



WMCA Board

Friday 13 September 2019 at 11.00 am

Minutes

Constituent Members

Andy Street (Chair)

Councillor Bob Sleight (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Mike Bird

Councillor Ian Brookfield

Councillor Yvonne Davies

Councillor George Duggins

Councillor Karen Grinsell

Councillor Patrick Harley

Councillor Brigid Jones

Councillor Abdul Khan

Councillor Ian Ward

Mayor of the West Midlands Combined
Authority

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

City of Wolverhampton Council

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Coventry City Council

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Birmingham City Council

Coventry City Council

Birmingham City Council

Non-Constituent Members

Councillor Matthew Dormer

Councillor David Humphreys

Councillor Julie Jackson

Councillor Tony Jefferson

Ninder Johal

Councillor Tony Johnson

Councillor Richard Overton

Tim Pile

Councillor Izzi Seccombe

Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince

Redditch Borough Council

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Black Country Local Enterprise

Partnership

Cannock Chase District Council

Telford & Wrekin Council

Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local

Enterprise Partnership

Warwickshire County Council

Rugby Borough Council

Observer Members

Councillor Greg Brackenridge

David Jamieson

West Midlands Fire Authority

West Midlands Police & Crime

Commissioner

In Attendance

Councillor Cathy Bayton

Councillor Kath Hartley

David Lane

Councillor Lisa Trickett

Councillor Richard Worrall

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Transport Delivery Committee

Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Transport Delivery Committee

Item Title

No.

31. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor George Adamson (Cannock Chase), Jonathan Browning (Coventry & Warwickshire LEP), Councillor Ian Courts (Solihull), Councillor Shaun Davies (Telford & Wrekin), Councillor Sebastian Lowe (Rugby) and Stewart Towe (Black Country LEP).

32. Minutes - 26 July 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

33. Forward Plan

The forward plan of items to be reported to future meetings of the board was noted.

34. Chair's Remarks

(a) Clive Heaphy, Birmingham City Council

The Chair welcomed Clive Heaphy, Acting Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council, to his first meeting and thanked Dawn Baxendale for all she had done to support the WMCA during her time in that role.

(b) Phil Hewitt, Transport for West Midlands

The Chair noted that Phil Hewitt, Director of West Midlands Metro, was soon to take up a new post outside of the WMCA and thanked him for his leadership in delivering improvements to the Midland Metro over the last four years

35. Financial Monitoring Report 2019/20

The board considered a report from Linda Horne, Director of Finance, on the WMCA's finances as at the end of July.

The report summarised the revenue and capital spend against the previously approved budget. The year to date position showed a minor £3,000 favourable variance from budget. This consisted of a favourable variance of £143,000 within transport offset by an adverse variance of £140,000 within the operational budget. The year end position showed an adverse variance of £627,000 from budget. This consisted of a favourable variance of £37,000 within transport offset by an adverse variance of £664,000 within the operational budget.

As part of financial planning work, an operational efficiency review was being undertaken with the aim of negating the adverse forecast position fully during the current financial year. Updates on this review would be provided at future meetings.

Resolved:

The financial position as at the end of July 2019 be noted.

36. Commonwealth Games Strategic Transport Plan

The board considered a report from Laura Shoaf, Managing Director of Transport for West Midlands, on proposals to publish the draft Commonwealth Games Strategic Transport Plan and to advise on the engagement that would take place across the region to gather feedback from residents and businesses to help shape the planning of transport operations for the Commonwealth Games with partners.

In line with other events of this nature, a Games Strategic Transport Plan was being prepared setting out how the transport operations for the Commonwealth Games would be planned and delivered with partners. At this stage the plan was intended to provide a high-level view of transport preparations, with more detailed operational planning to follow. The plan would help inform the public and businesses of Transport for West Midlands current approach to transport planning, as well as setting the framework for work going forward.

Councillor Ian Ward noted that transport was one of the key risks whilst the Games were in progress and that the purpose of this plan was to ensure that both visitors and local residents were able to travel around the region with minimal disruption. David Jamieson welcomed the work that had been undertaken to date to plan to address transport implications of hosting the Games. He confirmed that West Midlands Police were involved in significant scenario planning, and he anticipated that the Home Office would provide additional funding to properly support these added responsibilities.

Resolved:

The draft Commonwealth Games Strategic Transport Plan be approved for publication in September.

