going forward.

Key Priorities include:

- WMRSS Phase Two pre-Examination in Public / Examination in Public, including closer working with National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit
- WMRSS Phase Three – Gypsies and Travellers consultation and policy development on the accommodation of additional pitch numbers
- Advise the Minister on the allocation of grant for Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision
- On-going delivery of RHS through the sub-regional Housing Market Area Partnerships, including closer working between planning and housing
- Development of Sub-Regional Housing Strategies and more explicitly to contribute to developing mixed and balanced communities
- Commissioning of necessary research to facilitate the RHS Revision and contribute to the development of a Single Integrated Regional Strategy
- Research on climate change and in particular a scoping report to identify the potential to improve the energy demand and resilience of the existing building stock to likely climate impacts
- Strengthen monitoring of Capital Housing spend for 2007-2008 and steering local authorities monitoring for 2008/09 outputs.
- Expansion of the Kickstart Programme across the Region, ensuring further roll out of the Programme and its range of services, particularly the model for equity loan / home improvement release
- Work with IDeA, Housing Corporation and GOWM to strengthen the capacity of the local authority strategic housing function and the strategic housing leadership role of the Regional Housing Executive members. This should support the local authorities collective role envisaged in the SNR

2009-10 Priorities

The RHE will prioritise the completion of all on-going tasks and seek direct engagement with the new Regional structures, to enable it to influence the future development and implementation of Regional Housing policy:

- To have input to the housing content of the new Single Integrated Regional Strategy and continuing to engage with all appropriate regional and sub-regional partners
- To develop a good working relationship with the new Homes and Communities Agency
- To support the delivery of the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) targets on affordable housing
- To continue its dialogue on regional affordability issues with the NHPAU
- To support the Gypsy and Traveller and environment / climate change aspects of the RSS Phase 3 review EIP

2010-11 Priorities

Key Priorities will include:

- Implement the revised WMRSS Phase Two and Three as confirmed by the Minister
- Continued working with the National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit
- Working with planning authorities to monitor the implementation of the additional pitch numbers in Phase Three of the RSS

- Advise the Minister on the allocation of grant for Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision
- To continue to support the delivery of the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) targets on affordable housing
- On-going delivery of RHS through the sub-regional Housing Market Area Partnerships, including closer working between planning and housing
- Development of sub-regional Housing strategies and more explicitly to contribute to developing mixed and balanced communities
- Commissioning of necessary research to facilitate the RHS Revision and contribute to the development of a Single Integrated Regional Strategy
- Encourage the implementation of the Code for Sustainable Homes in the non-RSL sectors and other initiatives to reduce CO² emissions in the housing stock
- Monitoring of Capital Housing spend for 2009-2010
- Continued expansion of the Kickstart Programme across the Region, ensuring further roll out of the Programme and its range of services, particularly the model for equity loan / home improvement release
- To continue to develop a good working relationship with the new Homes and Communities Agency

Regional Transport Partnership

The Regional Transport Partnership will focus on the following matters:

- WMRSS Phase Two pre-Examination in Public/Examination in Public;
- Research on climate change and in particular a scoping report to identify the potential to improve the carbon trajectory of regional policy;
- Responding to the Government's expected Regional Funding Allocation Round 2 process in Summer 2008 – identifying the short term transport priorities that will help to deliver jobs and homes (building on the WMRSS and the 'transport challenge' processes);
- Work with the Department for Transport to better understand to opportunities set out in their response to Eddington and Stern ('Towards a Sustainable Transport System') and moves towards a transport White Paper in Winter 2008; and
- Continue to work with partners to ensure that transport plays its part in preparation of the new arrangements following the Sub National Review.

2009-2010 Priorities

The focus of activity for 2009/10 will build on the work in 2008/9, with a particular emphasis on:

- Delivering the WMRSS Implementation Plan;
- Managing the Regional Funding Allocation Transport Programme;
- Delivering the Regional Climate Change Action Plan; and
- Provide transport input to the new arrangements following the Sub National Review, particularly with respect to shaping the Single Integrated Strategy and developing the evidence base.

2010-2011 Priorities

- Implement the revised WMRSS Phase Two as confirmed by the Minister
- Ensure the integration of the Regional Transport Strategy into the SIRS.
- Ensure a key role for the Regional Transport Partnership post 2010 regional arrangements.

Regional Environment Partnership and Climate Change

On behalf of the Assembly, the Environment Partnership will support the West Midlands response to climate change. Implementation of the Actions is a key activity for the Assembly in 08-09. Other key priorities are the leadership and input to the WMRSS Phase Three Revision and production of technical evidence work, completion of the Regional Historic Environment Strategy and the integration of the ecosystems approach to the River Basin Management work. Flood risk work will also be taken forward with completion of two Catchment flood management Plans and a refresh of the Regional Flood Risk Appraisal to take account of the Strategic flood Risk Assessments.

- Implementation of actions and support to the delivery of the Regional Climate Change Action Plan.
- Input to the WMRSS Examination in Public concerning the Regional Waste Strategy and climate change, sustainable communities and sustainable design and construction policies..
- Develop and action technical work to provide evidence to develop WMRSS Phase Three Options for consultation.
- Input to regional landscape for living project Phase Two to develop a vision for biodiversity and WMRSS.
- Complete the region's first Regional Historic Environment Strategy.
- Input to the development of Green Infrastructure Plans for Growth Points.
- Prepare and develop work on brownfield land, including a brownfield conference and skills training as part of the Centre of Excellence.
- Input into the RES Delivery Framework and strengthening links to environmental economy and low carbon approaches.

2009-10 Priorities

- Develop and complete Phase One of the Habitat Regulation Assessment for WMRSS Phase Three Revision
- Development of environmental objectives and delivery plan into the Single Integrated Regional Strategy (SIRS) process
- Development of SA/SEA and HRA processes into the SIRS
- Integrate Designed Environment Green Infrastructure into SIRS and Delivery Plan

2010-11 Priorities

- To ensure the integration of environmental objectives and policy into the SIRS the revised Delivery Framework arrangements and the strengthening of sub regional delivery with the four statutory environmental agencies
- Strengthen the partnership arrangements to integrate climate change across SIRS and all functional groups.

- Develop climate change adaptation integration into planning economic development housing and planning work
- Develop sustainable consumption and production and integrate with environmental economy work.
- Integrate regional Biodiversity, Energy, Climate Change, Forestry, Historic Environment and Waste Strategy into the SIRS.
- Integrate water environment, landscape and minerals into SIRS,

Sustainability

Continue to promote the Regional Sustainable Development Framework and ensure that sustainability is strong feature of the Assembly's work programme.

2008-09 Priorities

On behalf of the Regional Assembly, ensure that the a robust Sustainability Appraisal of the WMRSS Phase Three Revisions, undertake technical work to support the Phase Three Revisions, and provide support for the Regional Climate Change virtual office.

2009-10 Priorities

- Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment of WMRSS Revision Phase Three Options.
- Support for Regional Climate Change virtual office and deliver actions assigned to the Regional Assembly in the Regional Climate Change Action Plan inc review of implications of climate change scenarios (UKCIP08) to identify likely adaptation requirements in the Region.
- Skills Development; education and training for planners, architects, transport, housing and other professionals in planning for climate change.
- Ensure that WMRSS policies and targets contribute to national climate change/carbon dioxide emission targets.
- Promote use of Regional Sustainable Development Framework in the development and review of all regional strategies.
- Technical work to support the WMRSS Phase Three Revisions including develop criteria-based policies for renewable energy resources.
- Support Sustainability WM and encourage them to continue to offer constructive criticism and advice into all aspects of the Assembly's work.

2010-11 Priorities

- Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment of WMRSS Revision Phase Three Preferred Option.
- Support for Regional Climate Change virtual office and deliver actions assigned to the Regional Assembly in the Regional Climate Change Action Plan.
- Technical work to support the WMRSS Phase Three Revisions including review of spatial implications of introducing decentralised and renewable energy technologies into the Region.
- Support Sustainability WM and encourage them to continue to offer constructive criticism and advice into all aspects of the Assembly's work.

Scrutiny & Strategic Review

Priorities for the 2008-9 financial year will fall into two areas. We will continue to deliver this statutory function in a robust and challenging manner with specific activities including;

- Scrutiny of how Advantage West Midlands support the skills agenda and the effectiveness of Business Link West Midlands following its first 12 months of operation
- Completion of the Strategic Review of Transport
- Development of links with local authority overview and scrutiny especially in relation to the Duty to Co-operate element of Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill

The other main priority will be contributing to the development of regional accountability arrangements post 2010. This will allow any new structures and processes to build on the experiences and successes of regional scrutiny to date.

2009-10 Priorities

- Complete two scrutiny reviews of Advantage West Midlands activity; Marketing the Region and one other subject to be identified
- Continue on going scrutiny activities of Advantage West Midlands including Advantage West Midlands's annual report to the Assembly
- Complete one strategic review of an issue of importance to the region – subject to be identified but should assist with the development of new regional governance arrangements or the single integrated regional strategy
- To develop an agreed approach to scrutiny and accountability arrangements at the regional level post 2010

2010-11 Priorities

To ensure a smooth transition to new scrutiny and accountability arrangements within the region ensuring that appropriate links are established with national, sub regional and local arrangements

Regional Health Partnership

The Regional Health Partnership will oversee the development of the Action Plan to support the Regional Health and Well-Being Strategy agreed in January 2006.

- Support the Development of The Strategic Action Plan for the Regional Health and Well-being Strategy.
- Support and project manage the initiation of actions under the Regional Health and Well-Being Strategy.
- Ensure the Regional Health Partnership is strategically aligned/integrated with the new Regional Integrated Strategy.
- Support and Manage the Living Well in the West Midlands Portfolio

- Launch the Living Well in the West Midlands portfolio.
- Attract match funding to the Living Well in the West Midlands portfolio to ensure sustainability of the projects.
- Monitor and evaluate the Living Well in the West Midlands portfolio.

2009-2010 Priorities

- Ensure the integration of the Regional Health and Wellbeing Partnership work and the Regional Health Strategy under the Sub National Review
- Continuation funding and sustainability of the Living Well programme

2010-2011 Priorities

- Continuation funding and sustainability of the Living Well programme.
- Ensure the integration of the Regional Health and Wellbeing Strategy into the SIRS.
- Ensure a key role for the Regional Health and Wellbeing Partnership in the post 2010 regional arrangements.

Europe

Focus on embedding the new Regional European Strategy and delivery structures within regional working.

- Further developing EU Connects www.euconnects.org a service to help local authorities and other partners increase their success rates in bidding for (non structural) EU funding; including attracting further funding to secure the service through to 2013, and expanding the service to include the funds covering the environment, and exchange of academic staff between universities.
- Further developing the transnational strand of the structural funds; to include a priority delivery plan
- Delivering the ESF Co financing plan with the LSC on behalf of the WMLGA.

2009-2010 Priorities

Embedding the new Regional European Strategy and delivery structures within regional working.

