



West Midlands Combined Authority

Housing & Land Delivery Board

Monday 23 January 2023 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Mike Bird (Chair)
Councillor Andy Mackiewicz
Councillor Charn Padda
Jo Nugent
Councillor Richard Smith

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Homes England
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

In Attendance via MS Team

Telford and Wrekin Council

Item Title No.

39. Inquorate meeting

It was reported that the meeting was inquorate and therefore the recommendations contained within the minutes would be submitted to the WMCA Board on 10 February 2023 for formal approval and adoption.

40. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Butlin (Warwickshire), Councillor Fitzgerald (Cannock), Councillor Gakhal (Wolverhampton), Councillor Sullivan (Dudley), Kevin Rodgers (West Midlands Housing Association Partnership) Dawn Ward (Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership), Suzanne Ward (Environment Agency) and Councillor Welsh (Coventry).

41. Minutes - 16 November 2022

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that :

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022 be agreed as a true record.

42. Trailblazer Devolution Deal and Investment Zones : Update on Housing & Land Asks

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration that provided an update on discussions with Government relating to the Trailblazer Devolution Deal.

The Head of Strategy and Analysis, Rob Lamond outlined the report and highlighted the four headline Housing and Land Portfolio asks of Government within the Trailblazer Devolution Deal which comprised of a Single West

Midlands Regeneration Fund; a West Midlands Land Reform Programme; Affordable Housing and Levelling Up Zones.

The board welcomed the report that set out the positive progress made in discussions with Government to secure funding for the region.

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that:

1. The development of the Housing and Land Asks within the Trailblazer Devolution Deal be noted and
2. The latest version of the Housing and Land Asks (as set out in Section 3 of the report) be supported.

43. Quarterly Report on Housing & Land Portfolio Deliverables, progress on Housing & Land Annual Business Plan and proposed High Level Deliverables for 2023/24

The board considered a report that provided a regular quarterly update on deliverable progress and sought endorsement for the proposed High Level Deliverables for 2023/24.

The Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration, Gareth Bradford, reported on key highlights during the quarter which included West Midlands Place Pilots, Private and public sector engagement and pipeline building and the Trailblazer Devolution Deal. In relation to the new High Level Deliverables for 2023/24 it was noted these built on the current High Level Deliverables and were included for comments/review prior to consideration by the WMCA Board on 10 February 2023.

In relation to West Midlands Place Pilots, the Chair reported of the need to re-invent town centres following the decline of retail outlets and to utilise the opportunity for housing that would attract people back into the town centres. He also enquired as to the progress being made on the WMCA's target for homes in the region.

Gareth Bradford advised that 16,700 houses had been built in the region since the pandemic and the housing numbers would continue to be monitored closely this year. He undertook to include this information as part of the main (public) report going forward.

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that :

1. The positive progress in achieving the Housing and Land Portfolio's approved Annual Deliverables in Q3 2022/2023 be noted;
2. The key performance highlights set out in Section 3 of the report be noted;
3. The positive performance and effective deployment of WMCA's Devolved Housing & Land Fund illustrated by the schemes summarised in the confidential annexe to this report (many of these schemes are now in the delivery phase, having progressed through to the end of the process which shows the role of the WMCA in unlocking, accelerating and problem solving on '*difficult to deliver*'

schemes) be noted and

4. The draft High Level Deliverables for the Housing and Land Portfolio for 2023/24 (attached as Appendix 1 to the is report) be endorsed prior to consideration by the WMCA Board on 10 February 2023.

44. Future Homes Strategy : Update on progress

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration that provided an update on progress on one of the key approved deliverables – the development of a Future Homes Strategy.

The Head of Policy and Planning, Pat Willoughby, outlined the report and highlighted that excellent feedback has been received from the Delivery Steering Group and Future Homes Taskforce on the structure and content of the emerging strategy and Future Homes Technical Standard which supports it.

Councillor Mackiewicz reported that the building trade was reluctant to change unless change was forced upon them and considered the WMCA should consult with the sector to understand the timescales the building trade needs to implement any changes.

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that :

1. Progress with work to date to develop a Future Homes Strategy (one of the Housing and Land Portfolio Deliverables) including support from local authorities, specialist consultancy and input from the members of the Future Homes Taskforce be noted;
2. The proposed direction of travel for the Future Homes Strategy and the work taking place to prepare supporting materials be endorsed;
3. The intention that, when approved the technical standard will be an investment criterion for WMCA's devolved Housing and Land Funds be noted and
4. The intention to incorporate the standards and aspirations of the strategy into existing and future strategic partnerships and joint ventures be noted.

45. West Midlands Local Transport Plan : Update

The board considered a report of the Principal Policy & Strategy Officer, Transport for the West Midlands that provides a summary of the WMCA Board report that seeks their approval to adopt the final version of the West Midlands LTP5 '*Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands*' Core Strategy and also seeks approval for undertaking engagement on the draft LTP5 Big Move documents which form a part of the suite of documents within the wider LTP framework.

The Principal Policy & Strategy Officer, Helen Davies, outlined the report that follows the Draft LTP 5 and Big Move document, 'Accessible and Inclusive Places' that was presented to the board in July 2022. The LTP document

has been developed and shared with local authority officers and subject to WMCA approval on 10 February 2023, the Big Moves document would go out to consultation in February 2023.

The Chair reported that the document makes no provision for the car which is still a mode of transport and is often the only choice of transport for many people. He considered public transport needs to be convenient, reliable and on time.

Councillor Mackiewicz concurred with the Chair and reported that rural parts of the West Midlands have no alternative to the car and enquired whether autonomous vehicles could be considered for rural areas as there would be no costs for drivers. He also reported of the need to link North Solihull with South Solihull and for superfast broadband to be seen as a priority for rural areas.

Councillor Padda also considered the car needs to feature in the Local Transport Plan and for parking facilities to be considered when new rail stations are built.

The Chair reported of the need for new ways of working and innovative thinking to utilise existing space such as the use of multi-story car parks at hospitals with provision for residential apartments.

The Chair asked that comments from this board be included in an appendix to the Local Transport Plan document being considered by the WMCA Board.

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that :

1. The update on progress in developing the new West Midlands Local Transport Plan, 'Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands (LTP5) and linkages between the LTP and the work of the Housing and Land Portfolio be noted;
2. The LTP 5 Core Strategy sets out the principles and overarching approach on how TfWM approaches transport strategy in the West Midlands be noted and
3. That the next steps for approval be sought for final adoption of the Core Strategy and approval to consult on the draft Big Moves documents and the draft Area Strategy guidance at the WMCA Board meeting on 10 February 2023 be noted.

46. Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

47. Appendix to Quarterly Report - Performance on Housing & Land Devolved Funds

The board considered the Housing and Land dashboards on the Brownfield Housing Fund, National Competitive Fund and Land Fund that provided an update on performance since the last meeting.

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that :

The report be noted.

The meeting ended at 11.00 am.