

## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** Monday 1 July 2024  
**Time:** 10.00 am **Public meeting** Yes  
**Venue:** Room 116, 16 Summer Lane, Birmingham, B19 3SD

### Membership

#### Voting Members

Councillor Naeem Akhtar	Coventry City Council
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Cathy Bayton	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Andrew Burrow	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Diane Donaldson	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Ellen Fenton	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Ian Kettle	Association of Black Country Authorities
Councillor Ewan Mackey	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Jamie Tennant	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Vera Waters	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

#### Non-Voting Members

Councillor Joanna Kane	Worcestershire Non-Constituent Authorities
Councillor John Preece	Staffordshire Non-Constituent Authorities
Vacant	Shropshire Non-Constituent Authorities
Vacant	Warwickshire Non-Constituent Authorities

The quorum for this meeting shall be 7 members.

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

**Contact** Janna Simpson, Governance Services Officer  
**Telephone** 07769 301598  
**Email** [janna.simpson@wmca.org.uk](mailto:janna.simpson@wmca.org.uk)

# AGENDA

No.	Item	Presenting	Pages
<b>Items of Public Business</b>			
1.	Appointment of Chair	Dan Essex	None
2.	Appointment of Vice-Chair	Chair	None
3.	Apologies for Absence	Chair	None
4.	Declarations of Interests Members are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable prejudicial interests they have in any 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
5.	Terms of Reference	Chair	1 - 4
6.	Schedule of Meetings 2024/25 <b>2024</b> 1 July 2024 2 September 2024 October 2024 (Mayoral Q&A WMCA Policy) – TBC December 2024 – (Mayoral Q&A Proposed Draft Budget) - TBC  <b>2025</b> 20 January 2025 3 March 2025	Chair	None
7.	Minutes - 4 March 2024	Chair	5 - 10
8.	Skills Scrutiny Review: Progress Report on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the review	Dr Fiona Aldridge	11 - 30
9.	Performance monitoring against the Annual Business Plan	Jaspal Seehra	31 - 44
10.	Grant Register	Kate Taylor	45 - 52
11.	Work Programme (a) Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme (Draft)	Chair	53 - 66

	(b) WMCA Board Forward Plan		
<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>			
12.	Monday 2 September 2024 at 10:00am	Chair	None

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<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee - Terms of Reference</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>To be an advocate for residents of the West Midlands and ensure that the decisions made by the WMCA help to make the West Midlands a more prosperous and better-connected region which is fairer, greener and healthier.</p> <p>To undertake pre-decision scrutiny, pre-development scrutiny and enact the call-in arrangements, as and when required, for the WMCA.</p>
<b>Accountable to</b>	WMCA Board
<b>Membership</b>	<p>Birmingham City Council x 3                      Coventry City Council x1                      Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council x 1                      Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council x 1                      Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council x 1                      Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council x1                      City of Wolverhampton Council x 1                      Association of Black Country Authorities x 1                      Non-Constituent Authorities x 4</p>
<b>Chair</b>	<p>The Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed by the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Chair and Vice-Chair must not be from the same political party as the Mayor.</p>
<b>Voting</b>	<p>Members appointed from constituent authorities will have one vote each.</p> <p>Members appointed from non-constituent authorities and all other members of the committee are non-voting representatives.</p>

	The Chair does not have a second, casting vote. If a vote is tied on any matter, it shall be considered not to have been carried.
<b>Quorum</b>	Two-thirds of voting members appointed to the committee.
<b>Frequency</b>	The committee shall meet seven times a year, or more often if it is determined necessary to discharge its responsibilities.
<b>Servicing</b>	The meetings will be serviced by the WMCA's Governance Services team.
<b>Functions</b>	<p><b>To undertake 'overview' and 'scrutiny'</b> focussing on strategies, policies and proposals to inform their development before they are determined by the WMCA Board, Mayor or other committee (<b>overview function</b>) and to scrutinise decisions that have been made or are about to be made (<b>scrutiny function</b>).</p> <p><b>To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken</b>, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the WMCA with the exception of transport-related matters.</p> <p><b>Make reports or recommendations to the WMCA Board or the Mayor</b> on matters that affect the WMCA area or the inhabitants of the area.</p> <p><b>Make reports or recommendations to the WMCA Board or to the Mayor</b> with respect to the discharge of any non-transport functions which are the responsibility of the Combined Authority.</p> <p><b>Call-In</b> decisions made by the WMCA, committees or the Mayor (excluding Transport Delivery Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee and Audit, Risk &amp; Assurance Committee). Decisions that have been delegated by the WMCA or the Mayor to other committees or officers may also be called in.</p> <p><b>To undertake at least two public Mayoral Q&amp;A Sessions per annum</b> structured around 'policy' and 'budget'. To make reports, observations and recommendations to the WMCA Board and the Mayor on any findings, as appropriate. Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee may publish its report, observations and or recommendations and by notice in writing require the WMCA and or the Mayor to:</p>

	<p>a) consider the report, observations and recommendations;</p> <p>b) respond to the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee indicating what (if any) action the WMCA proposes to take. The Mayor and or WMCA to respond within two months.</p> <p><b>To undertake deep dives and or establish scrutiny working groups</b>, as and when required.</p> <p><b>To monitor the progress delivery of recommendations</b> made by the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee to the WMCA, Mayor or any other committee.</p> <p><b>Who Can Refer Matters to the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</li> <li>• A member of the WMCA, including the Mayor</li> <li>• A member of a constituent or non-constituent authority</li> </ul> <p><b>Who Must Attend Meetings of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee?</b></p> <p>Members (including the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor) or officers of the WMCA must attend meetings, if invited, to answer questions.</p> <p><b>Access to Information Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined Authorities’ decision-making is covered by Access to Information requirements, which means that 28 clear days’ notice has to be given before a key decision can be taken (unless the general exception or special urgency rules apply).</li> <li>• The WMCA’s Forward Plan of Key Decisions enables the scrutiny committee to keep abreast of major decisions that are going to be taken by the WMCA, the Mayor.</li> </ul>
<b>Review</b>	Annually in June.

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## **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**Monday 4 March 2024 at 10.30am**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present In Person**

Councillor Cathy Bayton (Chair)  
Councillor Naeem Akhtar (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Philip Bateman  
Councillor Andrew Burrow  
Councillor Ian Kettle  
Councillor Nigel Lumby

Association of Black Country Authorities  
Coventry City Council  
City of Wolverhampton Council  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council  
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Shropshire Non-Constituent Local  
Authorities  
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council  
Birmingham City Council  
Business Representative

Councillor Paul Moore  
Councillor Jamie Tennant  
Amanda Tomlinson

#### **Present Virtually**

Councillor Emma Marshall  
Councillor Adrian Warwick

Worcestershire Non-Constituent Local  
Authorities  
Warwickshire Non-Constituent Local  
Authorities

#### **In Attendance**

Ed Cox

Director of Strategy, Economy and Net  
Zero

Dan Essex  
Helen Edwards  
Cat Orchard

Governance & Scrutiny Manager  
Director of Law & Governance  
Head of Commonwealth Games Legacy  
Enhancement Fund

Lyndsey Roberts

Statutory Scrutiny Officer

#### **Item Title No.**

#### **182. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ewan Mackey (Birmingham), Councillor Lauran Rainbow (Birmingham) and Councillor Vera Waters (Walsall). The Chair noted that Councillor Vera Waters had recently been unwell, and the committee wished her well for a swift recovery.

**183. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair noted that this was the last meeting of the committee for this mayoral term and thanked members their contribution which resulted in positive outcomes throughout the year. She noted that the comments and recommendations of this committee were increasingly being reflected in reports to the WMCA Board, and she welcomed the importance the board was placing on the work this committee undertook. She also thanked the Statutory Scrutiny Officer, Governance Services Officer and Governance & Scrutiny Manager for the support and advice they had given to members throughout the year.

**184. Minutes - 29 January 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

**185. Matters Arising**

**(a) WMCA Air Quality Framework and Implementation Plan** (minute no. 172(b) refers)

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer confirmed that the plan had been sent to local authority lead officers following its approval by the WMCA Board in November 2023.

**(b) Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Mayoral Q&A on the Proposed Draft Budget 2024/25** (minute no. 172(c) refers)

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer reported on the progress of the task & finish group that had been established by Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee to look into the effectiveness of the WMCA's member engagement and development. A copy of the final report would be shared with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee once it was completed.

**(c) Employment & Skills Strategy for Deeper Devolution** (minute no. 176 refers)

Councillor Andrew Burrow reported that he had been invited to visit a construction training programme with the Interim Director of for Employment, Skills, Health & Communities and noted that while this programme was in Solihull it was attended by constituents from all across the WMCA region. He considered that it would be helpful for the committee to gain an understanding of other skills offerings across the region. The Chair noted that the skills programme was on the work programme for July and the Statutory Scrutiny Officer agreed to work with the Skills Officer to ensure the committee receive an appropriate report.

**(d) Governments Scrutiny Protocol** (minute no. 178 refers)

The Chair noted that the Scrutiny Protocol Working Group was set to meet on 13 March.

**186. Brownfield Land Remediation Fund - Scrutiny Review Update**

Councillor Naeem Akhtar provided an update on the Brownfield Land Remediation Fund scrutiny review. He reported that the review group had met three times, in addition to collaborating with independent experts to assist in the review. He shared the three key main themes emerging for the report in respect of an enhanced brownfield land register covering all sites in the region, the integration of biodiversity (eco off-setting) in new developments and the approvals and application process including regular engagement and communication. He then stated that due to timescales, the final report would be represented at the next committee meeting in July. The Chair confirmed this, and stated that due diligence needed to be done on the report complete with fact checking and the inclusion of robust recommendations.

Resolved:

The update be noted.

**187. Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund Update**

The committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Strategy, Economy & Net Zero on a further, more comprehensive update on the initiatives that would be delivered through Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund monies, following a previous update to the committee on 13 March 2023.

The Head of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund delivered a presentation of the achievements of the programme. She covered the Inclusive Communities Pillar, the Economy Pillar, the Culture programme, and the Community Environment Fund.

One of the prominent aspects discussed was the Inclusive Communities Pillar, which garnered significant attention with over 1,400 applications received, amounting to £72m in requests for a fund of £9m.

Councillor Philip Bateman expressed concerns about the demand issue, questioning how those who did not receive funding would manage. Whilst commending the team for its fair application process, he also emphasised the need for additional funds. In response, the Head of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund assured the committee that all applicants would receive valuable feedback to improve future applications. She also confirmed that unsuccessful applicants would be signposted towards other funding opportunities available.

In response to Councillor Jamie Tennant, the Head of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund confirmed that Birmingham Skills contract was approved in February. She also confirmed that funds were allocated equally to each local authority, despite their varying sizes and needs.

The Chair raised questions regarding funding, particularly regarding concerns about funds being spent before the grant period closed in March 2025. In response, the Head of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund reiterated that monitoring was in place to ensure timely spending, with provisions for reallocation if necessary. Underspend would prompt a review to redirect funds accordingly, and a minimal 2% administrative charge was in place across the programme, reflecting the WMCA's standard practice.

Amanda Tomlinson highlighted impact within the report due to the programme timelines. She requested a deeper understanding of the collective impact of the program on the region. The Head of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund assured that each fund and program would undergo both internal and independent evaluations, with a commitment to providing a comprehensive report to the committee after March.

Councillor Ian Kettle suggested the potential value a highlight video showcasing the physical evidence of project impacts. The Head of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund confirmed ongoing efforts with the communications team to develop this aspect as part of the evaluation process.

Resolved:

- (1) The update on progress and impact in relation to the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund, as requested by the committee, be noted.
- (2) Areas of specific interest to the committee to inform a future report in March 2025, or as part of the committee's work programme for 2024-2025, be noted.

[NB. Amanda Tomlinson declared an interest in this item in respect of her chairing Active Black Country.]

#### **188. Grant Register**

The committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub provided an update on the Grant Register. The report stated that since the last meeting, the WMCA had had confirmation of £133.7m from the Department for Education for the Adult Skills Fund (formerly the Adult Education Budget) for the 2024/25 academic year and £9.4m from the Department for Education to fund Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs for the 2024/25 academic year.

The Chair also requested that future reports being presented at this committee as a result of incoming grants be supported with financial information. In response to a question from Councillor Phillip Bateman, it was confirmed that the committee would receive a briefing note from the Head of Environment to confirm the usage of the Biodiversity Net Fund from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

Resolved:

The grant register be noted.

**189. Work Programme**

The committee considered its current work programme and the WMCA 's forward plan.

Resolved:

The committee work plan, as updated, be noted.

The meeting ended at 11:40am.

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**West Midlands  
Combined Authority**

**Name of meeting:** Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Meeting date:** 1 July 2024

**Report title:** Skills Scrutiny Review: Progress Report on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the review

**Portfolio Lead:** Mayor of the West Midlands

**Responsible Director:** Helene Dearn, Interim Executive Director – Employment, Skills, Health and Communities

**Report author:** Fiona Aldridge [Fiona.aldridge@wmca.org.uk](mailto:Fiona.aldridge@wmca.org.uk)

**Key Decision?** No

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Is the ability for the Combined Authority to make a decision internally reliant on Constituent or Non-Constituent Councils making a formal decision first?

Yes       No

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**Public/private report:** Public

**Exempt by virtue of paragraph:** n/a

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- 1. Decision/s Recommended**
    - 1.1 To note the progress made and next steps on the implementation of the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s Skills Scrutiny Review.
  - 2. Voting Requirements**
    - 2.1 A majority of voting members, in attendance in the meeting room and indicating their preference, are required to vote in favour of any recommendation/proposition for it to become a decision of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
  - 3. Executive Summary**
    - 3.1 This report provides an update on the progress made on the implementation of the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that were supported by the Skills Advisory Board on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

#### **4. Matters for Consideration**

4.1 In 2023, the Skills Advisory Report were asked to consider the findings of a scrutiny review (see annex 1) undertaken in order to understand the impact of the devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the WMCA on the delivery of local skills training within the region, and to identify the challenges and ways in which the WMCA and local authorities could most effectively use skills development to address short and longer term challenges in the region, particularly in relation to its big economic challenges.