- Work with AWM and West Midlands in Europe to develop a joined up European service for the region with clear regional leadership and cross sectoral governance arrangements in place for regional European activity in the West Midlands and in Brussels
- Regional European strategic aims and actions embedded in key regional strategies and WMiE Business Plan
- To develop the WMRA niche within this, concentrating on support to the European Policy partnership and to partners seeking EU funding for transnational work.

2010-2011 Priorities

- Ensure a key role for the European Strategy Board in the post 2010 regional arrangements.
- Ensure the integration of the Regional European Strategy into the SIRS.
- Sustainability of the EU Connects project beyond the grant funded programme (funding already identified to 2013).

Equalities & Diversity

The Equalities and Diversity Partnership is leading this regional activity. The Partnership continues to be seen as a source of advice and support to other regional partners and activities. In 2008-09, the Partnership will continue to work with the RPB on WMRSS Phase Three and AWM on the WMES Delivery Framework to ensure that issues of community cohesion are factored into the development of revised/new policy options. It will continue to:

- Continue to working with the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to ensure that the most effective and efficient model is put in place for the West Midlands (within the region) and that both regional employers and employees utilise and contribute to it.
- Continue to work with the EHRC to develop the Partnership's role as an Advisory Body to the regional EHRC Hub.
- Continue to ensure that Equality & Diversity (social cohesion) issues are recognised and addressed within Government policies and strategies at local, regional, national and European levels, including LAAs and Third sector Compacts.
- Develop the future role of the Partnership in the light of the Sub National Review and the commencement of the EHRC.
- Maintain a strong and credible Equality & Diversity Partnership within the region.
- Work with WMSPARS to ensure asylum seekers and refugee matters are appropriately addressed.

2009-2011 Priorities

This work strand has resources by a free secondment which concludes at the end of 2008, if we are able to continue a resource, then the Equalities and Diversity Partnership would like to continue to lead in this regional activity through providing support in an advisory capacity to regional partners, such as GOWM, AWM and EHRC to ensure that issues of equality and diversity and community cohesion are factored into the development of revised/new policy options. Focus will be on ensuring a future for this activity perhaps under the stewardship of WMLGA.

Rural & Forestry

This Assembly activity secures funding from 4 different sources – a reflection of the importance of rural/forestry matters to the Region. The work detailed below contributes to our overall ambition in understanding and supporting urban-rural interdependencies and the role rural communities play in the economic and spatial functioning of the region.

- Facilitation and co-ordination to ensure the completion of the fourth year of implementation of the WM Regional Forestry Framework (WMRFF):
- Fulfilling the requirements for monitoring and reviewing the WMRFF; production of the Annual Report 2007-2008

- Preparation of the rolling Action Plan 2008-2011, aligning the WMRFF with the refreshed England Forestry Strategy and Implementation Plan
- Reviewing Quality of Environment Chapter 8 – Trees and Woodlands – as part of the WMRSS Phase Three Revision

Facilitation and co-ordination of rural policy design, development and implementation:

- Rural proofing of WMRSS Phase Three Revision with particular emphasis on policy review and revision for Critical Rural Services
- Facilitation and co-ordination of an effective rural agencies specialist task group properly working with the Accord and WMRAF to rural proof high level strategies and policies
- Supporting and providing a lead in the work of the Rural Affairs Forum
- Facilitation and co-ordination of the Rural Renaissance Working Group, and others in relation to regional rural policy development and delivery
- Continuing to lead the work, in conjunction with Welsh colleagues, to promote better collaboration between partners and organisations that operate both along and across the border between Central Wales and the West Midlands

2009-2010 Priorities

- Rural proofing of WMRSS Phase Three Revision with particular emphasis on policy review and revision for Critical Rural Services
- Facilitation and co-ordination of an effective rural agencies specialist task group properly working with the WMRAF to rural proof high level strategies and policies

2010-2011 Priorities

- Ensure the continuation of rural proofing and the WMRFF is integrated into the SIRS.
- Ensure a key role for this work programme in the post 2010 regional arrangements.

Culture

The Assembly will continue to work closely with Culture West Midlands to ensure there are synergies between the Regional Spatial Strategy Revision, the review of Regional Cultural Strategy and emerging work being undertaken by the City Region. We will also continue to maximise the benefits to the Region from the 2012 Olympics.

- Continue to lead the cultural element of the WMRSS Phase Three Revision process by helping to shape the 'Section 4.4 Briefs' which will be the mechanism for obtaining cultural planning guidance and information from the Region's local authorities. This will subsequently provide appropriate input into the development of the WMRSS Phase Three 'Spatial Options'.
- Continue to play a lead role in maximising the benefits to the Region from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- Support the development of a new Cultural Strategy for the West Midlands.

2009-2010 Priorities

- To have ensured that the Region is fully prepared for the 2012 Olympics and is able to benefit from all the cultural, sporting, economic and volunteering opportunities on offer. The West Midlands will also be in a position to deliver a long term Olympic legacy.
- To have successfully completed all the necessary stages within the WMRSS Phase Three Revision process and ensured synergy between associated regional strategies. All new Cultural policies; underpinned by appropriate technical work, will strengthen the role of culture within key regional strategies and play a key role in the delivery of economic prosperity, thriving communities and urban/rural renaissance.

2010-2011 Priorities

- A SIRS with Culture embedded as one of its key aims and which recognises the roles of sub regions and localities in delivering it.

Skills

The skills agenda continues to be of critical importance to the performance of the Region and the health and well-being of its communities. The Assembly will continue to use its influence to support effective regional working on skills;

- Continue to develop its role in the Regional Skills Partnership, including engaging in the further development of the Regional Skills Action Plan
- Continue to raise the profile of the importance of skills to the well-being of the Region.
- Establish stronger links between economic development, children's services and the FE college sector.
- Complete its Scrutiny Review of AWM on Skills
- Preparing for the transition to government proposed changes to education, learning and skills arrangements for 14-19 year olds.

2009-2010 Priorities

- Refreshed WMES Delivery Framework and Skills Action Plan which engage all partners and meet the social and economic needs of the region and its localities.
- Ensuring that the skills agenda is integrated into the development of the SIRS.

2010-2011 Priorities

- A SIRS which builds on local and sub regional intelligence to meet the skills needs of the region.

Economic Development

The Assembly will continue to play an important role in regional economic development strategy by working with the RDA to develop the new Single Integrated Regional Strategy as set out in the SNR. The Regional Economic Development Officers Group, which has become the first port of call for liaison between Advantage West Midlands and local authorities on Economic Development issues, will continue to be supported by the WMRA.

- Proactively work with AWM to shape the development of the Single Integrated Regional Strategy and its evidence base.
- Continue to support the Regional Economic Development Officers Group as a hub for engagement on regional economic development strategy and implementation initiatives.
- Work with AWM, local authorities and other key partners to help shape the new economic development duty responsibilities for local authorities.
- Work with AWM and partners to shape the local/sub regional economic assessments required as part of SNR.

2009-2010 Priorities

- A refreshed and up to date WMES Delivery Framework.
- Development of a SIRS which draws upon the current WMRSS and WMES but which is fully informed by local economic assessments.
- An Economic Development Officers group which provides sound advice and technical support to the development of the SIRS and its delivery mechanisms.

2010-2011 Priorities

- A SIRS which builds on local and sub regional intelligence to meet the economic needs of the region.

Urban Renaissance

Urban Renaissance is a key strand of the Regional Spatial Strategy and vital for the economic regeneration and restructuring of the West Midlands region.

- Continue to advocate and support the delivery of Urban Renaissance under the banner of the WMRSS and in relation to the WMES.
- Continue to engage with the Birmingham, Coventry, Black Country City Region to ensure the partnership adds value to regional and sub regional working in both urban and rural areas and helps to implement the WMRSS and the WMES.
- Continue to engage with the work of North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership to support the implementation of the sub regional vision.

2009-2010 Priorities

- Urban Renaissance is at the heart of the developing Single Integrated Regional Strategy.
- Demonstrable urban renaissance being delivered in the West Midlands through the Regional Spatial Strategy, the Regional Economic Strategy and sub regional delivery mechanisms including the BCBC City Region and the North Staffordshire Partnership.

2010-2011 Priorities

- A SIRS with Urban Renaissance as one of its key aims which recognises the roles of sub regions and localities in delivering it.

Accountability and Transitional Arrangements

Setting our Priorities

The Assembly's Partnerships have a key role in reviewing priorities and establishing effective work programmes that support and deliver against the statutory functions of the Regional Planning Body and the Regional Housing Executive, or the regional policy functions for Environment, Health and Equalities and Diversity. This work is co-ordinated by the secretariat via the policy team, who are instrumental in drawing up detailed work plans and associated costs. As the business planning process evolves, every budget bid and work programme is considered in detail by the Strategic Management Team and budgets are honed to ensure that key priorities are met within the overall budget parameters indicated by CLG.

In drawing up our 2008-09 Business Plan, our focus has been very much on the core statutory functions and we have begun a stepped approach of withdrawal from those activities that are not core to our planning, transport and housing functions. We believe that we have pared activities to the bare minimum to effectively deliver on our WMRSS and Housing commitments; we already have a lean establishment comprising the essential skill base to manage the challenging work programme; and any reduction of funding would have a significant impact on this business plan and would require cuts from these core activity areas.

Our Commitment to CLG

- The strategic activity set out in this Business Plan is drawn from more detailed work plans. Each activity has a measurable key performance indicator and we will report on our progress against these indicators quarterly to Government.
- Our reports to Government Office will include a financial summary detailing how the grant has been utilised and what partner funds have been utilised to complement and broaden our impact; and a copy of the Audited Financial Statements will be submitted to Government Office and CLG annually.
- Our Risk Register will be reviewed regularly by the Strategic Management Team and the Audit Committee will be responsible for overseeing the key risks we face as an organisation and the steps which need to be taken to mitigate these risks.
- We will maintain a Corporate Governance Action Plan to ensure robust, transparent and effective systems that mean we operate high standards of financial stewardship.
- We will ensure CLG accounting requirements are observed.

Risk Assessment

The Assembly's Audit Committee is charged with monitoring risk across both corporate governance and work programmes.

This Business Plan includes a comprehensive risk assessment for the work programme [Appendix A] and where we have identified a high risk scoring 9, this is also annotated alongside the work strand.

However there are some key risks that are emerging as a result of the SNR process such as our ability to; recruit and retain key staff, ensure continued effective partner engagement; ensure input of complementary policy areas such as Health, Europe, Culture etc. We will do our best to mitigate against these by working closely with AWM's HR team to secure early notice of new posts, communicate regularly with staff on transition progress, internal ring fencing of opportunities as they emerge; there is however no doubt that our withdrawal from 'non core' activities is bound to have an effect that is beyond our control.

