

West Midlands Regional Assembly 2007-10 Business Plan & Budget

CONTENTS

Chairman's Statement	Page 2
Key Achievements 2006-2007	Page 5
Key Priorities 2007-2008	Page 11
Accountability, audit, accounting and claim arrangements	Page 17
Work Strands	
Corporate Activities	Page 18
Regional Planning and Housing	Page 20
Scrutiny & Strategic Review	Page 28
Policy Integration	Page 29
Financial Summary 2007-08	Page 34
Flat Cash Three Year Budgets 2007-10	Page 36
Priorities for 2008-10 and Year 2 and 3 Budget Scenarios	Page 37

Chairman's Statement

This Business Plan has been developed in accordance with the guidance provided by the DCLG and sets out how the West Midlands will utilise the Government funding for Assemblies to deliver a wide ranging work programme covering statutory functions for Planning and Housing; the scrutiny of the Regional Development Agency and ensure integration of regional policies and strategies. The Plan provides detailed work plans for 2007-08 and an overview of the impact of a 2.5% increase or decrease on years 2008-2010.

Planning Transport & Housing

In 2007-08 the Assembly's planning responsibilities will remain of vital importance, particularly in helping to make our vision of urban and rural renaissance a reality. We will continue to help our partners to actively implement the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). In January 2007 the Examination in Public of the Black Country Study began. This is the first phase of the Revision; phase 2 is well underway, and we will begin work phase 3 during the year. In addition we will update the Regional Transport Delivery Plan.

A key focus is also to ensure alignment of the Revision of the RSS with the Review of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES). This will be seen in respect to the processes which the Assembly and Advantage WM adopt and the policy outcomes. Both processes will use the Regional Sustainability Development Framework (RSDF) to guide the development of policies. It is essential that we work closely with AWM, GOWM and Sustainability West Midlands to ensure consistency.

Our work with the Birmingham, Black Country and Coventry City Region and the Stoke and North Staffordshire City Region to secure urban renaissance will continue. It is underpinned by the Joint Statement issued in October 2006 by the Assembly and the two City Regions. The Statement has secured a clear understanding of the City Region approaches, and how they are shaping up to deliver regional strategic priorities, especially their contribution towards the urban renaissance agenda and competitiveness. Future iterations of this Statement will describe the 'fit' and contribution of other strategic sub-regional arrangements within the West Midlands region.

The recently established Regional Housing Partnership will ensure that the Region has a greater say in housing priorities and will work to ensure that housing resources are used to support the Regional Housing Strategy. The Regional Housing Partnership is working in tandem with the Regional Planning Partnership on the RSS Revision Phase 2. In particular it will work with Planning Partnership on the Government's household projections figures and advise on the number and distribution of affordable homes.

Our Transport Partnership continues to raise the profile of our regional transport priorities, most notably Birmingham New Street Station, with Government and its agencies. The partnership oversaw the prioritisation of transport schemes as part of the RFA process in early 2006. In 2007 we will review our transport priorities to reflect not only the RSS Revision and RES Review but also the implications of both the Stern Report on climate change and the Eddington Report on transport.

Climate Change – A Regional Priority

Having hosted a highly successful climate change conference in October 2006, the Assembly signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change and gave an undertaking to make climate change a regional priority and to try to ensure it is embedded in the planning and development processes of all Assembly partnerships. A Climate Change Task Force is charged with developing an action plan for our region, which will be implemented during 2007 and subsequent years.

Scrutiny & Strategic Review

Scrutiny of the Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands will continue to be a key function. Building on the strong foundations laid in previous years, we will continue to work with them to support their Review of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES). Our approach to the scrutiny process is highly valued within the region and we are now being asked by other regional partners such as the LSC, to develop this function further by carrying out reviews of other regional activities.

Working in Partnership

Partnership working is critical to our success in delivering on our ambitions for this region; both from the voluntary support provided from our stakeholders and regional partners, to the financial support provided to strengthen some work areas such as housing, health, rural and forestry.

The West Midlands Regional Assembly is an organisation that adapts as necessary to deliver our role across and within the region against a constantly changing and challenging landscape and our partnership activity is central to this. The Assembly embraced a move towards greater partnership working in 2006 by appointing a Chief Executive for the Partnership Centre which hosts the West Midlands LGA, Cultural Consortium and West Midlands Business Council; whose role it is to promote the necessary leadership and drive across a shared strategic agenda for the West Midlands.

The Assembly seeks to undertake its role in partnership with its constituent partners, regional stakeholders, Government Office of the West Midlands (GOWM) and Advantage West Midlands (AWM). Collectively, the Assembly and its partners are seeking to improve the Region's quality of life and have described their respective roles, responsibilities and leadership areas in the Regional Concordat (revised

2006). Last year the Assembly also established a Forward Planning Executive comprising the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Assembly, Transport Partnership, Regional Housing Executive and AWM (supported by the Chief Executives and Directors of the Assembly, AWM and Government Office). This group submitted advice to Treasury on the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 and will seek to forward plan and monitor the progress and sequencing of investment into the West Midlands.

David S Smith
Chairman – West Midlands Regional Assembly

DRAFT

Key Achievements 2006-2007

Corporate Governance

- Review of structures and legal framework for adoption of the Regional Housing Board function.
- Review of planning processes with legal advisers to ensure robust and sound planning processes.
- Training provided for Assembly members involved in conformity process and establishment of Conformity Protocol.
- Recruitment of new Chief Executive in common with the West Midlands LGA.
- Implementation of an internal audit function.
- Worked with AWM to provide a West Midlands Submission on the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007.
- Made representations to the LGA in respect of the White Paper – Strong & Prosperous Communities
- Assembly now represented by the Chairman on the Birmingham, Black Country & Coventry City Region Executive Board.
- Participated in a review of the Regional Partnership of the Assembly and West Midlands LGA - their strategic focus and remit.

Communications

- Raised profile of WMRA through increased media activity; average 2.5 releases per month, exceeding KPI of 5 releases per quarter.
- Annual Conference on Climate Change; attended by almost 300 people including the Minister for Climate Change.
- Launch of revised and strengthened Regional Concordat for regional partnership working.
- Campaign, publications and event to support RSS Phase 2 including the Options Consultation.
- Publications; Annual Monitoring Report and Summary Leaflets, Annual Review & Business Plan, Speaking Out Newsletter, e-news for policy areas to improve communications with stakeholders.
- New suite of materials to support activities such as Scrutiny and Strategic Review, Equalities and Diversity and improved access to information
- Successful West Midlands 2012 Roadshow securing extensive coverage and awareness; contributed to Communications Strategy for the West Midlands as part of the London 2012 nations and regions work
- Lobbying on behalf of RAF Cosford.