4.2 The scrutiny review had sought to:

- Understand the current delivery of the devolved AEB within each constituent authority and the difference devolution has made to date.
- Understand how additional skills investment has increased the offer in each Local Authority for residents and businesses.
- Consider the approach to the relative distribution of investment in the context of need and the economic challenges – this should include consideration of balancing the needs of business against the drive to increase qualification levels of the workforce.
- Understand the key drivers in terms of current and future employment, including which job sectors and residents are most at risk and their locations within the region.
- Ascertain views on how skills development can best contribute to levelling up, improving career pathways, and addressing the challenges for the region and where it has limitations or dependencies on the impact that can be created.

4.3 Over the course of the review, a number of broad themes emerged including:

- strong agreement that devolution of AEB has delivered positive local impact with skills training aligned according to labour market need.
- A shared view that the success of the AEB strategy is a result of the WMCA partnership approach. Place-based investment alongside a continued investment on partnership, will strengthen this further.
- Reflection that AEB investment needs to evolve and focus on helping residents develop skills for employment, and to provide support for employers to meet labour market shortages. Working with education providers to ensure a more flexible curriculum offer will be key.
- Consensus that a regional employer engagement strategy is needed to better secure employer commitment to workforce development, navigate the skills system, and feed into the AEB strategy.
- The increased need to help learners succeed, through integrated employability skills and wraparound support models to tackle barriers, build confidence and secure successful employment outcomes.



- Agreement that getting careers guidance right was another cornerstone to better preparing residents for market entry and mobility, by developing better integration and understanding about labour market changes across the educational system. Working with schools will be key, alongside FE and HE providers, regional partners and employers.

4.4 After considering the written and oral evidence received, the review panel concluded that a number of recommendations should be considered by the Skills Advisory Board. This report provides a progress report on each.

#### 4.5 **Recommendation 1: For the WMCA:**

##### **4.5.1 To share participant data with constituent authorities about engagement of residents in local provision and review AEB procedures.**

AEB participant data is now shared with all constituent authorities on a half-termly basis. We have also piloted review meetings, with Coventry, to review the data with Local Authority colleagues. This will now be rolled out across all authorities, in order to help inform our place-based approach to the adult skills pillar of the single settlement.

AEB performance is a standing agenda item in the monthly meetings with Local Authority Employment and Skills Leads, along with updates on the procurement pipeline, to support greater transparency of engagement opportunities.

##### **4.5.2 Incorporate feedback into the development of the all-age careers strategy, with opportunity for constituent authorities and relevant stakeholders to input into the design and potential implementation as needed.**

WMCA has now successfully incorporated the functional transfer of the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) contract from Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). This includes the development of Career Hubs and the Cornerstone Employer Group. The first year of this delivery has laid the foundation for the development of the all-age careers strategy for the WMCA area.

The Regional Cornerstone Employer group has taken responsibility for developing a consistent approach to work experience and to extending the offer to those at risk, of becoming NEET (Not in education, employment or training). They are also working on developing a next step guide and increasing business volunteers.

The key learning from this work will shape our approach in the next academic year with a transition to a place-based approach of providing an enhanced offer to 92 priority schools. This learning will shape the articulation of our all-age careers offer which will be shared with Local Authority Employment and Skills leads for consultation and further development on the 10<sup>th</sup> July.

##### **4.5.3 Provide an update on the development of a Provider Directory, particularly ITPs delivering provision to constituent authority residents, to support awareness of the range of commissioned providers.**

A Provider Directory, incorporating active independent training providers (ITPs), provision type and geographies, has been provided to all Local Authorities. The Directory will be updated and re-circulated as new provision is commissioned.

#### **4.6 Recommendation 2: For WMCA, Constituent Authorities and Regional Partners**

##### **4.6.1 Co-develop a regional engagement strategy with employers to identify and integrate skills requirements.**

We have developed a blueprint to incorporate a 'people and skills' offer through Business Growth West Midlands (BGWM). As part of this work, we have established a connecting team with subject matter expertise on skills, within the CA, to support the BGWM business adviser network, based in Local Authorities.

West Midlands Growth Company have rolled out its strategic relationship management (SRM) approach, focused on the top 500 businesses in the region. As part of this strategic key account approach we're developing an integrated people and skills offer to respond to identified need.

In response to the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), Colleges are using Local Skills Improvement Funding (LSIF), collaborating to create employer-focused branding, a skills quality mark, and a standardised diagnostic to support employer engagement. The employer representative body (ERB), with the colleges have also undertaken a series of deep dives to identify current and future skills needs.

As part of the development of the Investment Zone (IZ), we are working with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) to identify industry qualification gaps. We have identified a gap in Health/Med Tech – a growth sector for both the IZ and WMCA's Plan for Growth – and are now working with IfATE to develop a new composite qualification at level 4.

##### **4.6.2 Develop approaches to increasing work experiences / placements offering with employers maximising links to business support activity.**

WMCA have secured £740,000 from Department for Work and Pensions to test a Job Rotation model in Coventry for 2024/25. This will engage in employers in upskilling their existing workforce, whilst also creating opportunities to backfill their roles with residents who are currently unemployed. Unemployed residents will benefit from funded work placements, existing workers will benefit from opportunities for career progression, and businesses will benefit from increased productivity resulting from staff development.

#### **4.7 Recommendation 3: For WMCA with Constituent Authorities**

##### **4.7.1 Review and map out the range of available funding opportunities available to employers to help navigate the skills system and outline how Business Support is aligned with AEB investment to draw on full range of opportunities.**

As part of the development of BGWM blueprint we are incorporating two specific skills offers to support employers. This includes investment of £11.5m in digital skills bootcamps and £2m in leadership and management training, recognising the importance of both skills sets to improve productivity and create growth.

#### **4.7.2 Develop approaches to incorporate constituent authority services such as employment support, into SWAPs, in relevant localities.**

Building on the activity outlined at 4.5.1 above, we are working with Coventry Local Authority to understand how we can develop approaches to incorporating local services and support into SWAPs. This will then be extended to other Local Authorities.

Through the Job Rotation model to be piloted in Coventry 24/25 (see 4.6.2), we are working with Coventry City Council to develop a pre-employment intervention through the Coventry Job Hub. This test and learn approach will provide an opportunity to develop test employment support interventions in SWAP's.

#### **4.8 Recommendation 4: For WMCA with Education Providers**

##### **4.8.1 Design and integrate an employability programme that supports learners to develop transferable skills valued by employers to help secure good work, and to work with education providers to ensure effective delivery.**

All colleges and ITPs have started designing programmes for adults that are relevant and adaptable, with a place-based approach, and offering intensive wrap around support. We will continue to develop this work over the coming months.

- The principle of relevance ensures programmes are set in a real sector context that promotes group work, problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, resilience, communication, appropriate work ethic and learning/study mindset. All of which are key transferrable skills and attributes valued by local employers.
- Setting programmes in real sector context ensure residents are confronted with realistic scenarios and current challenges faced in the local world of work. The best examples of this have been observed with provision delivered by RMF (including in partnership with Solihull College), NIS (in partnership with Wolverhampton College) and in Skills Bootcamps providers.
- The intensive wrap around support includes coaching and mentoring. Individual mentoring will support learners to develop their critical thinking and reflective skills to improve their ability to adapt to changes in the labour market due to technological advances. Learners will be equipped to assess and use to best effect their own skills, as well as further develop their knowledge and abilities through a learning/study mindset.

#### **5. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?**

5.1 Activity in relation to each of the recommendations is underway and will continue to be progressed over the coming year. We are working closely with our constituent local authorities to ensure that these developments are informed by, and respond to, local need.

#### **6. Reasons for recommending preferred option**

6.1 n/a

## 7. Implications and Considerations

Priority:	Contribution:
Delivery of Strategic Transport Plan	n/a
Promote inclusive economic growth in every corner of the region	<p>Through our adult skills investment, we are seeking to boost inclusive economic growth, giving more people the training and support to find and progress in good well-paid work and improve their overall health and quality of life. Critically there is a focus through all skills investment in supporting those who experience that greatest labour market disadvantage.</p> <p>The four key pillars of our investment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Building strong and inclusive communities</li> <li>- Providing a good education up to level 2</li> <li>- Supporting residents into employment and supporting career progression</li> <li>- Meeting future skills needs at level 3 and above through upskilling and reskilling.</li> </ul>
Ensure everyone has the opportunity to benefit	See above. WMCA have introduced a low wage threshold of £32,000 to ensure that residents who are out of work or on lower-than-average earnings are able to access training opportunities.
Connect our communities by delivering transport and unlocking housing and regeneration schemes	n/a
Reduce carbon emissions to net zero and enhance the environment	n/a
Secure new powers and resources from central government	n/a
Develop our organisation and our role as a good regional partner	Through the adoption of a place-based approach, and in collaboration with constituent local authorities, we are seeking to strengthen our role as a good regional partner.

## 8. Internal Consultation and Scrutiny:

8.1 The paper has been approved by the Executive Director for Employment, Skills, Health and Communities.

## 9. External Consultation and Scrutiny:

9.1 The paper will be shared with Local Authority Employment & Skills leads.

**10. Financial implications:**

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. The progress made against the recommendations are all from existing approved budgets and grants.
- 10.2 To continue with the delivery against the recommendations and the strategies outlined in the paper, there is likely to be future financial implications arising, which will be funded from within the existing budget. Any new funding request above this will follow the existing governance processes to seek approval in advance of delivery taking place.

**11. Legal implications:**

- 11.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the contents of this report. Where recommendations are to be further developed, Legal Services should be engaged at an early stage.

**12. Single Assurance Framework implications:**

- 12.1 n/a – this paper provides a progress update only.

**13. Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:**

- 13.1 n/a – this paper provides a progress update only.

**14. Procurement Implications:**

- 14.1 n/a – this paper provides a progress update only.

**15. Equality implications:**

- 15.1 n/a – this paper provides a progress update only.

**16. Inclusive Growth Implications:**

- 16.1 The intent of our skills investment aligns with and supports delivery of our Inclusive Growth Framework. In particular, it contributes to the education and learning priorities where devolved skills funding enables us to ensure that we are providing opportunities for residents to gain new skills or retrain for a new job. In addition, it underpins delivery of inclusive economy, power and participation, connected communities, health and wellbeing and equality.

**17. Local Authority Impact:**

- 17.1 Collaboration with local authorities will ensure that skills investment supports wider place-based strategies.

**18. List of appendices referred to:**

- 18.1 Annex 1: Skills Advisory Board Paper - A review of the impact of the delivery of local skills training following the devolution of the Adult Education Budget to the WMCA

**19. Background papers used to compile this report:**

- 19.1 n/a

**20. List of Other Relevant Documents**

[WMCA and Warwickshire Local Skills and Improvement Plan](#)

[WMCA Employment & Skills Strategy](#)

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West Midlands  
Combined Authority

## Skills Advisory Board

<b>Date</b>	25 September 2023
<b>Report title</b>	A review of the impact of the delivery of local skills training following the devolution of the Adult Education Budget to the WMCA
<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee Members Undertaking the Review</b>	Amanda Tomlinson (Chair) Councillor Martin McCarthy Councillor Andrew Burrow Councillor Ian Kettle Councillor Jamie Tennant Councillor Vera Waters
<b>Accountable Employee</b>	Clare Hatton, Director of Employment & Skills email: <a href="mailto:clare.hatton@wmca.org.uk">clare.hatton@wmca.org.uk</a>

**Recommendation(s) for action or decision:**

**The Skills Advisory Board is recommended to:**

- (1) Endorse the conclusions and recommendations of the overview and scrutiny review group, as set out in sections four and five of the report.

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To consider the findings of a scrutiny review undertaken in order to understand the impact of the devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the WMCA on the delivery of local skills training within the region, and to identify the challenges and ways in which the WMCA and local authorities could most effectively use skills development to address short and longer term challenges in the region, particularly in relation to the big economic challenges.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Through its skills investment, the WMCA has a key role to play in moving people into the labour force, improving workplace support, and helping people find good, well-paid employment and progress at work. The WMCA and partners need to make sure no-one or place is left behind.

- 2.2 Following the findings of the 2020/21 review to ascertain whether the regional economic recovery proposals were meeting the needs that had been identified within the Black Country sub-region, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered that now was an appropriate time to undertake a further scrutiny review to assess the impact and outcomes that had been delivered through the AEB since its devolution to the WMCA in 2019.

- 2.3 This review sought to understand the impact of the devolution of the AEB on the delivery of local skills training within the region, and to identify the challenges and ways in which the WMCA and its constituent authorities could most effectively use skills development to address short and longer-term challenges in the region, particularly in relation to the big economic challenges. The key objectives for the review were identified as being to:

- Understand the current delivery of the devolved Adult Education Budget within each constituent authority and the difference devolution has made to date.
- Understand how additional skills investment has increased the offer in each Local Authority for residents and businesses.
- Consider the approach to the relative distribution of investment in the context of need and the economic challenges – this should include consideration of balancing the needs of business against the drive to increase qualification levels of the workforce.
- Understand the key drivers in terms of current and future employment, including which job sectors and residents are most at risk and their locations within the region.
- Ascertain views on how skills development can best contribute to levelling up, improving career pathways, and addressing the challenges for the region and where it has limitations or dependencies on the impact that can be created.

- 2.4 The scrutiny panel was chaired by Amanda Tomlinson and also comprised Councillor Martin McCarthy, Councillor Andrew Burrow, Councillor Ian Kettle, Councillor Jamie Tennant and Councillor Vera Waters and was supported by Clare Hatton (Director of Employment & Skills) and Lyndsey Roberts (Scrutiny Officer).



2.5 Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the report of the review group at its meeting on 10 July and endorsed the recommendations for submission and consideration by the Skills Advisory Board.

### **3. Evidence Gathering**

3.1 The scrutiny panel sought a range of written and verbal evidence to help inform its conclusions and recommendations. A briefing note was prepared by the Director of Employment & Skills that summarised the impact of the WMCA's work in delivering on its ambitions to benefit the residents across the seven metropolitan area local authorities.

