



Housing & Land Delivery Board

Date: Monday 24 April 2023

Time: 10.00 am **Public meeting** Yes

Venue: Room 116, West Midlands Combined Authority, 16 Summer Lane, Birmingham. B19 3SD

Membership

Councillor Mike Bird (Chair)	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Peter Butlin	Warwickshire County Council
Councillor Matthew Dormer	Redditch Borough Council
Councillor Adrienne Fitzgerald	Cannock Chase District Council
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Andy Mackiewicz	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Charn Padda	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Jo Nugent	Homes England
Councillor Richard Marshall	Shropshire Council
Councillor Jeremy Oates	Tamworth Borough Council
Councillor Richard Overton	Telford and Wrekin Council
Councillor Daren Pemberton	Stratford on Avon District Council
Councillor Richard Smith	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Councillor Wayne Sullivan	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Sharon Thompson	Birmingham City Council
Kevin Rodgers	West Midlands Housing Association Partnership
Dawn Ward	Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership
Suzanne Ward	Environment Agency
Councillor David Welsh	Coventry City Council
Councillor David A Wright	North Warwickshire Borough Council

The quorum for this meeting shall be eight members.

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact:

Contact Wendy Slater, Senior Governance Services Officer
Telephone 07557 831344
Email wendy.slater@wmca.org.uk

AGENDA

No.	Item	Presenting	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence (if any)	Chair	None
2.	Notification of Substitutes (if any)	Chair	None
3.	Declarations of Interests (if any) Members are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests they have in an item being discussed during the course of the meeting. In addition, the receipt of any gift or hospitality should be declared where the value of it was thought to have exceeded £25 (gifts) or £40 (hospitality).	Chair	None
4.	Minutes - 22 March 2023	Chair	1 - 6
5.	Deeper Devolution Deal Update	Rob Lamond	7 - 12
6.	Plan for Growth : Update	Pat Willoughby	13 - 16
7.	Exclusion of the Public and Press To pass the following resolution: That in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	Chair	None
8.	West Midlands Investment Prospectus 2023	Colin Clinton/ Lauren Rigby-Hopkins	17 - 22
9.	Housing & Land Fund Dashboard	Rob Lamond	23 - 32
Date of next meeting - 21 June 2023 (TBC)			



West Midlands Combined Authority

Housing & Land Delivery Board

Wednesday 22 March 2023 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Mike Bird (Chair)
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal
Councillor Andy Mackiewicz
Councillor Charn Padda
Councillor Richard Smith

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
City of Wolverhampton Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough
Council
Environment Agency

Suzanne Ward

In Attendance via MS Teams

Councillor Matthew Dormer
John Mather
Councillor Daren Pemberton

Redditch Borough Council
Homes England
Stratford on Avon District Council

Item Title No.

48. Inquorate meeting

It was noted that the meeting was inquorate and therefore the recommendations contained within the minutes would be submitted to the WMCA Board for formal approval and adoption.

49. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Butlin (Warwickshire), Councillor Fitzgerald (Cannock), Jo Nugent (Homes England), Councillor Overton (Telford & Wrekin), Kevin Rodgers (West Midlands Housing Association Partnership), Councillor Thompson (Birmingham) Dawn Ward (Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership) and Councillor Welsh (Coventry City Council).

50. Notification of Substitutes

John Mather (Homes England) was nominated as a substitute for Jo Nugent.

51. Minutes - 23 January 2023

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2023 be agreed as a true record.

52. Trailblazer Devolution Deal Update

The board received a presentation from the Head of Strategy & Analysis, Rob Lamond, that provided an update on the Trailblazing Devolution Deal for

the West Midlands that was recently announced by Government.

The presentation outlined regeneration funding (£100m Single Regeneration Fund), the land reform and public land partnership with Government, the new approach to the Affordable Homes Programme being piloted with the WMCA and how the WMCA would be responsible for adopting a strategic role in undertaking key decisions over local investment and spend of Affordable Homes Programme (£200m -£400m) in line with its strategic framework.

The Head of Strategy & Analysis also reported on the Strategic Place Partnership with Government and the 6 Levelling Up Zones across the West Midlands that included the East Birmingham- North Solihull corridor; Wolverhampton corridor; Walsall Growth corridor; Dudley Metro corridors (including the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill link) and the Coventry and Warwickshire gigafactory zone.