37. UK City of Culture 2021

The board considered a report from Charlotte Booth, Programme Development Manager with Coventry City Council, outlining the key benefits and implications of the UK City of Culture 2021 project to support the request for the approval of £4m of WMCA funding.

The Coventry City of Culture Trust was currently working with its partners to deliver a significant build-up programme, an ambitious UK City of Culture Year in 2021 and a legacy for Coventry, Warwickshire and the wider West Midlands region. The WMCA was being asked to contribute £4m towards the total cost of £36.4m for the full programme. The Coventry City of Culture Trust had scoped out all funding sources and was confident that it had maximised the value from all other relationships and stakeholders for the delivery phase.

David Jamieson reported that West Midlands Police were involved in planning to support the City of Culture events, which he hoped would provide a lasting legacy in helping to draw younger people away from crime. He indicated that he was particularly pleased that up to 500 Police Cadets would be involved in supporting this work.

Resolved:

The request for £4m of WMCA funding as part of an overall £36.4m project in progress to support the City of Culture Trust in planning and delivering the UK City of Culture 2021 programme and developing a sustainable legacy be approved.

38. Strategic Economic Development Board - 8 May 2019

The board received the minutes of the Strategic Economic Delivery Board held on 8 May.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2019 be noted.

39. Strategic Economic Development Board - 8 July 2019

The board received the minutes of the Strategic Economic Development Board held on 8 July.

Resolved:

(1) The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2019 be noted.

(2) The amendments to the Strategic Economic Development Board's terms of reference be agreed.

40. Housing & Land Delivery Board - 15 July 2019

The board received the minutes of the Housing & Land Delivery Board held on 15 July.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2019 be noted.

41. Wellbeing Board - 19 July 2019

The board received the minutes of the Wellbeing Board held on 19 July.

In respect of minute no. 6 ('Appointment of Vice-Chair') Councillor Izzi Seccombe was pleased to report that Councillor Paulette Hamilton had been re-appointed Vice-Chair of the board for 2019/20.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2019 be noted.

42. Transport Delivery Committee - 22 July 2019

The board received the minutes of the Transport Delivery Committee held on 22 July.

In respect of minute no. 12 ('Notices of Motion'), Councillor Kath Hartley noted that Rotala, operator of Diamond Bus services, had declined to participate in the voluntary scheme, funded by the seven metropolitan local authorities, to extend the West Midlands concessionary bus and travel pass for women born between March - November 1954 (so called 'WASPI women'). Transport Delivery Committee had called on Rotala to review its decision and agree to join the scheme.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2019 be noted.

43. Investment Board - 29 July 2019

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board held on 29 July.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2019 be noted.

44. Investment Board - 19 August 2019

The board received the minutes of the meeting held on 19 August.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 August 2019 be noted.

45. Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 2 September 2019

The board received the minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 2 September.

In respect of minute no. 81 ('Inquire Meeting'), Tim Martin, Head of Governance, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, indicated that the unusually high quorum for the committee was determined by Parliament within the Combined Authorities (Overview & Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017. Whilst representations had been made to Government on a number of occasions as to the implications of this, he did not reasonably expect the rules to be changed within the near future and therefore members of the committee needed to be encouraged to attend whenever possible.

In respect of minute no. 85 ('Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme and Governance'), Councillor Lisa Trickett explained that the role of 'scrutiny champion' would be to take a closer interest in matters within the portfolio area each member was shadowing, and to report back to the committee on matters of interest. She did not consider that the creation of scrutiny shadows would, in itself, result in an additional burden on the Mayor's Portfolio Leads.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2019 be agreed.

46. Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

In accordance with s100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as specified in paragraph 3 of the Act.

47. UK Battery Industrialisation Centre

The board considered a report from Steve Weir, Head of Economic Development at Coventry City Council, outlining the key benefits and implications of the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre project relating to the request for £18m funding from the WMCA.

The UK Battery Industrialisation Centre programme was currently part-way through development and was due for completion in March 2020. The project had a total cost of £126m, of which £108m had been secured from the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund through Innovate UK. It was proposed that the WMCA would contribute £18m to the project in the form of a repayable grant. Based on current business planning forecasts, it was expected that the grant would be repaid over a period of 12 years.