SNR Transitional Arrangements

Given the changes envisaged in the SNR, one of the key priorities for the Assembly whilst still in existence, is the effective planning for transition. We want to do this in a way that minimises disruption to performance on core activity and which results in something which is even better than the current arrangements. There is no doubt that this will be difficult; we have no spare resource which we can devote to the changes and so it will be absorbed, important as it is, into existing workloads. The exception to this is that the Assembly's Director of Policy has been seconded to lead the Transition Team at AWM.

The transitional arrangements go beyond the transfer of the Assembly's core functions around planning and transport to AWM. We anticipate that some of the key matters around transition will be;

- the scope and process for the development of a Single Integrated Regional Strategy
- the way in which effective scrutiny and accountability is delivered
- the future of partnership working (a feature of our work that all stakeholders in the region have valued and wish to see continued)

At the time of writing we are waiting for the promised consultation document from government and anticipate that whilst this will answer some of the questions we have, it will doubtless raise yet others.

Olwen Dutton
Chief Executive

Strategic Influence & Strategic Partnerships

Leading a 'Partnership' Region

There is no doubt that this Assembly has had a key role in the West Midlands in terms of its strategic influence on other partner organisations, regional initiatives, policies and strategies. It has developed a strong track record for innovative and effective partnership working across a number of delivery strands, where year on year partners continue to contribute both financially and intellectually in our work programme.

During 2008-09 there will be a review of the Concordat that will seek to build upon and enhance the key relationships already developed under the existing concordat; that ensures continued involvement and recognition of the value of partner contributions in developing a Single Integrated Regional Strategy; and that identifies effective regional working arrangements for the future that supports a shared ambition to **improve the performance and profile of the West Midlands.**

We have always committed a small amount of our CLG funding to support a range of regionally significant work programmes outside of our key statutory functions. A modest commitment from the Assembly has often been a catalyst to attracting wider support and even financial contributions from other partners; often delivered under a partnership agreement that seeks to secure longevity for the activity and develop a strong work programme that can effectively contribute to our statutory work on the Regional Spatial Strategy or Regional Housing Strategy.

Whilst we have no choice now but to begin to withdraw our financial support in these areas, we will continue to explore with partners how these contributions can be maintained up to and beyond 2010, as we believe this broader influence is vital to ensuring that all elements of regional social and economic growth can keep pace with developments around planning, housing and transport. These activities will also be vital for securing the successful implementation of SNR in the region. It can also lead to other key opportunities for our region; for example our modest contribution to a health policy post enabled us to successfully win £6.7m Big Lottery funding that will support and enhance a range of health projects in our region for 3 years.

The Assembly has been fortunate to have benefited from a secondment from the Home Office to lead our Equalities and Diversity work who has successfully worked with partners to develop a 'Whole Region' approach to community cohesion. This contribution has been invaluable and whilst the secondment is due to end in December 2008 we will explore any potential for an extension of this arrangement during the transition period and the potential for transfer of this arrangement to WMLGA.

Strong Local Government Commitment

The in-kind contribution to the Regional Assembly from WMLGA over the past few years has been both significant and invaluable. It has enabled the Assembly to operate from modern and well equipped offices for a notional contribution to costs; it has provided a range of corporate services and support for HR, finance, clerical and administration activities for no charge. In exchange we have provided WMLGA with some local government focused policy support; however an estimate of the in-kind contribution is in the region of £200,000 each year.

The West Midlands also operates a devolved model for local authority input into our WMRSS work programmes; with services delivered to the Assembly under a partnership agreement and a payment made to the authorities for their policy lead roles. In reality the total amount allocated to our authorities is only £225,000 but the support and input from senior members and officers in terms of policy lead roles, input into WMRSS data gathering and their active involvement in the Assembly's many decision making partnerships, is invaluable and probably worth in excess of £1m.

There is no doubt therefore that the significant support from local government has enabled this Assembly to really focus CLG funding on delivering against core activities. However as we begin to move towards a separation of our integrated arrangements, and in recognition of the impact SNR will have not only on the Assembly but on the WMLGA also, it will be necessary for local government to reduce this subsidy. A stepped approach to this is planned so as to moderate the impact on Assembly budgets.

Local government are keen to emphasise their continued strong commitment to this particular facet of regional work; they will actively be involved in developing effective transitional arrangements; they will ensure local government leadership in future regional working and in the development of a Single Integrated Regional Strategy. However, they must now also begin to practically reduce their financial support to enable a refocused role for WMLGA to deliver effectively for its local authorities on key aspects of SNR.

Work Strands – Corporate Activities

STAFFING and OPERATIONAL (Work Strands 10-13)					
Strategic Objective: Ensure sound corporate governance and practices that engender stakeholder engagement					
Strategic Objective: Ensure better collaboration between partners and organisations that operate both along and across the border between Central Wales and the West Midlands					
Risk Assessment: [10.1] Insufficient staff resource to effectively deliver the work programme – Mitigation; work closely with AWM to manage recruitment/ retention issues, ring fence internal opportunities, ask AWM to provide early notice of relevant new posts to Assembly staff					
[13.1] Impact on staff (10.1) partners (13.2) and financial ability to deal with the cost implications – Mitigation; Work with AWM to minimise impact on staff and ensure good practice in HR management and legal compliance, work through ERN to secure early advice/commitment from CLG in respect of redundancy, wind-up costs, etc and influence transition process to ensure partnership approach to single IRS and local government leadership.					
No	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
10.1	£1,397,551	Provide an effective and responsive Assembly Secretariat	Sufficient complement of staffing to deliver work programme Q1/2/3/4	Effective and sufficient staffing resource to deliver business plan	CEO
11.1	£10,000	Training needs identified via reviews and fed into a Corporate Training & Plan	2008-09 Corporate Training Plan Q1 New Member Induction Pack Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training needs identified / met ▪ Members equipped for the role 	CEO
13.1	£137,778	Maintain essential operational services; operate a rolling Corporate Governance Action Plan; Risk Management; Compliance and Probity, etc	Refreshed Corporate Governance Action Plan Q2/4 Audit Reports Q3 Risk Management Report Q2/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective business and operational systems ▪ Robust Financial Management ▪ Mitigated Risks ▪ Corporate compliance 	CEO
13.2		Provide Regional Leadership to ensure the aims of the Regional Concordat are achieved	Review of Regional Concordat (see WS30)	Clarity on leadership roles and contributions of key organisations in light of RFA	See WS30
13.3		Plan and prepare for transfer of statutory functions	Regional SNR Transition Work Programme updated quarterly	Clarity on the process and timetable for transfer of statutory functions to the RDA	AWM/ RA/ WMLGA
13.4		Facilitation and co-ordination of Cross Border working in support of Memorandum of Understanding between Central Wales and the West Midlands	Core Officer Group Meetings; Specialist working groups; Strategic Forum Meeting (June 2008)	Better collaboration between partners and organisations that operate along and across the border between Central Wales and the West Midlands	WMRA, WAG and partners

COMMUNICATIONS (Work Strand 14)

Strategic Objective: To effectively communicate and support the purpose and work of the Regional Housing Body and Regional Housing Executive.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
14.1	£9,000	Consult and communicate on the RPB and RHE's key activities ensuring positive press and media relations Provide partners with timely information enabling them to engage in the activities of the RPB and RHE Continue to improve communications with regional MPs and MEPs enabling them to engage in the activities of the RPB and RHE Continue to raise awareness of the WMRSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce Annual Review Business Plan. Q1 Scrutiny/Strategic Review Annual report. Q2 Electronic 'Update' newsletter for policy areas. Q1/2/3/4 MP/MEP targeted quarterly electronic newsletter Q1/2/3/4 Produce timely press releases (as required) Produce a quarterly electronic publication to support work of WMRSS, RPB and RHE. Q1/2/3/4 	<p>Raised profile for the work of the RPB and RHE</p> <p>Greater comprehension of / engagement with, the RPB and RHE and their work amongst key stakeholders leading to improved delivery</p>	Head of Comms WMRA
14.2		Support Regional Marketing Strategy	Support AWM in communicating key messages with Local Authorities as required	More positive perception both within and outside the Region	Head of Comms
14.3		Ensure Freedom of Information enquiries are responded to a timely manner	FOI inquiries dealt with effectively and within timescales Produce internal guidance on how to deal with FOI enquiries	More positive perception of RPB/RHE accountability	Head of Comms

Work Strands – Regional Planning, Housing and Transport

WMRSS IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND CONFORMITY (Work strands 15, 16, 17)					
Strategic Objective: Provide a robust monitoring system to track the progress and implementation of the WMRSS. Continue to develop the Conformity Protocol for use by the RPB as a key tool for implementing the WMRSS with public and private agencies					
Risk Assessment: [15.1] Failure to deliver defined outputs due to lack of funds – Mitigation; Develop detailed work and resource plan and regular review progress and priorities. Draw on existing work and partnership structures to deliver the outputs.					
[15.3] Insufficient funds to take forward development of the implementation plan – Mitigation; Further utilise the wholly partnership-based approach employed for the previous work.					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
15.1	£25,000 [WS15]	Development of a Communication and Partner Strategy	A defined approach to the communication of RSS issues to Stakeholders. Q3 Outputs to include the development of a refreshed series of RSS pamphlets and website development. Q4	Improved Stakeholder comprehension and participation in the delivery of the RSS	Strategic Adviser Implementation WMRA
15.2		Development and support of Regional Implementation alignment	Establish a group of senior regional stakeholders working towards the coordination of the delivery of the RSS; inform further Implementation Plan development. Q3	Alignment of Stakeholders' Business Planning with RSS requirements	SA Implement' WMRA
15.3		Further development of Implementation Plan 1) Pre-RSS Phase 2 EiP 2) post EiP	Further development of the RSS Implementation Plan to incorporate a sub-regional focus. Q4	Successful defence and promotion of the deliverability of the RSS at the EiP Implementation of RSS which delivers balanced and sustainable development sensitive to sub-regional needs	SA Implement' WMRA

16.1	£215,000 [WS16]	Provide an objective and cost effective assessment of the impact and implementation of the RSS	Data questionnaire issued. Q1 Deadline for data returns. Q3 Publish statutory Annual Monitoring Report and satisfy all associated requirements. Q4 This will be supported by the following reports & activities:-	To establish progress towards the policies and objectives expressed in the RSS and provide an evidence base for policy review	SA Monitoring WMRA
16.2		To develop monitoring so that the interplay between policy areas and the RSS with other strategies are fully developed.	1) Policy Lead Progress Reports Q3&1 2) Publish Employment Land Study Q3 3) Policy Lead Progress Reports Q3&1 4) Publish Housing Market Report Q3 5) Annual Stakeholder Conference. Q2 6) Policy Lead Progress Reports on Monitoring Q3&1	Provide WMRA and its partners with an enhanced understanding of the regional context and interplay with other strategies	SA Monitoring with 1) B'ham 2) Worc CC 6) Staffs CC
16.3		Harmonise the RES and RSS Monitoring frameworks post SNR	Implications for RSS monitoring from SIRS is fed into the annual review process. Q4	Complementary monitoring of RSS and RES to enable effective approach to the monitoring of the Single Integrated Regional Strategy	SA Monitoring WMRA
17.1	£20,000 [WS 17]	Providing advice and an opinion of general conformity with the WMRSS on Local Development Documents	100% of advice provided to Local Planning Authorities within statutory timescales Q1/2/3/4 Conformity Advisers Monitoring Reports Q3&1	Effective implementation of the WMRSS	Snr Advisor Conformity LAs
17.2		Providing WMRSS general conformity advice on planning applications of regional significance	100% of advice provided to Local Planning Authorities within statutory timescales Q1/2/3/4	Effective implementation of the WMRSS	Snr Advisor Conformity WMRA
17.3		Providing general conformity advice with the WMRSS in respect of pre-application enquiries.	100% of advice provided to the relevant enquirers within statutory timescales Q1/2/3/4	Effective implementation of the WMRSS	Snr Advisor Conformity WMRA

WMRSS REVISION PHASE, Two and Three and Partner Engagement (Work strands 18a, 18b and 20)

Strategic Objective: Implement the WMRSS in line with Government guidance, and agreed time-tables.

