



WMCA Board

Date: Friday 13 November 2020

Time: 11.00 am **Public meeting** Yes

Venue: This meeting will be conducted virtually using Microsoft Teams
[Click here to view the meeting](#)

Membership

Constituent Members

Andy Street (Chair)
Councillor Bob Sleigh (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Adrian Andrew
Councillor Mike Bird
Councillor Ian Brookfield
Councillor Ian Courts
Councillor Maria Crompton
Councillor George Duggins
Councillor Patrick Harley
Councillor Brigid Jones
Councillor Abdul Khan
Councillor Syeda Khatun
Councillor Ian Ward
Councillor Qadar Zada

Appointing Authority

Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
City of Wolverhampton Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Coventry City Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Birmingham City Council
Coventry City Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Birmingham City Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Non-Constituent Members

Nick Abell

Councillor George Adamson
Councillor Shaun Davies
Councillor Matthew Dormer
Councillor Julie Jackson
Councillor Tony Jefferson
Councillor Sebastian Lowe
Councillor Peter Nutting
Councillor Jeremy Oates
Tim Pile

Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise
Partnership
Cannock Chase District Council
Telford & Wrekin Council
Redditch Borough Council
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Rugby Borough Council
Shropshire Council
Tamworth Borough Council
Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise
Partnership
Warwickshire County Council
Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership
North Warwickshire Borough Council

Councillor Izzi Seccombe
Tom Westley
Councillor David A Wright

Observers Awaiting Membership

Councillor Andrew Day
Mandy Thorn

Warwick District Council
The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership

Co-Opted Member

Lee Barron

Midlands Trades Union Congress

Observer Members

Councillor Greg Brackenridge
David Jamieson

West Midlands Fire Authority
West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner

Quorum for this meeting shall be at least one member from five separate Constituent councils

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

Contact	Dan Essex, Governance Services Manager
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AGENDA

No.	Item	Presenting	Pages
Items of Public Business			
1.	Apologies for Absence	Chair	None
2.	Declarations of Interest Members are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests they have in an 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
3.	Chair's Remarks	Chair	None
4.	Minutes - 18 September 2020	Chair	1 - 10
5.	Forward Plan	Chair	11 - 14
6.	Annual Delivery 2020/21: Mid-Year Update	Chair	15 - 38
Economy & Innovation			
7.	Supporting the Economy Through Inward Investment, Capital Attraction and Tourism Activity	Councillor Ian Brookfield	39 - 46
Environment, Energy & HS2			
8.	WMCA HS2 Growth Strategy Refresh	Councillor Ian Courts	47 - 92
Finance			
9.	Financial Monitoring Report 2020/21	Councillor Bob Sleigh	93 - 122
Transport			
10.	Bus Byelaws	Councillor Ian Ward	123 - 132
11.	West Midlands Rail Ltd Governance Evolution	Councillor Ian Ward	133 - 140
Wellbeing			
12.	Health of the Region Report	Councillor Izzi Seccombe	141 - 268
Minutes			

13.	Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee - 8 September 2020	Chair	269 - 274
14.	Public Service Reform Board - 10 September 2020	Councillor Maria Crompton	275 - 278
15.	Transport Delivery Committee - 14 September 2020	Councillor Kath Hartley	279 - 284
16.	Investment Board - 21 September 2020	Councillor Bob Sleight	285 - 290
17.	Environment & Energy Board - 15 October 2020	Councillor Ian Courts	291 - 296
18.	Wellbeing Board - 16 October 2020	Councillor Izzi Seccombe	297 - 300
19.	Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 16 October 2020	Councillor Lisa Trickett	301 - 306
20.	Investment Board - 19 October 2020	Councillor Bob Sleight	307 - 314
21.	Strategic Economic Development Board - 20 October 2020	Tim Pile	315 - 326
22.	Housing & Land Delivery Board - 2 November 2020	Councillor Mike Bird	327 - 332
23.	Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 2 November 2020	Councillor Lisa Trickett	333 - 338
24.	Young Combined Authority - October	YCA Representative	339 - 340
Date of Next Meeting			
25.	Date of Next Meeting	Chair	None



**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

WMCA Board

Friday 18 September 2020 at 11.00am

Minutes

Constituent Members

Andy Street (Chair)	Mayor of the West Midlands
Councillor Bob Sleigh (Vice-Chair)	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Mike Bird	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Ian Courts	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Maria Crompton	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor George Duggins	Coventry City Council
Councillor Patrick Harley	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Brigid Jones	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Abdul Khan	Coventry City Council
Councillor Ian Ward	Birmingham City Council

Non-Constituent Members

Councillor George Adamson	Cannock Chase District Council
Councillor Matt Dormer	Redditch Borough Council
Councillor Tony Jefferson	Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Councillor Jeremy Oates	Tamworth Borough Council
Councillor Izzi Seccombe	Warwickshire County Council

Observer Members Awaiting Membership

Councillor Andrew Day	Warwick District Council
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Observer Members

Councillor Greg Brackenridge	West Midlands Fire Authority
Chris Burden	Young Combined Authority
David Jamieson	West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner
Rob Johnson	Midlands Trades Union Congress

In Attendance

Councillor Cathy Bayton	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Peter Fowler	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Kath Hartley	Transport Delivery Committee
Waheed Saleem	Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner
Councillor Lisa Trickett	Overview & Scrutiny Committee

This meeting was held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. The meeting was conducted using Microsoft Teams video conferencing software and all participants took part in the meeting remotely.

47. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ian Brookfield (Wolverhampton), Councillor Shaun Davies (Telford & Wrekin), Councillor Peter Nutting (Shropshire), Mandy Thorn (The Marches LEP) and David Lane (Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee).

48. Minutes - 24 July 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

49. Forward Plan

A forward plan of items to be considered at future meetings of the board was noted.

50. Chair's Remarks

(a) Councillor Maria Crompton - Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

The Chair reported that Councillor Maria Crompton had been appointed Portfolio Lead for Public Service Reform & Social Economy and Chair of the Public Service Reform Board.

51. Update on Annual Planning and Delivery

The board considered a report from the Director of Strategy on changes to the portfolio deliverables previously approved by the WMCA Board to ensure better support and alignment to the region's response to, and recovery from, the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the impact of the pandemic during the first six months of 2020/21, there had been a significant change to the environment within which the WMCA's planned delivery, enabling and influencing activity was being delivered. A review of the deliverables within the Annual Plan had shown that while some of the supporting activity to realise deliverables may have had to have been revised or repurposed, the majority of the portfolio deliverables themselves remained relevant, and progress against them had continued.

The Chief Executive confirmed that a six-monthly review of delivery on the annual plan deliverables would be submitted to the next meeting of the board on 13 November 2020.

Resolved:

The changes to the high-level portfolio deliverables that were approved as part of the WMCA budget 2020/21 be noted and the amended list of portfolio deliverables be endorsed.

52. Appointment of WMCA Returning Officer

The board considered a report from the Head of Governance, Clerk and Monitoring Officer seeking to confirm the continuation of the appointment of the Combined Authority Returning Officer in respect of the Combined Authority Mayoral elections first made on 24 May 2019.

Martin Reeves had been appointed Combined Authority Returning Officer for the mayoral elections scheduled for 7 May 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that election was subsequently postponed until 6 May 2021. It was therefore intended to re-appoint Martin Reeves to the Returning Officer position until further notice.

Resolved:

- (1) Martin Reeves, Chief Executive of Coventry City Council, be appointed as the West Midlands Combined Authority Returning Officer until further notice.
- (2) It be noted that the Returning Officer intended to appoint Helen Paterson, Chief Executive of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, as his deputy.

53. Extending Term of Office for Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee Chair

The board considered a report from the Head of Governance, Clerk and Monitoring Officer seeking approval to re-appoint David Lane as Chair of the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee for a further 12 month period, to include the approval of the WMCA's 2020/21 annual accounts.