Regional Planning Body

Draft RSS Phase 1 Revision

- Submission to Secretary of State – May 2006
- Public Examination 9th– 18th January 2007

Draft RSS Phase 2 Revision

- Final Project Plan published and distributed.
- Section 4(4) Briefs issued and advice received from Strategic authorities.
- RSS Reference Groups established for each Assembly Partnership.
- Spatial Options approved by Regional Planning Partnership for consultation commencing 8th January 2007
- Programme and procedures established for the Spatial Options consultation process.
- Sustainability Appraisal undertaken of the Spatial Options.

Draft RSS Phase 3 Revision

- Scoping Study completed.

RSS Monitoring

- Integration of RSS and RHS monitoring; evidenced by the Housing Market Summary Report (the first of its kind in the country).
- Annual Monitoring Report published in line with statutory requirements and cited by DCLG as good practice in feedback to the English Regional Assemblies.
- Contextual Monitoring report prepared in line with agreed programme.

RSS Implementation

- Working with a range of partners (e.g. Professional Institutes) to promote increased awareness of RSS and further alignment of regional policies.
- Steering and guiding both City Region agendas to secure complementarity of ambition and delivery in respect to the RSS and Urban Renaissance.

RSS Conformity

- Responded to all consultations in respect of Local Development Documents and Regionally Significant Planning Applications within statutory timescales. April 2006 to December 2006 the number of: Regionally significant planning applications responded to was 19. The number of pre Submission consultation Documents (i.e. Issues and Options and Preferred options) responded to was 24. The number of Submission Documents responded to where a formal opinion of general conformity was given is: 8
- Agreed a system for cross boundary referral of regionally significant planning applications in conjunction with other English Regions.

Regional Transport Partnership

- Developed policy options for RSS Phase 2.
- Input to Regional Funding Allocations and Corporate Spending Review 07 processes.
- Provided advice to the Inspector at the Coventry Airport and Warwick Local Plan Public Inquiries.
- Input into the Department for Transport's rail franchise invitation to tender process.

Regional Housing Board

- Development of the Sub-Regional Housing Market Area Partnerships to take forward implementation of the 'Regional Housing Strategy 2005' and in particular to identify sub-regional housing investment priorities to help target the allocation of Single Regional Capital Pot housing resources in the Region.
- A 'Guide to the Delivery of Affordable Housing' launched on 16th November 2006. The Guide was well received and is the result of work undertaken by an Affordable Housing Group (established by the Regional Assembly) to identify the structure of the Guide and to identify examples of good practice for inclusion in the Guide.
- Taken over responsibility for the Regional Housing Board function from the Government Office from September 2006; established new member and officer/stakeholder structures to undertake this function.
- Support for the Partial Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2; in particular regarding housing options.
- Commissioned research to; support the implementation of the Regional Housing Strategy, provide a robust evidence base, and further develop research previously undertaken in the development of the Strategy.
- Work to join up housing and planning monitoring regionally and to enhance the quality of information available; resulting in the production of a Regional Housing Market Summary Report.

Sustainability

- Sustainability Appraisal of RSS Partial Review Phase 2.
- Conference on Climate Change (October 2006) attracting 260 delegates; establishing climate change as a regional priority.
- Regional Sustainable Development Framework published (July 2006).
- Regional Sustainable Development Framework promoted and used in the development of a number of regional strategies.
- Development of a 'Sustainability Checklist/Toolkit' for use by planners and developers to *sustainability proof* major planning applications and new developments.
- Each Assembly Partnership independently appraised in respect to contributions towards sustainable development.

Strategic Review and Scrutiny

- Assessment of progress made by Advantage West Midlands in addressing recommendations previously made by the Assembly on Regeneration Zones.
- Strategic Review of the 'Regions' Relationship with Europe'.
- Significant contribution to Independent Performance Assessment of Advantage West Midlands undertaken by National Audit Office.
- Development of robust mechanism to monitor implementation of Review recommendations.
- Publication of 'Assessment of Regional Economy'; an examination of how key economic indicators in the region are changing over time and a comparison of local, regional and national pictures.

Policy Integration:

Regional Health Partnership

- Developed stage one bid to Big Lottery Fund to support regional projects.
- Scoping work and early draft of a Regional Health and Wellbeing strategy.
- Consultation responses to the proposed smoking legislation, future structural funds programme, EU Green Paper on Mental Health and the Regional Sustainable Development Framework.
- RSS and Health task group set up to feed into RSS Revision Phase 2.
- Developed a Health Network website with the Department of Health and Regional Action West Midlands.
- Published 'Choosing Health for the West Midlands' (Department of Health in the West Midlands).

Europe

- Strengthened Partnership working - providing WMRA responses to government consultations on EU Cohesion policy, especially successful in negotiating a new Assisted Areas map for 2007-2013 that dictates the extent to which private firms may receive public subsidy.
- Well attended annual West Midlands in Europe Partnership event September 2006 on the theme of working with partner European regions 'Beyond the Structural Funds'. Keynote speaker was the Director of the European Commission's London Office and delegates discovered more about successful projects involving partner regions.
- The West Midlands is the first English Region to submit its draft European Regional Development Programme document for public consultation, December 2006. This helps to achieve a prompt start to the programme in 2007-08.

Equalities & Diversity

- Appointed an Equality & Diversity Director on secondment from the Home Office to lead on the implementation of the recommendations of the Equality & Diversity Strategic Review.
- A Regional Strategic Partnership for Equality & Diversity was set-up with leading experts from across the "equalities" strands, as well as VCS, Business and Public sectors.
- Ran a series of consultation events around the establishment of a regional presence of the new Commission for Equality & Human Rights with stakeholders from across the various sectors and the region throughout the year.
- Held a Regional Leaders' Summit in January 2007.
- Worked with WMSPARS to ensure asylum seekers and refugee matters are appropriately addressed.

Rural & Forestry

- Adoption and co-ordination of the implementation of the West Midlands Rural Delivery Framework; first iteration April 2006.
- Established an effective rural agencies specialist task group, working with the Accord and WMRAF to rural proof high level strategies and policies. To date; RSS Phase 2 Options Development, RSS Phase 2 Options Document, RES Revision: Policy Choices, and the Regional Health & Wellbeing Strategy.
- Pro-actively managed the business of the Rural Accord on behalf of the Partners & act as focal point for advice and information providing updates and reports for Rural Accord, Rural Affairs Forum, RAG, Rural Renaissance Working Group & others.