Risk Assessment: [18a.3] Insufficient resources to undertake technical work and obtain consultancy input required to support the representations for the EiP – Mitigation; Effectively use funding resources and prioritise technical work required to support the representations and draw upon partner organisations to provide.

[18a.3] Insufficient resources to undertake technical work required to underpin the development of Options – Mitigation; Effectively use funding resources and prioritise technical work required to support the development of Options and draw upon partner organisations to provide

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
18a.1		Preparation of formal RPB response to EiP Panel Secretary on the further housing study	Response submitted to the EiP Panel Secretary. Q2	Ensure that RPB views are adequately considered at the EiP	Head of Planning WMRA
18a.2		Phase Two - Examination In Public	Representations to be submitted in advance of EiP. Q3&4	Ensure that the Region's case for its Phase Two Preferred Option Submission is presented and supported at the EiP, including any views on Ecotowns and New Growth Points.	HOP WMRA
18a.3	Phase 2 £100,000	<p>Technical Work to support representations to be made at the Phase Two EiP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of work to be determined in the lead-up to the EiP depending on outcome of the GOWM housing study and other issues arising as a result of the consultation. <p>Consultancy Support at EiP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancy support required to assist with representations and present evidence at EiP 	<p>Technical Work commenced. Q1&2</p> <p>Technical Work completed prior to EiP. Q2/3</p>	Evidence base to support the Region's case at the EiP.	HOP WMRA

18b.1		Phase 3 Project Plan	Publish Phase 3 Project Plan. Q1	Final Project Plan to respond to key issues raised in the consultation and to confirm the objectives of the Phase 3 Revision.	HOP WMRA
18b.2		Development of Phase 3 Options	Analysis of advice from Strategic Planning Authorities. Q2 Phase 3 Draft Options for informal consultation (Q3 or Q4 subject to possible delay)	The Options will set out a series of policies setting out the direction of travel in relation to Phase 3 Revision and the issues that need to be taken on board and the views that need to be sought for Public Consultation.	HOP WMRA
18b.3	Phase 3 £183,000	Phase 3 Options – Technical Work to support the development of the Options; Environmental element <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals Policy Review • Green Belt Policy • Energy Policy Review (see WS27) • Overarching Environmental policy Other; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTAB contribution to Environment Agency • PPS 9 Regional RSS biodiversity targets to 2026 • Carbon Trajectories 	Tender processes underway. Q1 Technical work commenced. Q2&3 Technical Work to be completed. Q3&4	To ensure a robust evidence base to support the development of the Phase 3 Options.	Strategic Advisers WMRA
18b.4		Assessment of Option Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal of Options (see WS 27) • Rural proofing (see WS35) • Habitat Regulation Assessment 	SA/SEA scoping report. Q3 SA/SEA and Rural Proofing of Phase 3 Options Policies completed. Q4 HRA Scoping report completed. Q3 HRA of Phase 3 Options Policies completed Q4	Integrated process to ensure the test of soundness and that emerging policies for consultation adequately reflect sustainability and rural issues.	Strategic Adviser Env WMRA

18b.5		Phase 3 Communication Activity To ensure stakeholder activity and engagement in the Phase 3 Process.	Events or publications that facilitate Stakeholder engagement in the development of the Phase Three Options. Q3 & Q4	Greater Regional representation and Participation in Assembly activities.	Head of Comms WMRA
18.c		<p><u>RSS Revision 2009/10</u> Analysis of Phase Two EiP Panel report and consideration of issues arising that need RPB action</p> <p>Analysis of Phase Two Proposed Changes and preparation of RPB response</p> <p>Analysis of Phase Three Options consultation responses to inform preparation of Preferred Option</p> <p>Development of Phase Three Preferred Option including activities to ensure stakeholder involvement</p> <p>Preparation of Phase Three Draft RSS Revision for submission to Secretary of State</p>	<p>Analysis of Panel report and issues arising reported to Regional Planning Partnership.</p> <p>RPB response to Proposed Changes submitted to Secretary of State.</p> <p>Phase Three Options consultation summary report published.</p> <p>Events or publications that facilitate stakeholder engagement in the development of Preferred Option.</p> <p>Phase Three Draft RSS Revision submitted to Secretary of State.</p>	<p>Ensure the RPB is aware of the Panel's recommendations to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Ensure that the RPB's views on the Proposed Changes are presented to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Ensure that views of regional stakeholders are taken into account in developing the Preferred Option</p> <p>Ensure continuing involvement of regional stakeholders in development of Preferred Option</p> <p>Present the Region's proposals for new/revised RSS policy to the Secretary of State.</p>	HOP WMRA
<p>NOTE: Dates for achieving the 2009-10 milestones at 18.c cannot be set at present because;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WMRA is awaiting appointment of consultants to undertake GOWM study ▪ GOWM has yet to confirm work plan and timetable for the study ▪ Phase Two EiP date has yet to be set by PINS ▪ Implications for Phase Three timetable have to be established once the above is clear <p>Once these activities have been completed in 2008-09 (either Q1 or Q2) then target dates for achieving the KPIs in 18.c can be set and GOWM will be informed accordingly.</p>					
20.1	£15,000	Support to ensure stakeholder engagement via RAWM/ WMBC in Assembly work especially the RSS	Stakeholders engaged in WMRSS, evidenced by 6 monthly monitoring reports. Q2 & Q4	Participation and influence of Assembly's activities and voice by all stakeholders	CEO WMRA

URBAN AND RURAL RENAISSANCE (Work Strand 19)

Strategic Objective: Secure vibrant and sustainable communities in urban and rural areas through the implementation of the WMRSS

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
19.1	£19,500	Support the development of the Rural Renaissance agenda via WMRSS and Phase Three Revision	Policy Lead Progress Reports Q3&1 Rural reference Group and Partners engaged and influencing work plan and technical reports. Q4	Rural communities enhanced in accordance with the WMRSS.	Shrops CC WMRA with key rural partners
19.2		Support for Urban Renaissance Agenda via City Region and sub regional initiatives such as the North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership	City Region and sub regional activity clarified and agreement gained to coordinate investment to deliver added value and speed up urban renaissance. Q4	Sub regional initiatives which contribute to the delivery of Urban Renaissance	City Region and sub regional partners inc WMRA
19.3		Advocate the WMRSS Renaissance Agenda via other strategies, organisations and initiatives	External strategies and initiatives with positive links to the WMRSS renaissance agenda. Q4	Renaissance of urban and rural communities in the region.	All regional and sub regional partners

TRANSPORT (Work strand 22)

Strategic Objective:
Implement the Regional Transport Strategy component of the WMRSS, in line with Government guidance, and agreed time-tables.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
22.1	£42,500	Support WMRSS Revision Phases One, Two, Three	Policy Lead Progress Report Q3&1 Revised policies in WMRSS. Q4	Behavioural and cultural changes that support the WMRSS	Strategic Adviser Transport with Staffs CC
22.2		Robust, effective, efficient and easy to understand system to promote and monitor the delivery of Regional Transport Priorities (Regional Funding Allocations/ Transport Delivery Plan)	Revised Regional Transport Priorities programme. Q4	Strategic transport measures that demonstrate value for money and support behavioural / cultural changes, productivity and sustainability.	SA Transport WMRA
22.3		Interface and converge the RTS with other strategic policies	Quarterly report as required to identify the RTS input to strategic consultations programmes. Q1/2/3/4	RTS objectives met and policies delivered	SA Transport WMRA

HOUSING (Work Strand 25)

Strategic Objective: Support Phases 2 and 3 of the WMRSS Revision and prepare for a Partial Revision to the Regional Housing Strategy

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
25.1	CLG £25,000	Support Phase Two of the WMRSS Revision process - To maintain the Regional consensus on the accommodation of the housing numbers within the Preferred Option and continue dialogue with GOWM in relation to the accommodation of any additional growth required, as directed by Government and the extended consultation currently until 30 th June 2008 and any subsequent knock on effects to the programme.	Policy Lead Progress Reports. Q3&1	Secretary of State confirms outcome of RSS Phase Two revision That the housing numbers are delivered in locations which are able to absorb growth in a sustainable manner	Strategic Adviser Housing with Staffs CC
25.2		Support Phase Three of the WMRSS Revision process	Commission consultant to draft a Regional overview of the outcomes from the sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs) and provide expert advice on the overall review of existing WMRSS G&T policies. Q4	Supporting the RPB in the preparation of Gypsy and Traveller options and preferred option for RSS Phase Three New WMRSS G&T Policies which meet the needs of both the travelling and settled communities	Q4 into 2009/10 SA Housing WMRA
25.3	Partners £67,987 For 2 yrs	Administration of the Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant Programme (G&TSGP)	RHE to receive bids submitted to G&TSGP and provide a Regional evaluation / recommendation to Ministers. Q4	Investment aimed to address shortfall in supply of pitches and improvement in the quality of existing pitches	SA Housing Annual CLG bids round

25.4		Monitoring	a) To input into the WMRSS Annual Monitoring Report and Annual Housing Market Summary Q3 b) To strengthen the monitoring of Capital Housing spend as required by CLG	To provide Regional Housing Executive (RHE) with clarity on performance /delivery of targets of local authorities and RSLs against RHS and WMRSS policies	SA Housing WMRA
25.5		Direct and co-ordinate the work of the four sub-regional Housing Market Area Partnerships to implement the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS)	To support the sub-regional Partnerships in their commissioning and completion of their Strategic Housing Market Assessments and provide a steer to the development of their sub-regional Housing strategy; and ensure closer working between housing and planning. Q4	Sub-regional implementation of the RHS, assisted through an improved understanding of the sub-regional drivers on housing markets/choices, and the resulting strategies required to deliver mixed and balanced communities.	SA Housing WMRA
25.6	Partners £450,000 For 3 yrs Partners £136,000 For 2 yrs	Housing Research Programme Research and Monitoring Advisor to be appointed	To commission new research to enable a partial Revision of RHS to be undertaken and commission research to update the data which currently exists as part of the RHS 2005 evidence base. Q4 A scoping report on climate change issues for existing stock will be a key element of the research programme. Q2	To complete preparations for a partial Revision to RHS and continuously improve the evidence base supporting the RHS and the WMRSS, to ensure a sound basis for housing investment decisions	SA Housing WMRA
25.7		To continue a good working relationship with the Housing Corporation with a view to it becoming the new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) To continue a good working relationships with the National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit (NHPAU). To strengthen the existing working relationship with Advantage West Midlands (RDA)	Contribute to Government consultations, policy forums and transitional working arrangements as required. Q1/2/3/4	To influence the re-organisation of Regional structures and future development of Regional Housing policy and to support delivery of the National Affordable Housing Programme	SA Housing WMRA

