

Agenda Item No. 8

**WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
Assembly Meeting – 24 October 2007**

Revised West Midlands Economic Strategy

Report of AWM Director of Strategy

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek endorsement of the revised West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES). A copy of the revised WMES is attached.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the revised WMES be endorsed.

3. Background

- 3.1 The review of the WMES was launched in 2006 by Advantage West Midlands, working with the West Midlands Regional Assembly. The review process has comprised five main phases:

- Building the evidence base (March to July 2006)
- Developing policy choices (August to October 2006)
- Consulting on policy choices (November 2006 to February 2007)
- Consulting on the full draft strategy (May to July 2007)
- Launch of the revised WMES (December 2007)

- 3.2 It is worth noting that the review process has included two substantial periods of consultation, involving 12 major public consultation events across the region, numerous smaller meetings with partners and stakeholders and approaching 400 written consultation responses.

- 3.3 Advantage West Midlands and Regional Assembly officers have worked together closely throughout the review process to ensure that the existing strong alignment between the WMES and the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy is maintained and strengthened through the review and revision of the two strategies.

4. Detail

- 4.1 The revised Strategy is accompanied by a draft Delivery Framework, setting out how the Strategy will be delivered. Copies of both documents are attached. In addition, when the Strategy is launched, a number of supporting documents, will be made available via the WMES web pages. These include:
- Context, evidence and rationales (a document summarising the context, evidence and rationales underpinning the Strategy)
 - WMES monitoring framework baseline report (Baseline regional and sub-regional data on performance against the headline and outcome indicators set out in the Strategy)
 - Reports on consultation feedback (one from the Policy Choices consultation and one from the consultation on the full draft Strategy)
 - A report describing the review process, including a summary of changes made to the Strategy as a result of the consultation feedback received
 - Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Report on the Strategy
 - Several reports providing further background information on the 'low carbon' dimensions of the Strategy
 - All of the original reports from the evidence base building phase of the review process.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 Following consideration of the Strategy by the Assembly, it will be put to Ministers for 'welcoming'. The intention is to launch the revised WMES and the outcome from the Phase Two revision of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, together, on 10th December. This will be the first step on the route to developing the first single integrated strategy for the region.
- 5.2 The draft Delivery Framework will be launched at the same time as the Strategy - on 10th December - but as a draft, allowing further time for discussion. The final version of the Framework will be ready for implementation from 1st April 2008.

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