

**WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Assembly Board of Directors - 8<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

***Priorities to 2010 ..... West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands in Europe .....committed to raising the PERFORMANCE AND PROFILE of the West Midlands***

**Report of Chief Executive.**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 To agree one set of Priorities for the Regional Partnership Centre which integrates the strategic objectives of West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands in Europe for the period 2007 to 2010.

**2. Recommendation**

2.1 That the Priorities set out in appendix one are agreed for the Regional Partnership Centre for the period 2007 to 2010.

2.2 That the Priorities provide the context for the annual work programmes for West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands in Europe for the period 2007 to 2010.

**3. Background**

3.1 In 2006 the Regional Partnership Centre came into being. The ethos behind the Regional Partnership Centre was to co-locate West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and aspects of West Midlands in Europe; to share operating and management costs to secure efficiency savings; and to bring synergy to those aspects of regional working for which local government has a leadership role.

3.2 The Regional Partnership Centre now has one Chief Executive who has responsibility for the four inter-linked organisations - West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local

Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands in Europe. Each organisation has its own legal structure, strategic objectives which are set out in Work Programmes and separate budgets which are set out in Annual Business Plans.

- 3.3 Whilst each of West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands in Europe has its own unique identity, function, role and modus operandi, each is linked by the fact that local government provides the strategic leadership for the benefit of the West Midlands Region and the local communities within it. Each organisation, individually, collectively and in partnership with other regional organisations is working to improve the performance and profile of the West Midlands Region.
- 3.4 The unique selling points of each organisation is rightly important but so too is the shared agenda of improving the performance and profile of the West Midlands. To demonstrate how West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands In Europe have responded to that shared agenda a set of shared priorities has been developed to put local government at the heart of regional decision making in a leadership role.
- 3.5 The Priorities are intended to provide clarity to our regional and national partners of the role and added value of the Regional Partnership Centre and the linked agendas of West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands in Europe.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 sets out Priorities for the Regional Partnership Centre which incorporates the strategic ambitions of West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands in Europe for the period 2007 to 2010. Executive Committee is asked to endorse the Priorities and agree that they be used to provide the context for the annual work programme for West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands In Europe for the period 2007 to 2010.

**Rose Poulter**  
**Director – Policy**

## ***Local Leadership – Regional Results***

***Priorities to 2010 for ..... West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Centre of Excellence and West Midlands in Europe .....committed to raising the PERFORMANCE AND PROFILE of the West Midlands***

***1 Develop strong and effective Partnership Working at the regional level with:-***

- Effective and legitimate democracy at the heart of policy making on regional issues, reflecting and balancing the needs of sub regions and individual localities with national priorities and objectives.
- Further devolution of decision making to the West Midlands from Government.
- One 'vision' for the West Midlands - shaped and owned by the region, its partners and sub-regions and recognised by Government
- The RSS and RES strongly aligned to the 'vision', followed by other regional strategies as they are reviewed – each supported by 'strategy specific' objectives.
- A regional response to deliver the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review.
- Strong links and integrated policy with neighbouring regions and Wales.

***2 Promote, develop and deliver the West Midlands Spatial Strategy (including the Regional Transport & Waste Strategies) – it will shape regional thinking and strategies and be owned by the region. We will:-***

- Take forward RSS Revisions in line with the issues and timescales set out in the Project Plans for Revision Phases 2 and 3.
- Agree deliverable Implementation Plans for Planning, Transport and Waste with all key partners.
- Continue to improve the Monitoring Framework and integrate monitoring arrangements for the Regional Housing Strategy.

***3 Promote, develop and deliver the West Midlands Housing Strategy. It will be owned by regional partners and recognised as 'the best' by Government and peers. We will:-***

- Secure wide spread support for the delivery of the Regional Housing Strategy from local authorities, regional partners and providers.
- Submit advice to the Housing Minister on the West Midlands Housing Allocations for 2008-11 by June 2007.
- Continue to develop Sub Regional /joint Local Authority working on Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Sub Regional Housing Investment .