25.8		Single Integrated Regional Strategy (SIRS)	Provide input to the Housing content of the SIRS. Q4	To ensure the democratic voice of Local Government and needs of vulnerable groups (e.g. Supported People, Voluntary Sector) are adequately reflected within future Regional Housing Policy	Strategic Adv Housing subject to CLG consultation processes WMRA
25.9		Expansion of the Kickstart Programme	Encourage local authority sign up to the Kickstart Partnership to ensure regional roll out of the Programme and its range of services, particularly the model for equity loan / home improvement release. Q4	Agreed roll out by sub-regional housing market area, subject to ministerial approval of the Regional Housing Pot	Strategic Adviser support to Kickstart Partnership

ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE PLANNING (Work Strand 26)

Strategic Objective: Support Phases One, Two and Three of the WMRSS Revision and ensure that new Government guidance on Environment and Waste is heeded and put into practice at the regional level.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs	Outcome	Who
26.1	£43,500	Development of policy and technical work into WMRSS Phase Three	Policy Lead Progress Reports. Q3&1	Preparation of evidence base to support development of WMRSS options.	Strategic Adviser with Solihull and Staffs CC
26.2		Development of statements and technical work into preparation for WMRSS Phase Two EIP	Statements completed. Q3	Regional Waste Strategy within the WMRSS. Cross cutting policy on climate change and sustainable communities in WMRSS.	SA Environment WMRA

26.3		Work with regional agencies NE, EA, EH ,FC etc to secure mutual and shared benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Regional Historic Environment Strategy. Q4 • Complete Landscapes for Living project work (statutory areas in the WMRSS for enhancement; RA is working with Natural England to promote and develop with local authorities and other partners) and carry into other areas. Q2 	Improved Protection and enhancement of the historic environment Integrated approach to biodiversity enhancement	Various partners, dates yet to be agreed SA Environment WMRA/Partners
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (Work Strand 27)

Strategic Objective: Support Phases One, Two and Three of the WMRSS Revision by ensuring a robust Sustainability Appraisal is in place. Leading the West Midlands climate change agenda.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
27.1	£20,000	Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of WMRSS Phase Three Revision	SA Scoping report completed. Q2 Work commenced on SA of Phase Three Revision Options. Q4	Fulfil mandatory requirement for WMRSS under Section 39(2) Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	Policy officer Sustainable Development WMRA
27.2		Technical work to ensure implementation of Planning Policy Statement on Climate Change	Carbon trajectories report for new development. Q2	Reducing Co2 emissions from new developments in line with PPS1	Policy officer SD WMRA
27.3		Technical work to support WMRSS Phase Three Revisions	Commence development of Criteria-based policies for renewable energy resources. Q1 Progress report on criteria based policies. Q3	Reducing Co2 emissions from new developments in line with PPS22	Policy officer SD WMRA
27.4		Contributing actions to the Delivery of the Regional Climate Change Action Plan	Commence a Scoping report on transport policy interventions and climate change. Q3 Complete scoping report on climate change and existing building stock. Q4	Fulfil commitments of WMRA in Regional Climate Change Action Plan	Policy Officer SD WMRA

27.5		(a) Support Sustainability West Midlands to act as SD independent advisor/champion to the Assembly and support West Midlands Sustainable Development Officers Network to secure professional and policy advice (b) Review RSDf and promote and its use in development and review of all regional strategies	Monitoring Report provided by SWM. Q2 Update RSDf in line with “Securing the Region’s Futures”. Q2	Demonstrate leadership on SD as outlined in DTI/ ODPM/DEFRA’s “Securing The Region’s Futures” Integration of SD principles	SWM SWM/WMRA
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ECONOMY AND CENTRES (Work Strand 28)

Strategic Objective: Support Phases One, Two and Three of the WMRSS Revision and ensure that the revision process, use of evidence and development of policies is aligned with implementation of the WMES and development of the SIRS.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
28.1	£39,000	Work with AWM to shape the development of the Single Integrated Regional Strategy and its evidence base.	Policy Lead Progress Report. Q3&1 Productive engagement between the two organisations which results in added value for the region within the SNR framework. Q4	An SIRS process which reflects the government’s SNR requirements but maintains the WMRA principles for development.	Policy Director with Bham WMRA/AWM and key partners.
28.2		Continue to support the Regional Economic Development Officers Group as a hub for engagement on regional economic development strategy and implementation initiatives.	A group which is actively engaged and consulted as a mechanism for gaining input into regional strategy and delivery mechanism development. Q4	WMRA partners inputs included in strategies and delivery mechanisms.	WMRA/Local Authorities / key partners
28.3		Work with AWM, local authorities and other key partners to help shape the new economic development duty responsibilities for local authorities. and the local/sub regional economic assessments required as part of SNR.	Meaningful engagement for WMRA partners in the development of the process for economic development devolution and the development of sub regional/ local economic assessments. Q4	Economic Development devolved to local authorities with adequate capacity from the RDA. Standardised Local / Sub regional economic assessments undertaken by local authorities.	WMRA/Local Authorities / key partners

Work Strands - Scrutiny & Strategic Review

SCRUTINY AND STRATEGIC REVIEW (Work Strand 30) – showing carried forward activities from 2007/8 plus new					
<p>Strategic Objective: Provide a robust scrutiny process over AWM's activities and working with regional partners to undertake strategic reviews of key policies and activities to secure greater co-ordination and impact of regional strategies and partnership working.</p>					
<p>Risk Assessment: [30.1] Lack of resources to undertake effective scrutiny reviews – Mitigation; Influencing DCLG to ensure adequate resources to support scrutiny in year 2. Working with partners to explore possible funding options for regional scrutiny arrangements post 2010.</p>					
<p>[30.1] Lack of engagement by Advantage West Midlands – Mitigation; Work with officers to emphasise the benefits to the Agency of the continuation of well respected scrutiny process.</p>					
<p>[30.1/2/3] Lack of involvement by regional and sub regional partners – Mitigation; Work with partners to emphasise that scrutiny and strategic review continues to be a valuable function that will influence the development of the SIRS.</p>					
Task	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
30.1	£20,000	Scrutiny Reviews - AWM and economic performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for skills agenda ▪ Business Link West Midlands ▪ Marketing the Region 	Completion of 2 Reviews - Final reports in Q2 and Q4 Scoping of Marketing the Region Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved understanding of AWM role in review area ▪ Clarification of issues ▪ Improved effectiveness of AWM intervention in areas of failure 	Senior Adviser Scrutiny & Strategic Review
30.2		Ongoing Scrutiny of AWM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AWM annual report ▪ Comments on AWM Corporate documents 	Annual Report to Assembly Q3 Submissions to AWM as requested	Transparent accountability Reinforcing scrutiny issues	Senior Adviser SSR
30.3		Strategic Review Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approach to Post 16 education, training and skills ▪ Transport 	Completion of 2 reviews - Final reports Q1 and Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved understanding of Regional Partner roles ▪ Improved regional working 	Senior Adviser SSR
30.4		ERN Regional Accountability Group Assembly Scrutiny Officers meetings	4 meetings Q1/2/3/4 4 meetings Q1/2/3/4	Shared good practice Developing positions re proposed new accountability arrangements	Senior Adviser SSR with Assemblies and partners

30.5		<p>New Accountability Arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of post 2010 regional structures ▪ Developing links with sub regional, local and national structures 	<p>A robust accountability structure that meets the region's needs: Identification of Option Q2 Agreement of protocol and working arrangements Q4</p> <p>Sharing information: Identify common issues Q4 Development of complimentary processes Q4 Involvement of O&S Network in identifying and developing new arrangements Q2/4</p>	<p>Effective and challenging arrangements that build on past experiences and have regional buy in</p> <p>Supportive outcomes from activities at all levels</p> <p>Understanding of needs and processes at different levels</p>	<p>Senior Adviser SSR with WMRA and partners</p> <p>WMRA/Scrutiny bodies</p>
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Work Strands – Policy Integration & Development

HEALTH (Work strand 31)					
Strategic Objective: Lead the development of Regional Health and Well-Being Strategy.					
	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
31.1	Partner Funds £28,900	Agree the Regional Health and Wellbeing action plan to take forward the Regional Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Action plan agreed and signed up to by partners. Q4	Agreed Regional Health and Wellbeing action plan and actions initiated as set out in the Action Plan	Policy Officer Health
31.2		Support Regional Health Partnership meetings and future integration of health under the SNR	Meetings held and work plans advanced as required	Targets met as per agreed action plan	POH
31.3		Lead and support the delivery of the Big Lottery project portfolio 'Living Well in the WM'	Projects delivering in accordance with milestones set out in their agreements Q1/2/3/4	Project outcomes and outputs agreed with the Big Lottery are met	POH

31.4		Monitor and evaluate the Living Well in the West Midlands	Monitoring systems for the projects set up and in place; Evaluation framework agreed and used to inform work. Q4	Annual report	POH
EUROPE (Work Strand 32)					
Strategic Objective: Ensure the West Midlands is able to influence EU policy and funding programmes to benefit the Region.					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs	Outcome	Who
32.1	£10,000	Implement new governance arrangements for European working to support key priorities of the European Strategy.	New governance arrangements in place. Q2 Reports of working groups progress to European Strategy Board. Q4	Four priority groups working to Strategic European officers group to deliver the European strategy	Strategic Adviser Europe WMRA/AWM
32.2		Further develop EU Connects to facilitate transnational working– to include Life and Marie Curie programmes Ensure external funding for unit into 2013	Unit expanded and working to deliver project plan with future external funding secured. Q3	Partner resource for better co-ordination of specific elements of transnational activity, such as partner search Additional EU funds to region.	SA Europe WMRA /EU Connects
32.3		Continue to Lead transnational priority of the new EU Competitiveness and Employment programme. Concentrating on proposals designed to overcome specific regional economic weaknesses as identified in the Operational Programming document	Priority delivery plan in place projects commissioned. Q4	Partners able to work with and learn from other EU regions to meet specific regional economic underperformance, such as the low level of collaboration between universities and business in exploiting commercially viable innovation.	SA Europe
32.4		Work with LSC to deliver WM Co-financing Action Plan (funded via ESDF funds)	ESF Co financing manager in post Q1 Projects beginning to deliver outputs Q4	Significant WMLGA influence over £200m programme	SA Europe WMRA

