



Housing & Land Delivery Board

Date	20th July 2022
Report title	Strategic Partnerships Programme: Update
Portfolio Lead	Housing and Land - Councillor Mike Bird
Accountable Employees	Gareth Bradford, Executive Director of Housing, Property & Regeneration Dr Colin Clinton, Head of Business Development & Partnerships Lauren Rigby-Hopkins, NGDP Graduate
Previous reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• June 2022: Discussion at Housing & Land Delivery Steering Group

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Housing & Land Delivery Board is recommended to:

- a) **Note** the positive progress in establishing and launching new Strategic Partnerships between WMCA and major developers/investors in line with the core deliverables of the Housing & Land Delivery Board for 2022/23 and the steers provided at the meeting of the Board in April 2022;
- b) **Note** that the approval and monitoring process for strategic partnership MoUs follow the standard assurance processes of WMCA;
- c) **Note** that WMCA is currently in negotiation with additional potential partners with a view to developing further Strategic Partnership MoUs; and
- d) **Consider and endorse** the Strategic Partnership Engagement Plan and programme timeline for delivering new Strategic Partnerships for the 2022/23 financial year.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to enable the Housing & Land Delivery Board to consider and endorse the **Strategic Partnership Programme** and to note positive progress to date. This paper provides an overview and update on agreed key deliverables for 2022/23 set by the Housing & Land Delivery Board i.e.

- Establish new partnerships and joint ventures and delivery vehicles, and
- Create strong investor engagement and developer relationships, working alongside West Midlands Growth Company.

2.0 Background and Update

2.1 Since 2018, WMCA under the Housing & Land Delivery Board has been progressing a strong strategic partnership programme. The publication of the West Midlands Investment Prospectus has been an important catalyst each year for this work, as has been true in 2022 with the publication of our £15bn Investment Prospectus in March.

2.2 As agreed at the meeting of the Housing & Land Delivery Board in April 2022, **WMCA is seeking to enter into further Strategic Partnerships in 2022/23** with organisations which will deliver specified additional benefits in the region (i.e. above 'business as usual') to help achieve WMCA's vision; leverage private investment; drive WMCA's ambition around key policies (e.g. Advanced Manufacturing in Construction, zero carbon homes, affordable housing, brownfield remediation) and bring forward schemes that meet and, wherever possible, exceed WMCA's policies and standards.

2.3 To date, WMCA has entered into **four Strategic Partnerships** based on Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) which are not legally binding but rather statements of intent:

- **Lovells/Morgan Sindall** signed September 2019 (projects include Lockside, Walsall)
- **Urban Splash** signed March 2020 (projects include Icknield Port Loop, Birmingham)
- **St Modwen** signed July 2021 (projects include West Longbridge, Birmingham)
- **Legal and General** signed June 2021 (first project was Fountain Lane, Oldbury; Legal and General made a commitment to invest £4bn over 7 years to levelling up and regeneration in the West Midlands).

2.4 In each case, the MoU partner approached WMCA through the commissioning partnership approach, provided for in the Single Commissioning Framework and Investment Prospectus.

2.5 WMCA is continuing its engagement with investors and developers with a comprehensive programme for signing new partnership agreements for 2022/23.

2.8 All existing and upcoming Strategic Partnerships have an individual focus which reflects both the deliverables agreed by the Housing & Land Delivery Board and the priorities of the West Midlands Investment Prospectus 2022.

3.0 The purpose of the Memoranda of Understanding

3.1 As discussed in previous meetings of the Housing & Land Delivery Board, the purpose of the Strategic Partnership MoUs is to:

- set out how WMCA and the Strategic Partner will work together to unlock new investment and outputs to deliver the vision and policies for the West Midlands as agreed by the WMCA Board
- commit to working in partnership with regional stakeholders to exceed, wherever possible, the policies and criteria set out in the Single Commissioning Framework, WMCA Charters and Roadmaps, and the requirements of wider WMCA strategies, policies and programmes
- identify potential areas for investment and delivery in line with the approved West Midlands Investment Prospectus.

3.2 MoUs are designed to provide a framework for collaboration which:

- will drive and unlock major private investment and delivery across the region
- is based on agreed priorities and principles with each partner that align with WMCA's vision and policies (e.g. as set out in the Plan for Growth, WM2041, the Local Transport Plan and the West Midlands Investment Prospectus)
- is a commitment to the strategic priorities for the region and supports the implementation of the deliverables of the Housing & Land Delivery Board
- supports the delivery of priority projects as set out in the Investment Prospectus
- increases the delivery of affordable, safe, energy efficient homes deploying advanced manufacturing techniques in construction; thriving communities; and commercial space
- maximises private sector leverage from public sector investment driving levelling-up and trailblazing devolution.