- Supported the work of the Rural Affairs Forum towards becoming carbon neutral; Specialist Seminar on Sustainable Energy Sources (June 2006) and Rural Conference on Climate Change (November 2006).
- Supported the work of the Rural Affairs Forum, in particular: lobbying to increase priority level of land based skills; inputting to Forum task group's proposal on the Rural Affordable Housing Commission Report.
- Completed of the second year of implementation of the WM Regional Forestry Framework.
- Prepared of the WMRFF rolling Action Plan 2006-2009; facilitating and co-ordinating its delivery.
- Monitoring and evaluation; culminating in the production of the Annual Report 2005-2006.
- Establishment and support to a growing number of WM Woodland & Forestry Forum's specialist task groups carrying the work of the WMRFF forward.
- Improved linkages to the Assembly policy partnerships and RSS implementation.

Culture

- Produced first regional plan to take full advantage of opportunities from the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games and expanded scope of officer and member structures to deliver the plan.
- Delivered successful WM leg of 2012 roadshow and secured significant broadcast and print media coverage of events.
- Region took on lead Nations and Regions role for 2012 Games Cultural Programme.
- Secured partnership funding for and appointed WM Co-ordinator for the 2012 Games.

Skills

- Raised awareness of the regional skills agenda with the Assembly, including Skills Conversation 25th October 2006.
- Established regular meetings with the Assembly's skills advisor David Cragg (LSC Regional Director).
- Commenced a strategic review with the Learning & Skills Council.

Key Priorities 2007-2008

Corporate Activity

- Review and monitoring of the Corporate Governance Action Plan and Risk Register; supported by an Internal Audit Function to ensure sound governance and stewardship of resources.
- Continued participation in the debate and Government consultation on regionalism; both as the West Midlands Regional Assembly and through English Regions Network.
- Be an active lead partner to AWM as the RES is reviewed.
- Participate in the Forward Planning Executive to maximise regional funding allocations and investment in our region.
- Respond to CSR07.
- Actively participate in City Region matters to ensure the City Region work supports the West Midlands region approach to renaissance and growth.
- Consider the findings of and implement the recommendations of the Review of the Regional Partnerships.

Communication & Engagement

- Raise profile for the Regional Assembly through increased media activity.
- Campaign and publications to support RSS Phases 2 and 3.
- Revised Communications Strategy to take account of closer Partnership working.
- Produce a range of publicity and information materials to communicate the work of the Assembly across its wide range of activities, such as the Annual Monitoring Report, review findings, the Regional Transport Delivery Plan.
- Communications support for the Region's 2012 work.
- FOI requests responded to within 20 days.
- Increased communication and engagement with MPs/MEPs including holding a briefing event
- Deliver an Assembly Annual Conference and participate in national LGA conference in Birmingham and ERN conference in Leeds.

Regional Planning Body

Draft RSS Phase 1 Revision

- Respond to 'Proposed Changes' to be published by GOWM following receipt of Panel Report.
- Provide input to and respond to, consultation on the Joint Core Strategy being prepared by the four Black Country Authorities.

Draft RSS Phase 2 Revision

- Preparation and publication of the Consultation Report.
- Consideration by RSS Reference Groups views in shaping the Preferred Option.
- Development of the Preferred Option leading to submission to the Secretary of State in December 2007.

Draft RSS Phase 3 Revision

- Prepare draft Project Plan for consultation to launch Phase 3.
- Prepare Options Report on Phase 3 matters.

RSS Monitoring

- Further develop and strengthen monitoring framework and links to implementation of RSS through Phase 2 Revision.
- Integrate monitoring of the RSS and RHS.

RSS Implementation

- Refreshing the RSS Implementation Framework to reflect RSS Revisions.
- Addressing the infrastructure implications of the RSS Revisions and relationships with key funding streams.
- Steering and guiding both City Region agendas to secure complementarity of ambition and delivery in respect to the RSS and Urban Renaissance.

RSS Conformity

- Continue to successfully implement RSS Conformity Procedures to meet statutory requirements.
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding to proactively engage with Local Planning Authorities at all stages of pre-submission work on their Local Development Frameworks.
- Revise Conformity Protocol in light of ongoing experiences and outcome of Inspectors Inquiry into Coventry Airport.

Regional Transport Partnership

- Revise RSS Phases 1 and 2 policies.
- Develop RSS Phase 3.
- Refine Regional Funding Allocation process and update Transport Delivery Plan.
- Consider and respond to draft Transport White Paper and the Eddington Report.

Regional Housing Executive

- Preparation of Regional Housing Executive advice on Regional Allocations Strategy 2008-11(RAS 08-11) for Ministers on the next three years broad investment of housing capital funds.
- Submission to Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 on the Region's longer term capital housing investment needs to present the case to Treasury.
- Continued support of RSS Partial Review Phase 2 particularly on affordable housing calculations and updated RSS Policy CF 5.
- Evaluate Gypsies and Traveller bids for new and refurbished pitches; providing advice and recommendations to Ministers.
- Continued work with the Sub-Regional Housing Market Area Partnerships to implement the Regional Housing Strategy, to conduct joint local housing market area needs assessments.
- Commission/update research as identified in the 'Regional Housing Strategy 2005' to improve the evidence base supporting the Regional Housing Strategy and the Regional Spatial Strategy; ensuring a sound basis for housing investment decisions.

Sustainability & Climate Change

- Sustainability Appraisal of RSS Revision Phase 2 Preferred Option and Phase 3 Options preparation.
- Climate Change Task Force to deliver an exemplar Regional Climate Change Action Plan.
- Skills Development; education and training for planners, architects, transport, housing and other professionals in planning for climate change.
- Ensure that RSS policies and targets contribute to national climate change/carbon dioxide emission targets.
- Refresh the Regional Sustainable Development Framework to ensure that it has the Government's 'essential ingredients'.
- Promote use of Regional Sustainable Development Framework in the development and review of all regional strategies.
- Work with Advantage West Midlands and Government Office to make our region an exemplar in respect of our approach to Climate Change.

Scrutiny & Strategic Review

- Continued robust and challenging scrutiny of Advantage West Midlands concentrating on provision of venture capital and Advantage West Midlands' support for skills
- Work with the Learning and Skills Council to deliver an independent strategic review of the regions approach to post 16 education, training and skills
- Assessment of the impact of the Local Government White Paper and the national scrutiny principles document on the approach to regional scrutiny
- Continued contribution to the review of the Regional Economic Strategy drawing on issues identified during scrutiny activities

Policy Integration:

Regional Health Partnership

- Consultation (February-July 2007) and Publication of the Regional Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Development of a Strategy Implementation Plan.
- Development of stage two of the Big Lottery Fund Health and Wellbeing Application 'Living Well in the West Midlands'.
- Develop partnership arrangements with Strategic Health Authority and PCTs

Europe

- The WMRA European and International Affairs Partnership will for the first time explicitly link the European Commissions annual work plan to our key regional strategies.
- WMRA will also consider the outcome of the Strategic Review into the Region's relationship with Europe.
- Plans to develop and launch a Project Support Centre; West Midlands EU Connects, aimed at supporting partners to develop projects working with EU partners will continue.
- Following public consultation the draft European Regional Development Fund Programme document will proceed to negotiation with the European Commission, and ultimately launch of the programme.