***4 Lead the integration of policy development and enhancing partnership working at the regional level***

***across the social, economic and environmental policy agenda including:-***

- Working with Regional Concordat partners and other regional partners, secure co-ordination, alignment and synergy of regional strategies and funding programmes.
- Providing a focus for regional activity on health & well-being through the adoption of Regional Health and Well-being Strategy – Autumn 2007.
- Establishing new Sustainable Development Partnership.
- Development and adoption of the and Regional Historic Environment Strategy – early 2008, revision of the Regional Energy Strategy – Spring 2008 and revision of the Regional Sustainable Development framework – December 07.
- Develop options for the proposed Regional Commission for Equalities and Human Rights presence, which has clear links to existing networks and structures - Summer 2007

***5 Using scrutiny to secure accountability, integrity and credibility to public sector bodies and regional working by:-***

- Extending the scrutiny process with peer support to include the modus operandi and budgets of other regional organisations for example Learning & Skills Council and Strategic Health Authority.
- Taking a proactive approach to changing Government policy in respect of regional accountability.
- Implementing the programme of Scrutiny over AWM's activities including business support mechanism and Strategic Reviews including marketing the region, regional transport and effectiveness of the Regional Concordat.

***6 Lead the Climate Change agenda in the Region, by:-***

- Being a region making significant strides towards reducing carbon emissions – 20% by 2010 (from 1990 levels) and promoting adaptation to climate change.
- Developing an action plan and monitoring arrangements, with milestones in place.
- Establishing new governance and delivery arrangements.

***7 Promote the West Midlands as a confident player in Europe, influencing EU policy and programmes through strategic alliances with UK/European regions and networks and maximising the regional impact of EU funding with:-***

- Clear regional leadership and cross sectoral governance arrangements in place for regional European activity in the West Midlands and in Brussels
- Regional European strategic aims and actions embedded in key WM strategies and WMiE Business Plan
- WM recognised by EU institutions and other regions as a leading player in Europe
- Mechanisms in place to implement the recommendations of the Strategic Review of the Region's Relationship with Europe.

**8 Support Local Authorities in the successful delivery of the 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' White Paper through:-**

- Being recognised as responding effectively to the development needs of members, officers and locality partners as necessary to improve the effectiveness of Local Area Agreements
- Providing a framework for the continuous development of elected members with all Local Authorities committed to the Member Development Charter supported by successful collaboration with strategic partners (IDeA / CfPS / LGLC etc.) in order to respond effectively to priority needs
- Ensuring a vibrant Overview & Scrutiny Network, which is led by and engages with members and officers from across the region, and is able to demonstrate the provision of effective support and collaboration with partners in response to the developing scrutiny agenda.
- Developing the role of local government at the centre of strong and effective partnership working at a regional level, having ensured that there is a influential role and coherent voice for the Region within the national LGA.

**9 Support the region to secure high performing local authorities recognised for achievements in service delivery alongside efficiency gains through:-**

- Engaging all Local Authorities in the development of a strong culture of collaboration, joint working and striving for best practice, including the successful delivery of regional programmes funded through Capacity Building and RCE funding.
- Demonstrating a significant regional contribution to the development and implementation of Business Process Improvement at a local level and efficiency improvements in agreed key 'workstreams' e.g. Children's Services, Waste Management.
- Being recognised as the regional centre for the demonstration and dissemination of regional and national best practice in service delivery
- Ensuring that the provision of all streams of national improvement funding are better co-ordinated through a regional gateway, increasing accessibility and reflecting the priorities of the regions local authorities.
- Supporting Local Authorities to achieve continuous improvement and high levels of performance within the CPA/CAA and VFM frameworks.

**10 Providing a range of policy support and services to local authorities in fulfilling the role of Regional Employers Organisation by:-**

- Maintaining and developing the existing level of recognition of the 'added value' employment advice and support role through demonstrating provision of a responsive service to members, chief officers and HR practitioners throughout the region
- Continuing to sustain the trends of increased surplus income generation through direct and indirect delivery of HR and Training Consultancy Services
- Ensuring that the voice of the regions local authorities as employers is effectively represented on a national stage.