

West Midlands Regional Assembly

Speaking out for the region

The Regional Assembly will meet at **the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 75 Harborne Road, Birmingham B15 3DH** on **Wednesday, 18 January 2006** commencing at **11.45 a.m.**

The agenda and reports referred to are available on the Assembly website: <http://www.wmra.gov.uk/page.asp?id=149>

The agenda will be:-

1. **Apologies**
2. **Members' Disclosures of Interests**
3. **Chairman's and Vice-Chairs' Reports** (verbal update)
4. **Decision notes of the meeting held on 26 October 2005**

5. **Draft Budget and Business Plan 2006-2009**

To present the Draft Budget and Business Plan 2006-09 to the Regional Assembly for endorsement. The final version will be presented to the Assembly at its April meeting.

Recommendations

- (a) The Assembly endorse the Draft Budget and Business Plan for 2006-2009.
- (b) The Assembly delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Regional Partnerships Secretary, Chair and Vice Chairs, authority to make such modifications as are necessary to the draft budget and/or business plan upon receipt of comments from ODPM.
- (c) That the final budget and business plan be submitted to the April Board meeting for approval.

For further information please contact: Trudi Elliott – Chief Executive on tel no: 0121 678 1031 or by email: t.elliott@wmra.gov.uk

6. **West Midlands Regional Funding Allocations – Advice to Government**

To consider the West Midlands Regional Funding Allocations – Advice to Government (attached an appendix to the report).

Recommendations

- i) That the Assembly endorses the approach being taken to the content and arrangements for finalising the West Midlands Regional Funding Allocations – Advice to Government – attached.
- ii) That the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Assembly have delegated responsibility to sign-off the final document in conjunction with the Chairman and Chief Executive of AWM and the Director of Government Office.

For further information please contact: Rose Poulter - Director of Policy on tel no 0121 678 1024 or by email: r.poulter@wmlga.gov.uk

7. Draft Statement – West Midlands Region – Incorporating A City Region and Sub-Regional Approach

The Assembly is asked to consider the attached draft statement.

Recommendation

That the Assembly offer views on the attached statement and request that the Chairman and Vice-Chair's of the Assembly sign-off the final version of the statement.

For further information please contact: Rose Poulter - Director of Policy on tel no 0121 678 1024 or by email: r.poulter@wmlga.gov.uk

8. Strategic Review of Equalities and Diversity - Final report

To present a copy of the recommendations arising from this strategic review to the full Assembly for information. The complete report can be accessed on the Assembly's website.

The Panel made fifteen recommendations for regional partners as listed below. The rationale for each recommendation is discussed within the main body of the report.

These are intended to provide a framework for future action that will require to be implemented by all regional partners working together.

- R1 That the West Midlands Regional Assembly and Sustainability West Midlands ensure that the social aspects of the Regional Sustainable Development Framework are developed further within the final version to be completed in April 2006. In particular it should demonstrate how actions to address equality and diversity issues can impact on other policy areas. The consultation period on the draft framework (30 January to 27 March 2006) should actively engage with social partners to develop aims and objectives.
- R2 That Sustainability West Midlands actively works to strengthen its membership from the social sector and explore how equalities and diversity issues impact on all aspects of its work. This should be included as an action in the their annual business plan to be published in July 2006

- R3 That the sustainable development monitoring mechanisms adopted by the West Midlands Regional Assembly make specific references to how equality and diversity issues are being addressed. The guidance for this annual report to the West Midlands Regional Assembly Annual General meeting held in July should include specific questions in relation to equality and diversity issues.
- R4 That Regional Concordat partners nominate an identified Board Member, Elected Member or Senior Officer as an internal Equalities and Diversity Champion by 31 March 2006.
- R5 That a new Regional Partnership Body be established under the aegis of the West Midlands Regional Assembly to replace the Social Inclusion Partnership with a first meeting of core members to be held during April 2006.
- R6 That the new Regional Partnership Body organises a regional summit to be held by autumn 2006 to provide a "safe space" for regional leaders to discuss equality and diversity issues facing the region in an open and honest way.
- R7 That the nervousness about issues and terminology within the region is addressed by the development of appropriate "branding" including a recognisable name and status for the new Regional Partnership Body. This should be agreed and in place so it can be launched at the regional summit (see Recommendation 6) by autumn 2006.
- R8 That a priority of the new Regional Partnership Body is to develop options by September 2006 for the proposed regional CEHR presence and how this will link to existing and proposed regional structures.
- R9 That the West Midlands Regional Assembly explicitly adopts equalities and diversity as central principles of all aspects of its work and takes on a regional leadership role upon endorsement of this report by the West Midlands Regional Assembly. Partners must have a clear understanding that this does not replace individual responsibilities of partners to collectively address issues.
- R10 That a secretariat is developed to support regional working with clear progress demonstrated by 31 June 2006. An initial approach could be the creation of a "virtual secretariat", made up of individuals within various organisations who provide a proportion of their time to support joint working
- R11 That the Regional Concordat is amended by July 2006 to include a specific commitment to valuing all citizens and giving all communities and individuals the chance to contribute to regional renaissance.
- R12 That the new Regional Partnership Body develops a website to allow sharing of research, good practice and information including

