

**Agenda Item 15c**

**WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Draft Decision Notes of The Regional Assembly Board Of Directors  
Meeting held on 12 March 2008**

---

**Chairman: Cllr David S Smith**

**Present:**

Cllr Paul Tilsley (Birmingham), Frances Beatty (WMBC), Sarindar Sahota (WMBC), Elizabeth Newman (OSG), Cllr Terry Dix (Staffordshire), Cllr Albert Bore (Birmingham), Cllr Chris Saint (Stratford-on-Avon), Cllr Serena Croad (Malvern Hills), Cllr Jo Jones (Shrewsbury & Atcham), Cllr Rex Roberts (Staffordshire CC) and Roger Evans (OSG).

**In attendance:** Andrea Whitworth (GOWM), Olwen Dutton (WMRA) and Sharon Doak (WMLGA/WMRA).

**1. Apologies for non attendance:**

The following apologies were noted:

Cllr Bob Badham (Sandwell), Cllr Steve Eling (Sandwell), Cllr Keith Austin (Telford & Wrekin), Roger Stone (WMBC) and Roger McKenzie (OSG)

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

**3. Chairman's and Vice-Chairs' Report (verbal update)**

The Chairman:

Paid respects to former Birmingham City Council Leader Sir Richard Knowles who passed away on 17 February 2008 after losing a battle with cancer. A letter of condolence would be send to his family.

Congratulated the West Midlands winners of round nine Beacon Awards, which recognise local authorities' clear vision, outstanding achievement and service excellence.

The Vice Chairman from the Business Sector:

Reassured the Board that the Business Sector would continue to support the

work of the Regional Assembly and its partnership working arrangements.

The Vice Chairman from the Local Authority Sector:

Assured the Business Sector that the Assembly would not forget the work of the Business and the Other Stakeholder Sectors.

He advised that the Transport Review had progressed extremely well and that a full report would be made to the Board meeting in June.

The Vice Chairman from the Other Stakeholder group had forwarded his apologies as he was unable to attend the meeting.

#### **NOTES OF MEETINGS**

**4a. Draft Decision Notes of the Board of Directors Meeting held on 5 December and Matters Arising**

The Board **agreed** the notes of 5 December 2007 as a true record. There were no matters arising.

**4b. Draft Decision Notes of the Special Board Meeting held on 16 January 2008 and Matters Arising**

The Board **noted** the decisions of the Special Board meeting held on 16 January 2008. There were no matters arising.

**4c. Draft Decision Notes of the Special Board Meeting held on 22 February 2008 and Matters Arising**

The Board **noted** the decisions made of the Special Board Meeting held on 22 February 2008. There were no matters arising.

**4d. Draft Decision Notes of the Assembly Meeting held on 16 January 2008**

The Board **noted** the decisions of the Assembly Meeting held on 16 January 2008.

**4e. Draft Notes of the Finance and Audit Committee held on 13 February 2008**

The Board **noted** the decisions of the Finance and Audit Committee meeting held on 13 February 2008.

#### **FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION**

**5. Sub National Review and its implications for the West Midlands**

The Board received a report that advised that the SNR had set out significant changes to the regional governance arrangements around local government, the RDA's and assemblies, with changes proposed to fully come into effect from 2010. The report gave the current position about SNR progress nationally and within the region.

The report further advised that next Assembly meeting would be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2008. If the consultation document had been published before that date, it would be likely that this item would be the major item on the assembly agenda so that the views of Assembly members could be sought to inform the response made back to government.

Members **noted** the report and **agreed** that a further report would be made to the Full Assembly on 23 April 2008.

### **Welsh Affairs Select Committee Call for Evidence on cross-border public services for Wales**

6. The Board were informed of the call for evidence by the Welsh Affairs Select Committee on the provision of cross-border public services for Wales.

Members were requested to forward comments to Sara Roberts at [s.roberts@wmra.gov.uk](mailto:s.roberts@wmra.gov.uk) by no later than 20 March 2008.

The report recommended and the Board **agreed**:

To consider the report and;

To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to agree the West Midlands Regional Assembly response.

### **7. Business Plan and Budget 2008/10**

The Board received the 2008-10 Business Plan & Budget (Appendix A to the report) as submitted to Government Office on 29 February 2008.

Members requested that their concern and disappointment be noted on the government's reduction in the Assembly budget.

It was recommended and **agreed** that:-

- The Board **endorse** the 2008-10 Business Plan & Budget and approach to the additional cuts required following the February review meetings.
- The Board **note** that a final decision on the level of funding offered to the Assembly is expected from CLG on 28 March 2008.

### **8. Company Secretary's Report**

The Board were provided with an update on the following general issues:-

- Staffing Update
- Members Declarations of Interest
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) Phase Two Revision – Extension of consultation period until 30 June 2008
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Final Virements 2007-08

- Voice of the Region – Speaking out for the Region West Midlands Regional Assembly 2008 Conference
- ERN Conference

The report recommended and it was **agreed:-**

- That the Board **noted** the details of the report.
- That the Board was requested and **approved** a proposal that Members who had not filed a Declaration of Interest by 23 April 2008 had their membership suspended until their forms are filed.
- That the Board **noted** the progress and ongoing consulting period for the WMRSS
- That the Board **delegates authority** to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairs to agree the final virements for 2007-08 to enable a year end report to be submitted to GOWM on schedule.
- To **encourage** attendance from the West Midlands Regional Assembly Members to the ERN Conference.

In addition to the report, the Company Secretary tabled a paper from the CLG "Community Infrastructure Fund – Round 2: Bidding Guidance" and advised that the deadline for expressions of interest for existing growth areas and growth points was 21 April 2008.

She further advised that she would write to relevant authorities highlighting the paper.

#### 9. **Policy Report of the Chief Executive – Headline Issues for the West Midlands Regional Assembly**

The Board were updated on key issues undertaken by the Secretariat on behalf of the Board and Assembly Partnerships over the last quarter.

The Board **considered** the report and **noted** the progress made.

## **FOR INFORMATION**

The following reports were for information and were **noted** by the Board.

**10. The Future of Scrutiny – The West Midlands and Parliamentary Activity**

The Board were informed of the progress being made with the development of new scrutiny and accountability arrangements resulting from proposals within the SNR, including the proceedings of the Modernisation Committee of the House of Commons.

**11. 'Connecting to Success' WMES Delivery Framework Consultation Response**

The Board received the response which the WMRA had submitted to the consultation on 'Connecting to Success' The West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES) Delivery Framework consultation.

**12. Report on a proposal for new structures and governance to support Regional European Working**

The board received a report that set out proposals for new structures and governance arrangements for regional European working following on from the Strategic Review of the Region's relationship with Europe.

**13. Minutes of the City Region Shadow Executive**

**13a.** 31 October 2007

**13b.** 28 November 2007

**13c.** 23 January 2008

**14. Advantage West Midlands – Notes from Board Meeting on 30 October 2007**

**15. Draft Agenda for the Full Assembly Meeting 23 April 2008**

**16. Suggested Dates of future Board Meetings 2008/09**

18 June 2008 – The Regional Partnership Centre

24 September 2008

3 December 2008

25 March 2009

10 June 2009

The Board **agreed** the dates of future meetings.

**Suggested Dates of future Full Assembly Meetings 2008/09**

23 April 2008 – Renewal Conference Centre, Solihull

9 July 2008 – Metalforming Centre, West Bromwich

29 October 2008 – Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, Birmingham

14 January 2009

22 April 2008

8 July 2009

The Board **noted** the suggested dates of future Full Assembly Meetings.

**17. Any Other Business**

There was no other business stated.