4.0 Standard Criteria for Strategic Partnerships

4.1 Before signing an MoU partnership, potential partners must demonstrate to WMCA a proven track record of commercial, residential and/or infrastructure delivery and investment. They must also show their commitment to a range of WMCA policies and requirements including:

- Advanced Manufacturing in Construction (AMC)
- Affordable housing provision
- a 'brownfield first' approach to the development of land
- WM2041 and the West Midlands reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2041
- the West Midlands Plan for Growth
- compliance with the Inclusive Growth Framework and Toolkit
- the Regional Design Charter
- the accelerated delivery of zero carbon homes and compliance with the Zero Carbon Homes Charter
- the Local Transport Plan
- the Public Land Charter
- other relevant regional standards, policies and plans

5.0 Partnership programme and MoU signing

5.1 MoUs have already been signed with:

- **Lovell/ Morgan Sindall:** An MoU agreement was signed between WMCA and Lovell in 2018 with a focus on unlocking brownfield housing schemes, especially in the Black Country. Examples of work to date include Cookley Works in Dudley; Caparo in Walsall; and Cable Street in Wolverhampton.
- **Urban Splash:** Urban Splash signed an MoU agreement with WMCA in 2020 with a partnership focus on delivering modular construction in the West Midlands; this has resulted in the delivery of phases of Icknield Port Loop in Birmingham.
- **St Modwen:** WMCA and St Modwen signed an MoU agreement in 2021; this focused on delivering comprehensive mixed use brownfield developments such as West Longbridge in Birmingham.
- **Legal & General:** Launched in May 2022, the MoU agreement with Legal & General commits to delivering cross-cutting institutional investment into regeneration and levelling up. This includes the investment made by L&G Affordable at Fountain Lane in Sandwell.

5.2 A number of partnerships are being progressed and the Housing & Land Delivery Board will be updated throughout.

6.0 Next Steps

6.1 The next steps for the Strategic Partnerships Programme are:

- to continue developing strategic partner MoU agreements that tackle the key challenges faced by the West Midlands and deliver projects that are inclusive, innovative and sustainable for the people of the West Midlands
- to continue working with existing strategic partners to develop a comprehensive pipeline of projects linked to the 2022 Investment Prospectus
- to continue to update Housing Land and Delivery Board with the progress made with the strategic partnership programme and the successful delivery of projects

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the Strategic Partnership Programme Update paper. There may be, in future, financial implications arising from implementing this but any such decisions would be subject to WMCA's approved assurance processes.

7.2 Any WMCA investment into the Strategic Partnership programme would be governed and administered through the WMCA Single Assurance Framework and in line with the accounting and taxation policies of the WMCA and HMRC.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 Section 113A(1)(a) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 gives WMCA a power of competence appropriate for the purposes of carrying-out any of its functions. Part 4 of The West Midlands Combined Authority Order 2016

(2016 No 653) confers that the functions relating to any economic development and regeneration in the constituent councils are exercisable by WMCA. Part 3 of The West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2017 confers functions corresponding to the functions of the Homes and Communities Agency has in relation to the combined area. Paragraph 10 (2) (a) of the 2017 Order confers the function of improving the supply and quality of housing to the Combined Authority, 10 (2) (b) to secure the regeneration or development of land or infrastructure in the combined area, 10 (2)(c) to support in other ways the creation, regeneration or development of communities in the combined area or their continued well-being and 10 (2)(d) confers the function of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and good design.

- 8.2 It is noted that this Paper provides an overview and update of the Strategic Partnership Programme to enable the Housing & Land Delivery Board to discuss and endorse the Programme and its progress to date. WMCA have been supported by both internal and external legal advisors in developing the Strategic Partnership Programme and the various Memorandums of Understanding. As further engagement with investors and developers continues, legal advice and input should be sought at relevant stages to support the establishment of new strategic partnerships and joint ventures and other innovative ways of co-working.

9.0 Equalities Implications

- 9.1 There are no immediate equalities implications in relation to this report. However, individual strategies and delivery schemes will need to take into account local area needs and local stakeholder needs to ensure that the schemes developed through strategic partnerships 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.

10.0 Inclusive Growth Implications

- 10.1 The High-level Deliverables agreed by the Housing & Land Delivery Board reflect WMCA's Inclusive Growth principles and are themselves neutral when it comes to inclusive growth. However, implications will arise as investments are made and strategies are devised e.g. in terms of who might benefit from those investments and who might be involved in shaping and contributing to them. As such, any programmes should be devised with the responsibility to deliver inclusive growth.

11.0 Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 11.1 The recommendations of this report apply to the whole of WMCA's geographical area.

12.0 Other Implications

- 12.1 None

13.0 Schedule of Background Papers

- 13.1 None.