COMMUNITY COHESION [Equality & Diversity] (Work Strand 33)

Strategic Objective: Lead the development of the Region's Community Cohesion agenda.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
33.1	£5,000	<p>Develop and oversee the implementation of the 2008/09 Action Plan for the Equality & Diversity Partnership, with particular reference to community cohesion</p> <p>NB: This will include reviewing the work of the Equality & Diversity Partnership and developing future options in the light of SNR, the commencement of the regional EHRC and the end of funding in December 2008 for the Director post.</p>	<p>Action Plan for 2008/09 Q1</p> <p>Regional Leaders' Summit Q4</p>	Improvements in relation to equality & diversity, social inclusion and community cohesion issues across the region and the "equalities" strands	Director Equalities & Diversity WMRA/EDP
33.2		Continue to work with the regional Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) presence for the West Midlands and work towards the Equality & Diversity Partnership becoming an Advisory Body for the regional EHRC.	Model recommended to DCLG (and ultimately to the CEHR) Q4	A regional CEHR presence meeting needs of stakeholders across the various "equality" strands and the needs of both employers and employees	Director E&D
33.3		Provide expert advice on Equality & Diversity, community cohesion and Social Inclusion issues to regional strategies, including RES/RSS/RHS, Scrutiny Reviews	Reports on the findings for submission to WMRA	Equality & diversity, social inclusion and community cohesion issues and solutions identified in regional strategies	See work strands 18, 19 and 31
33.4		National Strategies and the European Agenda.	Provide WMRA input into relevant national & EU agendas as required	Better understanding of WM community cohesion agenda by Government & EU	Director E&D

CULTURE (Work Strand 34a)

Strategic Objective: Support the development of the Cultural Strategy and the regions work into 2012 London Olympics.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
34a.1	£5,000	Support the preparation of the new Regional Cultural Strategy (inc tourism) and subsequent action planning	Cross-cutting technical work in progress to assist preliminary scoping. Q2 Co-ordinated cross-sectoral working between local & sub-regional partnerships & regional agencies at a strategic level. Q4	Range of cross-sectoral and policy links reflected in Strategy development.	Policy Officer Culture Culture West Midlands (CWM)
34a.2		Maximise opportunities from the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games	WM Regional Structures for the 2012 Games e.g. WM Leadership Group supported with WMRA input. Q4	A region capitalising on opportunities from the 2012 Games with well-developed legacy plans.	CWM
34a.3		Support policy leads on Phase Three of the WMRSS Revision by ensuring input from the cultural sector	Cultural issues and opportunities reflected fully in both phases of WMRSS Revision and subsequent WMRSS implementation. Q4	WMRSS that helps make the WM a special place; contributing to prosperity and health for all	See WS18 WMRA/CWM/ Sport England WM & others

SKILLS (Work Strand 34b)

Strategic Objective: Raise the profile of the regional skills agenda in conjunction with regional partners inc. AWM and LSC.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs	Outcome	Who
34b1	£2,000	Supporting the Regional Skills Partnership (RSP)	Continuing Assembly involvement in the RSP Board Q1/2/3/4	Improved two way information Informed and co-ordinated local and regional activity	Head LG Policy WMRA
34b.2		Review of Regional Skills Partnership Board	Review completed. Q3	Fit for purpose Regional Skills Partnership	HLGP WMRA/RSP
34b.3		Ensuring WMRSS and WMRES consistent on skills issues in terms of policy/implementation and delivery	Co-ordination of WMRES Delivery Framework and WMRSS Revision processes. Q4	Integration between WMRSS and WMRES on regional skills issues	WMRA / AWM

34b.4		Engagement in the revision of the Regional Skills Action Plan	Broad based revised Action Plan incorporating the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and other Assembly partners. Q4	More joined-up and effective Skills Action Plan.	WMRA/RSP/A WM/LSC
34b.5		Facilitate the engagement of local authority children's services departments in RSP	More co-ordinated local authority involvement in the Regional Skills Agenda. Q4	Better co-ordination between education, learning and skills	WMRA/ WMLGA
34b.6		Government led changes to 14-19 arrangements	Effective preparation for changes to skills delivery arrangements. Q4	Smoother transition to new arrangements and better delivery.	WMRA/WMLG A/LAs/LSC/Ao C/RSP
34b.7		Ensure the approach taken to rural skills is broader than the traditional land based industries	More appropriate programmes and qualifications for rural areas. Q4	Skills support in rural areas meets the needs of individuals and communities.	WMRA/LSC/L ANTRA
		Scrutiny Review of skills (see Strand 30 – Scrutiny)	(see Strand 30 – Scrutiny)	(see Strand 30 – Scrutiny)	(see Strand 30 – Scrutiny)
		Strategic Review of Post 16 education and learning. (see Strand 30 – Scrutiny)	(see Strand 30 – Scrutiny)	(see Strand 30 – Scrutiny)	(see Strand 30 – Scrutiny)

RURAL (Work Strand 35)

Strategic Objective: Ensure that rural issues are adequately reflected into regional work and policy.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
35.1	£5,000	Engagement of the rural interests in regional working and policy development	Support for and engagement with the WM Rural Affairs Forum, the WMRAF Management Committee and Secretariat. Q4	The profile of rural issues and priorities raised in the region. Body of expertise providing support and advice on regional strategies and initiatives which are appropriate for rural areas	Forestry & Rural Affairs Manager WMRA
35.2		Implementing successor arrangements for Rural Accord Group	Support from WMRA to facilitate the engagement with regional partners and delivery agents. Q4	Effective delivery agencies working at a strategic level to provide technical advice and to ensure that service delivery to rural communities and areas is not unduly disadvantaged	FRAM With Regional Partners

35.3		Establishment of effective rural stakeholder specialist task groups properly working with WMRAF to rural proof high level strategies and policies	Coordination and support to Task Groups as required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMES Connecting to Success implementation • WMRSS Phase 3 Revision • WM Regional Culture Strategy • European funded programmes • Others as required 	Rural areas valued and benefiting from sustainable economic growth, minimised environmental impacts and strengthened communities re not unduly disadvantaged	FRAM with regional partners
35.4		Ensure the approach taken rural skills is broader than the traditional land based industries (see 34b.7 above)	(see 34b.7 above)	(see 34b.7 above)	(see 34b.7 above)

FORESTRY (Work Strand 37)

Strategic Objective: Secure a strong Forestry Framework which influences and supports other key regional strategies.

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Who
37.1	Partner funds £87,000	Lead the development and implementation of the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework (WMRFF)	Preparation of the rolling action plan 2008-2011 Q1 and completing the fourth year of implementation Q4	Viable inclusive forestry and woodland sector benefiting from co-ordinated activity, closer partnership and networking	WMRFF
37.2		Collecting and collating data and information in order to compile the Annual Report 2007-2008	Publishing Annual Report 2007-2008. Q2	Providing Forum partners, networks and stakeholders with an enhanced understanding of progress of the WMRFF	WMRFF
37.3		Linking the work of the Action Plan Manager to the Assembly policy partnerships and WMRSS Implementation, ensuring a forestry dimension to all policy development/implementation	Reports and updates for Assembly task groups, officer groups and partnerships. Q4	Forestry policy effectively driven into other WMRSS implementation	WMRFF

BUDGETS AND FINANCIAL SUMMARIES

Two Year Budget 2008-2010

Whilst CLG guidance called for a 3 year budget we have drafted only two years as we do not believe it would be either practical or accurate for us to estimate for 2010-11 when transfer of functions will have or will be taking place.

In drafting our budget for 2008-09 we have deliberated at length over all our activities in an attempt to reduce any financial commitment to those that CLG would consider to be 'non core' and to identify the real priorities within the planning, housing and transport aspects of our work. Our budget total will be further supplemented by partners' contribution and other funding streams of around £398,000 to deliver the full business plan. There is no doubt that any reduction in CLG funds awarded will require us to delay or cut some of our WMRSS activities. We also believe that at this important stage in the transition process, this will also send the wrong kind of message to staff and partners about the value of the work we are still being asked to deliver by government under Assemblies' statutory responsibilities.

The budget for 2009-10 reflects the key priorities set out in the narrative and includes Phase 3 work now being pushed back into 2009-10 due to the delay in the proposed date for the Examination in Public.

We must emphasis that the 2009-10 budget makes no allowance or consideration of the cost of dissolution of the Assembly such as redundancy costs or withdrawals from contractual commitments etc. Working through ERN we would hope to develop a better understanding of the practical arrangements and funding provision from CLG to support these transition related costs.

Financial Summaries

The following financial tables present our budget estimates;

- Table 1 - 2008-09 Financial Summary and quarterly bid profile
- Table 2 - 2 Year Budgets 2008-2010

Table 1: 2008-09 Financial Summary & Bid Profile

INCOME	WS	Budget	CLG Funds	Others	Q1 Apr-June	Q2 July-Sept	Q3 Oct-Dec	Q4 Jan-Mar
CLG Assembly Funding	1	2,348,829	2,348,829		617,735	456,885	733,885	540,326
CLG Contingency	2	0	0					
Partners Support RHE [WS25]	3	284,000		284,000	284,000			
LSC Support for Scrutiny	4	0						
Forestry/Rural Partners [WS37]	5	85,000		85,000	85,000			
Department of Health [WS31]	6	28,900		28,900	28,900			
English Regions Network	7	0						
Total		2,746,729	2,348,829	397,900	1,015,635	456,885	733,885	540,326
EXPENDITURE								
Corporate								
Staffing	10	1,397,551	1,397,551		349,415	349,415	349,415	349,306
Staff Training (CPD)	11	10,000	10,000		10,000			
Operational	13	137,778	137,778		58,820	30,820	24,320	23,820
Communications	14	9,000	9,000		4,000	2,000	2,000	1,000
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>1,554,329</i>	<i>1,554,329</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>422,235</i>	<i>382,235</i>	<i>375,735</i>	<i>374,126</i>
Planning, Housing & Transport								
Implementation	15	25,000	25,000		5,000	7,500	12,500	0
Monitoring	16	215,000	215,000		84,250	18,000	105,750	7,000
Conformity	17	20,000	20,000		10,000		10,000	
RSS Revision Phase Two	18a	100,000	100,000		0	30,000	40,000	30,000
RSS Revision Phase Three	18b	183,000	183,000		0	5,000	75,000	103,000
Urban & Rural Renaissance	19	19,500	19,500		9,750		9,750	
Increase Partnering/Participation	20	15,000	15,000		7,500		7,500	
Transport	22	42,500	42,500		9,750		17,250	15,500
Housing	25	309,000	25,000	284,000	33,500	21,000	83,500	171,000
Environment	26	43,500	43,500		21,750		21,750	
Sustainable Development	27	20,000	20,000			5,000	7,500	7,500
Economy	28	39,000	39,000		19,500		19,500	
Legal Expenses	29	0	0					
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>1,031,500</i>	<i>747,500</i>	<i>284,000</i>	<i>201,000</i>	<i>86,500</i>	<i>410,000</i>	<i>334,000</i>
Strategic Review	30	20,000	20,000		9,500	5,150	4,150	1,200
Policy Integration & Development								
Health	31	28,900		28,900	7,225	7,225	7,225	7,225
Europe & International Policy	32	10,000	10,000		1,000	2,000	5,000	2,000
Social Inclusion	33	5,000	5,000			2,000	3,000	
Culture & Skills	34	7,000	7,000		5,000		2,000	
Rural	35	5,000	5,000				5,000	
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>55,900</i>	<i>27,000</i>	<i>28,900</i>	<i>13,225</i>	<i>11,225</i>	<i>22,225</i>	<i>9,225</i>
Other Activities								
Forestry	37	85,000		85,000	20,000	15,000	25,000	25,000
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>85,000</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>85,000</i>	<i>20,000</i>	<i>15,000</i>	<i>25,000</i>	<i>25,000</i>
Total		2,746,729	2,348,829	397,900	665,960	500,110	837,110	743,551