links with clear progress demonstrated by autumn 2006.

- R13 That Concordat Partners carry out an audit of their internal processes and delivery arrangements by 31 December 2006 in the light of this review to identify areas for improvement and joint working.
- R14 That the new Regional Partnership Body establishes a regional commission to examine how regional partners can contribute to the understanding, development and achievement of community cohesion goals. Clear progress should be demonstrated by 31 December 2006.
- R15 That the new Regional Partnership Body encourages bodies currently providing regional awards to include an equalities and diversity element for awards to be made in 2007 and thereafter.

Recommendation

That the Assembly discuss and endorse the recommendations of the strategic review report.

For further information please contact: Dagmar Waller - Strategic Review Officer on tel: 0121 678 1054 or email: d.waller@wmra.gov.uk

9. Response to the ODPM Request for detailed proposals on implementing the transfer of the Regional Housing Board function to the West Midlands Regional Assembly Limited

To approve the detailed proposals for implementing the proposed transfer of the Regional Housing Board functions to the West Midlands Regional Assembly Limited ("the Assembly") for submission to ODPM by 31 January 2006.

Recommendations

- (a) That the draft terms of reference for the Regional Housing Partnership and Regional Housing Executive attached as Appendix 1 be approved for submission to ODPM.
- (b) Note that once ODPM has approved the proposals the Assembly at a future meeting approve modifications to the Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association to
- (i) Allow the Board of Directors to create Committees of the Board whose members are not all members of the Board; and to
- (ii) List the Regional Housing Board functions as Company functions.

For further information please contact: Trudi Elliott - Chief Executive on tel: 0121 678 1031 or by email: t.elliott@wmra.gov.uk or Steve Forrest - Strategic Housing Advisor on tel no: 0121 678 1064 or by email: s.forrest@wmra.gov.uk

10. **Review of the West Midlands Economic Strategy**

To set out proposals from Advantage West Midlands for the review of the West Midlands Economic Strategy.

Recommendation

To consider the proposals for the review of the West Midlands Economic Strategy as set out in the report.

For further information please contact: Dr Roger Sumpton – (Corporate Director – Strategy and Communications), Advantage West Midlands - email: rogersumpton@advantagewm.co.uk

11. **Decisions of the Board of Directors**

To advise the Regional Assembly of matters considered by the Board at its meeting on 2 December 2005 which are not otherwise the subject of a report to this meeting.

Recommendation

The content of the report be noted.

For further information please contact: Trudi Elliott - Chief Executive on tel: 0121 678 1031 or by email: t.elliott@wmra.gov.uk or Nigel Summers – Regional Partnership Secretary, email: nigel_summers@sandwell.gov.uk

12. **Regional Policy Partnerships Activity**

To update the Regional Assembly on the current status and activities of Regional Partnerships, established by or working closely with the West Midlands Regional Assembly; and to seek Assembly members' support for a proposal for annual reporting from Regional Partnerships on how their work addresses sustainable development.

Recommendations

That the Regional Assembly considers the report, and endorses the proposals for annual reporting by Partnerships on their contribution to sustainable development.

For further information please contact: Rose Poulter - Director of Policy on tel no 0121 678 1024 or by email: r.poulter@wmlga.gov.uk or the appropriate officer named in the appendix to the report.

13. **Dates of future meetings**

Wednesday 5 April 2006

Wednesday 12 July 2006 (Annual General Meeting)

The venues for these meetings have yet to be determined. Should any members be aware of potential venues, please contact Daryl Davies by the methods shown below.

General Enquiries: Please contact Daryl Davies, Senior Regional Support Officer. Tel No: 0121 678 1046 or by e-mailing: d.davies@wmra.gov.uk

Enquiries about specific reports: Please contact the officers named in the reports.

The agenda and reports referred to are available on www.wmra.gov.uk

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