

**EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
REGIONAL SCRUTINY BOARD**

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON Thursday 6 December 2007

<u>Present:</u>	<u>Apologies</u>	<u>In attendance</u>	<u>Secretariat</u>
<u>Chair:</u> Martin Traynor <u>Vice Chair:</u> Cllr R Begy <u>LGA Representatives:</u> Cllr R Mayhew Cllr E White Cllr R Brown Cllr L Neal Cllr R Austin <u>ESEP Representatives:</u> Ian Murray	<u>LGA Representative:</u> Cllr R Parker Cllr F Martin <u>ESEP Representative:</u> Stuart Godfrey Gordon Lammie Angela Rushton Stuart Young	<u>GOEM</u> Roger Poole <u>emda</u> Stan Crawford Abby Johnson Brennan Glen Harris Steve Mulligan Richard Tulloch Peter Strutton	Matthew Wheatley Jonathon Little Val Fraser

1.	Welcome and Apologies	Action
1.1	Martin Traynor welcomed Cllr Ernie White to his first meeting	
1.2	Apologies were noted from Cllr Robert Parker, Cllr Fiona Martin, Gordon Lammie, Angela Rushton and Stuart Godfrey, Stuart Young	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 September 2007	
3.1	It was noted that apologies had been received from Cllr Ernie White for the meeting on 26 September 2007.	
3.	Glen Harris at 10.1 reported that the minute should have read that a draft of <i>emda's</i> Corporate Plan would be taken to <i>emda's</i> Board in December rather than the RSB.	
3.3	The minutes were otherwise agreed as a true and accurate record.	
4.	Matters Arising	
4.1	SNR Martin Traynor reported back to Members on the English Regions' Network Scrutiny Conference held at Bristol on 5 December 07. Martin co-chaired the conference. Many speakers' presentations focused on the SNR, with different perspectives/interpretations of what the document really meant. Martin suggested that much uncertainty remained around the implementation of the Sub-National Review and that there were currently many unanswered questions. Martin stated that, in the light of such uncertainty, it is very much 'business as usual' for the RSB. Cllr Robin Brown & Cllr Roy Mayhew, who had both been at the event, echoed these sentiments.	
4.2	Abby Johnson-Brennan reported that <i>emda</i> had been liaising with other RDAs who were considering the issues associated with SNR implementation. Abby stated that <i>emda</i> wished to ensure that there was no loss of continuity or capacity in regional scrutiny but also that the region does not develop duplicate scrutiny mechanisms.	
4.3	6.2 - Abby Johnson-Brennan reported that she was meeting regularly with Stuart Young and Andrew Pritchard over transitional issues.	
4.4	9.2 Cllr Roger Begy identified an appropriate consultee for the Energy review from the bio-fuels sector.	JL
5.	East Midlands Regional Assembly Business Plan – Scrutiny Work Programme	
5.1	Martin Traynor introduced the report to Members and noted the key points of the previous discussion concerning uncertainties over the timescale for the implementation of the Sub-National Review and the need to maintain 'business as usual'. Matthew Wheatley detailed the process for preparing the Business Plan to members, invited comments and reported that a finalised version of the plan would go to EMRA Board on 11 th January 2007.	SY/MT/ RB

5.2	Martin proposed that the Business Services Scrutiny Review should take place before the Innovation Review in view of a number of recent developments on the innovation agenda and it is currently too soon to assess their impact. Martin nominated Cllr Roger Begy to Chair the Business Services Panel Review. This was agreed by Members and accepted by Roger.	
5.3	There is scope for a 3 rd Panel Review to begin in Quarter 4 of 2008/09. Cllr Roger Begy suggested, Transport and or Access, links between businesses and the Further and Higher Education sector and the third sector as potential topics. Members are invited to suggest topics for scrutiny reviews or Scrutiny Board agenda items to the secretariat electronically.	
5.4	<p>The Regional Scrutiny Board -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted the development of EMRA's work programme. 2. Endorsed the rescheduling of the innovation and business support scrutiny reviews. 3. Nominated Cllr Roger Begy to lead the review. 4. Transport & Access to HE nominated for inclusion into the 2008-10 scrutiny work programme 5. Endorsed the proposed mechanism for developing and agreeing EMRA's Business Plan and for the Chair and Vice-Chair to have delegated authority to lead its development in consultation with RSB Members. 	
6.	<i>emda's</i> Corporate Plan	
6.1	Matthew Wheatley introduced the report, highlighting the challenging context and demanding timescale for <i>emda</i> in their preparation of their Corporate Plan. <i>emda</i> are required to submit their Corporate Plan to Government in January 2008. Members were invited to discuss issues arising from the draft Plan and share any further suggestions with the Secretariat, in time for their submission on 21 st December.	
6.2	Glenn Harris commented that the development of <i>emda's</i> Corporate Plan had been iterative process with aspects of guidance being regularly updated by Government. Glenn emphasised that <i>emda's</i> Corporate Plan represented their contribution to the delivery of the RES but that delivery of the RES would require actions by others as detailed in the RES Implementation Plan.	
6.3	Glenn outlined the revised performance management framework underpinning the draft Corporate Plan, with a new emphasis on the simplified objective of encouraging Regional Growth.	
6.4	Martin Traynor welcomed the shift of focus from outputs to outcomes. Martin referred Members to pages 50 and 51 of the Corporate Plan and <i>emda's</i> suggested framework for Sub-Regional delegation, Martin suggested that the EMRA response would be likely to focus on issues arising from this section.	
6.5	Martin Traynor suggested that the RSB should reconvene the Corporate Plan Sub-Group (Martin Traynor, Cllr Begy, Pat Zadora and Gordon Lammie) that shaped EMRA's earlier input to <i>emda's</i> Corporate Planning process, to finalise EMRA's response. Martin also suggested that it was important that EMRA's response is fully informed from the local	ALL