Given the uncertainties of the current year, including the postponement of the mayoral elections until May 2021 and the difficulties in recruiting a new chair of the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee during the wider restrictions, David Lane was approached to continue in post for a further 12 months. This would provide continuity through to the end of the Mayoral term of office and provide confidence that the audit and assurance function was being overseen by individuals experienced in the governance of the WMCA.

Resolved:

- (1) David Lane be appointed as the independent member and chair of the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee for a further 12 month period (to include the approval of the WMCA's 2020/21 annual accounts).
- (2) The Head of Governance undertake a recruitment exercise to ensure that a new independent member could be appointed for a four-year term effective from September 2021.

54. Financial Monitoring Report 2020/21

The board considered a report from the Director of Finance on the WMCA's finances as at the end of July 2020, an update on the financial implications of COVID-19 and the impact of the crisis on the overall level of the WMCA's reserves.

The overall year to date position at the end of July showed a £32,000 favourable variance from budget. This consisted of a favourable variance within the transport budget of £93,000, largely due to lower concessionary patronage volumes and efficiency savings offsetting the COVID-19 impact on advertising revenue and departure charge income. The latest forecast therefore set out the best assessment at the time of writing of the forecast impact on WMCA's financial position in 2020/21, including the specific impact of COVID-19, but was subject to constant change. It was proposed that the latest forecast deficit of £2.0m was met from the one-off use of reserves

Councillor Bob Sleight confirmed that further discussions would take place between the Mayor and constituent authority leaders during October, before a further update was considered at the next meeting of the board on 13 November 2020. The Chair thanked officers for all the work they had done to mitigate the impact of the pandemic of the WMCA's budgets.

Resolved:

- (1) The financial outturn position as at the end of July 2020 be noted.
- (2) The latest forecast for 2020/21, incorporating the estimated impact of COVID-19, be noted.
- (3) The key actions to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in 2020/21 and to bring the forecast position back within budget be noted.
- (4) The use of one-off reserves totalling £2.0m required to bring the forecast position back within budget be noted.
- (5) It be noted that an update on the Medium-Term Financial Planning position for the period 2021/22 to 2025/26 would be provided in the financial monitoring report considered by this board at its meeting on 13 November 2020.

55. Comprehensive Spending Review Representation and Economic Recovery Update

The board considered a report from the Director of Strategy on the proposed representation to the Government's 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review and on an update on the work to drive economic recovery, including the 'Recharging the West Midlands' submission to Government.

In July, guidance was published by the Government on the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review. The Chancellor of the Exchequer emphasised that it provided the opportunity to deliver on the third phase of coronavirus recovery activity, including "commitments made in the March Budget to rebuild, level up and invest in people and places, spreading opportunities more evenly across the nation." The WMCA agreed to develop a joint representation to be signed off by WMCA Board, centred around a strategic narrative of 'levelling up' and 'green recovery', with a core foundation of sustainable funding, including the proposals outlined in the 'Recharging the West Midlands' investment proposition.

Across all 31 asks in 'Recharge the West Midlands', 18 propositions had been either allocated funding or were in policy areas where it was believed the Government had allocated money, and officers would continue to push for the swift confirmation of funding for the West Midlands.

David Jamieson noted that West Midlands Police currently had a number of buildings that were underused and available for use, particularly in Solihull and Sutton Coldfield. He would welcome discussions with other public service providers who wished to make use of this availability. Councillor Ian Ward welcomed this suggestion, and supported the objective within the submission of having public services delivered at the right level and as close to communities as possible. Councillor Bob Sleigh confirmed that the consultation response had also been considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 7 September 2020.

Resolved:

- (1) The Comprehensive Spending Review representation be agreed for submission to the Treasury on behalf of the WMCA.
- (2) The update on economic recovery, following the report to the meeting of the WMCA Board on 24 July 2020 on this topic, be noted.

56. Inclusive Communities Portfolio Update

The board considered a report from the Chief Executive on the key deliverables and activity as part of the Inclusive Communities portfolio and how it was being refocused to better support the post COVID-19 recovery, and to respond to recent events such as Black Lives Matter, building on the Equalities Update report presented to the WMCA Board on 24 July 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic had thrown existing social, economic and health inequalities across the region into sharp focus, disproportionately impacting black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, women, young people and other disadvantaged groups in society. Since its launch in September 2019, the Young Combined Authority had contributed to the development of WMCA policy and identified its own priorities for young people. Reflecting on its first 12 months, and informed by feedback from Young Combined Authority members themselves, changes have been made recently to its operating model. At the heart of these changes had been the principles of engagement - ensuring the voice of the under-25s was present in planning, decision-making and delivery - and supporting the development of a closer relationship between the Young Combined Authority and the WMCA's political leadership that would enable more informed challenge and input.

Councillor Brigid Jones encouraged portfolio leads to meet with their Young Combined Authority shadow as a means of engaging with underrepresented voices. Councillor Ian Courts supported this suggestion and indicated that the Environment & Energy Board had received good engagement from members of the Young Combined Authority, which he hoped could be replicated with other boards. The Chair welcomed the report and looked forward to the Leadership Commission being a critical friend to the WMCA.

Resolved:

The updates and planned activity within the Inclusive Communities portfolio, including the recent changes to the Young Combined Authority, the proposed renewal and refocus of the Leadership Commission and other WMCA activity to embed equalities, diversity and inclusion, be noted and endorsed.

57. Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee - 14 July 2020

The board received the minutes of the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee meeting held on 14 July.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2020 be noted.

58. Wellbeing Board - 17 July 2020

The board received the minutes of the Wellbeing Board meeting held on 17 July.

In respect of minute no. 8 ('Regional Health Impact of COVID-19 Task & Finish Group'), Councillor Izzi Seccombe indicated that she would like to see the Young Combined Authority and representatives of black, Asian and minority ethnic communities involved in the task & finish group in order to hear as wide a range of views and experiences as possible.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2020 be noted.

59. Investment Board - 20 July 2020

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board meeting held on 20 July.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2020 be noted.

60. Strategic Economic Development Board - 20 July 2020

The board received the minutes of the Strategic Economic Development Board meeting held on 20 July.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2020 be noted.

61. Transport Delivery Committee - 20 July 2020

The board received the minutes of the Transport Delivery Committee meeting held on 20 July.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2020 be approved.

62. Investment Board - 10 August 2020

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board meeting held on 10 August.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 August 2020 be noted.

63. Strategic Economic Development Board - 20 August 2020

The board received the minutes of the Strategic Economic Development Board meeting held on 20 August.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 August 2020 be noted.

64. Housing & Land Delivery Board - 7 September 2020

The board received the minutes of the Housing & Land Delivery Board meeting held on 7 September.

In respect of minute no. 13 ('COVID-19 Recovery Discussion Paper: Town Centre Living and Regeneration'), Councillor Mike Bird confirmed that the board was now looking at how town centres could adapt to the challenges of COVID-19, particularly if the pandemic was to unlikely to disappear in the short term.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 be noted.

65. Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 7 September 2020

The board received the minutes of the inquorate Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7 September.

In respect of minute no. 68 ('Comprehensive Spending Review - Draft Submission Document'), Councillor Lisa Trickett thanked the Director of Strategy for including the committee's comments within the report considered earlier in the meeting. Members had also asked to see a tracker at future meetings in order to have an oversight of the funding resources that had been achieved through the 'Recharge West Midlands' investment proposition.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 be approved.

66. Young Combined Authority - August/September

The board considered a report of the Young Combined Authority activity during held in August and September.