Councillor George Duggins congratulated all those who had been involved in winning the Faraday Battery Challenge to secure funding to deliver a facility for use by SME businesses to scale innovative battery technologies towards high volume production. He particularly wished to place on record his appreciation to the late Lord Bhattacharyya for his leadership of Warwick Manufacturing Group and its work as part of the winning consortium. Councillor Izzi Seccombe endorsed these comments, noting that the benefits of the centre would be felt not just in Coventry but across the whole region.

Resolved:

- (1) The request for £18m of WMCA repayable grant, as part of an overall £126m project in progress to create an innovative open access facility and research and technology organisation to support national and regional Industrial Strategy focus on UK design, development and manufacture of battery technologies, be approved, subject to the charge noted in resolution (4) below on UK Battery Industrialisation Centre assets.
- (2) It be noted that the repayable grant would be financed by the WMCA through treasury management and prudential borrowing as required, and would not form part of the WMCA Investment Programme.
- (3) It be noted that the repayable grant would not bear interest.
- (4) It be noted that grant repayment risk would be mitigated by placing an appropriate first charge on UK Battery Industrialisation Centre assets.

- (5) Authority be delegated to the WMCA Finance Director and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation, to finalise details of the security, repayments and other technical details of the repayable grant.

48. UK Central Parallel Process - Roundabout Over-Trace - Full Business Case

The board considered a report from David Lawlor, UK Central Delivery Manager at Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, seeking approval to secure funding to proceed with infrastructure upgrades that would build upon those delivered in association with HS2 to maximise the commercial benefits from Arden Cross and the NEC that would arise with the introduction of high speed rail to the region.

HS2 Ltd was proposing to construct a three-lane roundabout to carry the A452 over the new HS2 track and the roundabout would form an access point to the HS2 car parks and the Arden Cross site, which itself was a key part of the UK Central Hub development area. The WMCA was being asked to fund £19.945m of the £66.508m total cost of the scheme, thereby providing access to HS2 and growth within the UK Central Hub area.

Resolved:

Funding of £19.945m be approved for the proposed Roundabout Over-Trace project required to ensure that the huge economic potential of the Arden Cross HS2 Interchange Station site and the NEC, which formed part of the wider growth plans for the UK Central Hub area, was realised.

[NB. Councillor Bob Sleigh declared a personal interest in respect of the fact that he was a Solihull councillor, the site of the project was within the ward he represented and he was a director of the UK Central Urban Growth Company. Councillor Karen Grinsell declared a personal interest in respect of the fact she was a Solihull councillor.]

49. Midland Metro Buy Before Boarding

The board considered a report from Phil Hewitt, Director of West Midlands Metro, reviewing the current ticketing approach on the Metro network and assessing the suitability of alternative options. The report also sought the approval of a new 'buy before boarding' off-tram ticketing policy to be adopted on the Metro network.

The current ticketing arrangements on West Midland Metro allowed passengers to purchase tickets on the tram from a member of staff, with no requirement to have purchased a ticket before boarding. As trams got busier, the ability of Customer Service Representatives to identify and interact with passengers reduced significantly, resulting in an increase in unticketed travel. Therefore, it was proposed to introduce an off-tram ticketing solution, shifting away from cash transactions and to a greater proportion of passengers transferring to Swift products.

Councillor Ian Ward welcomed these proposals, stressing the benefit of removing cash handling from the payments system and enabling contactless payments through the metro network. Councillor Ian Brookfield requested that Metro staff showed a pragmatic approach with young or vulnerable passengers during the implementation of the project.

Resolved:

- (1) The report, which reviewed the current ticketing approach on the West Midlands Metro as well as assessing the viability of alternative options in order to ensure a robust ticketing solution was in place to optimise revenue generation from Metro services, be noted.
- (2) The policy of moving to an off-tram 'buy before boarding' ticketing system incorporating the features set out in the report be approved.
- (3) Interim cashflow funding of £1.7m to cover the capital costs of the preferred option be approved, noting that the scheme was self-funding over a short timescale thereafter.
- (4) It be noted that Transport for West Midlands would explore further security measures on the tram network and, following consultations on these proposals with staff, no current customer representatives would be subject to compulsory redundancy.

50. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved:

- (1) The date of the next meeting, to be held on 8 November 2019, be noted.
- (2) It be agreed that the meeting originally scheduled for 10 January 2020 now be held on 17 January 2020.

The meeting ended at 11.55 am.