The Chair reported that the board should be very proud of what has been delivered to date and conveyed his thanks and appreciation to the Mayor of the West Midlands for securing additional funding for the region ahead of the announcement.

The Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration, Gareth Bradford reported that the West Midlands has proven its ability to deliver and has earned the trust of Government with the Trailblazer Devolution Deal (TDD) that represented a significant transfer of power to the region. He added that the new funds would enable mixed use schemes to be taken forward and the development of town centres, whilst this board, and local authorities would have a key role in taking forward projects.

Councillor Gakhal (Wolverhampton) reported that he welcomed the announcements and in particular the £100m Single Regeneration Fund that enables the development of difficult to deliver sites like Parkfields.

In relation to enquiry from Councillor Mackiewicz (Solihull) regarding the controls and audits by Government for the funding, the Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration advised of the WMCA's obligations to Government with regards to the outputs/outcomes of the various funds and where there was a local designation such as the Levelling Up Zones. He highlighted that the main change with the TDD was the way in which decisions were determined.

The board commented on how the Devolution Deal could provide the funding opportunities to roll-out the Help to Own scheme, to retain and re-purpose heritage buildings for housing, and to further develop St. Basil's 'Live and Work' model of supporting young people into employment and securing an affordable home.

In relation to the affordable housing that is split into two phases, the Chair reported that he wanted to see details of the housing schemes identified in the pipeline along with delivery dates in future reports so the board could ensure delivery dates were being met.

The Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration, Gareth Bradford undertook to provide the information and reported that it was very encouraging that expressions of interest with regards to grant funding applications have significantly increased in recent months.

The presentation was noted and circulated to the board for information.

53. Quarterly Report on 2022/23 Housing & Land Portfolio Deliverables, and Progress on Housing & Land Annual Business Plan

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration that provided a regular quarterly update on progress in delivering the High- Level Deliverables for the Housing and Land Portfolio.

The Head of Strategy & Analysis, Rob Lamond reported that meetings are continuing with local authority colleagues on 4-6 weekly basis to continue to build the pipeline of schemes.

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that:

1. The positive progress in achieving the Housing and Land Portfolio's approved Annual Deliverables in Q4 2022/23 to date be noted;
2. The key performance highlights set out in Section 3.0 of the report be noted and
3. The positive performance and effective deployment of the WMCA's Devolved Housing and Land Funds illustrated by the schemes summarised in the confidential annex to the report (many of these schemes are now in 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.

54. Place Pilots Programme: Introduction

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration that provided an overview of the Place Pilots programme led by the Cabinet Office and its initial launch in the West Midlands.

The Head of Policy & Planning, Pat Willoughby reported that the Place Pilots programme is an is a Cabinet Office initiative delivered through the One Public Estate programme which brings together public sector landowners to deliver a more a collaborative and strategic approach to future public estate demand and supply.

The Head of Policy & Planning reported on the success of two workshops held in November 2022 and January 2023 which have identified several opportunities for potential joint ventures across the region between partners and have provided a deeper insight into estate strategies and requirements within the West Midlands.

It was noted that with regards to the next steps, the Housing, Property and Regeneration Team would continue to engage with local authorities,

Government, and public sector organisations to develop an implementation plan for potential projects and initiatives on the themes identified for increased strategic asset management planning across the wider public sector.

Councillor Mackiewicz reported that he welcomed the initiative and enquired as to whether there would be engagement with private landowners and whether the programme would deal with land that has no owner.

The Chair advised that in the case of unknown land ownership, land would revert to the Crown and reported that all necessary steps are taken to identify landowners. He also reported that town centres need to be reinvented as leisure destinations.

Suzanne Ward (Environment Agency) considered this was a great opportunity to use land for resilience purposes such as flood prevention.

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that:

1. That work undertaken to date in collaboration with the Office of Government Property and the Local Government Association around HM Government's Place Pilots Programme be noted;
2. The selection of the West Midlands Combined Authority area as one of the five geographical areas for testing the Place Pilots concept be noted;
3. The potential of the programme to support the regional ambitions for public land in line with the WMCA's Public Land Charter be noted and
4. The continued engagement with the Office of the Government Property and Local Government Association in the Place Pilots programme be noted.

55. 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).

56. Quarterly Report on 2022/23 Housing and Land Portfolio Deliverables, and Progress on Housing and Land Annual Business Plan - Appendix

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.