Chris Burden reported that the Young Combined Authority was now entering its second year and its members had decided to look again at how it was operating. Changes had been made to give more opportunity for their voices to be heard, including identifying thematic leads to shadow the key work areas of the WMCA. The Chair welcomed these new arrangements and looked forward to working closely with Young Combined Authority members over the coming year.

Resolved:

The report be noted.

67. Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

That, in accordance with s100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the business or financial affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

68. Enabling the Development of the Arden Cross Multi-Storey Car Park (HS2 Interchange) Site

The board considered a report of the Director of Finance seeking approval of an Investment Programme allocation for development costs for the Arden Cross Multi-Storey Car Park.

As part of the HS2 Interchange station design, HS2 Ltd was empowered to deliver up to 7,400 car parking spaces for the station. The current configuration for the car parking contained within the HS2 Hybrid Act was entirely surface car parking and consumed 20.4 hectares of land adjacent to the station. This design would significantly reduce the amount of land available for commercial and residential development, as well as impede a sense of place being created at this new destination, negating the objective of driving economic growth around the new station. The Arden Cross alternative scheme for a multi-storey car park would allow up to 13.2 hectares of land to be made available for early commercial and residential development, subject to planning consent.

Councillor Ian Courts welcomed the proposals, noting that creating an economic zone in this area helped to maximise the benefit that HS2 would bring to the region.

Resolved:

- (1) An Investment Programme funding allocation, as set out in the report, for development costs towards the development of the Arden Cross Multi-Storey Car Park be approved.
- (2) The need as a West Midlands region to show a positive commitment towards the development of the Arden Cross Multi Storey Car Park be agreed.

- (3) The principle of a repayable grant from the WMCA to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, as set out in the report, to deliver the works at the HS2 site be agreed, which would be predicated on:
- (i) the WMCA and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council identifying reliable, sufficient and secure income streams to repay the investment;
 - (ii) the WMCA being adequately satisfied that the proposal was affordable and that the risks associated with the investment were acceptable to the WMCA;
 - (iii) the WMCA's constituent authorities supporting the agreement, and in particular noting the exposure to the under-write risk;
 - (iv) the proposals progressing through the WMCA's assurance framework;
 - (v) final approval to any repayable grant by the WMCA Board.
- (4) A further report be submitted at a future date, requesting funding approval as set out in the report, subject to the progression of this proposal through the WMCA's assurance frameworks.

69. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 13 November 2020 at 11.00am.

The meeting ended at 12.00pm

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WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY FORWARD PLAN: JANUARY 2021 - MARCH 2021

Title of Report	Description of Purpose	Date of Meeting	Key Decision (Y/N)	Lead Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Confidential	Category
WMCA Draft Budget 2021/22	To approve in draft the WMCA budget for 2021/22.	15 January 2021	Yes	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance
Financial Monitoring Report 2020/21	To consider the latest financial position.	15 January 2021	No	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance
Black Country Land and Property Investment Fund - Programme Update and Derogation Approval	To consider programme progress to date and request derogation approval for the programme until March 2026.	15 January 2021	Yes	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance
Digital Strategy	To agree the new Digital Strategy.	15 January 2021	Yes	Cllr Patrick Harley	Julia Goldsworthy	No	Culture & Digital
Culture Update	To consider a report on latest portfolio developments.	15 January 2021	No	Cllr Patrick Harley	Julia Goldsworthy	No	Culture & Digital

Title of Report	Description of Purpose	Date of Meeting	Key Decision (Y/N)	Lead Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Confidential	Category
'Help to Own' Pilot	To approve the establishment of a pilot 'help to own' scheme.	15 January 2021	Yes	Cllr Mike Bird	Gareth Bradford / Ian Martin	In part	Housing & Land
Rail - Package 1 Full Business Case	To consider an update on this issue.	15 January 2021	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	In part	Transport
Rail - Package 2 Full Business Case	To consider an update on this issue.	15 January 2021	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	In part	Transport
Road Safety	To consider an update on this issue.	15 January 2021	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	No	Transport
Reviewing the West Midlands Local Transport Plan	To consider the latest developments with reviewing the Local Transport Plan.	15 January 2021	No	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	No	Transport
Perry Barr Station Full Business Case	To approve the full business case for this project.	15 January 2020	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	In part	Transport



Title of Report	Description of Purpose	Date of Meeting	Key Decision (Y/N)	Lead Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Confidential	Category
Metro - Off-Tram Ticketing	To consider proposals for off-tram ticketing.	15 January 2021	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	No	Transport
WMCA Final Budget 2021/22	To approve the final WMCA budget for 2021/22.	12 February 2021	Yes	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance
Financial Monitoring Report 2020/21	To consider the latest financial position.	19 March 2021	No	Cllr Bob Sleigh	Linda Horne	No	Finance
Adult Education Budget	To provide an update on the allocation process and outcomes of the AEB.	19 March 2021	Yes	Cllr George Duggins	Julie Nugent	No	Productivity & Skills
Metro - Buy Before You Board Penalty Fares Byelaws	To consider proposals on this issue.	19 March 2021	Yes	Cllr Ian Ward	Laura Shoaf	No	Transport

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WMCA Board

Date	13 November 2020
Report title	Annual Delivery 2020/21: Mid-Year Update
Portfolio Lead	Mayor for the West Midlands - Andy Street
Accountable Chief Executive	Deborah Cadman, West Midlands Combined Authority email: deborah.cadman@wmca.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7200
Accountable Employee	Julia Goldsworthy, Director of Strategy email: julia.goldsworthy@wmca.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7941
Report has been considered by	Strategic Leadership Team - 21 October 2020 Programme Board - 30 October 2020 Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 2 November 2020

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the mid-year summary of progress against portfolio deliverables for 2020/21.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present a mid-year summary of progress against portfolio deliverables for 2020/21.

2. Background

- 2.1 As part of its business planning and performance management, the WMCA normally produces an Annual Plan. The purpose of the Plan is to set out the priorities of the WMCA, provide a strategic context for the WMCA as an organisation, and to articulate what is being delivered and planned across each of the priority portfolios.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 5 June 2020, the WMCA Board agreed not to publish an Annual Plan for 2020/21 given a need to reassess the portfolio deliverables originally agreed for 2020/21 (by the WMCA Board on 14 February 2020) and review WMCA's ongoing activity, strategic aims and planning processes in the context of the Region's recovery from Covid-19.
- 2.3 A report to the Board on 18 September 2020 provided a further update on annual delivery for 2020/21, including the changes that had been made in-year to deliverables to better align portfolio activity to recovery. That report also proposed that a mid-year review of delivery be presented to the Board in November, in line with our usual performance reporting practice.

3. Progress against portfolio deliverables

- 3.1 The ***Annual Delivery 2020/21: Mid-Year Update*** document attached at **Appendix 1** provides a half year summary of delivery and progress against 2020/21 WMCA portfolio activity. It enables the Board and other stakeholders to review the progress of portfolio activities that support our inclusive economic growth aspirations and realise the vision of a healthier, happier, better connected and more prosperous region. It also provides an opportunity to summarise how the context of COVID-19 and the region's recovery from it has changed the environment the Authority is operating in, and how it has impacted on portfolio activity delivered and planned.
- 3.2 The document has a section on each of the portfolios including:
 - A statement summarising overall progress and the context for delivery
 - Commentary against each of the high-level deliverables
- 3.3 There is also a section summarising some of the enabling activity that has supported portfolio delivery. This includes how governance and decision-making has been adapted, and how the Combined Authority has played a role in leading and convening the region's economic response to the pandemic, complementing and supporting activity at both a regional and national level.
- 3.4 In terms of progress against deliverables, most milestones and targets are being met, despite the onset of COVID-19 and there has been some notable progress, achievements and delivery across portfolios including:

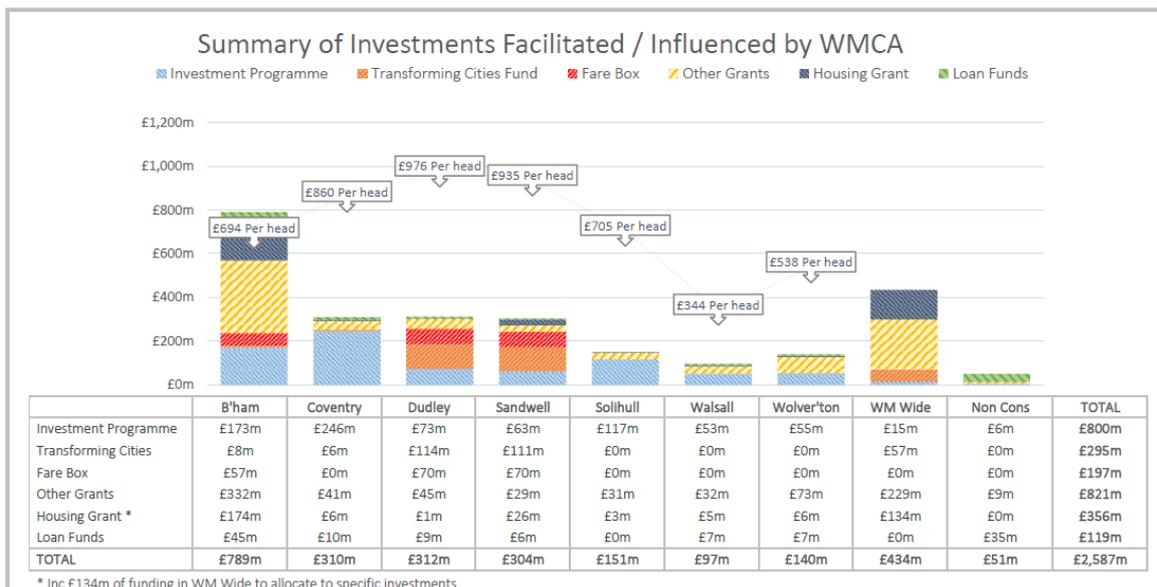
Portfolio	Progress, achievements and delivery
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 and the climate emergency are shaping delivery of the Local Transport Plan. • Successful restart and safe management of the transport system post lockdown • Supported the safe return of children to school. • Secured and coordinated funding to support recovery including the Emergency Active Travel Fund and the UK's first eScooter pilot on public highways.
Housing & Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £84m secured for brownfield regeneration. • Housing and Land Business Plan reviewed in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure effective response to COVID-19. • Establishment of Zero Carbon taskforce to take forward critical work on this priority.
Productivity & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved the Mayor's Mentors project target, meaning 10,000 young people across the West Midlands have benefited from mentoring interventions. • Successfully completed the £5m Construction Gateway programme. • A further £1.5m Government funding to scale-up the £5m Digital Retraining Fund. • Continuing to see apprenticeship starts despite the onset of COVID-19. • Secured an additional £5.3m into our Adult Education Budget in response to the crisis.
Economy and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Recharge the West Midlands' proposition helped prioritise local investment and shape an ambitious submission to Government's Spending Review. • West Midlands intelligence teams have informed policy decisions through intelligence products such as the State of the Region report. • Create Central and the Creative Scale-Up programme have provided specialist support to important growth sectors. • The West Midlands Innovation Programme is now operational and seeks to boost demand-led innovation by businesses.
Environment & Energy, HS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSP Global appointed to develop the first Five Year Plan in support of WM2041. • There is increasing visibility of WM2041 amongst a diverse set of stakeholders who are keen to support our ambitions for net zero. • £350k funding secured to enable Energy Capital to establish an implementation plan for the Fuel Poverty and Regional Retrofit programme. • Energy infrastructure strategy to support ULEV/ transport decarbonisation underway.
Public Service Reform & Social Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New project initiated in Homelessness Prevention focusing on Rough sleepers. • Established a £20K spot purchase fund with Royal British Legion to support veterans at risk of homelessness. • Through a successful collaboration with Solihull MBC we have worked together to build an outcomes framework. • Advising and supporting East Birmingham Board to codesign with Birmingham City Council to ensure it is focused on inclusion and collaborative delivery. • Developed rich insight from civil society, public services and a range of partners into the incredible innovation, enterprise and flexibility undertaken during the pandemic.
Culture & Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with the region's Culture Response Unit to coordinate information about support and guidance to cultural organisations.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cultural Leadership Board are now focussing on supporting the cultural sector post-COVID-19 and ensuring that culture is at the heart of the region's recovery. COVID-19 emphasised the importance of digital connectivity in our region and gave a new focus to the refresh of our digital strategy. WM5G – is continuing to deliver against the Infrastructure Acceleration targets and have successfully renegotiated dates with Telefonica to offset delays associated with COVID-19 and have secured approval for £10m of funding.
Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPS Trial recruitment at 75% despite Covid and additional funding secured till Jun-21. Physical Activity strategy presented to Wellbeing Board. Regional Health Impact of COVID-19 Task and Finish Group established and interim report published. Thrive at Work Awards Night held with 400 businesses now engaged. Population Intelligence Hub established and delivering Health of Region Report.
Inclusive Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabled the Young Combined Authority to provide challenge and insight from the 16-25 year olds. Repurposed planned activity, in response to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on disadvantaged communities. Supported the Leadership Commission to identify key aims for improving economic opportunities for underrepresented groups. Championed the WMCA's equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda, and the development of further actions to improve diversity and inclusion outcomes.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The portfolio deliverables were developed as part of the Authority's 2020/21 Annual Planning and Budget setting process. The 2020/21 Budget was approved at the WMCA Board on 14 February 2020 and contained a summary of the planned delivery that the budget underpins. The WMCA Board receives a regular Financial Monitoring Report which provides a comprehensive update on financial performance.

4.2 The diagram below are shows a per capita breakdown of investments facilitated and/or influenced by WMCA since the first Devolution Deal.



5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications as a direct consequence of this report. The Annual Plan however does support the principle of transparency in the actions of the Authority and indirectly reduces the prospect of legal challenges.

6. Equalities Implications

- 6.1 The individual projects and programmes listed in the portfolio deliverables will be equality impact assessed to ensure key equality considerations are taken into account.

7. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 7.1 The document attached sets out activity that contribute to the overall vision of a West Midlands that has a healthier, happier, better connected and more prosperous population. At the heart of that vision is an ambition to drive inclusive economic growth.

8. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 8.1 The documents appended to this report include information about delivery and performance across the region.

9. Other Implications

10. Schedule of Background Papers

Report to WMCA Board on 5 June 2020: Annual Planning: Review of 2019/20 delivery and update on 2020/21 planning

<https://governance.wmca.org.uk/documents/s4196/Annual%20Review%20Report.pdf>

Report to WMCA Board on 18 September 2020: Update on Annual Planning and Delivery 2020/21 <https://governance.wmca.org.uk/documents/s4645/Report.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix 1: Annual Delivery 2020/21 – Mid Year Review

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WMCA Annual Delivery 2020/21: Mid-Year Review

Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to provide a half year summary of delivery and progress against 2020/21 WMCA portfolio activity. Ordinarily these 'High Level Deliverables' for each portfolio would be included in a published Annual Plan. However the WMCA Board (5th June 2020) endorsed the decision to not publish a plan for 2020/21 due to the onset of COVID-19 and the need to review and reprioritise WMCA delivery, enabling and influencing activity to ensure it supports the region's recovery.

This document enables the WMCA Board and other stakeholders to review the progress of portfolio activities that deliver, enable and support our inclusive economic growth aspirations and realise the vision of a healthier, happier, better connected and more prosperous region. It also provides an opportunity to summarise how the context of COVID-19 and the region's recovery from it has changed the environment within which the Combined Authority is operating and how it has impacted on portfolio activity delivered and planned.

