

**WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Decision Notes of the West Midlands Regional Assembly Meeting  
Held on 29 October 2008  
At the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce**

**Chairman: Cllr David S Smith (Lichfield DC)**

**1. Apologies**

Apologies and attendance are attached in appendix 1

**2. Members Declarations of Interests**

There were no Declarations of Interest stated.

**3. Chairman and Vice Chairs reports**

***The Chairman:***

Shared his concerns regarding the current economic situation. He stated that Local Government needed to be responding quickly with a possibility of 3 million people becoming unemployed. There were no new building contracts being offered in local authorities – these were in fact being stopped to the credit crunch.

He stressed his disapproval of the NLP Study commissioned by Government which had already cost £211,000 with the possibility that this may increase to £250,000. He felt the Study put the Assembly behind in its discussion process and was totally lacking in understanding of the infrastructures for housing.

The report had caused massive strains on local authorities and to date there had not been any legislation received and felt that this should have been received weeks ago.

***The Vice-Chair Dr Sarindar Singh Sahota – Business Sector:***

Welcome David Cairo and Kevin Farrell, from the Business Council attending their first meeting of the Assembly.

He echoed the Chairman's comments on the economy and stressed the major impact that this has had on everybody, with the Business Sector being hit particularly hard with Businesses being demolished so that no business tax would need to be paid.

Business Council's views needed to be included in the decision making of the Operation Review of the Assembly and stressed the successful Partnership work that continued in the region and should continue to do so.

***The Vice Chair - Cllr Terry Dix - Local Government Sector:***

Agreed with Surindar's comments and reiterated that through the SNR all Partnerships needed to continue to be included.

***The Vice-Chair Roger McKenzie – OSG Sector***

Agreed with the comments made by the Chairman and the other Vice Chairs with regard to both the SNR and the Economy.

He stated that he would like to see all Partners coming together as they did with MG Rover. The situation needed to be looked at a regional level and approached together. He advised that at a recent TUC meeting it had been stated that some building companies were dismissing their staff and then re-employing them as self employed so that they were no longer responsible for the employees national insurance contributions and their health and safety.

In his closing comments, the Chairman suggested and it was **AGREED** that a Special 'Conversation' Meeting be called on the Economic situation. A date and venue would be circulated to Members.

**4. Draft Decision Notes of the Assembly Meeting held on 09 July 2008 and Matters Arising**

**NOTED**

**5. Draft notes of the Assembly Board of Directors 24 September 2008**

**NOTED**

**6. Company Secretary's Report**

The Assembly were provided with an update on general issues.

The report recommended that the Assembly:-

**NOTE** the details of the report.

**NOTE** the Quarter 2 Progress Report as submitted to GOWM on 17 October.

**SUBMIT** any outstanding Declaration of Interest and Gifts and Hospitality forms.

**7. Regional Funding Advice**

The Assembly received a verbal report and briefing note from Rose Poulter.

Members noted the report and were advised that further updates would be made available to meetings between now and February 2009.

#### **8. Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Review / Nathaniel Lichfield Partnership**

Members received a report were advised on the arrangements for an Assembly response by 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008 to the GOWM Housing Study undertaken by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) study and its impact on the RSS Phase Two Revision. .

The report recommended and it was **AGREED** that the Assembly endorse the action to be taken in respect of RSS Phase Two Revision work. This would include the development of the Assembly's response by 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008, following the publication of the GOWM Housing Study, and the preparatory work for the Examination in Public (EiP).

#### **9. Reviewing the operating arrangements of the Assembly 2008-2010**

The Assembly received a report on the proposed new operating arrangements for the Regional Assembly. Members were invited to discuss the report and the following comments were made:-

It was recommended and **AGREED** that the Assembly **NOTE** the intended changes to the specific arrangements which were intended to come in to effect from 3 December 2008.

#### **10. Strategic Review of Transport**

Members were presented with the findings from the Strategic Review of Transport, examining how transport policy within the region contributed to its success in integrating economic, environmental and societal needs.

Members were advised that the full report was available on the Assembly's website [http://www.wmra.gov.uk/Scrutiny\\_and\\_Strategic\\_Review/Strategic\\_Review\\_of\\_Transport.aspx](http://www.wmra.gov.uk/Scrutiny_and_Strategic_Review/Strategic_Review_of_Transport.aspx)

The Assembly:-

- discussed and **ENDORSED** the findings of the review panel
- **APPROVED** recommendation R3 made specifically to the Regional Assembly and recommendations R12, R14 and R17 made for the Regional Transport Partnership.

#### **11. Draft Notes of the Regional Housing Executive meeting held on 25 November 2008**

Due to the RHE being inquorat, the Assembly were requested and **AGREED** to the ratification of the notes of the RHE Meeting held on the 25 November 2008

## **FOR INFORMATION**

The following items were for information only and were **NOTED**.

12. **West Midlands Partnership Review**

The Assembly received and **NOTED** a verbal update.

13. **Delivering Advantage – Progress Report**

The Assembly were presented with the final Progress Report against Delivering Advantage, including the results of a third party verification of progress reported since 2004.

The Assembly **NOTED** the report against Delivering Advantage and the associated verification report covering progress since 2004.

14. **Report of the Chief Executive – Headline Issues for West Midlands Regional Assembly)**

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

The Assembly **NOTED** the progress made.

15. **Economic Inclusion Panel (EIP)**

The background and Membership of the EIP was **NOTED** by the Assembly.

16. **Response to BERR select committee inquiry into RDAs**

Members were informed of the submission made by the Assembly to the Business and Enterprise Select Committee.

The submission was **NOTED**.

17. **Living Well West Midlands – Update Report (Attached)**

The Assembly was updated on work and progress to date.

The report was **NOTED**.

17a. **Invitation to Living Well Annual Conference  
NOTED**

18. **Dates of future Meetings 2008/09**

14 January 2009

22 April 2009

08 July 2009

**NOTED**