3.2 In addition, the scrutiny panel also considered some regional highlights and trends on the current labour market, employment and unemployment activity, labour market shortages and business growth within each local authority area.

3.3 The scrutiny panel used this data and information as an evidence base to help frame its questions for key witnesses.

3.4 In addition to the written information submitted, the review group conducted online face-to-face interviews with a range of key witnesses to gain their understanding and insight into the impact of the devolution of the AEB on the delivery of local skills training within the region and challenges. These key witnesses represented:

- Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce
- Job Centre Plus
- Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
- City of Wolverhampton Council
- Chamber of Commerce
- A local training provider.

### **4. Emerging Themes and Considerations**

4.1 During the consideration of the written and oral evidence gathered over the course of the review, a number of broad themes emerged. Some are specific to AEB and some more widely to the skills system:

- There was strong agreement that devolution of AEB had delivered positive local impact with skills training aligned according to labour market need.
- Shared view that success of AEB strategy result of WMCA partnered approach, and continued emphasis will strengthen partnership, alongside a place-based focused investment.
- Reflection that AEB investment needed to evolve and focus on helping residents develop skills for employment, and to provide support for employers to meet labour market shortages. Working with education providers to ensure a more flexible curriculum offer will be key.
- Consensus that a regional employer engagement strategy needed to better secure employer commitment in workforce development, navigate the skills system, and feed into the AEB strategy.
- Increased need to help learners succeed, through integrated employability skills and wraparound support models to tackle barriers, build confidence and secure successful employment outcomes.

- Agreement that getting careers guidance right was another cornerstone to better preparing residents for market entry and mobility, by developing better integration and understanding about labour market changes across the educational system. Working with schools will be key, alongside FE and HE providers, regional partners and employers.
- 4.2 Broad consensus found devolution of the AEB to be a highly valued enabler to tackle the distinctive labour market challenges across the region for employers and residents. Witnesses welcomed the WMCA partnered approach, emphasising the importance of a place-based focus when determining skills funding, and that data (both local authority and AEB funding) could continue to ensure a targeted approach. Witnesses also highlighted the work of the AEB team as positive and constructive and welcomed continued opportunities to co-design programmes in constituent localities.
- 4.3 Key witnesses reported acute challenges within the labour market, particularly in the number of job vacancies, which would necessitate an AEB approach that is flexible and adaptable as the market changes. One witness indicated a change in employer recruitment practice, moving from hiring (qualified) specialists towards employees with the potential to develop into the role with training, though this was not always feasible, for example in the manufacturing sector, where technical roles had become hard to fill. The cumulative effects of a tight labour market regionally and locally, were that employers could not grow, shrinking workforce capacity and in turn potential to progress (eg. to higher skilled roles or better pay).
- 4.4 The pace of change in the labour market adds complexity and challenge. Common to the feedback received was a stronger need for employer engagement. This was seen to be central to understanding the changing needs of business and how skills development could improve employment opportunities; noting most AEB learners are unemployed and therefore ever more emphasis on getting people into employment was needed. Witnesses reported employer confusion in navigating the training and skills system with different funding arrangements, for example between the Sector-based Work Academy Programme, Apprenticeships, and the Multiply programme. More work to link funding streams regionally was encouraged, for example aligning business support under UKSPF with AEB investment. In placing greater focus on helping residents secure employment, two witnesses invited the WMCA to review where its AEB procedures could allow more flexibility so that education providers delivered the types of skills programmes that will better serve employer requirements, citing it could be overly bureaucratic or result in a tendency to micro-manage providers.
- 4.5 Employers are unsure about available advice and to whom they may turn to for help to address workforce challenges or to innovate (and diversify) business practices. Whilst witnesses included employer representation in local boards, this was at different stages of maturity, and there was widespread support for more to be done regionally as an opportunity for partners to learn from one-another's approaches and to co-create a regional employer engagement strategy. There was agreement that WMCA, together with constituent partners and the Chamber of Commerce, had a key role to incorporate the employer voice and to work with employers to extend the impact of AEB investment. This work would be in tandem with the developments arising from the Local Skills Improvement Plan.

- 4.6 In seeking to balance the needs of residents, employers, and the principle of education as a force for lifelong good, there is an appreciable tension. Key witnesses agreed the WMCA has a good hold of the skills needs and key areas of deprivation across the region and, consequently the relative distribution of AEB investment; although the level of investment was not always consistent to the local need, for example the City of Wolverhampton Council noted higher need for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) as well a low level of numeracy in both its locality and Sandwell. To date AEB investment is both historical and based on learner demand and subsequent uptake.
- 4.7 The challenges of the labour market have created a pressure balance between serving the ever-changing needs of the local and regional economy, directly responding to residents, and, developing a future workforce that is resilient, equipped with the tools and mindset of a life-long learner. Against this backdrop, witnesses largely agreed that AEB should focus on helping people secure good work, beyond employment itself, and that the integration of employability or 'soft' skills into wider programmes should result in a responsive and adaptable workforce. Certainly, good skills provision should deliver against these requirements and be able to instil the values of lifelong learning, however we should also recognise that training and qualifications are only one determinant of whether an individual can access work.
- 4.8 At a local level, devolution of AEB had made a noticeable difference because of the strong partnership approach between the WMCA and constituent authorities. Key witnesses welcomed the shared and place-based working adopted through the AEB strategy, with some constituent authorities noting their inclusion in shaping the AEB offer in its first year, as well as the opportunity to inform the design of commissioned activity in the years that have followed. Such examples were considered to be especially useful. Another witness observed that whilst the Plan for Growth identified the eight clusters and emerging sectors across the region, there were some sectors that were not identified which are a priority to the constituent authority, for which there could be a missed opportunity in terms of local skills investment which may pose a future challenge. Constituent authorities emphasised the importance of maintaining a partnered approach going forward as part of the conversation with employers, key strategic partners, and the new co-creation opportunities arising from the Trailblazer Deal (eg. DWP).
- 4.9 Presently the key drivers for employment are to ensure the supply of sufficiently skilled workers in key local sectors – manufacturing, hospitality, and tourism – all with acute labour shortages, some which were skills driven. Emerging areas of interest in Net Zero, Sustainability, and Digital skills, also featured in the feedback, noting that some employers understand the need to develop in these areas but are unable to make progress due to wider recruitment challenges. Witnesses agreed that securing employment as a 'job first' principle could offer a ready solution for employers and residents, to accrue critical work skills and fill gaps. Securing sound basic skills in numeracy, literacy and digital were considered essential in achieving this objective, alongside employer engagement to help with in-work progression. One witness invited further exploration of community learning to enable access into under-served communities and groups of residents where basic skills deficits are most pronounced and are significant barriers.

- 4.10 AEB investment alone cannot tackle the challenges of the labour market. The disconnect between employer and resident expectations was a reported concern, creating a barrier to employment. Amongst the issues highlighted were working conditions (particularly long hours and low pay) and employer inflexibility to adopt more hybrid practices, particularly following the Covid-19 pandemic. Jobs in sectors with high turnover and vacancies, such as care, offer little to counter negative perceptions or attract potential talent. Some witnesses suggested more work was needed through skills training to help residents understand that an entry or low-paid role would often lead to progression, better pay and more fulfilling careers. Another witness noted that in-work progression as a policy rested on the principle that residents were in the right job (or career) first. However, the labour market challenges extend beyond the AEB ambit, and require a whole system response, recognising that whilst WMCA, with regional partners, have a role to play, employers also occupy an essential position.
- 4.11 Several witnesses agreed employers had a responsibility to provide work experience/placement opportunities so that residents could learn critical workplace behaviours, particularly as currency of work experience can be a deciding factor for recruiters. And whilst strengthening the focus on employment outcomes through the AEB will help residents, witnesses were clear that employers needed to also consider their own recruitment, progression and retention policies, alongside their pay and wider terms and conditions, to create and/or maintain attractive workplace offers, particularly in sectors where there are acute labour market shortages. Most witnesses saw a stronger employer engagement strategy as a vehicle to strengthen insights into how and where AEB investment is best served, but some also suggested that more could be done to explore how specific business networks, such as those with the Chambers and constituent authorities, could serve as communication channels or feed forward tools to increase employer awareness and support.
- 4.12 Employers have also altered their staff training approach. Whilst it was noted that employers will possess a staff training budget, depending on the size of the employer it will be limited, and typically used to train already skilled or qualified staff. A witness reported that some businesses are no longer prepared to support workers for 12-18 month long training programmes, and there was consensus that short, modular-based skills programmes would offer an attractive alternative. One witness cited a pilot between the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber with UK Hospitality and 'Rest Less' to support rapid skills development to support vacancies in hospitality and tourism. This supports earlier feedback for a flexible skills response to help manage the pace of change in the labour market. However, it does also pose a challenge regarding traditional curriculum programmes typically offered by Further Education Colleges, or the potential uptake of apprenticeships that carry minimum durations set by the national regulator, the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. On the latter, there was consensus that apprenticeships offer good employment opportunities, especially for younger residents aged 19-29 years, but that challenges regarding apprentice wages and lack of support to help businesses establish and meet apprenticeship requirements in their workplaces, particularly for small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs), could be holding back local potential. One witness suggested that more was needed to help SMEs take on an apprentice, particularly those employers with little experience of apprenticeships, but who could nevertheless offer a good apprentice experience. A couple of witnesses suggested that as part of the regional employer engagement strategy, discussions should emphasise the benefits of workforce development as a business investment to mitigate for the earlier observation that some employers were less likely to invest in long qualifications, opting for short skills interventions. If the AEB

approach is to successfully address workforce skills gaps, discussions with employers will need to be clear about how and where skills interventions can effectively address employer requirements and where it cannot, for example, if an employer is seeking an accredited qualification or apprenticeship over a shorter delivery window than awarding body or funding agency rules allow.

- 4.13 Future employment drivers were reported to incorporate changes in national skills policy such as the shift from funding specific BTEC qualifications to T-Levels, changing the type of knowledge and skills that learners will acquire which may be different to what employers expect, alongside continued changes in the workforce (presently over 50s and economic inactivity amongst young people), as well as issues with long-term mental and physical health (particularly the rise in work limiting disability amongst young people, with growing poor mental health in males under 30). There was clear consensus that in addressing these developments, the AEB approach needed to allow greater wraparound support for residents to succeed, especially if they are currently under-represented, where structural inequalities may have had a disproportionate impact in securing and/or retaining long-term employment. Key witnesses agreed that wraparound support is a priority and was widely recognised to be a tool that would enhance the skills offer, particularly with employability. Most agreed that coaching/mentoring models that focus on the individual in the cohort would be valuable, alongside targeted mental health care. One witness proposed extending wraparound support into employment, as a potential mechanism to improve job retention and support transition into work or new/different careers. This has not been the focus of policy and funding for AEB historically, instead this residing more with DWP and ESF programmes.
- 4.14 In delivering wraparound support, witnesses emphasised the need for greater employability skills to be woven into skills/curriculum delivery. It was reported that employers were looking for candidates with good team working skills (virtually and in-person), were resilient, reliable, adaptable, approachable, confident and creative, and able to problem solve, with a high level of emotional intelligence. Such skills are considered transferable and highly prized by employers across sectors, supporting the principle of a flexible workforce. One witness reported that for many employers being able to get up and travel to work punctually was now also considered a core ability. Highly skilled workers with technical expertise were still considered a necessity, however this shift towards soft skills was reported to be a response to the shortages in finding suitably skilled employees, though may also reflect the growing importance of transferable skills. Achieving a balance between technical knowledge, applied skills, and employability will require careful curriculum design. However, witnesses noted staff shortages in the education sector will have a continued effect, especially in colleges. Supporting providers to shift to a flexible curriculum offer, with rapid skills development, that meets employers' requirements will require further detailed consideration. For example, one witness noted that the provision offered at Walsall College did not reflect the type of employment available locally. This aligned with feedback from another witness who observed that many employers did not engage with education providers and providers needed to do more work with these employers to offer a more creative flexible curriculum.

- 4.15 At a place level, key witnesses welcomed the positive contribution of AEB investment and the CA's partnership approach. There was consensus that in increasing the focus on employer needs and better employment through a responsive skills system, AEB processes could benefit from regular review to ensure sufficient flexibility in its procedures. For example, one witness suggested the prevention of out-of-area sub-contracts may limit access to high quality skills offers. Other witnesses noted the value of data on the range and uptake of provision within their localities and suspected gaps in the level 2 offer; another requested more opportunity to partner with the CA when commissioning SWAPs to draw on the constituent authority's expertise in employment support, such as the Wolves at Work service, to secure successful transition into employment. Another witness reported that whilst the constituent authority had good relationships with college providers, there was less insight into the shape and scale of Independent Training Providers (ITPs) delivering provision to residents within their locality, and that proposed solutions such as a provider directory had not yet come to pass but continued to be of interest to them.
- 4.16 There was strong consensus that greater integration and availability of careers advice and guidance would contribute to levelling up and improving career pathways. Changes in labour market demands and the impact of technology will require adaptable residents. However, a lack of access to careers support may be limiting insight into what high-vacancy sectors have to offer or the types of careers available. Witnesses agreed that more was needed to improve resident awareness about career pathways and associated skills progression, especially amongst young people (who are dispirited about their future due to a lack of opportunity), or for mature and older learners (who are likely to see several career changes over their working lives). One witness suggested the post-19 skills approach was dependent on the success of a post-16 careers advice and guidance system, which for many disadvantaged groups was inadequate. Key witnesses agreed that more attention should be given to preparing residents to meet current and future labour market demand by understanding their aspirations and career hopes earlier with several suggesting it be from the age of 14-15 years. As such, an all-age integrated careers offering presented an opportunity to maximise the effectiveness of skills investments and wider economic interventions throughout the resident's working life, helping to support early and mid career transitions, when necessary. However, witnesses recognised that developing such an approach within the wider system, this would be a challenge because it relied upon a sufficient and shared network of data about every potential learner and resident within the region, the range of careers advice, guidance and support available and provided, and a continuous record of engagement with the individual. This added complexity and would mean the policy will require much more thought to secure the ambition. Accepting this was a challenge, witnesses were supportive, and if achievable, could see the potential dividends alongside a regional employer engagement strategy, and AEB investment.

## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

- 5.1 This review sought to understand the impact of the devolution of AEB on the delivery of local skills training within the region. Feedback indicates strong support for the changes arising from the devolution of AEB and that through its investment there has had a positive impact on local skills training, overall achieving a balanced and proportional distribution in the main. The devolved AEB is considered a highly valued enabler in tackling the distinctive labour market challenges across the region for employers and residents. Its success is tied to the valued partnership model adopted by the WMCA with constituent authorities, which has included opportunity for constituent authorities to inform the shape of funded provision and commissioned activity relevant to their localities or regional skills interests. It is clear that the approach taken by the AEB team has established excellent foundations from which to continue to strengthen the partnered and place-centred approach going forward and there is a clear action for the CA to maintain, and expand on opportunities for further collaborations with constituent authorities, for example to align constituent authority employment services with delivery of SWAPs so that residents receive extended support as they seek or transition to employment, or to share additional data from the individual learner record about the detailed provision in respective localities and the residents who had taken up AEB funded provision, again to inform follow up support services from the constituent authority.
- 5.2 This review also sought to identify the challenges and ways in which AEB investment could continue to effectively serve skills development to address short and longer-term labour market challenges. Witnesses confirmed that the WMCA had a good appreciation of the skills needs and levels of deprivation across the region. Whilst some witnesses invited further consideration for how AEB investment might increase support where there are higher resident numbers with ESOL and numeracy need, there was clear consensus that skills investment needed to help employers with labour market shortages particularly in sectors acutely effected such as manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, and care – whilst also enabling future workforce development in key industries such as net zero, sustainability and digital. Incorporating a ‘work first’ approach to manage vacancy demand was considered a practical solution, although the wider objective should be to help residents secure good work and progression in work. Critically, witnesses agreed that there needed to be greater emphasis and integration of employer views and engagement to enable a responsive skills delivery system. The creation of a regional employer engagement strategy, co-created with employers and regional partners, in tandem with developments from LSIP presented an opportunity to visibly set out how this would be achieved. Strengthening employer engagement was considered a priority.
- 5.3 Addressing current and future labour market demand will necessitate a flexible skills and curriculum offer. There was clear consensus that traditional curriculum models cannot deliver at the pace and content needed to meet employer requirements, and it was accepted that the CA needed to work with education providers to help adapt and develop more flexible creative curriculum solutions. Feedback also indicated growing demand for employability or ‘soft’ skills, and there was strong agreement that continued AEB investment needed to integrate employability into wider programmes, alongside better wraparound support to help residents succeed and develop lifelong learning skills. Central to delivering this objective will be managing resident and employer expectations and creating wider understanding about the range of careers, sectors and jobs skills that are available both now and into the future. Many witnesses agreed this required an

integrated all-age careers strategy, that included schools as key partners, with other post-16 education providers, employers and regional partners (such as the DWP), to operate alongside a targeted AEB approach.

#### 5.4 Recommendations

After considering the written and oral evidence received, the review panel concluded that a number of recommendations should be considered by the Skills Advisory Board.

##### Recommendation 1: For the WMCA:

1. To share participant data with constituent authorities about engagement of residents in local provision and review AEB procedures.
2. Incorporate feedback into the development of the all-aged careers strategy, with opportunity for constituent authorities and relevant stakeholders to input into the design and potential implementation as needed.
3. Provide an update on the development of a Provider Directory, particularly ITPs delivering provision to constituent authority residents, to support awareness of the range of commissioned providers.

##### Recommendation 2: For WMCA, Constituent Authorities and Regional Partners

1. Co-develop a regional engagement strategy with employers to identify and integrate skills requirements.
2. Develop approaches to increasing work experiences / placements offering with employers maximising links to business support activity.

##### Recommendation 3: For WMCA with Constituent Authorities:

1. Review and map out the range of available funding opportunities available to employers to help navigate the skills system and outline how Business Support is aligned with AEB investment to draw on full range of opportunities.
2. Develop approaches to incorporate constituent authority services such as employment support, into SWAPs, in relevant localities.

##### Recommendation 4: For WMCA with Education Providers:

1. Design and integrate an employability programme that supports learners to develop transferable skills valued by employers to help secure good work, and to work with education providers to ensure effective delivery.



## **6. Strategic Aims and Objectives**

- 6.1 The overview & scrutiny function supports all six of the WMCA's aims for the region by ensuring that decision taken at boards/committees have considered all relevant matters and opinions. This particular review looking at the impact of the devolution of the AEB on the delivery of local skills training within the region will help to promote inclusive economic growth in every corner of the region and stimulate the creation of good jobs through the enhanced work to be undertaken together with local authorities, regional partners and educational providers.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implication from this report. The recommendations are likely to result in financial implications in the future to enable and support the delivery, which will be funded from within the existing budget. Any request above this will follow the existing governance processes.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The function of ensuring adult education provision was conferred on WMCA by the West Midlands Combined Authority (Adult Education Functions) Order 2018. There are no new legal implications resulting from this report.

## **9. Equalities Implications**

- 9.1 Overall, the devolution of the AEB to WMCA has a significantly positive equality impact. The ethos of being able to influence how Adult Education provisions are provided within the West Midlands ensures that our approach is fit-for-purpose and tailored to our residents. The WMCA has a sound understanding of the deprivation and inequalities faced within our region, as echoed by feedback shared within the report. Aligning education and training opportunities with labour demand increases the likelihood of training recipients obtaining the appropriate skills to go into employment, as their knowledge and expertise can fill the gaps in the market; the impact of gaining employment has confounding positive equity outcomes, supporting social mobility and encouraging more proportional access to opportunities.
- 9.2 It is clear that there are areas for development within the WMCAs approach to have a greater positive equality impact. Namely around strengthening relationships with partners and providers; recommendations 2, 3 and 4 will help address any areas for improvement by facilitating a collaborative approach, across stakeholders, regarding the implementation of the AEB.
- 9.3 It is acknowledged that the longer-term vision is to minimise the existing equality gap regarding residents who have lower levels of numeracy and English proficiency, it's important that this remains embedded to continue to support equitable outcomes for those who are the most deprived within the region. Should the recommendations be taken on board, it's likely to enhance the AEB provision and have a greater level of long-lasting success.

## **10. Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 10.1 The AEB provisions and recommendations within the report supports a number of the Inclusive Growth Fundamentals: Education and Learning; Power and Participation and Equality.

## **11. Geographical Area of Report's Implications**

- 11.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee comprises 10 members appointed by constituent authorities, four members appointed by non-constituent authorities and a representative from the business sector.

## **12. Other Implications**

- 12.1 None.

## **13. Schedule of Background Papers**

- 13.1 None.



West Midlands  
Combined Authority

<b>Name of meeting:</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
<b>Meeting date:</b>	1 July 2024
<b>Report title:</b>	Performance monitoring against the Annual Business Plan
<b>Responsible Director:</b>	Linda Horne, Executive Director of Finance and Business Hub
<b>Report author:</b>	Jaspal Seehra, Performance Manager
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No

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Is the ability for the Combined Authority to make a decision internally reliant on Constituent or Non-Constituent Councils making a formal decision first?

Yes       No

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**Public/private report:**      Public

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## 1. Decision/s Recommended

- Endorse the proposed method for monitoring the Annual Business Plan for 2024/25 and the assurances it provides to manage performance.
- Consider any areas of interest that could form part of members' future work programme.

## 2. Voting Requirements

A majority of voting members, in attendance in the meeting room and indicating their preference, are required to vote in favour of any recommendation/proposition for it to become a decision of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC).

## 3. Executive Summary

This paper provides an overview of the monitoring and reporting process for this fiscal year's Annual Business Plan (ABP) and reviews the outturn performance for 2023/24. The aim is to assure the OSC of the robustness of the reporting process and to ensure confidence in Executive Boards responses to any identified slippages. This approach aligns with the performance roadmap approved by Executive Board to support the shift towards data-driven, evidence-based decision-making.

#### **4. Matters for Consideration**

- 4.1 There have been three successive integrated ABPs and budgets, forming a vital link in the 'golden thread' connecting the WMCA's aims and objectives with Directorate and team plans, extending to the Individual Performance Management (IPM) goals of employees across the organisation. The ABP outlines all activities to be delivered within the year, aligning with those aims and objectives. It details not only capital project activity but also business-as-usual tasks and the resources (financial and human) required to deliver a balanced budget.
- 4.2 The 2024/25 yearly activity is measured by 119 performance indicators (PIs), of which 27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified by the Executive Board as critical to achieving the WMCA's aims and objectives. This exercise was completed in March, allowing KPI performance to be reported monthly in the new fiscal year to the Executive Board through a visually rich Power BI dashboard that triangulates performance, risk and capital spend (see appendix 1 for KPI and PI list). Additionally, an exception report provides mitigation commentary for any KPI rated amber or red, enabling the Executive Board to make evidence-based decisions. Quarterly reports to the Executive Board will encompass all performance information (KPIs and PIs), to ensure no performance issues are missed.
- 4.3 To ensure the information provided to Executive Board adequately reflects all the key performance issues we face as an organisation the Performance Team continues to embed a performance management culture across the WMCA. This involves encouraging the consistent use of the Power BI dashboards, now accessible on all employee desktops, engaging with directorate management teams to ensure they understand the performance roadmap and cascading performance data to key stakeholders to enhance its visibility and transparency. Additionally, the WMCA has improved its performance approach through the use of KPIs and PIs, which provide clear, quantifiable measures of our progress and highlight areas needing attention.
- 4.4 The reporting and monitoring approach is also refined each year based on feedback from Executive Board and lessons learned exercises. After quarterly reporting cycle, the Performance Team conducts a review to identify areas for improvement. This process includes gathering feedback from Executive Board on the clarity, relevance and comprehensiveness of the reports. Insights gained from these activities are used to refine the reporting processes, ensuring they are more responsive to the needs of stakeholders to ensure that they can act on the information to make evidence-based decisions.
- 4.5 This is the third report to the OSC on the monitoring and reporting of the ABP. During last September's meeting, it was agreed that performance against the ABP would be shared with members twice yearly. The aim is to reassure members regarding Executive Board responses, particularly to red and amber indicators. As it is still early in the fiscal year and June's performance is predominantly 'on track', this report highlights last year's (2023/24) outturn figures instead. The second report in January (2025) will show cumulative performance over the first three quarters and is expected to highlight more red and amber indicators.

#### 4.6 ABP outturn performance (2023/24)

Outturn performance for the 127 indicators is shown in the table below:

Indicator	Completed	RAG status			Total
KPI	13	9	4	4	30
PI	62	18	14	3	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>127</b>

4.7 Out of the 127 indicators, 102 or 80% have either remained on track or have been completed compared to 84% in 2022/23. This is a significant achievement given the cost-of-living crisis, volatile market conditions and the reprioritisation of resources for the Deeper Devolution Deal. There were 25 red and amber indicators reported in 2023/24 and this is similar to the 2022/23 outturn where 22 were reported.

4.8 Additionally, when these 25 indicators are broken down by the WMCAs aims, the analysis shows that aim 3 (delivering transport and housing) and aim 4 (reducing carbon emissions) account for 16 of the 25 indicators. This demonstrates the strategic risk relating to the sustainability of transport (SRR-R007) and our commitment to reducing the carbon budget to net-zero CO2 by 2041 (Strategic Risk R015) beginning to impact the delivery of our objectives.

4.9 The performance journey through the year shows 115 indicators remained on track in Q1 and only 3 were amber. This positive trend continues into Q2, although there are now 11 red and amber indicators. By Q3, 106 indicators remained on track and 14 had a red and amber status. This increase is to be expected because performance is calculated cumulatively and by the end of Q4, 102 indicators have either remained on track or have been completed (see appendix 2 for RAG status trend 2023/2024).

4.10 The outturn performance for 2023/24 will be reported through the Annual Accounts to ARAC in Autumn. The intention is to raise the profile of our successes, to demonstrate the work that has been achieved by our employees and to highlight how this links directly through to the WMCAs aims and objectives.

#### **5. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?**

5.1 The performance monitoring of the ABP has been an organic process which has been iteratively improved each year rather than having a preferred option. Various methods, including traditional reporting and alternative data management tools were evaluated. The chosen method to use Power BI dashboards and integrating KPIs and PIs emerged as the most effective approach to manage performance. Continuous feedback from the Executive Board and lessons learned exercises have refined this method, confirming its effectiveness in enhancing evidence-based decision making by the Executive Board.

**6. Reasons for recommending preferred option**

- 6.1 The recommended method for monitoring the ABP for 2024/25 is based on its proven effectiveness in enhancing transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. This approach uses Power BI dashboards and integrates KPIs and PIs, which have demonstrated significant success in tracking performance, with 80% of indicators on track or completed in 2023/24 despite challenging conditions. Feedback from the Executive Board and lessons learned exercises have refined the reporting process, ensuring reports are clear, relevant, and comprehensive.
- 6.2 Progress will be reported through monthly KPI updates to the Executive Board, quarterly comprehensive performance reports, biannual updates to OSC and annual performance reporting through the Annual Accounts to ARAC. This structured approach ensures that progress is closely monitored, the impact of initiatives is assessed, and desired outcomes are achieved.

**7. Implications and Considerations**

Priority:	Contribution:
Delivery of Strategic Transport Plan	N/A
Promote inclusive economic growth in every corner of the region	N/A
Ensure everyone has the opportunity to benefit	N/A
Connect our communities by delivering transport and unlocking housing and regeneration schemes	N/A
Reduce carbon emissions to net zero and enhance the environment	N/A
Secure new powers and resources from central government	N/A
Develop our organisation and our role as a good regional partner	This report is aligned to strategic aim 6, which is to develop our organisation and be a good regional partner. To help achieve this aim it is important to monitor performance against the ABP to detail what we are going to deliver as we work towards our vision of making the West Midlands one of the fairest, greenest, and best-connected places to live and work.