Portfolio progress

Most milestones and targets are being met, despite the onset of COVID-19 and there has been some notable progress, achievements and delivery across all portfolios including:

Transport

- COVID-19 and the climate emergency are shaping delivery of the Local Transport Plan.
- Successful restart and safe management of the transport system post lockdown
- Supported the safe return of children to school.
- Secured and coordinated funding to support recovery including the Emergency Active Travel Fund and the UK's first eScooter pilot on public highways.

Housing & Land

- The West Midlands is well ahead of trajectory on the 215,000 homes target of the Housing Deal, delivering 16,928 new homes in 2019.
- The West Midlands is ahead of trajectory on the 8,000 homes target of the £100m Land Fund and will exceed the housing starts trajectory set by HMG on Land Fund sites in 2021 and 2022.
- The West Midlands has effectively deployed devolved land funds - directly acquiring, assembling and remediating land where there is clear market failure.
- The West Midlands has a strong pipeline of sites ready and waiting for the next tranche of Land Fund to be released.

Productivity & Skills

- Achieved the Mayor's Mentors project target, meaning 10,000 young people across the West Midlands have benefited from mentoring interventions.
- Successfully completed the £5m Construction Gateway programme.
- A further £1.5m Government funding to scale-up the £5m Digital Retraining Fund.
- Continuing to see apprenticeship starts despite the onset of COVID-19.
- Secured an additional £5.3m into our Adult Education Budget in response to the crisis.

Economy and Innovation

- The 'Recharge the West Midlands' proposition helped prioritise local investment and shape an ambitious submission to Government's Spending Review.
- West Midlands intelligence teams have informed policy decisions through intelligence products such as the 'State of the Region' report (presented to WMCA Board in July).
- Create Central and the Creative Scale-Up programme have provided specialist support to important growth sectors.
- The West Midlands Innovation Programme is now operational and seeks to boost demand-led innovation by businesses.

Environment, Energy & HS2

- WSP Global appointed to develop the first Five Year Plan in support of WM2041.
- There is increasing visibility of WM2041 amongst a diverse set of stakeholders who are keen to support our ambitions for net zero.
- £350k funding secured to enable Energy Capital to establish an implementation plan for the Fuel Poverty and Regional Retrofit programme.
- Energy infrastructure strategy to support ULEV/ transport decarbonisation underway.

Public Service Reform & Social Economy

- New project initiated in Homelessness Prevention focusing on Rough sleepers.
- Established a £20K spot purchase fund with Royal British Legion to support veterans at risk of homelessness.
- Through a successful collaboration with Solihull MBC we have worked together to build an outcomes framework.
- Advising and supporting East Birmingham Board to co-design with Birmingham City Council to ensure it is focused on inclusion and collaborative delivery.
- Developed rich insight from civil society, public services and a range of partners into the incredible innovation, enterprise and flexibility undertaken during the pandemic.

Culture & Digital

- Worked with the region's Culture Response Unit to coordinate information about support and guidance to cultural organisations.
- The Cultural Leadership Board are now focussing on supporting the cultural sector post-COVID-19 and ensuring that culture is at the heart of the region's recovery.
- COVID-19 emphasised the importance of digital connectivity in our region and gave a new focus to the refresh of our digital strategy.
- WM5G is continuing to deliver against the Infrastructure Acceleration targets and have successfully renegotiated dates with Telefonica to offset delays associated with COVID-19 and have secured approval for £10m of funding.

Wellbeing

- IPS Trial recruitment at 75% despite COVID-19 and additional funding secured till June 2021.
- Regional Health Impact of COVID-19 Task and Finish Group established and interim report published.
- Thrive at Work Awards Night held with 400 businesses now engaged.
- Population Intelligence Hub established and delivering Health of Region Report.

Inclusive Communities

- Enabled the Young Combined Authority to provide challenge and insight from the 16-25 year olds.
- Repurposed planned activity, in response to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on disadvantaged communities.

- ‘Relaunched’ the Leadership Commission to identify key aims for improving economic opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- Championed the WMCA’s equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda, and the development of further actions to improve diversity and inclusion outcomes.

Regional Economic Context

The ‘State of the Region’¹ report provides a thorough analysis of the region’s economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It describes how, in the past 12 months, the West Midlands region broke through the £100bn GVA barrier and had been bucking the national trend on a host of economic indicators, such as enterprise and employment growth. All this was powered by a young workforce, increasing its skills and moving to the region. However, underlying this growth there were significant issues with inequality, poverty, youth unemployment, low skills, poor health and school performance.

Since the turn of the year, the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been severe. First quarter UK GDP fell dropped 20% compared to last year, manufacturing PMI hit an all-time low, but bounced back over summer, furlough hit 619k people across the 3 LEP area. The overall claimant count has gone up by just under 50% (from 115k to 214k) and youth claimants have doubled (22k to 43k). Sectors where we have previously seen growth and expansion are now hardest hit, such as construction and the expanding higher education sector which makes our 3 cities, Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton vulnerable. WMREDI (with support of and in collaboration with the Office for Data Analytics and wider partners) continue to produce weekly Economic Monitors², which are shared and discussed with the Economic Impact Group and local authority/LEP economy directors.

Economic models consistently show the West Midlands to be hit hardest by the economic crisis, shrinking by around 10%. This is because of our industrial and demographic mix, with some local economies among the most vulnerable in the UK (e.g. Stratford upon Avon, Tamworth and Dudley), reliance on key exporting sectors such as automotive and the large university base. Those same models also show relatively strong regional growth in 2021, but this depends on assumptions about health conditions, future market demand and international trade agreements and the impact of a second lockdown. The point is that the stakes are high everywhere, but particularly so in the West Midlands.

¹ <https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/4290/state-of-the-region-2020-final-full-report.pdf>

² <https://blog.bham.ac.uk/cityredi/west-midlands-weekly-economic-impact-monitor-30th-october-2020/>

Portfolio delivery and progress

This section details the progress against portfolio activities that deliver, enable and support our inclusive economic growth aspirations.

Transport

Progress Summary: Transport		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to progress delivery of our local transport plan – with major schemes moving forward including starting the delivery of the Metro Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension and the development of new rail stations, SPRINT and Metro extensions have met key stages. Set out proposals to review the Local Transport Plan in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Climate Emergency. Successfully managed the restart and safe management of the transport system after lockdown through the newly supported Transport Cell working closely with our partners. Worked with bus operators to manage changes to the bus network and ensure stops and interchanges were ready for social distancing; developed a data portal provide intelligence to support decision making; developed a communications and marketing campaign to provide up to date and trustworthy travel information. Supported the return to school across the region to ensure that children could access schools safely. Secured funding for and co-ordinated the delivery of transport investment to support the recovery including the Emergency Active Travel Fund and the UK's first eScooter pilot on public highways. 		
Update on High Level Deliverables		
Customer Services	Create a system for easy to use and affordable payments to access the transport system – customer information	Good progress but the COVID-19 pandemic has created problems which has affected some areas of delivery.
	Create a system for easy to use and affordable payments to access the transport system -payment	Significant progress has been made and the impacts of the COVID-19 have been managed through the various projects.
Development & Delivery	Deliver our Cycling Charter & making streets more walkable	Key highlights include appointment of West Midlands Bikeshare scheme and launch in October, development of Starley cycle network and delivery of a number of walking and cycling measures through the Emergency Active Travel Fund.
	Deliver a step change in our Mass Transit Network to unlock growth and tackle climate change	Good progress being made with intention to publish Notice to Proceed in October
	Management of the TfWM Capital Programme	The programme continues to be reviewed in respect to financial pressures.
	Increase the efficiency and performance of transport delivery in the West Midlands	Governance in place for each delivery programme but further work to be undertaken to standardise approaches
	Commonwealth Games Active Travel Legacy	The Cycling and Walking Legacy Task and Finish Group has been established.
Integrated Transport Network	Make our transport assets more affordable by increasing commercial revenues	Currently working with Clear Channel to understand income levels for the remainder of the contract following constraints caused by COVID-19.
	Delivering our bus vision to support growth, inclusion and reduced car dependency	TfWM has worked closely with the Bus Alliance to ensure that the bus network has continued to provide a safe and essential service. Work continues on future delivery models for bus services and Demand Responsive Services in the West Midlands taking account of the implications of the pandemic and seeking to take advantage of additional devolution and regulatory reform.
	Reduce emissions from bus travel	Impact of pandemic is likely to mean that c95%, not 100% of all buses will achieve Euro VI by April 2021.
	Enhance infrastructure and customer experience at our bus stations and major interchanges	COVID-19 pandemic has required additional measures to support social distancing.
	Ensure strategic and operational Health and Safety aims and key deliverables are communicated and embedded throughout the WMCA	WMCA processes were reviewed and updated to respond to CV19 and which adheres to government guidance and the response to CV19 in respect of H&S is continuously under review and additional measures have been embedded in our practice.