Equalities & Diversity

- Working with the new Commission for Equality & Human Rights to ensure that the most effective and efficient model is put in place for the West Midlands (within the region) and that both regional employers and employees utilise it and contribute to it.
- Ensuring that Equality & Diversity (social cohesion) issues are recognised and addressed within Government policies and strategies at local, regional, national and European levels.
- Raising the profile of the West Midlands (and the UK) within Europe.
- Maintaining a strong and credible Equality & Diversity Partnership within the region.
- Work with WMSPARS to ensure asylum seekers and refugee matters are appropriately addressed.

Rural & Forestry

- Project management co-ordinating the delivery of the Regional Rural Delivery Framework (RDF) in the Region; establishing processes by which partners carry forward their ways of joint working to meet the principles of the Rural Accord.
- Support the rural agencies specialist task group working with the Accord and WMRAF to rural proof high level strategies and policies: Rural Proofing RSS Phase 2 and 3, Regional Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the Strategic Health Authority Strategy.
- Pro-actively managing the business of the Rural Accord on the behalf of the Rural Accord Partners.
- Fulfilling the requirements for monitoring and reviewing the WM Regional Forestry Framework (WMRFF); production of the Annual Report 2006-2007.
- Preparation of the rolling Action Plan 2007-2010, aligning the WMRFF with the refreshed England Forestry Strategy and Implementation Plan.
- Facilitation and co-ordination to ensure the completion of the third year of implementation of the WMRFF.

Culture

- Input into the development of the new Regional Cultural Strategy.
- Support Phase 3 Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy in relation to recreational space and provision.
- Collaborate on regional work to maximise opportunities from the 2012 Games.
- Respond to the review of Visitor Economy Strategy delivery structures.

Skills

- Raising awareness of the regional skills agenda with the Assembly, including an annual Skills Conversation.
- Establishing regular meetings with the Assembly's skills advisor David Cragg (LSC Regional Director)
- Continued support for the Regional Skills Partnership.
- Ensuring RSS and WMRES are consistent on skills issues.
- Consider/ implement outcomes of strategic review of LSC.

DRAFT

Accountability, Audit & Risk Management

Our Commitment to DCLG

- The strategic activity as set out in this Business Plan is drawn up from more detailed work plans. Each activity has a measurable performance indicator and we will report on our progress against these indicators every six months to Government Office with a report submission deadline in April for the year ended and in October for the six month progress report.
- Our six monthly reports to Government Office will include a financial summary detailing how the grant has been utilised and a copy of the Audited Financial Statements will be submitted to Government Office and DCLG annually.
- We will maintain a Risk Register that will be reviewed regularly by the Audit Committee who will be responsible for overseeing an assessment of the key risks we face as an organisation and the steps which need to be taken to mitigate these risks.
- We will maintain a Corporate Governance Action Plan to ensure robust, transparent and effective systems that ensure we operate high standards of financial stewardship.
- We will ensure DCLG accounting requirements are observed via internal audit and external audit functions.

Other Funding Sources

The Assembly's annual work plan attracts financial contributions from other organisations and in 2007-08 these will include the Department of Health, the Forestry Commission and Government Office. The Assembly no longer manages the Energy West Midlands activity and funding arrangements. Details of partner funding will be included and identified separately in our reports to DCLG.

Risk Assessment

This Business Plan includes a risk assessment for the work strands and generally these risks are considered to be low unless otherwise stated within the document. A more strategic risk assessment process is undertaken annually under our corporate governance activities.

Olwen Dutton
Chief Executive

Work Strands - Corporate

STAFFING, OPERATIONAL & PARTNERING AND PARTICIPATION (Work Strands 10-13 and 20)					
No	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
10.1	£1127706	Provide an effective and responsive Assembly Secretariat	Full complement of staffing	Business Plan Objectives delivered	Annually WMRA
11.1	£10,000	Establish Corporate Training & Induction Plan for staff/members	2007-08 Corporate Training Plan New Member Induction Pack	Priority training funded and staff / members equipped for the role	Annually WMRA
12.1	£15,000	Implement a Members Allowances/ Expense Scheme	Allowances Policy in place	Ensure key posts occupied	April 2007 WMRA
13.1	DCLG £133,500 Other £5,000	Maintain a rolling Corporate Governance Action Plan for; Risk, Compliance and Probity	1. Corporate Governance Report to the Board 2. Internal Audit Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Robust Systems ▪ Effective Financial Management ▪ Mitigated Risks 	Annually WMRA
13.1		Implement and Monitor Regional Code of Conduct for Planning	Regional Code of Conduct for Planning	Clarity and consistency of approach for members/officers	Ongoing WMRA
13.2		Provide Regional Leadership to ensure the aims of the Regional Concordat are achieved	1. Regional Concordat 2. Scrutiny review (see WS30)	Clarity on leadership roles and contributions of key organisations in light of RFA	Ongoing WMRA
20.1	£30,000	Support to ensure stakeholder engagement in RSS at all stages	Stakeholders engaged in all areas of Assembly's work especially RSS	Participation and influence of Assembly's activities and voice by all stakeholders.	Ongoing WMRA
<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>10.1 Corporate Governance risks; Mitigation audit reports help identify areas for improvement</p> <p>11.1 Insufficient funds; Mitigation combined WMRA/WMLGA training budget focused on priority needs</p> <p>12.1 Cost may be prohibitive; Mitigation IRP engaged to develop an appropriate and affordable scheme</p> <p>13.1 Objection to sign up; Mitigation good communication and engagement to ensure buy in and understanding of benefits</p> <p>13.2 Ineffective peer monitoring; Mitigation scrutiny review recommendations</p> <p>20.1 Risk of poor engagement mitigated by clear expectations set out in Service Level Agreement</p>					

COMMUNICATIONS (Work Strand 14)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
14.1	£55,000	Support delivery of the Assembly's work including producing publications and organising events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSS Phase 2 Publications • RSS Phase 3 launch materials • Scrutiny/Strategic Review Annual report • Annual Monitoring Report and supplementary reports 	Greater comprehension of and engagement with the Assembly and its work.	Ongoing WMRA
14.2		Communicate the Assembly's work to members, partners, stakeholders, public and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report and Business Plan produced • Electronic 'Update' newsletter for policy areas • Annual Conference 	Raised profile of the work of the Assembly and key issues affecting the Region	June 07 Ongoing Autumn 07 All WMRA
14.3		Support Regional Marketing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support AWM in communicating key messages with Local Authorities 	More positive perception both within and outside the Region	Ongoing AWM & WMRA
<p>Risk Assessment: 14.1,14.2 Insufficient resources due to increases in supplier costs (paper, printing etc); Mitigation negotiated deals with suppliers Time involved in responding to FOI enquiries; Mitigation user friendly, well populated web site</p>					