The Head of Strategy & Analysis, Rob Lamond reported that he would include the additional funds referred to as part of the Trailblazer Devolution Deal update in future dashboard reports.

The Executive Director of Housing, Property and Regeneration, Gareth Bradford reported on 4 schemes that are being delayed due to planning

issues and advised the board that these would be closely monitored.

It be recommended to the WMCA Board that:

The report be noted.

57. Monday 24 April 2023 at 10.00am

The meeting ended at 11.00 am.

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Housing & Land Delivery Board

Date	24 April 2023
Report Title	Deeper Devolution Deal: Update
Portfolio lead	Housing and Land - Cllr Mike Bird
Accountable Employees	Gareth Bradford, Executive Director of Housing, Property & Regeneration (Accountable Director) Rob Lamond, Head of Strategy & Analysis – Housing, Property & Regeneration Robert McGrath, NGDP Graduate – Housing, Property & Regeneration (Report Author)
Previous reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2023: Housing & Land Delivery Board • February 2023: Housing & Land Delivery Steering Group • March 2023: Housing & Land Delivery Board • April 2023: Delivery Steering Group

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Housing & Land Delivery Board is recommended to:

- a) **Note** the inclusions in the Deeper Devolution Deal relating to the Housing and Land Portfolio in the West Midlands;
- b) **Note** that an Implementation Plan for the Deeper Devolution Deal will be submitted to the WMCA Board in summer 2023 and work is ongoing with partners for mobilisation of the Housing and Land programmes set out in the Deal.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update the Housing & Land Delivery Board on the implications for the Housing and Land Portfolio of the Deeper Devolution Deal, agreed by WMCA and HM Government in March 2023.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Deeper Devolution Deal (DDD) was announced in the Chancellor's Spring Budget on 15 March 2023. The powers devolved to the Combined Authority signify the third transfer of powers since the organisation's inception in 2016.
- 2.2 Since the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper in February 2022, WMCA has worked closely with Local Authorities, HM Government and other regional partners to develop the Deeper Devolution Deal, including significant input, challenge and critical support

throughout the co-development process of the Housing and Land Portfolio's proposals from its Delivery Steering Group.

2.3 The Deeper Devolution Deal responds to our four headline Housing and Land Portfolio asks of Government:

- A West Midlands Regeneration Fund
- A West Midlands Land Reform Programme
- Affordable Housing
- Levelling Up Zones.

3.0 Key Outcomes from the Deeper Devolution Deal

West Midlands Regeneration Funding

3.1 £100 million in brownfield funding is to be devolved to WMCA, to drive placemaking, housing and urban regeneration across the region. This will be deployed within the upcoming spending review period and will support the delivery of 4000 homes. A few features of this new brownfield funding worth noting are that it: a) is a top up to existing devolved funds WMCA has secured since 2018; b) will be focused on commercial, mixed use and employment development; and c) will be subject to clear HM Government rules and criteria (as for the existing Brownfield Housing and Land Funding).

3.2 WMCA is targeting quick and extensive deployment of this funding, to de-risk stalled and challenging housing, urban and commercial development sites across the region. This investment will support the progression and delivery of emerging and adopted local plans, and support brownfield first and town centre regeneration policy. Building on the ask to unlock and accelerate the more 'difficult to deliver' brownfield development sites, the Deeper Devolution Deal provides WMCA with more flexibility and strategic funding abilities necessary to tackle the most pertinent development issues and barriers for the region and the specific barriers facing individual sites.

Land Reform and Public Land

3.3 Building on the ask for a strong partnership with HM Government, with the ability to significantly influence HM Government decisions on their West Midlands land and property assets, WMCA has been given through the Deeper Devolution Deal a new strategic leadership role on HM Government's Departmental and agency land. This role centres on decisions on the disposals or development of HM Government estate in the region. The new land reform partnership will include a joint plan to anticipate where there may be potential upcoming disposals and reconfiguration of HM Government land and buildings within the West Midlands.

3.4 As requested in discussions, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the Cabinet Office will support WMCA to become a leader in public land policy and delivery including being the first region for the Cabinet Office's new "place pilots" programme.

3.5 DLUHC, WMCA and its constituent authorities will undertake a review of the effectiveness of local development orders in the West Midlands, explore how local authorities could be supported in their application to accelerate regeneration delivery, growth, and investment, and to pilot resulting models in the region.

