



WMCA Board Meeting

Date	23 June 2017
Report title	Land commission update
Portfolio Lead	Councillor Sean Coughlan – Housing & Land
Accountable Chief Executive	Martin Reeves, Chief Executive, WMCA Email Martin.Reeves@coventry.gov.uk Tel 024 7683 3232
Accountable Employee	Simon Neilson, Executive Director, Economy & Environment, Walsall Council Email Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk Tel 01922 652004
Report to be/has been considered by	none

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The West Midlands Combined Authority Board is recommended to:

1. Note the WMCA Land Commission update report.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 Earlier this year, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) received the report and recommendations from the West Midlands Land Commission, chaired by Paul Marcuse.
- 1.2 This update report sets out the next steps to be taken to bring forward the programme of work required to respond to the Land Commission recommendations.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The WMCA established the Commission to identify the means by which the stock of developable land could be increased so that the level of housing completions, and the stock of developable employment sites, could be raised to accommodate the ambitious levels of growth outlined in the WMCA's Strategic Economic Plan.
- 2.2 The Land Commission's report was presented to WMCA Board in February 2017 and the WMCA is now in a position to begin work at pace on responding to the report's recommendations and developing a clear implementation plan.
- 2.3 The Commission identified six 'game changers' which are transformational in nature and which the Commission considers will be needed if the major step change required to deliver the SEP targets is to be achieved. These are:
 - The development of Non Statutory Spatial Frameworks;
 - The designation of Action Zones for residential and commercial development;
 - The creation of new collaborative delivery models;
 - The expanded programme of remediation of brownfield development sites;
 - The strategic review of the Green Belt; and
 - The development of enhanced governance arrangements to provide shared leadership and oversight of the implementation of the measures within the report.
- 2.4 All the members of the WMCA are at different stages of progressing local plans or reviewing future plans across the region. Inevitably any consideration of such matters will be seen through the lens of the work members do together at a West Midlands level and the independent Land Commission report and recommendations. It is important, therefore, that a mechanism through which these matters can be appropriately discussed is established.

3.0 Next Steps

- 3.1 Over the next 10-12 weeks, PwC will support the Portfolio holder to work with the constituent and non-constituent members of the WMCA to develop a collective response to the Land Commission's report and to build consensus on the areas within the report which can be implemented at pace and in the medium term; and identify areas where more work will be needed to define the activity required.
- 3.2 This work needs to be an inclusive process open to all members of the Combined Authority, whether Constituent Members or Non-constituents and it must reflect the important matters it will consider.

3.3 To oversee and undertake this work, an officer task and finish Steering Group will be established with representation from the constituent and non-constituent members and other stakeholders representing the Growth Company, One Public Estate programme and Homes & Communities Agency.

3.4 The work will include the following activity:

- Baselining the existing activity across WMCA in relation to report's recommendations;
- Identifying the risks, benefits and issues associated with the implementation of each recommendation, identifying points of convergence and divergence across the local authority members;
- Identifying any gaps in the Commission's findings/recommendations that the WMCA may seek to address;
- Proposing appropriate governance arrangements to oversee and support the delivery of the Land Commission's recommendations;
- Developing a road-map of the key decisions that WMCA will need to take in relation to each recommendation.

3.5 This group will also consider the governance required for the land and housing portfolio, including a proposal to establish a WMCA Land & Housing Advisory Board to bring together the appropriate portfolio strands of work, including One Public Estate, accelerated delivery of housing already permitted, future devolution deals and working with the Department for Communities & Local Government and the Homes & Communities Agency.

3.6 A further update report will be provided to the Board in September.

4.0 Financial implications

4.1 4.1 A budget of £100k has been approved to support Land Commission work in 2017/18. Advisor support to the value of £100k has now been approved to assist with the implementation phase.

4.2 There is no budget to support any further Land Commission work this financial year.

5.0 Legal implications

5.1 There are no direct legal implications

6.0 Equalities implications

6.1 There are no direct equalities implications

7.0 Other implications

7.1 Not applicable

8.0 Schedule of background papers

8.1 Agenda item 2.1 WMCA Board meeting 17th February 2017, The West Midlands Land Commission