Work Strands - Planning, Housing and Transport

RSS IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND CONFORMITY (Work strands 15, 16, 17)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
15.1	£60,000	Provide an ongoing framework for the implementation of the RSS	Annually Refreshed Implementation Framework.	Implementation of RSS which delivers balanced and sustainable development	December 2007 WMRA
15.2		Support the submission of the Phase 2 Preferred Option	Phase 2 Draft Implementation Plan to be prepared to accompany the submission of the Preferred Option.	Clarity of implementation-related implications of the Phase 2 Preferred Option and strengthened evidence base for Examination.	June 2007 WMRA / wide partnership involvement
15.3		Support the RFA/CSR and associated processes and strengthen links with the implementation of the RSS	A report detailing key infrastructure investment requirements and their phasing.	Clarity of linkage between RSS and LDF/LTP Implementation plans and the planning of investing authorities (e.g. water, transport)	December 2007 WMRA
15.4		Produce a mechanism for promoting and monitoring the delivery of Regional Transport Priorities (RFA/TDP) that is robust, effective, efficient and easy to understand.	Revised Regional Transport Priorities programme	Strategic transport measures that demonstrate value for money and support behavioural/cultural changes, productivity and sustainability.	March 2008 RTP (RTOG RFA Sub-Group)
16.1	£272,000	Provide an objective and cost effective assessment of the impact and implementation of the RSS	Publish the statutory Annual Monitoring Report and satisfy all associated requirements. This will be supported by the following reports & activities:-	To establish progress towards the policies and objectives expressed in the RSS and provide an evidence base for policy review	Feb 2007 WMRA

16.2		To develop monitoring so that the interplay between policy areas and the RS with other strategies are fully developed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Publish an annual Employment Land study 2) Further develop the joint monitoring of the RHS and RSS through the annual Housing Market Report 3) Publish a biennial report considering the Green Belt 4) Hold an Annual Stakeholder Conference 	Provide WMRA and its partners with an enhanced understanding of the regional context and interplay with other strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) June 2007 2) June 2007 3) June 2007 4) July 2007
17.1	£20,000	Providing advice and an opinion of general conformity with the RSS on Local Development Documents	Number of assessments and opinions given within statutory deadline against the total Local Development Documents	Effective implementation of the RSS	Ongoing WMRA
17.2		Planning application of regional significance received	Applications received	Effective implementation of the RSS	Ongoing WMRA
17.3		Providing advice on the general conformity with the RSS in respect of pre-application enquiries.	Total number of pre-application enquiries received	Effective implementation of the RSS	Ongoing WMRA

Risk Assessment:

15.1 Lack of engagement of key partners : Mitigation - increased awareness raising activities

15.2 Insufficient funds to take forward infrastructure Assessment of Housing Options work to support Preferred Option: Mitigation – to further utilise the wholly partnership-based approach employed for the initial study.

15.4 Funding not available; Mitigation - this activity may not be carried out in an independent process (the quality of the revised TDP may then be compromised) in house resource will need to be secured.

16.1 HMG increase monitoring requirement without commensurate increase in resource allocation: Mitigation-through ERN work to ensure monitoring requirements are kept at a reasonable and realistic level

17.1 Cost implications of attending Public Examinations and Inquiries, assistance to the Planning Inspectorate too high. Mitigation- written conformity advise available and will have to suffice.

RSS REVISION PHASE 1, 2 and 3 (Work strands 18.1, 18.2 and 18.3)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
18.1.1	Phase 1 £40,000	Respond to consultation on Secretary of State's proposed changes to Draft RSS Phase 1 Revision	Response to proposed changes	Ensure the 'Proposed Changes' include appropriate policies to guide the long term renaissance of the Black Country	Summer 2007 WMRA
18.2.1	Phase 2 & 3	Phase 2 -Prepare submission documents	Meet GOWM timetable set out in the Project Plan	Submission to Secretary of State	Dec 07 WMRA
18.2.2	£231,000	Phase 2 - Technical work to support submission Assessment of preferred Option Refreshed urban capacity study	Completed Dec 07	To ensure robust evidence base	Dec 07 WMRA
18.2.3		Phase 2 - Pre-submission consultation event	Anticipated summer 07 completed pre - RPB sign off	Submission has the support/ understanding of regional stakeholders	Jul 07 WMRA
18.2.4		Phase 2- Sustainability Appraisal of Preferred Option	Completion of SA/SEA	An integrated process, to ensure the test of soundness is met.	Dec 07
18.3.2		Phase 3 – 1 Draft Project plan <small>Dates associated with phase 3 are provisional and subject to a full risk assessment after the scoping study is completed</small> 2 Technical work	Launch of Project Plan for consultation	To ensure that the draft project plan reflects all aspirations with achievable objectives	April 2007
18.3.3		Phase 3 – Analysis of consultation of PP	Analysis report	To ensure that the analysis feeds into the Section 4(4) briefs and development of Spatial Options	August 2007
18.3.4	See above	Phase 3 - SA / SEA	Technical work completed for development of spatial options	To ensure that Phase three is based on robust evidence base	Ongoing
18.3.5	See above	Phase 3 – Project Plan	Publication of Project Plan	To set the parameters and timetable for phase3.	Sept 2007

Risk Assessment:

18.2 Phase 2 is dependant on external staff resources to meet the submission deadline, risks therefore include the availability of resources ie Policy Leads; Mitigation – clarity of SLA arrangements with LAs and goodwill of partners.

18.3 Phase 3 is largely dependant on use of the same internal staff resource as Phase 2 and therefore may necessitate a variation of work priorities within the WMRA Secretariat; Mitigation – as above

18.1 18.2 18.3 The timescales and overlaps of the three Phases needs careful management as there are likely to be peaks of resources demand; Mitigation - appropriate and realistic timescales to be agreed with GO/DCLG

URBAN AND RURAL RENAISSANCE (Work Strand 19)

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
19.1	£40,000	Support the development of the Rural Renaissance agenda via RSS and Pase 3 Revision	Partners engaged and work plan moving forward	Rural communities enhanced in accordance with the RSS.	Ongoing WMRA and other key rural partners
19.2		Support for Urban Renaissance Agenda via City Regions	City Region activity clarified and agreement gained to coordinate investment.	Sub regional initiatives which contribute to the delivery of Urban Renaissance	Ongoing City Region partners inc WMRA
19.3		Advocate the RSS Renaissance Agenda via other strategies, organisations and initiatives	External strategies and initiatives with positive links to the RSS renaissance agenda	Renaissance of urban and rural communities in the region.	Ongoing, all regional and sub regional partners

Risk Assessment:

19.1 Inadequate land supply in major urban areas and silo approach to issues jeopardises urban and rural renaissance; Mitigation RSS implementation.

