

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Board of Directors – 25 March 2009

Report of the Chief Executive and Company Secretary

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide the Board with an update on current activities.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Board is asked to note the following updates: -

3. Members Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 The following Members have still not provided a Declaration of Interest form for the year 07/08. The same Members have been re-nominated for the year 2008/09. The Board is advised that these Members are **in breach of company regulations and their membership is suspended until their forms are filed with the Secretariat.**

Local Authority Members

David Minnery, North Shropshire	Full Member	- 08/09
John Brian Gillow, Shropshire	Alternate	- 08/09

OSG

Dally Panesar	Alternate	- 08/09
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For information, all Declarations of Interest may be accessed on the website at;

http://www.wmra.gov.uk/What_We_Do/Governance_Arrangements/Assembly_Membership/Members_Declarations_of_Interest.aspx

(Members are reminded that they should periodically check their details and advise the Secretariat in writing if there are any changes.)

4. Retrofitting for the Future – Low Carbon Housing – Developing a Baseline for Refurbishment in the West Midlands

- 4.1 The recent UK Green Building Council report Low Carbon Housing emphasised the need for a significant increase in the level of energy efficiency refurbishment in the existing housing sector, and a strong lead from Government to enable industry to increase capacity and innovate.
- 4.2 New and existing housing were both identified as key areas of concern in the West Midlands Regional Climate Change Action Plan, as current indicators are that housing accounts for up to 30 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions in the West Midlands. The Climate Change Action Plan was prepared by the Regional Assembly on behalf of the Region and launched by the Regional Minister Liam Byrne, MP in December 2007 and its implementation is now co-ordinated by GOWM through a virtual office which includes Assembly staff. The Assembly, AWM, Natural England and the Environment Agency remain the partners in the Climate Change Action Plan.
- 4.3 As part of the Action Plan's implementation, WMRA and AWM commissioned an important project to assess the current level of refurbishment in existing housing (social and private sector), the impact on CO₂ reduction and recommend how the region can support households, housing managers and industry in meeting the challenges of an 80% CO₂ reduction target by 2050.
- 4.4 Interest in the retrofitting agenda is increasing rapidly and the Government's current consultation on the 'definition of Zero Carbon' talks about 'allowable solutions' including the possibility of a tax paid by developers to improve the efficiency of existing housing.
- 4.5 The report is to be launched on Monday 23 March 2009, at the Orange Studio in Birmingham.
- 4.6 For further information please see **Appendix 1**

5. The Strategic Forum for Central Wales and the West Midlands

- 5.1 On behalf of the West Midlands Regional Assembly and the Welsh Assembly Government, the Cross Border Strategic Forum Event is being held at Hope Community Church Conference Centre on 2 April 2009. Ministers, regional partners and stakeholders have been invited to look at what progress has been made since the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2007
- 5.2 For further information please see **Appendix 2a and 2b**

5.3 A report on the event will be made available at the Full Assembly meeting on 22 April 2009.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (SOCIAL INCLUSION)

Finally, I am pleased to confirm that we have appointed Laird Ryan as the Strategic Adviser for Equality and Diversity on a 6 month contract. He will be supported by Paul Singh, who will be joining us on secondment for six months as Policy Support for Equality & Diversity – funding for this has been provided by AWM.

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