

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **New Policy Director for Regional Assembly**

Worcestershire County Council's head of planning, economy and research is to join West Midlands Regional Assembly.

Mark Middleton, takes up a two-year secondment this month with the Assembly as director of policy.

The secondment is a high profile role for Mr Middleton, advising regional partnerships on planning, housing, transport and environmental matters managing revisions to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, and leading on significant local government policy matters.

Mr Middleton said: "The next two years will see some very big changes in the way in which the Region's future development is planned. I look forward to helping to negotiate sustainable development targets and maintaining a meaningful role for local government in regional planning."

Olwen Dutton, chief executive welcomed Mr Middleton to the Assembly.

She said: "I am very pleased that Mark is joining us at the Assembly at a significant time for regional planning both in the West Midlands and nationally. The stage we are at now with the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and the government expectations set out in the Housing Green Paper, is a challenging time for the Assembly and I am sure Marks' experience will be up to the task ahead."

**ENDS**

**Photograph of Mark Middleton attached.**

## **Notes to editors:**

1. The West Midlands Regional Assembly ('the Assembly') represents a wide range of democratic, social and economic interests throughout the West Midlands region.
2. The Assembly's membership consists of 100 nominated representatives, with 68 members representing the local authority, 16 representing the business sector and 16 representing other economic and social partners.
3. The Assembly provides a platform for organisations to consider matters of common concern including: regional planning, transport, economic prosperity, sustainability, culture and Europe. It also supports regional policy forums and task groups on social inclusion, faith, housing, life long learning/skills, health, rural and community safety/crime reduction.
4. The Assembly works in partnership with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) the regional development agency (RDA), the Government Office West Midlands (GOWM), Regional Action West Midlands (RAWM) the West Midlands Local Government Association (WMLGA) and other regional and local organisations from across the West Midlands region.
5. The Assembly is the Regional Planning Body, and is also responsible for scrutinising the operation of the region's RDA, Advantage West Midlands.
6. For further information, visit our website [www.wmra.gov.uk](http://www.wmra.gov.uk)

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