19.2 Unable to deliver affordable rural housing or sustainable services jeopardising the sustainable rural communities' ambition of the RSS. Mitigation – strengthen partnership arrangements to secure additional resource.

9.3 Changing ambitions and support for City Region initiatives threaten the viability of the work; Mitigation continue to support the initiatives as important for the region with or without the support of national drivers.

TRANSPORT (Work strand 22)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
22.1	£39,500	Support RSS Revision Phases 1,2,3	Revised policies in RSS	Outcomes of Phase 3 Revision will be behavioural/cultural changes	See wk st 18
22.2		Robust, effective, efficient and easy to understand system to promote and monitor the delivery of Regional Transport Priorities (RFA/TDP)	Revised Regional Transport Priorities programme	Strategic transport measures that demonstrate value for money and support behavioural / cultural changes, productivity and sustainability.	Spring 2008 WMRA
22.3		Interface and converge the RTS with other strategic policies	Quarterly report identifying the RTS input to strategic consultations programmes	RTS objectives met and policies delivered	WMRA quarterly
Risk Assessment: 22 Limited capacity within Assembly; Mitigation encourage partner organisations to provide input from within their own limited capacity					
HOUSING (Work Strand 25)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
25.1	DCLG £19,500	Support to the RSS Review	Affordable Housing calculations, updated policy CF 5 in the RSS	Place making for mixed and balanced communities	Dec 2007 RHE
25.2	Additional DCLG Funding £93,790	Regional Allocations Strategy	A Regional Allocations Strategy 2008-11 fully consulted on with appropriate partners and submitted to Ministers	Clear advice and guidance for Ministers	July 2007 RHE
25.3		Gypsies and Travellers bids	To receive bid evaluations and report advice to RHE	Advice to Ministers on bids to be funded in line with RSS policy	Ongoing tba RHE

Risk Assessment:
 Failure to deliver RHAS; Mitigation WMRA to start work early, with advice from DCLG and support from the Housing Corporation.
 (A detailed Risk Assessment has been undertaken on the Regional Housing Executive.)

ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE PLANNING (Work Strand 26)

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs	Outcome	Date / Who
26.1	£63,500	Development of policy and technical work into RSS Phase 2 Revision and Phase 3	Regional Waste Strategy within RSS.	Greater certainty over provision of waste facilities	July 2007 RTAB/WMRA
26.2		Regional Strategic Influence of the suite of regional papers and strategies impacting on the environment	Example : Development of Black Country Brownfield Land Action Plan Complete pilot studies on BEAs and carry into further areas	Acceleration of remediation of derelict and contaminated land Integrated approach to biodiversity enhancement	Various partners and dates tba

Risk Assessment:
 26.1 26.2 Highly dependant on statutory environmental agencies and other key partners input to regional environmental programmes and policy development as well in some cases direct support funding to facilitate regional group working; Mitigation – High level of partnership working and goodwill
 26.1 26.2 Limited resources and work growth around climate change; Mitigation – High level of partnership and good will.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (Work Strand 27)

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
27.1	£75,000	Sustainability Appraisal of RSS Partial Review Phase 2 and 3	Report; Sustainability Appraisal of RSS Partial Review Phase 2 Preferred Option	Ensure a sustainable RSS	Dec 2007

West Midlands Regional Assembly Business Plan & Budget 2007-2010

27.2		Sustainability Appraisal of RSS Partial Review Phase 3	Report - Sustainability Appraisal of RSS Partial Review Phase 3	Fulfil mandatory requirement for RSS under Section 39(2) Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	Date tba
27.3		Preparation for implementation of PPS on Climate Change	Toolkit to assess climate change impact of new developments	Reducing Co2 emissions from new developments	Date tba
27.4		Climate Change Task Force to Develop Climate Change Action Plan	Regional Climate Change Action Plan	Fulfil commitments of WMRA Climate Change Declaration	WMRA Jul 2007 Oct 2007
27.5		(a) Support Sustainability West Midlands to act as SD independent advisor/champion to the Assembly and support West Midlands Sustainable Development Officers Network to secure professional and policy advice	Deliver technical and policy advice on SD to WMRA Partnerships and Officer networks	Demonstrate leadership on SD as outlined in DTI/ODPM/DEFRA's "Securing The Region's Futures"	Ongoing
		(b) Promote RSDF and its use in development and review of all regional strategies	Update RSDF in line with "Securing the Region's Futures"	Integration of SD principles	October 2007

Risk Assessment:

27.1 Failure to fulfil mandatory requirement for RSS under Section 39(2) of Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; Mitigation Repeat exercise

ECONOMY AND CENTRES (Work Strand 28)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
28.1	£39,000	Ensure work being undertaken in association with DCLG 'growth point' initiative is taken into account in the RSS Phase 2 Revision process	'Growth point' proposals reflected in the submission of the Preferred Option (and supporting material) to the Secretary of State	Ensure that monies available from the growth point initiative are drawn down to support key proposals within the RSS Phase 2 Revision Preferred Option	Dec 07 WMRA/ DCLG
28.2		Ensure effective alignment between the RSS (including on-going Phase 1,2 and 3 Revisions) and the WMRES Review	RSS Strategy and Policies reflected in the RES Review and vice versa	Economic development proposals in the RES review in line with the RSS aims for Urban and Rural Renaissance	Dec 07 WMRA/ REDOG
<p>Risk Assessment: 28.2 Depending on outcome of consultations on Spatial Options there may be a need to undertake further technical work on the inter-relationship between economic forecasts, labour market changes (relating to household change) and future employment land demand; Mitigation – seek partner funding</p>					
LEGAL (Work strand 29)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
29.1	£27,000	Ability to seek legal counsel on matters relating to the WMRA role in issuing conformity opinions on LDDs and regionally significant planning applications	Effective and sound Conformity Protocol which is 'fit for purpose' and not vulnerable to legal challenge	Reduce the risk of legal challenge and financial threat to work programme	Ongoing WMRA
<p>Risk Assessment: 29.1 Insufficient Resource; Mitigation conformity protocol and reduced involvement in public inquiries 29.1 Decision on significant cost application for Coventry Airport LPI; Mitigation DCLG approval of legal contingency carry forward.</p>					