**8. Internal Consultation and Scrutiny:**

- 8.1 This paper has been prepared for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

**9. External Consultation and Scrutiny:**

- 9.1 This paper is not subject to external consultation and scrutiny.

**10. Financial implications:**

- 10.1 Activity during 2023/24 has been delivered within budgeted allocations. The capital programme outturn was 39% lower than budget, with further works rephased to future years. The revenue budget had a favourable variance to budget of £2.0m. The variations have not materially impacted performance.

**11. Legal implications:**

11.1 There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

**12. Single Assurance Framework implications:**

12.1 There are no Single Assurance Framework implications for this report.

**13. Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:**

13.1 There are no direct risk implications as a result of this report.

**14. Procurement Implications:**

14.1 There are no procurement implications as a result of this report.

**15. Equality implications:**

15.1 There are no equality implications as a result of this report.

**16. Inclusive Growth Implications:**

16.1 There are no inclusive growth implications as a result of this report.

**17. Local Authority Impact:**

17.1 There is no direct Local Authority Impact as a result of this report.

**18. List of appendices referred to:**

18.1 Appendix 1 List of KPIs/PIs for 2024/25

18.2 Appendix 2 RAG status trend 2023/24

**19. Background papers used to compile this report:**

19.1 None

**20. List of Other Relevant Documents**

20.1 None

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – List of KPIs/PIs for 2024/25

PI No.	PI Name	PI Description	PI or KPI
1	Single Settlement	Agree the local growth and place pillar of the single settlement for the next Spending Review using the outputs of the Strategic Productivity and Innovation Partnerships	PI
2	Strategic Innovation Partnership	Use the Strategic Innovation Partnership to increase public Research & Development funding to the region and the coherence of universities	PI
3	CCID Strategy	Integrate the work of Culture, Creative Industries and Digital (CCID) and West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) where it relates to defining and promoting the West Midlands Creative and Cultural offer.	KPI
4	Plan For Growth	Plan For Growth - Lead the mobilisation of the West Midlands Plan for Growth with priorities including i) leading a coherent and cohesive approach to cluster leadership and growth priorities for each of eight clusters plus tech as an underpinning theme ii) ensuring there are key thematic interventions and clear strategic direction for each cluster iii) informing Strategic Productivity Partnership and Single Settlement discussions with a clear view of strategically important cluster specific interventions iv) ensuring funding decisions and priorities on cross-cutting interventions across the WMCA and partners on issues such as land, skills and investment consider Plan for Growth	PI
5	Business Growth Programmes	Deliver £40m of regional business growth programmes in line with the objectives in those business cases and fully aligned to Business Growth West Midlands and Plan for Growth	PI
6	BGWM Implementation	Deliver the Business Growth West Midlands business support ecosystem inc. strengthening links with the private sector with a focus on i) consistency of service across West Midlands ii) a high quality service iii) informing Strategic Productivity Partnerships and Single Settlement discussions iv) ensuring regional programmes are fully embedded in the service	KPI
7	Effective Local Delivery	As part of Business Growth West Midlands, ensure effective local delivery by partners of the UK Shared Prosperity Funded business support programmes, including ongoing improvement of and liaison between LAs and WM-wide "core hub" activities	PI
8	WM Growth Company	Manage the funding agreement with the West Midlands Growth Company to deliver the programmes impacts of Global West Midlands.	PI
9	Bootcamp Deliverables	3,600 bootcamp starts, with 80% completing (2,880) and 75% of completions with positive outcomes	PI
10	Bootcamp Provision	Broaden the portfolio of bootcamp provision to include business and professional occupations	PI
11	Into Employment	10,500 residents taking an into-employment programme	PI
12	Into Employment Unemployed	4,200 unemployed residents who have moved into work after participating in an into-employment programme	PI
13	Supply Chain Expansion	Procure a consortium delivery contract to expand the supply chain of organisations delivering Sector-Based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) provision provider	PI
14	Culture & Heritage Frameworks	Implementation of the strategic frameworks for culture and heritage created in 2023-24, including sharing with key regional and national stakeholders.	PI
15	Capital Fund Delivery	Delivery of main part of the capital fund, with a specific focus on 1-2 bigger projects and a number of smaller ones.	PI

PI No.	PI Name	PI Description	PI or KPI
16	COG & CLB Meetings	Supporting quarterly meetings for Cultural Officers Group (COG) and Cultural Leadership Board (CLB), and other board activities such as working groups and task & finish groups.	PI
17	CDF Grant Activities	Delivery of final year of Cultural Development Fund underspend grant activities with focus on the Black Country	PI
18	Creative Industries Strategy	Develop, agree and implement a WMCA Creative Industries strategy that maps onto Dept. Culture, Media & Sport Creative Industries Sector Vision outcomes but also understands and develops the WM Creative Industries specific sector approaches and opportunities. Completed strategy by March 2025.	PI
19	CWGLEF Culture	Delivery of the full Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund Culture Pillar Programme and evaluation across the four missions of 1) Cultural engagement, communities and social value; 2) Civic Pride, Placemaking and Cultural Infrastructure; 3) Futureproofing our cultural sector; and 4) Globally connected West Midlands Cultural Sector.	PI
20	Thought Leadership	Develop, agree and implement a West Midlands CA Culture, Creative Industries and Digital combined strategy that provides thought leadership for WM partners, connects across sectors and has a clearly defined agreed regional unique selling point. Completed strategy by March 2025.	PI
21	CWG Legacy	Ensure the delivery of a CWGLEF-wide evaluation that demonstrates the positive impact that the CWGLEF has had on the region	PI
22	AEB Foundation Starts	30,600 residents starting foundation skills training funded by WMCA through the Adult Education Budget (AEB)	KPI
23	Know How Campaign	Develop and implement a behavioural insights 'Know How' campaign targeting those at work to take up learning	PI
24	Level 3 Starts	6,350 residents start training on a level 3 course, funded by WMCA and delivered by our grant-funded or contracted providers	KPI
25	Citizen engagement	Facilitation and development of a varied portfolio of citizen engagement activity across the WMCA to ensure decisions are shaped by citizens and that our policies, practices and investments deliver real value for everyone living and working in the region.	PI
26	Race Forward	Deliver the recommendations made in Race Forward. Convene the Race Equalities Taskforce, Members Advisory Group and associated task groups to influence and enable the West Midlands Combined Authority, our partners and wider stakeholders to achieve the vision that your ethnicity, race or heritage will not be a barrier.	PI
27	CWGLEF Implementation	Ensure that the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund (CWGLEF) is effectively project managed, administered and delivered in line with the Funding Agreement with DCMS, including the provision of all quarterly reporting and six monthly deep dives into activity across the whole of the programme	KPI
28	IC Implementation	Implementation and evaluation of the Inclusive Communities Pillar of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund	PI
29	Community Learning	12,600 residents improving their well-being through participating in WMCA-funded community learning provision.	PI
30	Health at Work	71,286 employees and 100 employers in the region supported to improve health at work	KPI
31	Health Improvement	9,000 people have better and more inclusive access to health improvement	PI
32	Physical & Mental Health	36,200 people will be supported to improve their Physical and Mental Wellbeing	KPI

PI No.	PI Name	PI Description	KPI or PI
33	Universal Support	Work with Local Authorities to develop a delivery model for Universal Support, Commissioning and Commencement Delivery	KPI
34	Homelessness	Deliver the ambition to design out homelessness through ongoing facilitation of the Homelessness Taskforce, Members Advisory Group and associated task groups, including delivery of proof of concept activity, oversight of externally funded projects and programmes and developing alternative models for preventative activity.	PI
35	Behaviour Change Hub	Behaviour Change Hub: Enabling sustainable travel across the West Midlands, considering both their environmental impact, and the increasing effects of climate change	PI
36	Active Travel	Delivery of Active Travel Fund: Work across the region to support our Local Authority partners, and in collaboration with Active Travel England, to support the delivery of the Active Travel Fund programme including developing a pipeline of shovel ready scheme to take forward for future funding tranches.	PI
37	Key Route Network	Key Route Network: Develop, enhance, manage the performance of the KRN to a high standard and make sure it is safe, reliable and well maintained for all road users	PI
38	Metro Interface	Metro interface - Develop with Midlands Metro Limited a 5 Year Business Plan and ensure the Asset Strategy and lifecycle renewal works are delivered for Metro.	PI
39	Metro Resource	Metro - Ensure Midlands Metro Limited have the resource to deliver the WBHE Extension	PI
40	Midlands Rail Hub	Progress Midlands Rail Hub	PI
41	Network Insight	Network Insight: Analyse the transport system to provide deep insight, recommend actions and produce robust evidenced based business cases for schemes and funding programmes	PI
42	New Rail Services	Introduce train services on new infrastructure	PI
43	Regional Transport Planning	Regional Transport Planning: Maintain & publish a statutory West Midlands Local Transport Plan and embed transport policy and investment strategy (inc City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlements / Single Pot) in the plans and programmes of the wider WMCA & partners	KPI
44	RTCC, Events & Emergencies	Regional Transport Control Centre, Events and Emergencies: Improving the performance of the Transport Network and co-ordinating the delivery of regional events, LRF activities and the TfWM Emergency Plan.	PI
45	Passenger Safety	Security and Policing: Improving perceptions of passenger safety to increase trust and confidence in using public transport services, enabled where necessary by new technologies. Keep the transport system safe and secure	KPI
46	Smart Payment & Journey Planning	Smart Payment & Journey Planning: Develop and operate the Swift eco-system for easy to use and affordable ways to plan and pay for travel across the whole transport system	PI
47	Traffic Signal Technology	Traffic Signal Technology: Collaborating with stakeholders and local authority partners to maximise the performance of the West Midlands traffic signals network	PI
48	Transport Branding	Branding: Taking forward a strong, unified brand for the West Midlands transport network will make us: Easy to see, and easier to choose	PI
49	Transport Capital Programme	Deliver the transport capital programme under City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlements, ATF and other legacy funds	KPI
50	Transport Customer Experience	Customer Experience. Deliver high quality customer facing services across a range of customer touchpoints throughout the organisation through Safety and Security, brand, transport network, web and media channels including front line services at bus stations, interchanges, cycle hire, e-scooters.	KPI

PI No.	PI No.	PI No.	PI No.
51	Transport Data	Transport Data: Continue to develop and maintain a robust common data environment for the West Midlands transport system	PI
52	Rail Customer Experience	Meet future demand and improve the Customer experience	PI
53	Transport H&S	Ensure strategic and operational Health and Safety aims and key deliverables are communicated and embedded throughout the WMCA	PI
54	TfWM Supported Services	Fund and effectively manage essential supported services that provide a social benefit including concessions, ring and ride, and tendered bus services	PI
55	Travel Information	Creating and maintaining accurate and reliable public transport travel information including the requirements set out in the National Bus Strategy and Vision for Bus.	PI
56	Transport User Research	Transport User Research: Develop and maintain a deep understanding of the needs, attitudes and perceptions of people who use the West Midlands transport system	PI
57	Sprint P2	Sprint Phase 2 Delivery: Commence delivery of Sprint Phase 2 works with close engagement with stakeholders in LA's and relentless focus on cost, programme and delivery quality.	PI
58	Dudley Interchange	Dudley Interchange: Commence delivery of Dudley Interchange. To include demolition of old bus station and construction of new bus station and associated infrastructure works. Relentless focus on cost, programme and delivery quality.	PI
59	Rail Package 1	Deliver Rail Package 1: Relentless focus on construction completion for Walsall stations (package 1) working in partnership with WMRE to ensure smooth transition into opening.	PI
60	Rail Package 2	Deliver Rail Package 2: Relentless focus on construction completion for Camp Hill Line stations (package 2), working in partnership with WMRE to ensure smooth transition into opening.	PI
61	Aldridge Station	Aldridge Station: Continue with development proposals for Aldridge station.	PI
62	Metro Delivery	Metro: Extending the WM Metro Network to better serve more people and businesses completing snagging on Westside (Edge) and Wolverhampton City Centre, and continuing with WBHE and Birmingham East Side extensions.	PI
63	Bus Delivery Review	Deliver a review of the regions Bus Delivery Options with a clear recommendation to WMCA Board on the regulatory framework and any changes.	PI
64	Deliver Bus Vision	Delivering our bus vision and Bus Service Improvement Plan to support inclusive growth.	KPI
65	Station Development	Develop new and Improved Stations	PI
66	TfWM Programme Integration	Programme Integration: The development of integrated of programmes to ensure that alignment to wider WMCA objectives	PI
67	Transport Provision Influence	Greater Influence in the provision of train services for the West Midlands	PI
68	Asset Management	Lead WMCA Strategic Acquisitions, Disposals and Asset Management programmes	KPI
69	Housing & Land Insight	Organise and lead a series of industry led taskforces to provide critical insight, challenge, advocacy and support to the work of the Housing and Land Board	PI
70	Policy Development	Develop and support Board approved policy development work e.g. Homes for the Future and West Midlands Design Charter	PI