	government perspective. Members agreed with Martin's proposals.	
6.5	The Regional Scrutiny Board - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considered <i>emda's</i> Consultation Draft Corporate Plan. 2. Agreed to the suggested mechanism for finalising EMRA's comments 	
7.	Regional Energy Scrutiny Review Update	
7.1	Cllr Robin Brown updated members on the progress of the Review, confirming that all Panel dates have been set.	
7.2	Jonathon Little outlined some of the emerging issues from the consultation stage of the review, including the integration of the SSPs with the region's energy targets, skills for energy and target-setting. Jonathan stressed that such findings could only be regarded as interim because only 50% of the scheduled interviews had been completed.	
7.3	Cllr Roger Begy suggested additional consultees for the review, including a representative from the Energy Retail Association.	RB/JL
7.4	Jonathon Little expressed thanks to <i>emda</i> staff for their support in preparing for the workshop to be held at Apex Court on 7 th December.	
7.5	The Regional Scrutiny Board - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted the information contained within the report 2. Considered and commented upon the emerging issues from the review 3. Noted the final report to be completed by end March 2008 for the consideration and endorsement of Members. 	
8.	Rural Scrutiny Review – <i>emda's</i> Scrutiny Action Plan	
8.1	Cllr Linda Neal thanked <i>emda</i> for their contribution to the Scrutiny Review and their sharing of their Scrutiny Action Plan. Cllr Robin Brown informed Members that the Review was well received at the ERN conference.	
8.2	Cllr Neal noted that on p55 of <i>emda's</i> draft Corporate Plan, a specific mention of urban areas was made in relation to regeneration but there was no equivalent mention of rural. It was agreed that this point should be made in EMRA's response to the Corporate Plan.	
8.3	Matthew Wheatley outlined the process for monitoring the impact of Scrutiny Reviews and Richard Tulloch introduced <i>emda's</i> Scrutiny Action Plan.	
8.4	Members debated a number of issues arising from the Scrutiny Action Plan, including mechanisms to better engage with the first tier of local government. It was noted that it was too early to be clear about activity to be undertaken in some areas. Consequently, it was agreed that <i>emda</i> should give further details on progress against agreed actions at the June 2008 meeting of the RSB. Cllr Roger Begy noted that June would be a particularly appropriate time report progress on integration with LAAs.	
8.5	On behalf of Board Members, Martin Traynor thanked Cllr Linda Neal for leading this review.	
8.6	The Regional Scrutiny Board - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considered and discussed the <i>emda</i> Scrutiny Action Plan. 	