Other Funded Activity
Income 3 : Exp 25
Income 5 : Exp 37
Income 6 : Exp 31

The total cost less other
income
contributions = CLG funding

Table 2 : 2008-2010 Two Year Budget Plan

INCOME	WS	2008-09	2009-10
CLG Assembly Funding	1	2,348,829	2,241,089
CLG carry forward	1	0	0
RHE Partners (CLG 07-08)	2	284,000	369,987
LSC Support for Scrutiny	3	0	0
Forestry/Rural Partners	4	85,000	0
Department of Health	5	28,900	0
English Regions Network	6	0	0
Other Partner Support	7		
Total		2,746,729	2,611,076
EXPENDITURE			
Corporate			
Staffing	10	1,397,551	1,346,778
Staff Training & Healthcare	11	10,000	5,000
Operational	13	137,778	136,811
Communications	14	9,000	9,000
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>1,554,329</i>	<i>1,497,589</i>
Planning, Housing & Transport			
Implementation	15	25,000	25,000
Monitoring	16	215,000	215,000
Conformity	17	20,000	20,000
Revision Phase 2	18a	100,000	40,000
Revision Phase 3	18b	183,000	257,000
Urban & Rural Renaissance	19	19,500	19,500
Partnering/Participation	20	15,000	0
Transport	22	42,500	19,500
Housing	25	309,000	394,987
Environment	26	43,500	43,500
Sustainable Development	27	20,000	27,000
Economy	28	39,000	39,000
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>1,031,500</i>	<i>1,100,487</i>

	WS	2008-09	2009-10
Expenditure continued ...			
Strategic Review	30	20,000	13,000
Policy Integration & Development			
Health	31	28,900	0
Europe & International Policy	32	10,000	0
Social Inclusion	33	5,000	0
Culture & Skills	34	7,000	0
Rural	35	5,000	0
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>55,900</i>	<i>0</i>
Other Activities			
Forestry/Rural Accord	37	85,000	0
Partner Projects	38	0	0
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>85,000</i>	<i>0</i>
Total		2,746,729	2,611,076

Note: For the purposes of 2009-10 we have focused on core Assembly funding and the availability of other known funds to support housing activity, as the future position on other partner contributions is not clear at this time.

2007 Risk Register

Appendix A

The Assembly has undertaken a risk analysis for all work strands. This involved the assessment of a range of likely threats or challenges against a matrix of three levels of likelihood (chance) and consequences (impact) giving a numerical value to indicate priority.

Work Strand Number	Description of Risk	Likelihood x Impact						Risk Value	Timescale Long / Medium/ Short term	Control and Mitigation (Current and future actions)
		H	M	L	H	M	L			
		3	2	1	3	2	1			
Staffing 10.1	Insufficient staff resource to effectively deliver the work programme	X			X			9	Short	Work closely with AWM to manage recruitment/retention issues. Ring fence internal opportunities. AWM provide early notice of new posts to Assembly staff.
Training 11.1	Insufficient training budget to support staff affected by transition arrangements	X				X		6	Short	Combined WMLGA/WMRA training budget and corporate training plan to focus on priorities. Seek financial contribution from AWM as appropriate.
13.1	Impact on staff (10.1) partners (13.2) and financial ability to deal with the cost implications	X			X			9	Short/ Medium	Work with AWM to minimise impact on staff and ensure good practice in HR management and legal compliance. Work through ERN to secure early advice/commitment from CLG in respect of redundancy, wind-up costs, etc. Influence the transition process to ensure continued partnership approach to the single IRS and local government leadership.
13.2	Transfer of leadership role to RDA may impact on sign up to concordat		X		X			6	Medium	Review of concordat to try to future proof partner engagement and buy-in to new regional arrangements.
Comms 14.1	Lack of resources to effectively deliver Communications to support WMRSS, RBP, RHE		X			X		4	Medium	Improved time-tabling of events and publications to secure shared costs and/or economies of scale. Stricter prioritisation of work load
14..2	Reputation damaged due to negative press coverage		X		X			6	Medium	Build up current levels of engagement with Regional Media
14.3	FOI – not responded to within timescales			X	X			3	Medium	Ensure colleagues notify FOI lead as soon as the request is received to ensure maximum time period is available to respond to request

Work Strand	Description of Risk	Likelihood x Impact					Risk Value	Timescale	Control and Mitigation (Current and future actions)
Imp'tation 15.1	Failure to deliver defined outputs due to lack of funds	X			X		9	Short/ Medium	Develop detailed work and resource plan and regular review progress and priorities. Draw on existing work and partnership structures to deliver the outputs.
15.2	Failure to secure involvement of senior regional stakeholders in the Implementation Panel		X		X		4	Medium	Build on existing partnership arrangements and contacts with key agencies and partners which have proven effective.
15.3	Insufficient funds to take forward development of the implementation plan	X			X		9	Short/ Medium	Further utilise the wholly partnership-based approach employed for the previous work.
Monitoring 16.1	DCLG increase monitoring requirement without commensurate increase in resource allocation.		X		X		4	Medium	Via ERN ensure monitoring requirements are kept at a reasonable and realistic level.
16.2	Failures to produce monitoring reports due to lack of resources		X		X		4	Medium	Detailed planning and prioritisation of the elements of this work stream. Regular review of timetable and priorities in the light of available resources.
16.3	Lack of clarity about monitoring arrangements post SNR		X		X		4	Medium/ long	Active engagement in planning post SNR and close working with key partners to ensure integration of monitoring activities.
Conformity 17.1	RPB unable to attend Public Examinations and Inquiries to assist Planning Inspectorate and defend the WMRSS.	X			X		6	Medium	Attendance at Public Examinations/Inquiries can be controlled by giving well considered advice and engaging in front loading of Documents so that issues are minimised in advance. Conformity advice is clear, comprehensive and consistent and written in such a way as to serve as written reps to Public Examinations.
RSS Revision 18a.1	Failure to develop and submit response on the Government's further study within the timetable.			X	X		4	Short	To prepare a detailed project work plan with key milestones leading up to the EiP and monitor its implementation. To hold regular officer meetings to develop a response and monitor progress.
18a.2	Failure to prepare RPB representations to the EiP Panel on time.			X	X		3	Medium	To prepare a detailed project work plan with key milestones leading up to the EiP and monitor its implementation. To hold regular officer meetings to develop a response and monitor progress.

Work Strand	Description of Risk	Likelihood x Impact						Risk Value	Timescale	Control and Mitigation (Current and future actions)
18a.3	Insufficient resources to undertake technical work and obtain consultancy input required to support the representations for the EiP.	X			X			9	Medium	Effectively use funding resources and prioritise technical work required to support the representations and draw upon partner organisations to provide.
18b.1	Failure to publish Project Plan within agreed timescale.			X	X			3	Short	To prepare a detailed project work plan with key milestones leading up to the publication of the Project Plan and monitor its implementation. To hold regular officer meetings to develop a response and monitor progress.
18b.2	Failure to develop and publish the Phase 3 Options within the agreed timescale due to pressure arising from Phase 2.		X		X			6	Medium	To prepare a detailed project work plan with key milestones leading up to the publication of the Options and monitor its implementation. To hold regular officer meetings to develop a response and monitor progress. To review the timetable in the light of progress of Phase 2.
18b.3	Insufficient resources to undertake technical work required to underpin the development of Options	X			X			9	Short/ Medium	Effectively use funding resources and prioritise technical work required to support the development of Options and draw upon partner organisations to provide.
18b.4	Failure to integrate the SA/SEA/HRA/Rural Proofing into the development of Options.			X	X			3	Short/ Medium	Scoping study and draft project plan to be developed to ensure Phase Three process reflects aspirations. Outcome will inform and prioritise technical work required and timeframe for undertaking SA. Secure partner support & funding.
18b.5	Lack of stakeholder involvement due to resource and/or time constraints		X		X			6	Short/ Medium	Integrate stakeholder engagement activities into the overall work plan to ensure stakeholder input at key stages. Draw on existing groups and networks, including Partnership, officer and Reference Groups to ensure wide engagement through tested channels.
Urban and Rural 19.1	Rural issues perceived not given due prominence			X	X			3	Medium	Secure resource/capacity for rural proofing at key stages
19.2	Changing support and ambitions for City Regions threatens the implementation of WMRSS.		X		X			6	Short	Facilitate engagement of City Region 'players' at all levels to secure ownership and implementation of WMRSS.