PI No.	PI No.	PI No.	PI No.
71	Public Land	Deliver a comprehensive programme supporting the effective implementation of the public land charter through collaborative working with the Cabinet Office, LGA, industry taskforces & local partners via overseeing and managing the development and delivery of the regional One Public Estate and Place Pilots Programmes.	PI
72	Affordable Housing	Establish new and strengthen existing partnerships, ventures and joint approaches with public and private sector partners across the whole of the region to deliver local priorities leading to the development of an Affordable Homes strategy and Affordable Homes Programme for the region.	KPI
73	Housing Lobbying	Influence & Engage with Govt on behalf of the region on a diverse range of housing, land and regeneration matters	PI
74	Inv Prospectus & Partnerships	Produce the annual West Midlands Investment Prospectus and deliver associated partner engagement	PI
75	Town Centres	Support local authorities and other partners on policy, projects, funding bids and investment plans in town centres	KPI
76	Network Infrastructure	Network Infrastructure. Developing assets to support better access to the transport system including making our transport assets more affordable by increasing commercial revenues	PI
77	Non-domestic Energy	Non-domestic energy transition	PI
78	Energy Infrastructure	Support systems and processes for devolving and delivering more effective energy infrastructure and remove barriers to investing in clean energy assets	PI
79	Fuel Poverty	Work with partners to develop and deliver projects to tackle fuel poverty in the region and progress towards the target of getting the region's homes to Net Zero by 2041	PI
80	Net Zero Neighbourhoods	Commence delivery of Net Zero Neighbourhood Demonstrator programme to pilot place-based approaches to retrofit and wider decarbonisation, building a pipeline of projects, establishing the first Net Zero Neighbourhood and commencing works to homes in this area	PI
81	SMART Hub	Grow SMART Hub capacity to support local authorities to access funding, intelligence and expertise to retrofit homes to reduce carbon emissions	PI
82	Strategic Partnerships	Strategic Partnerships: The development of strategic partnerships at a regional, national and international level aligned to TfWM objectives	PI
83	Housing Deal & Funding Reqs	Delivery of prescribed requirements and output targets of the 2018 Housing Deal & subsequent funding deals and agreements with HMG, as part of our nationally pioneering approach to brownfield regeneration and delivery innovation	KPI
84	Housing Devolution	Lead the implementation of the new funding, powers and leveraging of private sector investment for Housing Property & Regeneration, in alignment with the Devolution Deal, Single Settlement and Plan for Growth .	PI
85	WMIS	Deliver the WM Industrial Symbiosis Demonstrator (WMIS) programme by March 2025	PI
86	Future Transport Zone	Future Transport Zone: Continue to support and grow a vibrant low carbon transport innovation eco-system which improves user experiences and furthers LTP outcomes through grant funded programmes and commercial collaborations	PI
87	HS2	HS2: Ensure that the West Midlands maximises the benefits of HS2 to the region in line with HS2 Growth Strategy	PI
88	Mass Rapid Transit	Mass Rapid Transit: Development of option assessment studies for priority routes as identified in the Long Term Plan	PI

PI No.	PI No.	PI No.	PI No.
89	Air Quality	Deliver the Defra and DLUHC Air Quality behaviour change and sensor network programme by March 2025	PI
90	CEF	Deliver Projects for the Community Environment Fund (CEF) by March 2025	PI
91	Climate Adaptation	Work with partners on the Climate Adaptation programme	PI
92	Greener Together	Deliver the Greener Together Citizens Panel	PI
93	LINC	Deliver & publish the Local Investment in Natural Capital (LINC) programme by March 2025	PI
94	LNRS	Deliver the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) by March 2025	PI
95	West Midlands Futures	Secure a regional consensus on a shared narrative and vision for the West Midlands.	PI
96	Mayoral Election Support	Contribute policy and public affairs insights to the preparations for the mayoral election and new mayoral term.	PI
97	WMCA Corporate Strategy	Deliver the WMCA's corporate strategy.	PI
98	Digital Roadmap	Deliver outcomes as defined by the WMCA Digital Roadmap through a programme of integrated activity and partnership working across each of the five missions.	PI
99	Inclusive Growth	To develop, integrate and socialise Inclusive Growth across the West Midlands through the development of Inclusive Growth products, communications, and events.	KPI
100	Outcomes Framework	Deliver the West Midlands Outcomes Framework by which the West Midlands can measure the extent to which we are achieving our Inclusive Growth fundamentals.	PI
101	Public Affairs Strategy	Implement the public affairs strategy, including lobbying plans and the Public Affairs Network, to secure WMCA influence within national policy and policymaking processes and with national thought leaders; and to establish our role as a regional public affairs convenor.	PI
102	Research and Intelligence	Design, develop, deliver and communicate research programme undertaken by WMCA's research and intelligence community to stakeholders across the West Midlands ecosystem	PI
103	Strategic Policy	Maintain capacity for disseminating policy ideas, information and research across the organisation, to support the WMCA's capacity for innovative policymaking.	PI
104	Social Economy	Doubling the size of the social economy by delivering the ten ecosystem items.	PI
105	Trailblazer deal	Facilitate the implementation of the trailblazer deeper devolution deal and support colleagues resolve the most important and/or challenging elements of implementation, with a particular focus on business case delivery and MP Questions.	PI
106	Single Settlement Implementation	Deliver the 9 workstreams required to implement the single settlement.	KPI
107	Future Devolution	Undertake a devolution review in 2024 to identify the WMCA's future devolution priorities.	PI
108	Finance	Lead development of WMCA financial strategy and medium term financial plan aligned to devolution and single settlement to optimise best use of resources including delivery of a balanced budget into 25/26 and Unqualified Statutory Accounts.	KPI
109	Business World	Develop our Integrated Enterprise Resource System (Business World) and continue to support users and processes to be able to get the job done quickly and efficiently and improve user satisfaction.	KPI
110	Management Information	Actively deliver timely, meaningful management information in relation to organisational performance, finances, risk and resources to inform effective decision making.	KPI



PI No.	PI No.	PI No.	PI No.
111	Workplace Services	Manage and deliver modern high-class Facilities and Workplace Services for WMCA and its estate tenants	KPI
112	Appraisal & Assurance SAF	Develop and prepare WMCA Single Assurance Framework (SAF) in readiness for Single Settlement and to drive WMCA improvement in Programme Accountability and Capability.	KPI
113	Deliver People & Culture Strategy	People - continually evolve and deliver our People and Culture strategy to ensure our People are supported to learn and grow to be the best they can be in an inclusive and supportive working environment.	KPI
114	Transport Skills Academy	Transport Skills Academy: Inspire the future workforce to consider Transport as a viable option for career choice within the West Midlands transport sector	PI
115	Digital & Data	Maximising Digital Opportunities to enhance our ways of working as a Digital First and Data Lead Organisation	KPI
116	TfWM Delivery Directorate	Develop Delivery Directorate: Develop the Delivery Directorate team to become the best delivery team in the West Midlands, with a relentless focus on cost, programme and delivery quality becoming trusted partners both across TfWM, WMCA and the Local Authorities	PI
117	WMCA Equality	Embed plans and activities for the organisation's internal and external functions to meet the requirements as set out in the WMCA equality scheme. Deliver the workplace wellbeing strategy and support.	PI
118	Procurement	Refresh and develop existing procurement policies, processes and practices and embed within the organisation to ensure compliance with new regulations, ensuring Value for Money and support to efficient and effective ways of working.	KPI
119	Legal Advice	Provide legal advice to support the organisation's strategic objectives and business activities including the delivery of key projects/ schemes, ensuring compliance with laws, regulations and internal governance	PI

## Appendix 2 - RAG status trend 2023/24

Monitoring Period	RAG Status			Complete	Not Started	Qualified	Total
Apr-23	95	0	0	0	32	0	127
May -23	110	1	0	1	15	0	127
Q1 Jun-23	115	3	0	1	8	0	127
Jul-23	115	6	1	1	4	0	127
Aug-23	117	5	1	1	3	0	127
Q2 Sep-23	112	9	2	1	3	0	127
Oct-23	108	11	2	3	3	0	127
Nov-23	107	12	2	6	0	0	127
Q3 Dec-23	106	10	4	7	0	0	127
Jan-24	103	8	5	11	0	0	127
Feb-24	94	11	5	17	0	0	127
Q4 Mar-24	27	18	7	75	0	0	127

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West Midlands  
Combined Authority

**Name of meeting:** Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Meeting date:** 1 July 2024

**Report title:** Grant Register

**Responsible Director:** Linda Horne, Executive Director of Finance and Business Hub

**Report author:** Beverly Sullivan, Financial Planning & Co-ordination Manager

**Key Decision?** No

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Is the ability for the Combined Authority to make a decision internally reliant on Constituent or Non-Constituent Councils making a formal decision first?

Yes       No

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**Public/private report:** Public

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**1. Decision/s Recommended**

1.1 Note the updates to the grant register.

**2. Voting Requirements**

2.1 A majority of voting members, in attendance in the meeting room and indicating their preference, are required to vote in favour of any recommendation/proposition for it to become a decision of the committee.

**3. Executive Summary**

3.1 This paper provides an update on the grants received and utilised by the WMCA. The grant register contains all current 'live' grants where the WMCA is the accountable body and captures a comprehensive total of grants, awarding body, time period for delivery and a description of what the grant delivers.

**4. Matters for Consideration**

4.1 The grant register is appended at Appendices 1 and 2 of this report. It shows revenue and capital grants that have been derived through:

- Competitive bidding – These grants were awarded based on a competitive process where the WMCA has successfully demonstrated to the funder its ability to effectively utilise funds for specified projects.
- Annual allocations – These are regular allocations from Government, forming a crucial part of the WMCA's budget to support ongoing programmes.

- One-off allocations – specific grants allocated to support specific initiatives and unlikely to be re-allocated in the future.

4.2 Grants have been vital in the WMCA being able to further its strategic ambitions. During 2024/25, there will be continued focus on securing any available funds which will aid the WMCA in being able to deliver on its Aims and Objectives and which support the development and well-being of the region’s residents. From 2025/26, it is anticipated that Single Settlement, part of the Deeper Devolution Deal, will mean an end to competitive bidding for the relevant funds with an allocative approach to funding instead.

- 4.3 Since the last report the WMCA has had confirmation of the following grants:
- £14.5m of capital funding from the DfT for the provision of electric vehicles charge points across the region. £0.3m of revenue funding has also been provided to support the for installing electric via the LEVI Capability Fund.
  - £6.1m for an extension of the Active Travel Scheme. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of the project to deliver cycling and walking schemes.
  - £1.0m for the annual allocation for the Mayoral Capacity Fund. This grant has been budgeted to support the Mayoral Office.
  - £0.7m to address backlog in traffic signal maintenance and upgrades. This funding is to be distributed to local authorities.
  - £0.5m from DCMS to support high-growth potential creative businesses to become investment ready.
  - £0.4m to support the delivery of the Business Growth Hub network across the West Midlands
  - £0.3m from DLUHC to provide capacity support to deliver the Single Settlement and the wider commitments agreed in Deeper Devolution Deal.
  - £0.2m from DLUHC as core funding following the WMCA assuming responsibilities transferred as a result of dissolution of LEPs.

**5. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?**

This report form part of a series of updates. No other options have been considered.

**6. Reasons for recommending preferred option**

6.1 Not applicable; this report is providing an update only.

**7. Implications and Considerations**

Priority:	Contribution:
Delivery of Strategic Transport Plan	Not applicable
Promote inclusive economic growth in every corner of the region	Not applicable
Ensure everyone has the opportunity to benefit	Not applicable
Connect our communities by delivering transport and unlocking housing and regeneration schemes	Not applicable
Reduce carbon emissions to net zero and enhance the environment	Not applicable

Priority:	Contribution:
Secure new powers and resources from central government	Not applicable
Develop our organisation and our role as a good regional partner	Grant funding is instrumental in the WMCA being able to deliver on its Aims and Objectives.

**8. Internal Consultation and Scrutiny:**

8.1 There has been no consultation required for this update report.

**9. External Consultation and Scrutiny:**

9.1 Not applicable for this report.

**10. Financial implications:**

10.1 There are no financial implications arising from accepting the recommendations in this report. The update on the grant register is provided for transparency purposes

**11. Legal implications:**

11.1 There are no legal implications as a direct consequence of this report.

**12. Single Assurance Framework implications:**

12.1 The relevant Single Assurance Framework process will be followed as necessary.

**13. Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:**

13.1 Grants will be appropriately monitored and managed to reduce any possible clawback and to ensure that use is in line with any specified conditions.

**14. Procurement Implications:**

14.1 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

**15. Equality implications:**

15.1 There are no specific equality implications from this update report. However, individual grant funded schemes and initiatives will be subject to equality impact assessments to ensure key equality and inclusion considerations have been embedded.

**16. Inclusive Growth Implications:**

16.1 There are no direct implications to the West Midlands Inclusive Growth fundamentals arising from this report.

**17. Local Authority Impact:**

17.1 Some of the grants included in this register have been passported/devolved to Local Authorities.

**18. List of appendices referred to:**

18.1 Appendix 1 - Revenue Grant Register

18.2 Appendix 2 - Capital Grant Register.

**19. Background papers used to compile this report:**

None.