	Develop park & ride to support better access to the Integrated Transport System	Additional capacity at Bradley Lane and Longbridge has opened.
	Develop park & ride to support other Key Deliverables	
Rail	Enhance the capacity of our rail network for a better connected region	The impact of the pandemic on rail travel is not yet understood. A review of the West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy is underway.
	Use rail franchising to support and engage on rail development	Rail franchising is no longer being pursued by the Government. WMCA and WMRE will continue to seek to ensure that reforms of the rail industry deliver in the interests of the region.
	Continue to improve the quality and capacity of our rail stations and interchanges	Feasibility Studies ongoing into a number of proposals including 'One Station' in central Birmingham and a new station at Aldridge.
	Develop a single rail network vision & devolution case to support a growing West Midlands	Rail franchising is no longer being pursued by the Government. WMCA and WMRE will continue to seek to ensure that reforms of the rail industry deliver in the interests of the region.
Metro	Improve our financial performance of our Metro to support growth of the network	Improvements to payment systems have been progressed. Off-tram ticketing arrangements will be considered by WMCA Board in November.
	Extend our Metro Network to better serve more people and businesses	Progress with delivery of Birmingham city centre, Wolverhampton city centre and Wednesbury & Brierley Hill Metro extensions have progressed. The Full Business Case for the Birmingham city centre eastside extension to Curzon Street has been approved.
Network Resilience	Manage the West Midlands Transport Network and improving coordination with the Regional Transport Co-ordination Centre	The RTCC has remained operational throughout the pandemic, providing a critical service to manage the transport network. TfWM continues support Authorities through the wider integration of CCTV systems into the RTCC.
	Keep the transport networks safe and secure	A new Safer Travel Plan is in delivery by the Safer Travel Partnership. The Strategic Road Safety Partnership is now active, with an independent chair appointed and officer resources being recruited.
	Keep travellers informed and find new ways of keeping the West Midlands Moving through travel demand management	TfWM have supported businesses and education institutions throughout the return to work/school. As well as supporting LA's, HE and HS2 with ongoing construction works and raising the awareness to travellers.
	Plan and develop the Transport Operations Plan for the Commonwealth Games for visitors (Spectators and Workforce) to the region	The Transport Operations Plan remains on schedule and additional resources have been recruited.
	Mitigating the impacts of transport investment programmes on the West Midlands Networks	TfWM have implemented a toolkit of highways interventions to improve the efficiency of the highway network.
	Developing and enhancing the performance of the KRN to tackle congestion	Evidence work is progressing to develop the KRN Action Plans with Local Authorities and explore/test how future interventions/measures will improve the KRN.
Policy, Strategy & Innovation	Maintain and refresh the West Midlands Statutory Transport Plan(s) and policies	A report was approved at the July WMCA Board setting out they key issues any new plan would need to address. A revised plan will not be adopted in 2021.
	Embed transport policy & strategy in the plans and programmes of the wider WMCA & partners to support integrated development planning	Working closely with Local Authority and WMCA colleagues, progress has been made to develop a draft developer guide and provide technical analysis & data for inclusive growth corridor plans.
	Continue to develop and maintain a robust common data environment for transport	The Data Insight Service is exceeding expected targets and is taking on additional analysis beyond original scope. TfWM is working closely with Local Authorities to understand future needs of the service and how funding agreements can be secured.

	Develop and maintain a deep understanding of the needs, attitudes and perceptions of people who use our transport system	A series of COVID-19 tracking surveys have been undertaken and have provided valuable insight into current and future transport behaviour.
	Analyse the transport system to provide deep insight, recommend actions and produce robust and funded evidenced based business cases for schemes and programmes	Future transport model options are progressing well. Ongoing scenario planning work is providing insight into the impacts on COVID-19 on transport system and how it could impact the future.
	Coordinate and deliver a globally significant transport innovation programme	A number of test bed facilities will go fully live in early 2021. Working is progressing with partners to maximise the opportunities from ULEV's charging infrastructure and 5G.

Housing & Land

Progress Summary: Housing & Land	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The West Midlands is well ahead of trajectory on the 215,000 homes target of the Housing Deal, delivering 16,928 new homes in 2019. The West Midlands is ahead of trajectory on the 8,000 homes target of the £100m Land Fund and will exceed the housing starts trajectory set by HMG on Land Fund sites in 2021 and 2022. The West Midlands has effectively deployed devolved land funds - directly acquiring, assembling and remediating land where there is clear market failure. The West Midlands has a strong pipeline of sites ready and waiting for the next tranche of Land Fund to be released.
Update on High Level Deliverables	
Brownfield Investment & Acquisition Programme	This is an ongoing programme of investment into schemes/developments through a range of funding pots. As such there is no "completion date" or target as such
Town Centre Regeneration Programme	Part of the wider Brownfield acquisition and interventions programme, as per HLD1 above
Land and Transport Delivery Programme	Part of the wider Brownfield acquisition and interventions programme, as per HLD1 above
Inclusive Growth Corridor Programme	Ongoing development of Corridor Programme for Walsall to Wolverhampton; Sandwell to Dudley (for which Delivery & Investment Plans are being prepared); and Greater Icknield to Smethwick for which a Development Framework & Delivery Strategy is being prepared. All work undertaken in collaboration with local authorities.
Local Plans	Local Plans' progress is monitored as part of the CA/HMG Housing Deal. The CA has no direct role or ability to influence delivery of Plans but can assist with support where requested. This is an ongoing process, completed only when all plans have been adopted by local authorities. As such there is no "completion date" or target as such.
Affordable Housing Policy and Delivery Programme	MoU agreed for Joint Venture Affordable Housing Delivery Vehicle. Regional Affordable Definition Agreed January 2020. Business Case to HMG for devolved Regional Affordable Housing funds included in CSR representation.
Town Centre Policy Programme	TC Recovery Plan in development as part of H&L Economic Recovery Plan Development and Investment Plans for 5 Town Centres being prepared. Ongoing programme of specific interventions. Town Centre Taskforce workshops held with 2 local authorities in Sep 2020. The Town Centre Programme is an ongoing process extending to support other town centres across the region. As such there is no "completion date" or target as such.
Town Deals	Town Investment Plans are being submitted by Town Boards for each location. WMCA represented on most boards, contributing to discussions and providing support on preparation of these Town Investment Plans. HMG decisions awaited on outstanding Cohort 1 submissions. All Town Investment Plans submitted by January 2021. Thereafter Towns which have been offered a Deal by HMG will work up detailed business cases to support submissions for Town Deals. Continuing discussions with HMG thereafter.
West Midlands Investment and Developer Frameworks	Delivery 70% 2020-21 & 30% Q1 2021-22. Investment Prospectus being revised for MIPIM 2021. Commissioned Partnerships established with 2x Developers. 2x further agreements in pipeline. Single Commissioning Framework promotional campaign in development.
Housing Deal	Housing Deal Land Fund Tranche 1 deployed on schedule. Further Tranches forthcoming. Outstanding HIF funding (£85m) being pursued through further business cases to HMG.
One Public Estate	The OPE programme is being reviewed as part of the H&L Covid19 Recovery work to form part of a wider Public Land approach led by the CA and its partners. This will be an ongoing & medium-term programme of work that will form a key element of the directorate approach in future years. OPE Phase 8 & Land Release Fund programme announced for November 2020 submission. WMCA & partners developing application.
AMC Programme	AMC Business Case delivered for HMG submission July 2020 & ongoing dialogue with officials. AMC Expert Advisory Panel established. AMC routemap being finalised.