3.6 Building on WMCA's ask for the ability and flexibility to acquire land ahead of the market, WMCA, local authorities and DLUHC are working together to explore and demonstrate the more flexible compulsory purchase and land assembly opportunities for regeneration.

Affordable Housing Phase 1: 2023-2026

- 3.7 In the Deeper Devolution Deal, HM Government committed to a new trailblazer approach to the delivery of affordable housing within the West Midlands centred on a new approach to the Affordable Homes Programme being piloted with the WMCA. The Affordable Homes Programme is the government's flagship programme for delivering affordable housing in England. It provides grant funding towards the supply of new social and affordable housing. The Phase 1 agreement relates to funding within the existing envelope of the Affordable Homes Programme.
- 3.8 **The trailblazer approach means that WMCA will set the overall strategic direction, strategy, objectives, and local leadership for the deployment of the Affordable Homes Programme in the region** for the first time, while retaining Homes England's delivery expertise, administration and operational management, ensuring the business case objectives of the national programme are delivered and existing local authority arrangements are maintained.
- 3.9 **To help WMCA meet its ambition of working with local authorities, HM Government, housing associations and industry to double the supply of affordable homes in the West Midlands**, Homes England will invest at least £200 million of Affordable Homes Programme funding within the WMCA area by March 2026 with a clear ambition for WMCA, local partners and Homes England to work together to invest up to £400 million to build more social and affordable homes by 2026.
- 3.10 This will be dependent on appetite from providers alongside the ongoing work to develop a joint pipeline and delivery plan, developed as part of the Strategic Place Partnership. WMCA will work collaboratively with Homes England, local authorities and local delivery partners to develop a joint pipeline and delivery plan.

Affordable Housing Phase 2: Post 2026

- 3.11 Post 2026, WMCA will be responsible for adopting a strategic role on affordable housing, including some decisions currently taken by Homes England. This will involve agreeing sites and providers and identifying standards, working in partnership with its local authorities. In this new 'trailblazing' model of delivery, WMCA will make the key strategic decisions relating to local investment and spend of Affordable Homes Programme in the WMCA area in line with its strategic framework.
- 3.12 WMCA will be held accountable for delivery through a new accountability framework. Day to day administration of the Affordable Homes Programme in the West Midlands will continue to be undertaken by Homes England working to the strategy, objectives and framework set by WMCA, with Homes England reporting to WMCA on delivery of the agreed outcomes and outputs.

West Midlands Levelling Up Zones

- 3.13 WMCA and its constituent authorities have identified 6 key corridors across the region on the basis of their potential for growth and levelling up. These 'Levelling Up Zones' are:
1. East Birmingham-North Solihull corridor
 2. Wolverhampton Corridor

3. Walsall Growth Corridor
4. Dudley Metro Corridor
5. Sandwell Wednesbury to Tipton
6. Coventry and Warwickshire gigafactory zone.

3.14 Levelling Up Zones are fundamental to driving economic growth and wider Levelling Up outcomes in the region, tackling long-standing barriers and challenges faced by these areas, supporting identified regeneration proposals and unlocking and accelerating private sector investment for the West Midlands. The areas identified by local authorities as Levelling Up Zones all have real economic growth and investment potential but suffer from long-standing, inter-related market failures.

3.15 It is expected that that the following tools made available in the Deeper Devolution Deal will help WMCA and its partners to deliver a shared vision to catalyse growth and levelling up:

1. **Fiscal devolution and investment:** WMCA will be able to work with the government towards designation of specific, targeted “growth zones”, in which 100% of business rate growth above an agreed baseline could be retained by local authorities for 25 years
2. **Investment in regeneration:** The government has committed to devolve £100 million brownfield funding to WMCA. The Deeper Devolution Deal also provides for the investment of £60 million in the proposed Metro line extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill.
3. A trailblazing approach to **affordable housing** (see above)
4. Post-19 skills funding.

Strategic Place Partnership

3.16 HM Government has committed to working with WMCA through a strategic place partnership with its housing delivery agency Homes England to bring new housing supply and regeneration sites forward. To do so, Homes England and WMCA will be establishing a new wide-ranging Strategic Place Partnership to support the region with ambitious plans on housing supply, investment, and urban regeneration.

3.17 Homes England will work with WMCA and its constituent local authorities to agree a set of place-making outcomes, focused on delivering transformational change across the West Midlands. The Strategic Place Partnership will align expertise, funding and other relevant assets to support the delivery of these outcomes, and other strategic priorities at combined authority level.