Work Strand	Description of Risk	Likelihood x Impact					Risk Value	Timescale	Control and Mitigation (Current and future actions)
				X	X				
19.3	Urban and rural renaissance ambitions not recognised in other regional strategies.			X	X		3	Medium	Promote urban and rural renaissance issues with Concordat partners and delivery agencies.
Partnering 20.1	Poor engagement from key sectors		X			X	4	Medium	Continue to secure support for engagement via a service level agreement, within the reduced funding provision. Peer pressure from Concordat partners.
Transport 22.2	Failure to get buy-in to Regional Transport Priorities		X		X		6	Medium	Engagement with Regional stakeholders (via RTP) in open, transparent and inclusive process.
22.3	Limited impact of RTS' integration with other strategies, policies and programmes.		X			X	4	Medium	Encourage partner organisations to take 'ownership' of the RTS to ensure that the RTS influences where appropriate (including National Policy, RES, LDFs, LTPs, Planning Applications).
Housing 25.1	Insufficient affordable housing being delivered. Delays to RSS Ph. 2		X		X		6	Short-medium	Promote affordable housing guide. Review performance of delivery agents and take action. Continue to work with sub-regional HMAs and reinforce Government's AH delivery agenda
25.4	Failure to deliver Regional Housing Allocations Strategy 2008/2011			X	X		3	Short	Early work with partners and Housing Corporation / seek advice from DCLG & GOWM at earliest opportunity.
25.7	Lack of Support from partner organisations, GOWM, HC, EP, AWM		x		X		6	Short	Ensure partner colleagues are fully involved in RHE work programme / make them aware of implications posed by RHE failing to deliver on this. Address SNR uncertainties as far as possible
25.6	Insufficient resource and capacity with HMAs to complete SMHAs.		X			X	4	Medium	Work with Government Office to ensure brief for work is realistic in view of available resource.
25.8	Lack of support from sub-regional HMAs and partners due to uncertainties posed by SNR		x		x		6	Short / medium	Work with CLG, GOWM, AWM, HC and EP to provide a consistent message to partners regarding the importance of sub-regional working
25.9	Lack of expansion of Kick Start Partnership			x	x		3	Short / medium	Work with Kick Start Partnership to promote the Programme to all local authorities in the Region to ensure take up
Environm't 26.1	Insufficient capacity /funding to complete Ph 3 technical work	X			X		3	Medium	Develop strong partnerships, clear time-table and secure support from key players.
Sustainable Develop't 27.1	Lack of resources to fulfil mandatory requirement for WMRSS under section 39(2) of Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004			X	X		3	Short	Engagement with GOWM/DCLG to ensure sufficient funding levels. And review budget together with priorities.

Work Strand	Description of Risk	Likelihood x Impact						Risk Value	Timescale	Control and Mitigation (Current and future actions)
27.2	Lack of resources to fulfil RPB requirement in PPS1			X			X	1	Short	Engagement with GOWM/DCLG to ensure sufficient funding levels and review budget together with priorities.
27.3	Lack of resources to fulfil RPB requirement in PPS22	X				X		6	Short	Engagement with GOWM/DCLG to ensure sufficient funding levels and review budget together with priorities.
27.4	Lack of resources to deliver WMRA responsibilities in Regional Climate Change Action Plan leading to lack of stakeholder engagement and credibility	X				X		6	Medium	Engagement with GOWM and other stakeholders to seek support for, and delivery of, Climate Change Action Plan. Lobby other stakeholders to seek alternative sources of funding and review budget together with priorities.
27.5a	Lack of funding to support SWM/regional SD champion resulting in loss of credibility to WMRA/SWM			X		X		3	Medium	Engagement with GOWM/DCLG to ensure sufficient funding levels and review budget together with priorities.
27.5b	Lack of resources to update & promote RSDF in line with Govt guidelines.			X			X	1	Short	Engagement with stakeholders to update and promote RSDF and review budget together with priorities.
Economic 28.1	Growth proposals not consistent with the WMRSS. WMRSS submitted preferred option does not sufficiently reflect the growth point's implications			X		X		6	Short	Ensure adequate engagement of partners in the development of growth points and engagement in the WMRSS Revision process.
28.2	RES and WMRSS policies relating to economic development and employment land do not align and support the urban and rural Renaissance Goals of WMRSS.			X	X			3	Short	Through ongoing interaction at members and officer level ensure that the RES review and WMRSS Revision develop in a mutually supportive way. WMRSS/RES Working Group and WMRSS Strategic Management Steering Group in place to identify problems and solutions.
Legal 29	No budget for legal advice across statutory functions	X				X		6	Short	Would need to meet any unplanned cost from respective work strand budget allocation.

Work Strand	Description of Risk	Likelihood x Impact						Risk Value	Timescale	Control and Mitigation (Current and future actions)
Scrutiny 30.1	Lack of resources to undertake effective scrutiny reviews	X			X			9	Short and Medium	Influencing DCLG to ensure adequate resources to support scrutiny in year 2. Working with partners to explore possible funding options for regional scrutiny arrangements post 2010.
30.1	Lack of engagement by Advantage West Midlands	X			X			9	Medium	Work with officers to emphasise the benefits to the Agency of the continuation of well respected scrutiny process
30.1 30.3	Lack of involvement by regional and sub regional partners	X			X			9	Medium	Work with partners to emphasise that scrutiny and strategic review continues to be a valuable function that will influence the development of the SIRS
Health 31.1	Partners not supporting Regional Health Partnership	X			X			3	Long	Ensure adequate engagement of partners, encouraging participation with the development of the Health and Well-Being Strategy and action plans
31.2	Lack of engagement from key partners with respect to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy consultation and action planning	X				X		6	Short	Use of networks and communication links to encourage response to the consultation process. Pro-actively market consultation events
31.3	Lack of funding for strategy implementation work		X		X			6	Medium	Seek avenues of funding and 'in kind' contributions through the Regional Health Partners to sustain work
31.4	Stage 2 Big Lottery Fund bid unsuccessful		X				X	2	Short	Continue to engage with project leads to encourage applications for other funding streams
31.5	Lack of funding for monitoring work		X		X			6	Long	Keep monitoring requirements at a realistic level. Seek additional avenues of funding and review budget together with priorities.
Europe 32.1	Grant funding expires and no further funding available to sustain EU Connects project			X	X			3	Short	Ensure successful project delivery and demonstrate added value to secure alternative funding to sustain project
32.2	WMRA asked to lead the Transnational Priority (approx £500k pa over 7 years)			X			X	1	Short	Mitigation; keep Assembly Board and partners well informed of progress.
32.3	Failure to influence cofinancing programme to significant degree		X		X			6	Medium	Ensure robust systems to involve the Local Authority sector at key stages. Ensure high level of negotiation skills of ESF manager.
Social Inc 33.1	Lack of co-ordination on social, cohesion, equality & diversity issues within the region. More difficult to raise issue – no single route to Govt.	X				X		6	Medium	Continue to work with Partners including DCLG to raise awareness of related issues and influence others to ensure that they are not overlooked.

Work Strand	Description of Risk	Likelihood x Impact					Risk Value	Timescale	Control and Mitigation (Current and future actions)
33.2	Regional CEHR presence could be ineffective and not meet the needs of employers and employees. Negative impact on social and community cohesion as well as regional economy. CEHR unable to respond effectively as UK spokes-organisation – could have negative affect on UK Govt	X				X	6	Medium	Continue to work with national and regional stakeholders to try to ensure that there is support for both employers and employees. Continue to work with GOWM/DCLG to ensure that the region and related aspects or issues are represented.
33.3	Lack of social capital, equality & diversity issues reflected in regional strategies. Negative impact on sustainable, economic and cohesion aspects, such as access to services.		X		X		6	Medium	Continue to work with regional stakeholders, such as the Concordat Partners, as well as GOWM/DCLG to ensure that the region and related aspects or issues are represented.
33.4	As above for national and European strategies – West Midlands one of the largest regions in Europe.		X		X		6	Medium	Continue to work with regional stakeholders, such as the Concordat Partners, as well as GOWM/DCLG to ensure that the region and related aspects or issues are represented.
Culture 34a.1	Lack of ownership and involvement in new Regional Cultural Strategy.		X			X	4	Short	Continue to engage with regional partners and make linkages between sectors and policy areas.
34a.2	Opportunities not identified and potential benefits from Olympics not maximised		X		X		6	Long	Continuing involvement in WM Leadership Group and engagement with regional partners.
34a.3	WMRSS does not properly reflect and integrate cultural issues.		X			X	4	Medium	Support the cultural sector's involvement in WMRSS Phase Two & Three Revisions.
Skills 34b.2	Regional skills priorities fail to reflect and address needs of regional strategies especially WMRSS		X			X	4	Medium	Broaden involvement in development of Regional Skills Partnership priorities.
Rural 35.3	Insufficient priority for rural issues in regional strategy and delivery mechanisms.			X	X		3	Short	Strengthen rural proofing and the role and activities of the Regional Rural Affairs Forum and supporting groups.

Work Strand	Description of Risk	Likelihood x Impact					Risk Value	Timescale	Control and Mitigation (Current and future actions)
Forestry 37.1	Failure to get buy-in to Action Plan 2007-2010		X			X	4	Medium	Furthering engagement with partners and work programmes.
37.3	Lack of partnership funding for Action Plan Manager and work programmes		X			X	4	Medium	Lobby GOWM, AWM, Forestry Commission, Natural England and Environment Agency seeking avenues of alternative funding and review budget together with priorities.

Key Performance Indicators

Appendix B

We identify below the Assembly's **Key** Performance Indicators (KPIs). They are selected because they are critical to the performance of the Assembly, part of our strategy obligations and / or activities for which payment is recovered. Each is measurable.

Work Strand Number	Work Strand	Indicator
10-13 20	Corporate Activity	Ensure sound Corporate Governance and stewardship of resources to deliver against an agreed work plan and a break even budget. Working towards smooth transfer of functions to the RDA.
14	Communication & Engagement	Produce Annual Report; Scrutiny and Strategic Review Report.
15	WMRSS Implementation	Further development of the RSS implementation plan.
16	WMRSS Monitoring	An integrated monitoring process for the WMRSS and RHS. Produce the Annual Monitoring Report to agreed content and timetable.
17	WMRSS Conformity	Implement WMRSS Conformity Procedures to meet statutory requirements.
18	WMRSS Phase Two Revision WMRSS Phase Three Revision	Prepare representations for submission to the Examination in Public. Represent Assembly at the EiP. Publish final Project Plan; following consultation on draft to launch Phase Three Revision. Complete technical work for Phase Three and develop Options for consultation.
19	Urban & Rural Renaissance	Actively participate in City Region matters to ensure this work supports the West Midlands approach to renaissance and growth. Take forward critical rural services element of WMRSS Phase Three as above.
22	Transport	Prepare representations for submission to the Examination in Public. Represent Assembly at the EiP. Revised Regional Transport Priorities Programme.
25	Housing	Development of evidence base for EiP. Take forward development of G&T policy element of WMRSS Phase Three as described above.
26	Environment	Support regional waste policies at EiP. Develop strategic environmental issues/policies of WMRSS Phase Three as described above.
27	Sustainability & Climate Change	Sustainability Appraisal of WMRSS Revision Phase Three Options/ Preferred Option. Implement Regional Climate Change Action Plan.

28	Economy and Centres	Continued productive liaison with AWM.
30	Scrutiny & Strategic Review	Completion of two scrutiny reviews; AWM Support for Skills, Business Link Annual report to Assembly re scrutiny of AWM Completion of two strategic reviews; Post 16, Transport
31	Regional Health Partnership	Initiate implementation of Regional Health & Wellbeing action plan.
32	Europe	Implement new governance arrangements for European working to support key priorities of the European Strategy. Successful delivery of EU Connects project.
33	Equalities & Diversity	Regional Leaders Summit. Work with EHRC to develop and recommend a West Midlands model.
34 a	Culture	Cultural issues reflected in WMRSS Phase Three.
34 b	Skills	Assembly support for the development of a Regional Skills Action Plan.
35 & 37	Rural & Forestry	Rural Proofing WMRSS Phase Three. Preparation of the rolling Action Plan 2008-2011.