National Development	This is an ongoing programme of and the deliverable is engagement with key stakeholders on a weekly basis. This includes a range of private sector, local public services and central government partners.
Design Charter	Completed January 2020.

Productivity & Skills

Progress Summary: Productivity & Skills	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have achieved our Mayor's Mentors project target, ahead of schedule, meaning 10,000 young people across the West Midlands have benefited from mentoring interventions. We are now integrating learnings right across our wider Young People programme. We have successfully drawn our £5m Construction Gateway programme to a close, having trained over 2,000 people and moved around half of these learners straight into sustained employment, despite the challenging jobs market. Our innovations in digital retraining – specifically our 'bootcamp' model – have gained national recognition, and we have been awarded a further £1.5m Government funding to scale-up our £5m Digital Retraining Fund provision. Despite understandable concerns around redundancies due to the current Covid19 crisis, we are continuing to see apprenticeship starts, and we welcomed our 1000th WM Levy Transfer funded apprentice this summer. We have secured an additional £5.3m into our Adult Education Budget in response to the crisis, which will support Sector-based Work Academy Programmes and targeted 'high value' level 2 and 3 courses for adults without employment or employment training opportunities.
Update on High Level Deliverables	
Prepare our young people for future life and work	Online youth employment platform launched (October) that brings together the full range of opportunities available for young people across the region. This will be a critical resource at this time – when young people will undoubtedly be hit hardest by the economic crisis – and we will be working to supplement this with an integrated work experience platform by the end of the year.
Create regional networks of specialist technical education and training	We are extending our digital retraining provision, having secured additional funding. We will continue to fund provision that supports inclusion for a range of different communities across the region.
Accelerate the take up of good quality apprenticeships across the region	We have now secured over £18m of our £20m WM Apprenticeship Levy Transfer target for this year. We are expecting apprenticeship provision to be challenging, given the climate, but we will continue to champion and support this.
Support inclusive growth by more people the skills to get and sustain good jobs and careers	Our Connecting Communities (employment support pilot) programme delivery has understandably been impacted by Covid19. In light of this, we have negotiated contract flexibilities with DWP and are working with contractors to support online engagement as current circumstances dictate.
Continue to test, develop and embed new approaches to commissioning and delivering provision funded through the Adult Education Budget	Entering a new academic year, we are now working towards our second year of devolved Adult Education Budget priorities. We are continuing to re-balance provision towards technical and higher-level courses and we are now amplifying Sector-based Work Academy Programmes and related 'sector gateway' provision, leading to tangible job outcomes for West Midlands residents.
Promote the concept of skills ecosystem for the region	We are continuing to work closely with Local Authorities, JCP, colleges and local providers and other partners to develop a comprehensive understanding of, and signposting across, local skills provision. We have, for example, taken a focused, place-based approach in East Birmingham to address specific skills gaps and support local people into local jobs.
Additional work to be undertaken in submitting proposal to government and other funders	We are continually working to secure funding against our recovery proposals and related business cases, subject to moving Government timetables.

Economy & Innovation

Progress Summary: Economy and Innovation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The region has come together to secure measures that make our economy more resilient to the economic shock from the pandemic and end of the Transition Period. This has seen weekly meetings of the economic impact group and more frequent SED Board activity to understand from business and civic leaders the effects of economic shock and develop practical solutions. The long-term Local Industrial Strategy pinpoints the region's assets and long-term sector strengths, and these have been embedded in economic recovery planning. For example, the 'Recharge the West Midlands' proposition helped prioritise local investment and shape an ambitious submission to Government's spending review. With Government expected update to the nation Industrial Strategy, the region's partners have also committed to refresh the region's economic strategy to guide an economic recovery that meets our net zero carbon aim and further embeds inclusive growth by, for example, using the foundational economy to improve living standards of the low paid. Through the Office for Data Analytics and working in conjunction with WM-Redi and LEPs, the region has produced excellent analysis to inform policy decisions. This includes the State of the Region report, weekly Monitors and a monthly dashboard on the health of the region's economy. Create Central and the Creative Scale-Up programme have provided specialist support to important growth sectors. This has resulted in a full executive team established - externally funded and directed by the screen industries – to secure investment and develop more inclusive screen industries. The Scale Up programme has now 4 cohorts of more resilient and growing businesses, which have been helped to survive, develop their growth plans and secure new investment. The West Midlands Innovation Programme, which runs to November 2022 to boost demand-led innovation by businesses, is now in operation. The programme's processes have been established and project approvals and funding are starting to really incentivise sectors and industries to introduce new products and processes. 	
Update on High Level Deliverables	
Economic Resilience: Enable and coordinate cross-organisational and cross-partner working that builds economic resilience in the West Midlands	Established new resilience activity to address the impact of COVID-19, including publishing the 'Recharge the West Midlands' investment case and continue to prepare for Brexit.
Local Industrial Strategy Delivery: work with partners to secure and implement the priority projects and programmes	The Local Industrial Strategy will evolve to address the pandemic's effect on businesses and local economies, and the likely update to the national Industrial Strategy. This will result in refresh of economic vision and strategy, with core processes to be tailored to that refresh.
Increase demand led business innovation in the wider economy, enabled by the Innovation Board and delivery of phase one of the West Midlands Innovation programme	The Innovation Lead has now been appointed and the region is also now leading on MIT REAP UK and Made Smarter work to strengthen innovation ecosystem on behalf of the region.
Through the ODA provide integrated intelligence to support decision making in the region on a range of issues	WMREDI, Black Country Consortium and the Strategic Hub are developing outline of tools and toolkits for evaluations. The State of the Sub Region report has also been developed and delivered.
Create Central – mobilise the industry led board to convert 3 years of consultation into a clear plan for action that will secure substantial resource and investment into the sector	Progressed the Create Central governance review, agreed joint partnership approach and single pipeline for scale-up and secured the BFI projects.
Creative Scale up pilot – to identify and deliver a programme of activity to support business growth and improve their investability	2 Cohorts have already been supported on the Programme with another 2 to run. Trainers and mentors have been recruited onto the programme.