3.18 The success of the partnership will be dependent on the appetite from providers alongside the ongoing work to develop a joint pipeline and delivery plan, developed as part of the Strategic Place Partnership. WMCA will work collaboratively with Homes England, constituent local authorities and local delivery partners to develop a joint pipeline and delivery plan.

4.0 Next Steps

4.1 WMCA will continue to engage with DLUHC and local authorities on the implementation plan work for the programmes and funding summarised above. A full Deeper Devolution Deal Implementation Plan is due to be received by WMCA Board in June 2023 and updates will be provided to Delivery Steering Group and Housing & Land Delivery Board in due course as part of this process.

4.2 The High Level Deliverables for the Housing & Land Portfolio will include relevant indicators, milestones and progress reports being provided to Delivery Steering Group and Housing & Land Delivery Board throughout 2023/24.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 It is noted that the purpose of this paper is to update Housing & Land Delivery Board on the implications for the Housing and Land Portfolio of the Deeper Devolution Deal, agreed by WMCA and HM Government in March 2023.

5.2 Finance note that the £100m Brownfield funding is a Capital fund only and that work continues on the request for Revenue funding to go alongside the Capital grant, to allow for the necessary feasibility work to be undertaken on a self-funding basis. This is, also, the case for the Affordable Homes funding.

5.3 Finance, also, note that work is underway on a review of resource capacity within the Housing team, to deliver the outputs for the Funds noted above. There may be financial implications arising from this review.

5.4 Outside of this, there are no financial implications as a result of the updates within this report. The development of the implementation plan for the Deeper Devolution Deal will be undertaken from within existing resources. Further details on the progress of the initiative, including the financial implications noted above and any other potential/emerging financial implications, will be reported to Housing & Land Delivery Board before onwards approval by the relevant Board.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 The legal implications for the Deeper Devolution Deal will be very wide and will need to be considered at each stage as the deal is developed. Each proposal will have separate legal issues and implications attached to them ranging from specific issues on individual projects to partnership working and joint plans with Homes England and HM Government and DLUHC. As the deal progresses, there may also be legal implications arising from any additional powers required by and granted to WMCA, in addition to any conditions imposed by HM Government in regard to the funding. Legal advice should be sought at all appropriate stages.

7.0 Equalities Implications

7.1 Equality impact assessments will need to be conducted to understand demographics, key inequality issues and how investment can help address key inequality gaps. Engagement and consultation with key equality stakeholders is also crucial.

8.0 Inclusive Growth Implications

8.1 Individual projects will need to take into account local area needs and local stakeholder needs to ensure that they benefit local communities.

9.0 Geographical Area of Report's Implications

9.1 The recommendations of this report apply to the whole of the WMCA area.

10.0 Other implications

10.1 None.

11.0. Schedule of Background Papers

11.1 None



Housing & Land Delivery Board

Date	24 April 2023
Report Title	Plan for Growth: Update
Portfolio lead	Housing and Land - Cllr Mike Bird
Accountable Employees	Gareth Bradford, Executive Director for Housing, Property & Regeneration (Accountable Director) Patricia Willoughby, Head of Policy & Planning – Housing, Property & Regeneration (Senior Reporting Officer) John English, Policy Officer – Housing, Property & Regeneration (Report Author)
Previous reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2022 - Housing & Land Delivery Steering Group and Housing & Land Delivery Board April 2023: Housing & Land Delivery Steering Group

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Housing & Land Delivery Board is recommended to:

- a) **Note** the work relating to the West Midlands Plan for Growth and its alignment with and relevance to the work being done under the Housing and Land Board.
- b) **Discuss** the potential for WMCA to commission an additional study, as requested by local partners, to explore the challenges and barriers experienced by growth clusters, providing evidence that could also be used to support local plans and business cases to Government;
- c) **Consider** how this work could be developed to support the continued identification of future pipeline projects which, subject to consideration, might access WMCA's devolved funds, both existing and new funds secured through the Deeper Devolution Deal; and
- d) **Note** the proposal to Delivery Steering Group for representatives to join a working group to progress the work.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Housing and Land Board about progress relating to work on the Plan for Growth and the proposal to establish a working group to ensure widespread engagement across the region on this work.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In November 2022, the Head of Economic Development and Delivery, presented a paper to the Housing & Land Delivery Board outlining the West Midlands Plan for Growth and the potential to align workstreams with the work of the Housing & Land Delivery Board, particularly in relation to the Future Homes Strategy and work on employment land supply, investment prospectus and project pipeline development.
- 2.2 The Plan for Growth focuses on clusters which have the potential to bring high-value growth to the region, create jobs and develop the region's skill base in key growth sectors. More generally, the Plan for Growth also recognises the need to bring forward brownfield land for regeneration, to meet the housing needs of the region and to provide land for industrial development across a range of key sectors. As such, the work aligns with, and supports, the West Midlands Strategic Employment Sites Study commissioned jointly by local authorities across the region, including WMCA.
- 2.3 Both the Plan for Growth and the Strategic Employment Sites Study also respond to the request by members of the Housing & Land Delivery Board, earlier in 2022, that WMCA could help to bring together a regional perspective on employment land supply and help to build a strong pipeline of future employment sites which could be supported by housing and land funding, including in the Deeper Devolution Deal.

3.0 Current activity

- 3.1 Work on the West Midlands Strategic Employment Sites Study has already started, initial findings are due to be available in May 2023 and the final report is scheduled for completion in summer 2023. The findings of the study will include an updated baseline picture of employment land supply and need across the region although, as this is a strategic study, it is likely that the baseline will need to be augmented with more detail on smaller scale development opportunities.
- 3.2 There is considerable activity across the region on assessing employment land need and supply through the review of local plans. Housing and economic development needs assessments and estimates of land supply are updated on a regular basis.
- 3.3 The pipeline of future development sites is also reviewed on a regular basis in a series of meetings between WMCA and local authorities. There is a renewed focus on this work given the increased funding that is being made available by Government through the Deeper Devolution Deal.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 The ambitions set out in the Plan for Growth will only be achieved if there is a clear focus on delivery. This work needs to be underpinned by an understanding of the challenges that are being experienced by existing clusters, including individual occupiers, and an analysis of the ways in which any barriers can be removed, potentially using WMCA's devolved funds. Although a considerable amount of information was collected when the Plan for Growth was being prepared, there is merit in commissioning more detailed work.

- 4.2 Delivery Steering Group endorsed the proposal for WMCA to set up a working group to consider the scope of a potential consultancy study to support employment land supply and, where appropriate, the delivery of individual sites where specific challenges and barriers are delaying potential growth. The scope of work could be designed to support both the findings of the Strategic Employment Sites Study and to provide evidence that would support local plans.
- 4.3 The Strategic Employment Sites Study and the Plan for Growth could also be used to support the further identification and development of future pipeline projects which, if they satisfy the relevant criteria, might be able to access either existing devolved funds or the more flexible funding secured by WMCA in the Deeper Devolution Deal. These discussions will continue with local authorities, developers and investors on a regular basis through planned engagement meetings.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 It is noted that the purpose of the report is to inform Housing and Land Board about progress on the alignment of work on the Plan for Growth with work of the Housing & Land Delivery Board and to discuss the potential to commission a further study to gain evidence to support local plans, and to augment the information collected when the Plan for Growth was prepared.

Whilst the Plan for Growth has the potential to deliver interventions that may require financial commitments in the future, there are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations within this report. The work to date has been and the proposed further study on this will be enabled from existing WMCA resources. As this proposal is developed further, further updates will be brought back to this Board which will include details of any emerging financial implications.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Plan for Growth and its alignment with the work of the Housing & Land Delivery Board. Although there are no immediate legal implications arising from this report, legal advice should be sought at the appropriate stages in the development and implementation of the Plan for Growth and any opportunities arising out of the work with the Housing & Land Delivery Board.

7.0 Equalities Implications

- 7.1 There are no immediate equalities implications arising from this report but individual strategies and delivery schemes will need to take into account local area, and local stakeholder, needs to ensure the schemes developed through the joint working benefit local residents, including harder to reach groups. To that effect equality impact assessments will need to be conducted to understand demographics, key inequality issues and how investment can help address key inequality gaps. Engagement and consultation with key equality stakeholders is also crucial.



8.0 Inclusive Growth Implications

8.1 There are no immediate inclusive growth implications arising from this report but individual strategies and delivery schemes are expected to respond to local area, and local stakeholder, needs to ensure that projects arising benefit local residents, including harder to reach groups.

9.1 Geographical Area of Report's Implications

9.1 The report covers the WMCA area.

10.0 Other implications

10.1 None.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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