**20. List of Other Relevant Documents**

20.1 None

Revenue Grant Register

Grant Name	Provider	Start Date	End Date	Total Grant Awarded in Full	Notes
BSOG	DfT	Annual		1,792,259	A discretionary grant paid to operators of eligible local bus services to help them recover some of their fuel costs.
Adult Skills Fund (formerly Adult Education Budget)	DfE	Annual		133,699,702	Devolved budget from DfE for delivery of adult education (19+) in West Midlands region
Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs	DfE	Annual		9,375,622	Devolved budget from DfE for delivery of level 3 education offer open to adults without an existing L3 qualification in West Midlands
Black Country Cultural Capital Development	Arts Council England	Apr-22	Mar-25	725,000	This grant is specifically marked to be spent in the Black Country, with the aim to support development of future cultural sector capital projects within Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Dudley. The grant activity will specifically focus on developing capital project feasibility studies and business cases, together with some support resources for cultural organisation.
DLUHC - Rough Sleeping Initiative	DLUHC	Apr-22	Mar-25	1,491,707	3 year settlement to allow Authorities to build on the progress of previous funding interventions, moving increasingly from a focus on intervention to supporting long term recovery and preventing rough sleeping.
Multiply	DfE	Apr-24	Mar-25	5,848,999	Multi year grant allocation of 16.7m total funding over 3 years. Amount shown here is for year 3 only. Grant supports literacy and numeracy skills development activities in line with investment plan submitted to HMG
Bus Service Improvement Plan	DfT	Apr-24	Mar-25	32,818,147	Multi year grant allocation of £87.8m total funding over 3 years. Amount shown here is for year 2 only. Grant supports transformation activities to support bus service improvement in line with investment plan submitted to DfT. A further £16.6m has been promised but not yet confirmed.
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (2022/23)	DLUHC	Apr-22	Mar-23	7,175,415	UKSPF is a central pillar of this government's levelling up agenda, and replacement funding for the European Union Structural Funding. Funds will be spent in line with the investment plan submitted to government.
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (2023/24)	DLUHC	Apr-23	Mar-24	13,536,117	
Technical Bootcamps Wave 4	DfE	Apr-23	Mar-24	10,605,000	Continued support for Bootcamp activity. Amount reflects current amount confirmed via grant letter but total allocation is confirmed as £15.15m.
Thrive into Work	DWP	Feb-23	Mar-25	7,936,260	Continued support for existing Thrive into Work employment scheme.
Active Travel Capability Fund	Active Travel England	Jan-23	Jan-24	3,456,000	To support the better design, planning and development of cycling, wheeling and walking schemes in the region.
Local Government Cyber Security Resilience Fund	DLUHC	Jan-23		175,000	To support digital and data requirements in this area
Air Quality Grant 22/23	DEFRA	Apr-23	Mar-25	778,531	Provision of sensors that monitor air particles PM2.5 and PM10.
Create Central	BFI	Apr-23	Mar-26	1,000,000	National Lottery Funding to support screen production workforce development and training
Place Pilot	DLUHC	Nov-22	May-24	500,000	Grant to support the realisation of efficiencies across the public estate, and also unlock opportunities to release land held by central and local government. It builds on the strength of the One Public Programme and pilots a place-based approach to strategic asset management. Funding can be allocated for purposes such as data analysis and mapping, undertaking feasibility studies, masterplanning, seed funding to initiate opportunities, programme coordination, etc.
Levelling Up Capacity Grant	DLUHC	Apr-24	Mar-25	625,000	Following successful bid to DLUHC on 24/02/2023, the grant has provided funding to build the necessary capacity and capability support infrastructure to support local authorities within the MCAs geographical area to deliver their capital projects. A further 2 years of funding will be made available, subject to delivery of outcomes outlined in the proposal to DLUHC.
Local Transport Fund- Bus Recovery Fund extension	DfT	Apr-23	Jun-23	6,087,372	March Board report indicated that Government had extended the funding for support of the bus network to June 2023 in light of the challenges that the sector continues to face. This report confirms the value
Cycling facilities (velodrome)	DfT	May-23	Maximum term of 7 years specified	40,000	Grant to fund expert consultants to determine whether there is a business case for specialist cycling facilities in the West Midlands. The consultancy will make recommendations to a Cycling Facility Advisory Group chaired by the WM Walking and Cycling Commissioner as to whether there is a strategic, site allocation; business, commercial, management and financial business case(s) for such facilities.
One Public Estate Opportunity Development Fund	DLUHC	Apr-23	Not specified	140,000	The Opportunity Development Fund (ODF) will fund a comprehensive forward-looking assessment of the region's public estate. The assessment will identify pipeline opportunities for land release to deliver new homes, employment, health and community space alongside wider inclusive growth benefits.
Careers & Enterprise Company	Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC)	Sep-23	Aug-24	1,244,863	Funding for Careers Hub to improve careers provision in schools and colleges. Matched funding to be provided by WMCA
West Midlands Business Energy Assessment Service (BEAS)	DESNZ	Apr-23	Mar-25	9,109,772	Pilot funding for energy assessment audits and roadmaps for SMEs in both the industrial and commercial sectors across the ITL 1 area of the West Midlands
Sport England Solicited Grant	Sport England	Apr-23	Mar-25	2,500,000	An agreed Wellbeing Board Sport England Lottery workstream which includes: a Commonwealth Games collaborative leadership programme for the Physical Activity system, Black Country Moving (placed based funding with grant agreement to Black Country Consortium Limited), Include Me West Midlands (an ongoing work programme consisting secondment to manage work to address identified barriers preventing disabled people getting active e.g. transport), a regional action commitment, citizen voice and a Public Space Design trial and learn programme. Negotiations started in developing a 5-7 year partnership to deliver twin strategic priorities.
Bootcamp wave 5	DfE	Apr-24	Mar-25	26,794,280	Equip adults with technical skills that enable them to access in-demand jobs, apprenticeships (and for the self-employed, new opportunities) leading to increased income and productivity
National Antisocial Behaviour Action Plan	DfT	Jan-24	Mar-25	450,000	One of our Corporate priorities this year is to be an ambitious, forward thinking and determined organisation, which this bid aligns to and it support the deliver of Aim 3.1. Within the National Antisocial Behaviour Action Plan the DfT committed to making public transport safer, building on the model seen in the West Midlands by piloting an expansion to the TSOs with up to £2.5m additional funding – specifically – trained staff to deal with low level nuisance and disorder, who target hotspot routes and locations. Consequently, the DfT is commissioning TfWM to provide advice to the five local transport authorities, who will be responsible for the delivery of the pilot programme.
Capability & Ambition Fund	DfT			1,700,000	Revenue funding for Cycling & Walking tranche 2
Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund Supplement (CWGLEF)	DLUHC	Apr-23	Mar-24	3,000,000	Funding from DLUHC to supplement the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund (CWGLEF) budget to support community projects.

Campos + (Place Based Decarbonisation Accelerator)	DESNZ	Mar-24	Mar-26	6,200,000	Deliver a Place-Based Net Zero Accelerator project that will build on the work done in Phase 1 of Project CAMPOS. The objective set by Government is to design a net zero accelerator model which covers energy, transport and building decarbonisation as a minimum and design investment model(s) to attract private investment - which is scalable, replicable and which leads to contracted or secured investment partners capable of delivering at scale by circ. March 26. Delivery will commence shortly after, if not before.
LEVI Capability Fund	DIT	Apr-24	Mar-25	341,000	Revenue funding to support delivery of project for installing electric charging points across the region.
Mayoral Capacity Fund 2024/25	DLUHC	Apr-24	Mar-25	1,000,000	This grant supports the Mayor's Office and activities by providing funding for capacity and resources to deliver for the local area.
Post Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funding 2024/25	DLUHC	Apr-24	Mar-25	234,285	Core funding for responsibilities transferred to WMCA as a result of dissolution of LEPs.
Growth Hub Funding	DBT	Apr-24	Mar-25	420,000	To support the delivery of the Business Growth Hub network across the West Midlands
Capacity Support for Trailblazers	DLUHC	Apr-24	Mar-25	250,000	To provide additional capacity support to deliver the single settlement and the wider commitments agreed in Deeper Devolution Deal to meet local and national priorities, and maximise the policy opportunities this reform offers.
Creative Growth Programme	DCMS	Apr-24	Mar-25	520,000	WMCA will act as the project lead, working in partnership with creative cluster Lead, Create Central and commissioning Creative UK to deliver the programme until the end of March 2025. The funding will support high-growth potential creative businesses to become investment ready outside of London, by developing businesses' knowledge, skills and access to finance and will increase the number of investors willing to invest in creative businesses outside of London, by educating and developing investor networks.

#### Specific Revenue/Devo Grants

Devo Deal Grant	MHCLG	Annual		36,500,000	Devolution Grant Deal (Investment Programme)
MHCLG - Office for Data Analytics	MHCLG	Apr-18	No end date	800,000	Devolution funding to support operational activities of ODA
Devo Housing Package	MHCLG	Apr-17		6,000,000	Revenue grants to support capital housing grant activity delivery
Brownfield Housing Fund	MHCLG	Apr-20		2,826,498	Revenue grants to support capital housing grant activity delivery
One Public Estate	LGA		Apr-22	1,246,141	Support OPE activity - drawn down by partners delivering OPE activity as required.

#### Other Revenue Contributions

MHCLG -Brexit	MHCLG	Apr-18	No end date	1,375,059	
IPS Programme	DWP	Mar-17	Jun-22	2,059,911	



Capital Grants Register

Grant Name	Provider	Date of grant Award Letter	Total Grant Awarded in full £	Notes
DIT - Major Scheme (Eastside / Edgbaston)	DIT	Apr-19	£ 187,559,779	Midland Metro Extensions
ITB WMCA	DIT	Apr-21	£ 17,755,000	Annual rolling settlement from DIT, rolled into CRSTS from 22/23. Funding is distributed to WMCA and all & LAs on a formula basis which is agreed locally. The 21/22 annual value only is shown here.
Road National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIFF)	DIT	Sep-17	£ 17,055,000	National Productivity Investment Fund including projects in Birmingham (Growth Point Public Transport Package), Walsall (Economic Growth and Infrastructure Project) and Solihull (Strategic Cycle Network)
Clean Bus Technology	DIT	Feb-18	£ 5,987,750	Projects that work with bus operators or technology providers to retrofit buses to reduce emissions
Transforming Cities Fund	DIT	Annually	£ 250,000,000	The purpose of the Transforming Cities Fund is to boost productivity, transform intra-city connectivity and reduce congestion through investment in public and sustainable transport in the West Midlands. No detailed constraints as to what it can be spent on, but the WMCA should have regard to the national objectives of the Fund. Programme agreed Nov 2018. Additional £71.5m TCF2 now funded through CRSTS)
Joint Air Quality	DIT	Jan-19	£ 3,456,520	Fund retrofit buses with kits that tackle exhaust emission in Birmingham
Association of Directors Environment Economy, Place & Travel (ADEPT) Live Labs	DIT	Jul-19	£ 2,650,000	Network Resilience Live Lab funding covering the transport network to build up a detailed picture of traffic and transport movements around the region through collection of data
Opening LA Transport Data Competition	DIT	Pre 18/19	£ 100,000	Data / Technology
Future mobility Zones	DIT	Jun-19	£ 20,000,000	The purpose of the Future Mobility Zones is to: trial new transport services modes and models, creating a functioning marketplace for mobility that combines new and traditional modes of transport; improve integration of services; increase the availability of real-time data; and provide access to digital planning and payment options. The fund also aims to explore options for: providing mobility credits, or other low-cost options, for lower income households; and delivering efficiencies through shared (dynamic) demand responsive transport.
TIWM Bus Priority	DIT	Jul-20	£ 24,225,000	Funding bus priority measures in Birmingham City Centre and between Dudley and Druids Heath.
Emergency Active Travel Fund	DIT	Nov-20	£ 13,182,667	Phase 2 of Active Travel Fund to support longer term walking and cycling schemes (Phase 1 classed as revenue grant)
Active Travel Fund (Tranche 3)	DIT	Mar-22	£ 17,250,000	Phase 3 of Active Travel Fund to support longer term walking and cycling schemes
All Electric Bus Town Competition (Coventry) (AEBT)	DIT	Mar-21	£ 50,000,000	Coventry All Electric Bus City project
Zero Emissions Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA)	DIT	Mar-22	£ 30,383,250	Grant to deliver 124 hydrogen buses plus associated infrastructure in the region
City Region Sustainable Transport Summary (CRSTS)	DIT	Apr-22	£ 1,050,000,000	Supporting inclusive economic growth, provide better connections between places and encourage more people to use sustainable and zero-carbon transport
West Midlands Land Fund	MHCLG	Apr-18	£ 100,000,000	Quarterly reporting to MHCLG as part of the grant. This is against the outputs specific to Housing of 8,000 homes and the wider West Midlands target of 215,000 homes by 2031, which includes outputs from the Local Authorities
Brownfield Housing Fund	MHCLG	Apr-20	£ 125,381,582	Quarterly reporting to MHCLG on the outputs of this grant. Deliver between 7,714 and 9,773 homes.
Brownfield Housing Fund Extension	MHCLG	Mar-22	£ 17,350,000	Extension agreed to the Brownfield Housing Fund March 2022.
Sustainable Warmth Competition	BEIS	Mar-22	£ 2,600,000	Upgrade homes to a target energy efficiency rating
BEIS Social Decarbonisation Fund	BEIS	Feb-22	£ 6,174,205	Improve the energy performance of social rented homes
Metro Birmingham Eastside Extension	EZ	n/a	£ 18,000	Enterprise Zone funding
University Hospital Birmingham - University Station	3rd Party	Aug-20	£ 5,000,000	Delivery of University Station build.
Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP) Funding	DIT	Oct-21	£ 39,650,000	Rail Station Development-Package 1 Walsall - Wolverhampton
Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP) Funding	DIT	Oct-21	£ 19,350,000	Rail Station Development-Package 2 Camp Hill
PB - Highways England	Highways England	n/a	£ 86,400	Relates to HS2 Modelling Framework
Public Realm Schemes	BCC	Jun-22	£ 606,543	Enhance public realms for Commonwealth Games
A435 Alcester Rd Bus Priority Revitalisation	BCC	21/22	£ 154,000	A435 Alcester Rd Bus Priority Revitalisation
Clear Air Zone	BCC	Mar-22	£ 5,218,000	Rail Station Development-Package 2 Camp Hill
Rail Development	Walsall MBC	21/22	£ 68,000	Rail Station Development-Package 1 Walsall - Wolverhampton
Air Quality	Defra	Mar-22	£ 990,000	Develop and/or implement measures that deliver air quality benefits in the near future (one to two years), projects which develop solutions over the longer term by increasing awareness to encourage behavioural changes, and new, innovative ideas if they will successfully and as closely as possible meet the needs and objectives of the Applicant's local area.
LA - Birmingham	LA	n/a	£ 14,279,629	Rail funding = £8,983m: BCC funding for Perry Barr = £5,083m BCC funding for University = £3,9m BCC funding for Package 2 = £5,2m
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - capital element	DLUHC	Dec-22	£ 8,900,000	Capital allocation for 22/23 of UKSPF Fund. Permission has been sought from grant providers to carry forward £5.7m of UKSPF into 2023/24
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - capital element	DLUHC	Aug-23	£ 7,922,222	Capital allocation for 23/24 of UKSPF Fund.
Social Housing Fund	DLUHC	Feb-23	£ c14,900,000	Working with local authorities and registered housing provider for repairs and improvements to properties to raise homes to 'Decent Homes Standard'. Works may include insulation, replacement of doors and windows, roofing repairs, reduction of mould and damp and repairs/replacements to ineffective heating systems.
Air Quality Grant 22/23	DEFRA	Feb-23	£ 140,000	Provision of sensors that monitor air particles PM2.5 and PM10.
ADEPT LIVE LAB 2 - Highways CO2laboration centre	DIT	Feb-23	£ 4,035,000	The UK CO2laboration Centre of Excellence for Materials Decarbonisation will be a single centre based across two campuses: a physical centre based in Birmingham and a virtual centre hosted by North Lanarkshire Council. It will provide a centralised hub for research and innovation for the decarbonisation of local roads materials, developing a knowledge bank, real-life conditions testing and sharing and learning insights.
CCAV - MACAM	Innovate UK	Nov-23	£ 1,485,000	Part of wider automated public transport demonstrator project to prove viability of services.

