

West Midlands Regional Assembly

Agenda Item 8
(See Paragraph 8.4 to Company Secretary Report)

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY **Board of Directors – 3 December 2008**

Regional Assembly Draft 2009-10 Business Plan & Budget

1. Draft Business Plan

1.1 The first draft of the Assembly 2009-10 Business Plan & Budget is attached at (Appendix A). This Plan seeks to focus on two key objectives in the final year of the Assembly;

- WMRSS Phase 2 Examination in Public
- WMRSS Phase 3 Consultation on Preferred Options

In addition however, it also has to detail our approach to the transfer of statutory functions to a successor body and plans for dissolution.

1.2 The Draft Plan was submitted to GOWM on 28 November and a review meeting is scheduled for 9 December. Board Members are therefore asked to advise of any key points or issues they would wish to be shared with colleagues at GOWM at the review meeting.

1.3 As Members will appreciate, much of the detail was drafted ahead of the receipt of the Government's Response to the SNR consultation issued 25 November, so we acknowledge that there will be some further amendments required as we work through the advice and indeed, as we develop transitional arrangements.

1.4 In particular at this point, we have excluded from this first draft the required section on a Change Management Plan and approach to development of a Single Integrated Regional Strategy. This is to enable consultation with our Members and AWM to inform this element of the Plan.

1.5 We have also made some amendments to the scrutiny work programme in light of the absence of a scrutiny role going

forward; we have indicated that we will complete on scrutiny work in progress up to a transfer of functions and then we will explore how we may need to refocus resources on a 'monitoring' role going forward.

2. Draft Budget

- 2.1 The expectation from CLG for 2009-10 is for at least a 10% cut in funding and we have constructed our draft budget on this basis. However, due to the Examination in Public being delayed to 2009-10 we require a contingency budget of £100,000 to be carried over from 2008-09 to meet the significant costs associated with this.
- 2.2 We are looking hard at current year expenditure in Q3 in order to secure such a significant contingency, but we believe that it will be deliverable from savings on staffing due to non replacement of some posts that fell vacant.
- 2.3 Any contingency must be agreed by CLG and we will be writing to them to formally request this carry forward of funds which we believe to be absolutely critical to the overall delivery of our 2009-10 work programme.

3. Assembly Dissolution Fund

- 3.1 CLG specifically ask us to clarify how reserves will be used. We have indicated that our reserves will provide a 'dissolution fund' to meet all costs related to the process of winding up the Assembly and that this fund will be directly managed by the Board. Any funds remaining after all dissolution costs are met would transfer to the successor body to support continuation of activities.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The Final Plan must be submitted to GOWM before Christmas and due to the very tight timetable, the Board is asked to delegate responsibility to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairs to agree any further amendments to enable a final draft to be submitted and a copy circulated electronically to all Board Members.
- 4.2 A final review meeting will be held with GOWM week commencing 5 January to enable them to submit plans to CLG early January. It is expected that Funding Allocation Letters will be issued to Assemblies early February 2009.
- 4.3 In addition the Chief Executive will circulate to all Board Members a draft of the proposed section on 'Change

Management Plan & SIRS' for comment before submission to GOWM.

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Board delegates responsibility to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairs to agree the Final 2009-10 Business Plan & Budget for submission to GOWM.

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