

EUROPEAN STRATEGY BOARD
Notes of meeting held 10 December 2008
at West Midlands in Europe

PRESENT:

Members

Cllr Sir Albert Bore (WMLGA) – Chair, Cllr Philip Atkins (WMLGA), David Brown (Chair, West Midlands in Europe), David Burton (CWMCC), Brendan Connor (AWM), Cllr Pauline Dee (CLRAE), Olwen Dutton (WMLGA/WMRA), Tim Gebbels (AWM), Cllr Roger Lawrence (WMLGA), Doug Mahoney (UKTI WM/AWM), Chris Marsh (GOWM), Paul Richards (WMHEA), Cllr David S Smith (WMLGA)

Officers

Jon Bloomfield (AWM), Esther Knight (WMRA), Richard Tuffs (WMiE), Glynis Whiting (WMiE), Louise Chilton (WMLGA)

Item	Discussion and Decision	Action
1.	<p>Apologies Apologies had been received from Members: Philip Bushill-Matthews MEP, Mike Cherry (FSB), Michael Clarke (WMBC), Denise Craig (FSB – alternate), Chris Crean (Friends of the Earth), Trudi Elliott (GOWM), Jerry Hutchinson (North Warwickshire Borough Council), Cllr Syeda Khatun (Committee of the Regions), Mick Laverty (AWM), Roger McKenzie (Midlands TUC), Isabella Moore (CILT), Julie Robson (LSC), Cllr Ken Taylor (WMLGA), Cllr Paul Tilsley (WMLGA), Cllr Mike Whitby (WMLGA), Cllr Milner Whiteman (CoR) Officers: James Watkins (WMBC), Patrick Willcocks (REFPG)</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of 26 September 2008 meeting and matters arising The notes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting. Any matters arising were to be covered on the day's agenda.</p> <p><u>Item 7 (Communicating Regional European activity):</u> EU Connects had appeared on Central News, which had generated many new enquiries.</p>	
	<p>For Discussion</p>	
3.	<p>The Single Integrated Regional Strategy (SIRS) and the European Dimension: a European Strategy Board contribution to the SIRS visioning event in Spring 2009 The Board was updated on the outcome of the SNR consultation which was now known. The Single Integrated Regional Strategy would be implemented from the beginning of 2010.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the update • To agree the ESB contribution to the Spring 2009 SIRS visioning event, ie ensuring and enforcing a European element to the Regional Strategy. 	<p>WMRA</p>
4.	<p>Measuring the Progress of the European Strategy Work on the Strategy had progressed steadily since its launch at the "Getting Europe out of the box" event on 26 September, including the</p>	

	<p>Executive should add value by looking at bigger issues as well as the four priorities, such as the EU budget, and the membership of the Group was being strengthened in order to be able to do this.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to note the report • to seek further progress reports and invite Group chairs to present 	WMRA
	For Information	
5.	<p>Local Government-EU Summit: Strengthening Dialogue between Local Government and Brussels (National LGA/Wales LGA/Northern Ireland LGA summit held on 13 November)</p> <p>The first Local Government-EU Summit had brought together representatives from local government, UKREP and the EU institutions to discuss how to develop relations and to broaden recognition of local government as a key delivery partner in many areas of EU policy.</p> <p>Cllr Pauline Dee had attended the summit as a member of CLRAE. She reported on the action plan that had been produced containing the five identified themes of relationship management, better communications around how the EU affects the local government day job, long-term policy planning, enhancing the local government input into legislative and policy debates in Brussels and post election work.</p> <p>A commitment had been made to an annual summit and the summit involvement extended to key national partners such as the TUC and the CBI. It had been proposed to produce a "rough guide" as a joint publication and an update of the "What has Europe done for me?" publication, together with an early warning system for councils on key issues from the EU. There had also been calls for communication with parish and town councils. After the election there would be joint work with UKREP to give briefings for new MEPs.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	
6.	<p>The Future of EU Territorial Cohesion: Responding to the Green Paper</p> <p>Territorial Cohesion was one of the "bigger picture" areas the ESB had decided to monitor.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to make a formal submission to the consultation by 28 February • to delegate responsibility for signing off to the Chair • to bring the response to the ESB meeting on 27 February. 	<p>WMiE</p> <p>WMRA</p>
7.	<p>European Institute of Innovation and Technology: Preparing a Bid for a Knowledge Innovation Community (KIC)</p> <p>The European Institute of Innovation and Technology is a flagship initiative with a budget of €300 million, designed to lift the innovative capacity of Europe. The Board's first task will be to establish three Knowledge Innovation Communities (KICs) and it was proposed that the West Midlands should apply for a KIC on mitigating the effects of climate</p>	

	<p>change, which would bring in resources and raise the Region's profile.</p> <p>Professor Fred Steward from Brunel had been appointed Project Manager and had been working with The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) on innovation policy to develop a proposal. Significant interest was coming from within the Region and a meeting had taken place with the European Environmental Energies Institute regarding how this network could be fitted into climate change strategy.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another area to examine would be local transport as a mechanism for addressing climate change • It was emphasised that the bid would be a West Midlands core bid that would explore the full knowledge base of the Region, however the region also needed to ensure that the best quality bid was produced • To do this was properly it was necessary to engage people and ensure that they understood that they were part of the bid • The competition with well established partnerships would be fierce; however, even if the Region was unsuccessful with this bid it would present a good learning opportunity. JB to send details of the proposed partnership to GW. WMiE was very geared up to support the bid but it would be necessary to harness all contacts and connections. • It would be necessary to have committed high quality partners with a proven track record and significant resources. <p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to note the proposed engagement of the Region in a KIC bid • to contribute to the development of the bid. 	<p>JB</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Czech Presidency Priorities</p> <p>Czech colleagues had unfortunately been called away to attend a meeting of the French presidency and would therefore be unable to deliver the arranged briefing session on the Czech Presidency priorities. Instead colleagues from the permanent Representation of the Czech Republic and the Czech Liaison Office (Czelo) would give updates on (a) events that would take place during the presidency and (b) the EU Forum on Research and Development Impact Assessment (EUFORDIA). There would also be a presentation from Catherine Bradley (Counsellor for Industry and the Internal Market at the UK Representation to the EU (UKRep)) regarding the European Commission's new economic recovery plan, delivery of which would be one of the Czech Presidency priorities.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Commission's 2009 work programme was tabled. This was very scant compared to what was normally issued. It was agreed to examine this and the presidential programme annually in order to make decisions about activities within the West Midlands.</p> <p>The Contribution to the debate on the future of Cohesion Policy paper</p>	<p>ALL</p>