Work Strands - Scrutiny & Strategic Review

SCRUTINY AND STRATEGIC REVIEW (Work Strand 30)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
30.1	DCLG £29,000 LSC £20,000	Scrutiny Reviews - AWM and economic performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Finance • Support for skills agenda • New Review 2 TBA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of 2 Reviews • Scoping of one new Review • Publication of 2 Reports with recommendations for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of AWM role in review area • Clarification of issues • Improved effectiveness of AWM intervention in areas of failure 	Final reports in July 2007 and January 2008 New Review 2 starts Feb 2008 All WMRA
30.2		Ongoing Scrutiny of AWM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AWM annual report • Monitoring recommendations • Implications of IPA outcome & Improvement Plan • Comments on AWM Corporate documents 	Annual Report to Assembly Annual report to SRG Report to SRG Submissions to AWM	Transparent accountability Understanding of progress Scrutiny and IPA coherence Reinforcing scrutiny issues	Oct 07/AWM Dec 07/WMRA/ AWM July 07/WMRA As required/ WMRA
30.3		Strategic Review Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to Post 16 education, training and skills • Effectiveness of Concordat • Transport 	Two final reports One draft report	Improved understanding of Regional Partner roles Identification of issues Improved regional working	Final reports Oct 07 and April 08 Draft report Feb 08 All WMRA
30.4		ERN Regional Accountability Group	Four meetings	Shared good practice	Quarterly Assemblies
Risk Assessment: 30.1 Deterioration in good relationship with Advantage West Midlands; Mitigation well respected scrutiny process 30.1 Lack of involvement of regional partners; Mitigation revision of review scoping documents 30.3 Lack of funding from LSC; Mitigation skills strategic review not undertaken					

Work Strands – Policy Integration & Development

HEALTH (Work strand 31)					
	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
31.1	DCLG £10,000	Support Regional Health Partnership meetings and then publish work plans	Meetings held and work plans advanced	Work plans carried forward and targets met	Ongoing
31.2	DoH £19,687	Consult and publish a Regional Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Consultation held on draft strategy Strategy published	Improving health and well being across the West Midlands long term	Consultation Dec-April 07 Launch June 07 (led RHP/ WMPHG)
31.3		Lead and support development of Big Lottery Fund Regional Well Being bid 'Living Well in the WM'	Submission of stage 2 regional bid for the Big Lottery Well Being Fund	Stage 2 bid submitted to the BLF	March/April 2007 WMRA
Risk Assessment:					
31.1 Partners not supporting regional working; Mitigation – secure partner support and downscale work					
EUROPE (Work Strand 32)					
No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs	Outcome	Date / Who
32.1	£15,000	Establish WM EU Connects to facilitate transnational working – initially focussing on projects relating to the EU programmes for Life Long Learning and Competitiveness and Innovation	Unit established and working to deliver project plan	Partner resource for better co-ordination of specific elements of transnational activity, such as partner search Additional EU funds to region.	April 2007 WMRA/AWM /WMiE

32.2		Lead transnational priority of the new EU Competitiveness and Employment programme. Concentrating on proposals designed to overcome specific regional economic weaknesses as identified in the Operational Programming document	Priority working group established and working to deliver the priority, planning phase	Partners able to work with and learn from other EU regions to meet specific regional economic underperformance, such as the low level of collaboration between universities and business in exploiting commercially viable innovation	likely to commence Autumn 2007 WMRA – with agreement from partnership programme
32.3		Jointly host regional European Partnership event with West Midlands in Europe; to showcase successful regional projects and identify policy developments and funding opportunities in future	Annual event held	Partners better informed and more aware of activity within the region, policy developments and funding opportunities	Autumn 2007 WMRA/WMiE

Risk Assessment:

32.1 WM EU Connects dependent on funding from both AWM and Technical assistance (GOWM); Mitigation current funding indications are very positive

32.2 WMRA likely to be asked to lead the Transnational Priority (approx £500k pa over 7 years) but subject to the agreement of partners; Mitigation keep partners well informed of progress

COMMUNITY COHESION [Equality & Diversity] (Work Strand 33)

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
33.1	£10,000	Develop and oversee the implementation of the 2008/09 Action Plan for the Equality & Diversity Partnership, with particular reference to community cohesion	Regional Leaders' Summit Action Plan for 2008/09	Improvements in relation to equality & diversity, social inclusion and community cohesion issues across the region and the "equalities" strands	January 2008 March 2008 WMRA/EDP

33.2		Develop a model for the regional CEHR presence for the West Midlands and support its introduction in the Region	Model recommended to DCLG [and ultimately to the CEHR]	A regional CEHR presence meeting needs of stakeholders across the various "equality" strands and the needs of both employers and employees	Autumn 2007 WMRA
33.3		Provide expert advice on Equality & Diversity, community cohesion and Social Inclusion issues to regional strategies, including RES/RSS/RHS, Scrutiny Reviews	Reports on the findings for submission to WMRA	Equality & diversity, social inclusion and community cohesion issues and solutions identified in regional strategies	See work strands 18,19 and 31
33.4		National Strategies and the European Agenda.	Provide WMRA input into relevant national & EU agendas	Better understanding of WM community cohesion agenda by Government & EU	WMRA

Risk Assessment:

33.1 A regional CEHR presence could be ineffective and not meet the needs of either employers or employees. This could impact negatively on the economy, education, health, social inclusion, community cohesion etc. especially in view of the abolition of the Commissions for Race Equality, Equal Opportunities and Disability Rights.; Mitigation – effective consultation on proposals with other key partners.

CULTURE (Work Strand 34a)

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
34a.1	£9,000	Support the preparation of the new Regional Cultural Strategy (inc tourism) and subsequent action planning	Range of cross-sectoral and policy links reflected in Strategy development	Co-ordinated cross-sectoral working between local & sub-regional partnerships & regional agencies at a strategic level	Lead Culture Consortium with WMRA July 2007
34a.2		Maximise opportunities from the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games	WM Regional Structures for the 2012 Games e.g. WM Leadership Group supported with WMRA input	A region capitalising on opportunities from the 2012 Games with well-developed legacy plans	Ongoing

34a.3		Support policy leads for Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the RSS revision by ensuring input from the cultural sector	Cultural issues and opportunities reflected fully in both phases of RSS revision and subsequent RSS implementation	RSS that helps make the WM a special place; contributing to prosperity and health for all	See WS18 WMRA/CWM/ SportEngland WM et al
-------	--	---	--	---	--

Risk Assessment:

34.1 34.2 34.3 Failure to engage with regional partners e.g. Culture WM; Mitigation continuing efforts to engage with regional partners

SKILLS (Work Strand 34b)

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs	Outcome	Date / Who
34b1	£1,000	Supporting the Regional Skills Partnership	Assembly observer status on the RSP Board 'Skills Conversation' event	Improved two way information Informed and co-ordinated local and regional activity	On-going Nov 2007 WMRA
34b.2		Ensuring RSS and WMRES consistent on skills issues in terms of policy/implementation	Co-ordination of WMRES and RSS review processes and consistency of policy options.	Integration between RSS and WMRES on regional skills issues	On-going WMRA / AWM

Risk Assessment:

34b.2 Regional skills priorities fail to reflect and address needs of regional strategies especially RSS; Mitigation broaden involvement in development of RSP priorities

RURAL (Work Strand 35)

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
35.1	£10,000	Engagement of the rural interests in regional working and policy development	Support for and engagement with the WM Rural Affairs Forum (WMRAF) Management Committee and Secretariat	Support and advice on regional strategies and initiatives which are appropriate for rural areas The profile of rural issues and priorities raised in the region	WMRA ongoing

35.2		Regional Rural Accord Group	Support from WMRA to the Regional Rural Accord Group	Effective delivery agencies working at a strategic level to provide technical advice and to ensure the RDF is delivered	Accord Partners Ongoing
35.3		Regional Rural Proofing of RSS Phases 1 and 2, Regional Health Strategy, Regional Cultural Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy	Key regional strategies and initiatives rural proofed	Rural areas are not unduly disadvantaged	Ongoing WMRA and other partners

Risk Assessment:

35.3 Insufficient priority for rural issues in regional strategy and delivery mechanisms; Mitigation – Strengthen rural proofing

FORESTRY (Work Strand 37)

No.	INPUT £	Process	Outputs (KPI)	Outcome	Date / Who
37.1	DCLG £10,000 Others	Lead the development and implementation of the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework (WMRFF)	Preparation of the rolling action plan 2007-2010; completing the third year of implementation	Viable inclusive forestry and woodland sector benefiting from co-ordinated activity, closer partnership and networking	June 2007 WMRFF
37.2	£65,000	Collecting and collating data and information in order to compile the Annual Report 2006-2007	Publishing Annual Report 2006-2007	Providing Forum partners, networks and stakeholders with an enhanced understanding of progress of the WMRFF	July 2007 WMRFF
37.3		Linking the work of the Action Plan Manager to the Assembly policy partnerships and RSS Implementation, ensuring a forestry dimension to all policy development/implementation	Reports and updates for Assembly task groups, officer groups and partnerships	Forestry policy effectively driven into other RSS implementation	March 2008 WMRFF

Risk Assessment:

37.1 Failure to get buy-in to Action Plan 2007-2010; Mitigation furthering engagement of partners and work programmes

Financial Summary 2007-08

		2006 BP	Revised
INCOME	WS	2007-08	2007-08
DCLG Assembly Funding	1	2,321,000	2,423,712
DCLG Black Country Study	2	0	0
DCLG RHE Funding	3	94,043	93,790
Partners Support c/fwd 06-07	4	0	0
LSC Support Scrutiny	5	0	20,000
Forestry/Rural Partners	6	0	65,000
Department of Health	7	0	19,687
English Regions Network	8	5,000	5,000
Energy Office (DTI)	9	100,000	0
Total		2,520,043	2,627,189
EXPENDITURE			
Corporate			
Staffing	10	1,130,076	1,159,712
Staff Training (CPD)	11	10,000	10,000
Members Allowance	12	15,000	15,000
Operational	13	128,000	138,500
Communications	14	55,000	55,000
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>1,338,076</i>	<i>1,378,212</i>
Planning, Housing & Transport			
Implementation	15	35,000	60,000
Monitoring	16	246,000	272,000
Conformity	17	22,000	20,000
Revision Phase 1	18a	238,924	40,000
Revision Phases 2 & 3	18b		231,000
Urban & Rural Renaissance	19	79,000	40,000

West Midlands Regional Assembly Business Plan & Budget 2007-2010

Increase Partnering/Participation	20	34,000	30,000
Black Country Study	21	0	0
Transport	22	21,000	39,500
RTPP	23	0	0
Housing Policy Lead	25a	21,000	19,500
Housing Executive	25b	94,043	93,790
Environment	26	48,000	63,500
Sustainable Development	27	22,000	75,000
Economy	28	79,000	39,000
Legal Expenses	29	27,000	27,000
<i>Sub Total</i>		966,967	1,050,290
Strategic Review	30	35,000	49,000
Policy Integration & Development			
Health	31	10,000	29,687
Europe & International Policy	32	15,000	15,000
Social Inclusion	33	10,000	10,000
Culture & Skills	34	10,000	10,000
Rural	35	10,000	10,000
WMRO State of Region	36	25,000	0
<i>Sub Total</i>		80,000	74,687
Other Activities			
Forestry	37	0	75,000
Regional Energy	38	100,000	0
<i>Sub Total</i>		100,000	75,000
Total		2,520,043	2,627,189

Flat Cash Three Year Budgets 2007-2010

Firstly it is noteworthy that the Assembly constantly strives to reduce overheads by securing savings through efficiency gains, effective tendering, securing sponsorship and attracting contributions from partners that were in excess of £400,000 in 2006-07. In addition we have recently gone through a review of the senior management structure to create closer integration with WMLGA resulting in a single chief executive and smaller management team, to deliver efficiencies across both organisations. Whilst this process has delivered significant efficiencies that have been reinvested in the broader delivery structure, clearly this cannot be replicated year on year and staffing levels are the minimum required to deliver the breadth of our work programme.

A stand still budget clearly does not take account of natural inflationary increases on fixed overhead costs and nationally negotiated pay awards; for budgetary purposes we can expect increases in costs of around 2.5% - 3%.

There remains little 'room for manoeuvre' following this review, therefore the options available to meet any shortfall would be;

- **Securing additional contributions from partners** – this is only possible if appropriate projects are identified for 'match' funding, however all public sector partners without exception will be feeling the 'squeeze' of CSR07 and unlikely to have resource to support core costs.
- **Reduction in services delivered** - the target for service delivery cuts in this scenario would have to be non-statutory functions such as work streams set out in the Policy Integration work strands 31 to 37. However there is a very real risk in targeting Policy Integration in that funding from partners contributing to Assembly work programmes would also likely then be lost and be hard to recover.

Aside from the reduction of budgets and services, we should also not underestimated the value of our ability to secure a partnership approach to the co-ordination and integration of decision making; this would be constrained and delivery of regionally significant activities would be severely jeopardised as a result of funding cuts.

WMRA is highly regarded by its regional and national partners as the organisation that brings not only coherence and co-ordination to the regional agenda, but also strives to balance the competing pulls of our social, environment, economic and quality of life ambitions. We believe no other options are viable and are certain that neither stated option will prove acceptable to regional partners or Government. WMRA's regional partners including Government Office are already acutely aware of the incredible value for money WMRA delivers and the important role it plays at the regional level of governance and strategic delivery.

Priorities for 2008-10 and +/-2.5% Budget Scenarios

-2.5% Budget Reduction Scenario

+2.5% Budget Increase Scenario

This element of the Business Plan is currently being drafted pending a discussion at ERN around a general approach to the year 2 and 3 budget scenarios

DRAFT