	<p>2. Discussed arising issues with <i>emda</i> representatives in the meeting.</p> <p>3. Received an update to the SAP from <i>emda</i>.</p> <p>4. Received a Progress and Final Assessment Report from <i>emda</i>.</p> <p>5. Thanked <i>emda</i> and partners for their constructive contribution to the scrutiny review process.</p> <p>(Roger Begy left the meeting at 3.05pm)</p>	
9.	<i>emda</i>'s Sustainable Procurement Policy	
9.1	<p>Glenn Harris updated members on <i>emda</i> Sustainable Procurement policy, noting that the agency has had a policy in place since 2005, which was available on their web-site. <i>emda</i>'s 'Pre-Qualification Questionnaire' for suppliers includes sustainability criteria and <i>emda</i> have developed an Environmental Management System.</p> <p>Glenn reported that <i>emda</i> is currently tendering for consultancy services to develop a Regional Procurement Opportunities Plan as a basis for planning, organising and prioritising action to maximise the benefits of public procurement across the East Midlands. A key component of this work will involve the formation of a project reference/stakeholder group. <i>emda</i> will contact EMRA to nominate a representative to sit on this group</p>	GH/MW
9.2	<p>Members discussed sustainable procurement practice in depth, in particular its relationship with local sourcing and its compatibility with 'Gershon' efficiency savings. Martin Traynor commented that if local SMEs worked collectively, then they would have a better chance of accessing public sector contracts, due to the size. Martin also echoed EMRA's response to the RES consultation where we felt the focus should be on helping SMEs to work together. Cllr Ernie White reported on the progress that Blaby District Council was making with encouraging more local suppliers.</p>	
9.3	<p>Martin Traynor thanked Glenn Harris for his report and asked that the Board be kept updated.</p>	
10.	<i>emda</i> Chief Executive Report and Board Minutes	
10.1	<p>Martin Traynor referred Members to the previously agreed set of Questions.</p>	
10.2	<p><i>October Chief Executive Report</i> <i>Could emda please update RSB on the progress made by the task and finish group to support communities and businesses affected by Post Office closure?</i></p>	
10.3	<p>Richard Tulloch responded for <i>emda</i>. He reported that they plan to undertake a research project into the local economic impacts of Post Office closure and how they could be mitigated. Martin Traynor and Richard concurred that the impact of representations made by <i>emda</i>, EMRA and other organisations on the final closure programme is likely to be minimal.</p>	
10.4	<p>Members discussed the issue of post office closures in depth. Cllr Linda Neal reported on the number of Local Authority representations that have been made to the Post Office. Cllr Ernie White reported there is still much work to do on improving the accessibility of postal services and alternative means of provision. Cllr Robin Brown expressed his concerns about travelling post offices, the ageing population and viability.</p>	

10.5	Abby Johnson-Brennan emphasised that <i>emda</i> 's focus was on the economic impact of Post Office closures rather than their wider social ramifications.	JL
10.6	November Chief Executive Report <i>Were the opportunities afforded by the JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas) mechanism discussed and is emda looking at these as a way of sustaining investment beyond 2013</i>	
10.7	Abby Johnson-Brennan reported that the 'JESSICA' model was not specifically raised by Bryan Jackson at the meeting in question. Abby reported that 'JESSICA', 'JASPER' and 'JEREMIE' were innovative funding mechanisms that <i>emda</i> were considering as part of their ERDF responsibilities.	
10.8	emda Board - October 2007 Minutes <i>What are the four 'Critical Success Factors' that have been identified as requiring corrective action, and what action has been planned?</i> <i>Has the RBSIS Project Board met since the October Board meeting and what is the progress on consolidation of RBSIS?</i>	
10.9	Glenn Harris noted that the answers to the two questions could be rolled together. This approach was endorsed.	
10.10	Glenn reported that of the 20 Critical Success factors in <i>emda</i> 's Business Plan, only four were identified as requiring corrective action and plans were in place implement such actions. They were;	
10.11	<u>1. The Consolidation of RBSIS.</u> Glenn reported that the RBSIS Project Board would meet on 7 th December 07 and that an Action Plan had been developed for rolling out access to RBSIS to partner organisations including UKTI.	
10.12	<u>2. Transfer of Structural Funding responsibility to RDAs</u> Glenn reported that the ERDF process manual and Investment Framework were slightly delayed due to delays in Central Government guidance and Operational Programme negotiations with the European Commission respectively. However negotiations had been productive and Glenn expected the Operational Programme and Investment Framework to be approved in December 2007 and January 2008 respectively.	
10.13	<u>3. Three-Year Rolling Capital Programme</u> Glenn reported that as of 28th September 77% of <i>emda</i> 's Capital Budget has been committed - from <i>emda</i> 's Target of 80% by December. Glenn noted that a series of pipeline projects are at full application stage, which dependent upon approval, will ensure the Capital Budget will be spent.	
10.14	<u>4. Rural Development Programme</u> Glenn noted that there had been delays to the Rural Development Programme for England. Final bids were expected in mid-January 2008.	
10.15	The Regional Scrutiny Board - 1. Considered <i>emda</i>'s Chief Executive's Reports and Minutes 2. Considered <i>emda</i>'s response to questions submitted, and supplementary questions raised	

11.	Any Other Business	
	None	
12.	Date of Next Meeting	
12.1	<i>Monday 31 March 2007, 2.00pm, at Pera, Melton Mowbray</i>	
12.2	<i>The meeting closed at 3.37pm</i>	