CCAV - EBNS Feasibility Study	Innovate UK	Nov-23	£	55,000	Feasibility project looking at how Connected and Autonomous Mobility technologies could be used in East Birmingham and North Solihull. Part of larger project.
Social Decarbonisation Fund (Wave 2.1)	DESNZ	Mar-23	£	17,776,915	Funding to make homes more energy efficient through retrofitting with better insulation, new doors and windows and greener heating systems. This will be matched by further £35 million from registered social housing providers across the region to benefit approximately 3000 homes.
Homes Upgrade Grant	DESNZ	Mar-23	£	16,000,000	Retrofit off gas grid homes in Birmingham, Dudley and Sandwell, Dudley. The bid was part of the Midlands Net Zero Hub consortium that successfully bid for £140 million for the wider Midlands area.
DLUHC Capital funding	DLUHC	Feb-23	£	25,900,000	Grant to support delivery of the following schemes: i. The extension to the West Midlands Metro network that will link Dudley and Brierley Hill via Line One to Wolverhampton and Birmingham ii. The extension of the Wolverhampton Metro iii. A package of works to renew life-expired sections of key systems on Metro Line One iv. Funding for the renewal of University station v. The provision of digital devices through the Connected Services Project
Highways Maintenance Funding	DfT	Mar-23	£	3,617,000	For Additional Highways Maintenance and Pothole repair announced within the Central Government 2023 Budget Statement
Local Investment in Natural Capital Programme	DEFRA	Mar-23	£	1,000,000	DEFRA funding to support the establishment of a natural environment investment fund.
Active Travel Fund (Tranche 4)	DfT	Mar-23	£	12,608,201	Phase 4 of Active Travel Fund to support longer term walking and cycling schemes
Live Labs Capital funding	DfT	Jun-23	£	3,617,200	To fund the Transport for West Midlands Live Labs project which is exploring ways to decarbonise local highways infrastructure in the region
Local Transport Capital Block Funding (Pothole Fund)	DfT	Jul-23	£	1,614,000	Capital grant for repairs of potholes across the region. Announced as part of the 2023 budget
West Midlands Business Energy Assessment Service (BEAS)	DESNZ	Sep-23	£	5,000,000	Overall objective is national energy productivity, supply chain resilience and global competitiveness. High volume (2-4000) of well-targeted and tailored energy efficiency interventions in small and mid-sized energy-exposed businesses. The emphasis is on data and evaluation, diversity of sectors and variety of interventions. To include resource efficiency advice, identifying the most cost-effective ways for government to address market barriers, permanently mitigate impacts of the energy cost crisis and increase UK economic and supply chain resilience.
Single Regeneration Fund	DLUHC	Dec-23	£	100,000,000	Part of the Deeper Devolution Deal, will support WMCA to use brownfield land funding to not only deliver 4,000 homes, but also to deliver commercial, employment land and mixed-used developments
Pothole Funding	DfT	Dec-23	£	2,586,000	As part of the Network North announcement, WMCA has been awarded an additional Pothole Funding for local highways maintenance for 2023/24 and 2024/25. This will be passported in full to local authorities
Trailblazer Devolution Deal	DLUHC	Mar-24	£	20,000,000	DLUHC trailblazer devolution deal capital funding.
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Capital Fund	DfT	Mar-24	£	14,549,000	Funding for the provision of electric vehicle chargepoints throughout the region. Allocations cover two financial years: 2023/24 £13,094m and 2024/25 £1,455m. The grant is aimed at delivering a step-change in deployment of local, primarily low power on-street charging infrastructure and accelerating the commercialisation of, and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector.
Active Travel Fund 4 - Extension	DfT	Mar-24	£	6,142,000	Extension of the Phase 4 scheme to support walking and cycling projects within the region.
Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant (TSOG) and Green Light Fund (GLF)	DfT	Mar-24	£	682,759	This funding is allocated specifically to address the backlog in traffic signal maintenance and upgrading works in local authorities and is made up of two funds: • TSOG, the Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant, to upgrade traffic signal systems by replacing obsolete equipment and • GLF, the Green Light Fund, to provide funding to tune up traffic signals to better reflect current traffic conditions and get traffic flowing. Funding to be distributed to Local Authorities





## WMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme - **DRAFT**

Title of Report	Date of Meeting	Employee to Contact
<b>Brownfield Land Remediation Fund - Scrutiny Review: Report of the Review Panel</b> To consider the findings of the review panel and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board.	1 July 2024	Ben Coleman
<b>Skills Scrutiny Review: Progress Report on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the review</b> To review the progress being made on the implementation of the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that were supported by the Skills Advisory Board on 25 September 2023.	1 July 2024	Fiona Aldridge
<b>Performance Against the WMCA's Annual Business Plan</b> To consider the performance of the WMCA against the Annual Business Plan and consider whether to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board	1 July 2024	Fiona Bebbington Jaspal Seehra
<b>Grant Register</b> To receive and review the WMCA's Grant Register and to make any recommendations to the WMCA Board	1 July 2024	Kate Taylor

<b>Member Knowledge Briefing Session:</b> Single Settlement Update	2 September 2024 <b>TBC</b>	<b>TBC</b>
<b>One Public Estate and Place Pilots Programme</b> To consider the progress made with regard to One Public Estate and make any recommendation to the WMCA Board.	2 September 2024	John Godfrey
<b>Grant Register</b> To receive and review the WMCA's Grant Register and to make any recommendations to the WMCA Board	2 September 2024	Kate Taylor
<b>Members Workshop: WMCA Policy Matters</b> A workshop to prepare members for the forthcoming Mayoral Q&A on WMCA Policies	October 2024 <b>TBC</b>	Dan Essex Lyndsey Roberts
<b>Mayor's Question Time: Policy</b> A Q&A with the Mayor on WMCA Policy Matters	October 2024 <b>TBC</b>	Dan Essex Lyndsey Roberts
<b>Budget Workshop: Overview &amp; Scrutiny</b> A joint Overview & Scrutiny workshop to prepare members from the WMCA's Overview & Scrutiny Committees for the forthcoming Mayoral Q&A.	December 2024 <b>TBC</b>	Linda Horne Kate Taylor Lyndsey Roberts
<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny: Mayoral Q&amp;A - Proposed Draft Budget</b> A Q&A with the Mayor on the proposed draft budget.	December 2024 <b>TBC</b>	Linda Horne Kate Taylor Lyndsey Roberts
<b>Grant Register</b> To receive and review the WMCA's Grant Register and to make any recommendations to the WMCA Board.	20 January 2025	Kate Taylor

<p><b>West Midlands State of the Region Report 2024/25</b> To consider the key messages and recommendations and to identify areas for which the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee may wish to address as part of their work programme.</p>	20 January 2025	Si Chun Lam Ed Cox
<p><b>Performance Against the WMCA's Annual Business Plan</b> To consider the performance of the WMCA against the Annual Business Plan and consider whether to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board</p>	20 January 2025	Fiona Bebbington Jaspal Seehra
<p><b>Grant Register</b> To receive and review the WMCA's Grant Register and to make any recommendations to the WMCA Board</p>	20 January 2025	Kate Taylor
<p><b>Impact of the Commonwealth Enhancement Legacy Funding</b> To receive a comprehensive report on the collective impact of the programme on the region.</p>	3 March 2025	Ed Cox Cat Orchard
<p><b>Grant Register</b> To receive and review the WMCA's Grant Register and to make any recommendations to the WMCA Board</p>	3 March 2025	Kate Taylor

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# **West Midlands Combined Authority**

## **Forward Plan**

## Forthcoming key decisions

Title of key decision:	Decision to be taken by and date:	Open or Exempt:	Employee to contact:
<p><b>WMCA Financial Monitoring Report</b> To provide an update on the financial position as at the end of Month 2 (May 2024) and present the revised multi- year capital programme which takes account of the outturn position for approval</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant
<p><b>Universal Support</b> To consider the principles agreed with local authority partners for the commissioning and delivery model of Universal Support, a Department for Work &amp; Pensions funded opportunity to support residents with health conditions to gain and progress into employment.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	John Hall Senior Delivery Manager-Employment Support
<p><b>Culture, Creative and Heritage Infrastructure Programme</b> To seek permission to undertake the Culture, Creative &amp; Heritage Infrastructure programme of activity.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Hayley Pepler
<p><b>Bus Options Report</b> To consider options for the future delivery of the region's bus network.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Steven Hayes Head of Network Transformation
<p><b>Bus Depot Strategy</b> To approve the funding for TfWM to acquire sites for Bus Depots.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Ian Shore Asset Delivery Manager
<p><b>Transport Capital Programme</b> To raise awareness of the capital budget pressures across transport multi-modal programmes.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Jenni MacKenzie, Sandeep Shingadia Head of Transport Portfolio, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Integration

<p><b>Wednesbury Brierley Hill Extension (WBHE) Business Case</b> Consider a report in relation to Wednesbury Brierley Hill Extension (WBHE) Business Case</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Simon Dickinson, Tom Oldershaw, Mike Waters Director of Policy, Strategy and Innovation
<p><b>A Review of the Effectiveness of Member Engagement and Development within the WMCA</b> To consider the findings of a scrutiny review undertaken to examine the effectiveness of member engagement and development within the WMCA.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Open	Dan Essex, Lyndsey Roberts Governance & Scrutiny Manager, Scrutiny Officer
<p><b>Black Country Innovative Manufacturing Organisation (BCIMO)</b> To consider the latest position.</p>	WMCA Board 19 July 2024	Fully exempt	Kate Taylor Head of Finance Business Partnering and Strategic Planning
<p><b>WMCA Financial Monitoring Report</b> To provide an update on the latest financial position.</p>	WMCA Board 13 September 2024	Open	Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant
<p><b>Single Settlement Update</b> To consider the work undertaken to-date between the WMCA and constituent authorities to develop functional and place-based strategies that will underpin the delivery of the Single Settlement.</p>	WMCA Board 13 September 2024	Open	Jonathan Gibson Head of Policy & Public Affairs
<p><b>Health of the Region Report 2024</b> To acknowledge the findings of the report and to approve its recommendations, including WMCA actions on improving health through all its policies and programmes.</p>	WMCA Board 13 September 2024	Open	Mubasshir Ajaz Head of Health and Communities • Strategy, Integration and Net Zero



<p><b>Key Route Network Review 2023/24</b> To approve the amended Key Route Network within the WMCA area.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 13 September 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Rachel Ing Corridor Manager</p>
<p><b>Regional Road Safety Action Plan 2024-2030</b> Endorsement of the Regional Road Safety Action Plan 2024-2030 following completion of public consultation and validation from the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 13 September 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Darren Divall Regional Road Safety Manager</p>
<p><b>Local Transport Plan Adoption</b> To consider recommendations to approve the final version of the LTP suite of documents (including Area Based Strategies) which have been adapted to align fully with the WMCA Functional and Place Based Strategies.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 13 September 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Carl Beet, David Harris, Mike Waters Head of Strategy and Intelligence - TfWM, Transport Strategy and Place Manager - TfWM, Director of Policy, Strategy and Innovation</p>
<p><b>WMCA Financial Monitoring Report</b> To provide an update on the latest financial position</p>	<p>WMCA Board 15 November 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant</p>
<p><b>Best Value Fare Capping for Bus (cEMV Broker)</b> To consider the Full Business Case for the national cEMV Broker pilot and West Midlands roll-out which will enable best value fare capping for bus users to be delivered for travellers using their contactless debit card or other device. The Board will also be asked to approve the legal partnership arrangements with the collaborating delivery entities.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 15 November 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Matt Lewis, Mike Waters Head of Swift, Director of Policy, Strategy and Innovation</p>

<p><b>WMCA Financial Monitoring Report</b> To provide an update on the latest financial position</p>	<p>WMCA Board 10 January 2025</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant</p>
<p><b>Draft WMCA Budget 2025/26</b> To consider the draft budget for the 2025/26 fiscal year.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 10 January 2025</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant</p>
<p><b>WMCA Budget 2025/26</b> To approve the 2025/26 budget.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 7 February 2025</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant</p>
<p><b>WMCA Financial Monitoring Report</b> To provide an update on the latest financial position</p>	<p>WMCA Board 14 March 2025</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant</p>

**WMCA Financial Monitoring Report**

To provide an update on the latest financial position and provisional outturn for the 2024/25 financial year.

WMCA Board 13 June 2025

Open

Beverly Sullivan,  
Sally Truman  
Financial Planning  
and Coordination  
Manager, Lead  
Financial Planning  
Accountant

## The Forward Plan

This document sets out known 'key decisions' that will be taken by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) over the coming months.

Forthcoming key decisions are published online to meet the statutory 28 day notification rule for each meeting where a key decision will be taken. Where it has not been possible to meet the 28 day rule for publication of notice of a key decision or an intention to meet in private, the relevant notices will be published as required by legislation as soon as possible.

### What is a key decision?

Page 64

A 'key decision' means a decision of the Mayor, WMCA or officer which is likely:

- (a) to result in the WMCA incurring expenditure, making savings or generating income amounting to £1m or more; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the WMCA.

The report relating to a decision, together with any other documents being considered, will be available five clear working days before the decision is to be taken (unless the documentation contains exempt information).

The forward plan also provides notice of when the WMCA may decide to exclude the press and public during consideration of a particular matter due to the potential for disclosure of confidential or exempt

information. The grounds upon which local authorities can exclude the press and public are specified by law and details of the exempt categories are available on request from the Governance Services team ([governance.services@wmca.org.uk](mailto:governance.services@wmca.org.uk)).

Councillors or members of the public wishing to:

- make a representation about why a matter should be heard in public, or
- submit information to the decision-making body about an item in the forward plan, or
- request details of relevant documents, or
- seek advice about the WMCA's decision-making arrangements,

should contact the Governance Services team: [governance.services@wmca.org.uk](mailto:governance.services@wmca.org.uk)

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