Environment & Energy, HS2

Progress Summary: Environment, Energy & HS2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WSP appointed to develop the first Five Year Plan in support of WM2041. This will give a clear indication of carbon savings against investment required. Increasing visibility of WM2041 amongst a diversity of stakeholders (from local authorities, national government and business) who are keen to work with us and support our ambitions for net zero. A clear pipeline of programmes and projects that are being delivered to address climate change in the WMCA area. £350k funding secured to enable Energy Capital to establish an implementation plan for the Fuel Poverty and Regional Retrofit programme. Work has been commissioned and 6 supporting working groups established. A further £0.9m leveraged into the region to fill existing gaps in fuel poverty support provision going to Act on Energy. Energy infrastructure strategy to support ULEV/ transport decarbonisation underway. Evidence base completed by Cenex. Integration into TfWM programme deepening. Delivery of the Regional Energy Strategy progressing well. Energy Transition project approved by the SED Board and is under development with Western Power Distribution. Smart local energy system innovation projects funded by Innovate UK are progressing well and learning outcomes are informing our national positioning on energy devolution. Progress is being made on positioning the West Midlands for energy devolution, with a positioning piece recently commissioned for the Mayor. £2m secured towards Repowering the Black Country industrial decarbonisation programme. 	
Update on High Level Deliverables	
Support the development of the evidence base for the WMCA 2041 zero emissions target	WSP have been commissioned to produce the first five-year plan (2021 – 2026) as part of the WM2041 work. This plan will provide a robust evidence base for the programmes that will need to be implemented, and the costs for doing so. There will also be a section on the implications for jobs and skills in relation to the transition to net zero. All directorates at the WMCA are being involved in this process and we are working with the constituent local authorities and the LEPs.
Develop the first five-year plan for WM2041 to provide clarity on the actions, projects and programmes that will need to be put in place from 2021 - 2026 [this will be the first of four five-year plans]	
Build and deliver on priorities within UK's first clean growth Local Industrial Strategy	We are working with business to support the implementation of the WM2041 programme – we are developing a business pledge as well as running a clean innovation challenge (with 5G) to support growth and collaboration in the journey to net zero. We are also working with the GBSLEP as they build out the Low Carbon Sector Action Plan. The Circular Economy Taskforce and Routemap (finalised by spring 2021) will also give good indication of business opportunities through resource efficiency.
Ensure the energy infrastructure of the region supports a competitive industrial base, clean growth and social inclusion.	<p>Energy Capital have joined a renewed Environment Board, defined as the Energy and Environment Board. The WMCA Director of PSR and Inclusive Growth now sits on the Board and is seeking internal funding to secure Energy Capital as part of the #WM2041 delivery team.</p> <p>Energy Capital is working with PSR team and Strategy and Policy team to build the case for energy devolution. Details being pulled together to submit to the BEIS minister in November 2020.</p> <p>We are working on the #WM2041 delivery plan to agree TfWM priorities for transport decarbonisation. We are developing a strategy to direct funding and resources to ensure energy infrastructure is capable of supporting smooth and cost-effective decarbonisation (including Energy Transition project). EV working groups with LA's have been established. An ultra-rapid charging hub model has been developed for which we are seeking funding. ULEV working groups are looking into various aspects of strategy development including policy and data and we have connected with Midlands Connect on developing an alternative fuel strategy.</p>
Decarbonise WMCA	The Environment Team is working to develop a carbon literacy programme for WMCA staff. We are working with the Carbon Literacy Project on this. WMCA assets, and their potential, are also being considered by the five-year planning process.

Support partners to deliver HS2	Marc Liddeth (Environment Agency) nominated as Chair for a revised Environment and Landscape Board.
Support the sustainability work and legacy for the Commonwealth Games (CWG)	The Environment Team contributes to the CWG Sustainability Forum as well as a dedicated group supported by central government. We are collaborating with DCMS on a behaviour change programme and await the publication of the CWG net zero plan.
Develop the work around natural capital across the region, convening and supporting different organisations for delivery	This is focusing on a number of different areas: 1) New Economics Foundation have developed a study on access to green space across the WMCA area, which will support targeting of community green grants; 2) an MoU has been signed with the West Midlands National Park and we are supporting initial project delivery; and, 3) the tree planting platform (the Virtual Forest) has been redesigned and will be launched during tree planting week. We are working with multiple national, regional and local stakeholders on these programmes. There was a significant natural capital ask as part of the CSR bid to Government.
WM2041 communications and behaviour change	There is now a WM2041 communication strategy in place, with funding to develop the design and visuals to support the programme. We are about to undertake soft market testing with organisations specialising in behaviour change in relation to climate. There is also alignment with the CWG legacy programme. WMCA is also a founding partner of the global 'Count Us In' initiative.
Develop and implement a fuel poverty and regional retrofit programme	<p>The Fuel Poverty Task Force reported in March 2020 with the Warm Homes Saves Lives report.</p> <p>Secured new funding from the Innovation Board. Fuel Poverty and Regional Retrofit programme partnerships established to bring together partners from across the region to develop an implementation plan, secure further investment and develop skills and training opportunities associated with an upscale in fuel poverty support and quality retrofit rates.</p> <p>New funding secured to deliver a social housing decarbonisation pilot using BEIS funding through the Midlands Energy Hub. Project is underway.</p>

Public Service Reform & Social Economy

Progress Summary: Public Service Reform & Social Economy	
<p>The portfolio has had to adapt its priorities in light of the pandemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New project initiated in Homelessness Prevention focusing on Rough sleepers where 214 unique individuals have been supported to retain or enter tenancies between June and September 2020. • Established a £20K spot purchase fund with Royal British Legion to support veterans at risk of homelessness. • Through a successful collaboration with Solihull MBC we have worked together to build an outcomes framework for a new development, defining the overarching outcomes, as well as providing a benchmark that elements of the development proposal can be assessed against. This has supported the decision making process around the housing element and discussions around how the buildings and service offer can be designed to tackle health inequalities in the area. • Advising and supporting East Birmingham Board to co-design with Birmingham City Council to ensure it is focused on inclusion and collaborative delivery. • Developed rich insight from civil society, public services and a range of partners into the incredible innovation, enterprise and flexibility undertaken during the pandemic and the system level improvements and community recovery priorities required going forwards. 	
Update on High Level Deliverables	
Strengthen and grow our approach to Applied Inclusive Growth by embedding WMCA's Inclusive Growth assets into the WMCA's governance, Single Assurance Framework and procurement procedures including its Economic Recovery activity	We have successfully embedded inclusive growth principles into the new Strategic Assurance Framework (SAF) and governance processes. We have analysed a number of business cases submitted as part of the economic recovery process and comprehensive spending review activity against the inclusive growth framework and made appropriate recommendations.
Commence delivery of the recommendations from the Social Economy Taskforce.	The Social Economy taskforce report was successfully launched and well received. We are about to award a tender to move this into the next phase with a 10-year plan and anticipate key deliverables identified therein.
Develop the 'Commitment to Collaborate' across public services to help demand management and preventative outcomes for rough sleepers.	Currently being developed by BVSC, expected to be completed by December 2020.
Collaboration to Support Radical Prevention	Process commenced
On-going work to support to the development of the Violence Reduction Unit and other joint initiatives with the OPCC	Active engagement and collaboration in place. Board and exec group meeting regularly and consultation and joint development of policy and strategy in place.
Develop a proposal for a West Midlands Future Fund	Initial proposal is worked up, but needs to be reworked to incorporate a broader set of themes and programmes. Given that this would be an external body, there will need to be significant partnership work ahead of establishing it.
Demonstrate Inclusive Growth in Action through exemplar projects in key inclusive growth corridors	Currently working in two corridors, with three sets of partners. Progress is good, but partnerships take ongoing work, and the door is open to further work. Positive, tangible results demonstrated in one corridor.
Digital inclusion programme as part of Digital Strategy refresh	Initial discussions held with BEP and the Birmingham Child Poverty Action Group. Discussion paper produced by Applied IG team, currently contributing to the development of the Digital Strategy.
Community recovery programme including insights from public service responses to COVID 19 and refresh of public service reform activity	Approach agreed end of July 2020, community recovery priorities and principles analysis complete and draft community recovery prospectus due November 2020.

Culture & Digital

Progress Summary: Culture & Digital	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 has hit the cultural sector particularly hard, with significant numbers of jobs lost, organisations closed, and seasons or performances cancelled. Recognising this impact, we worked closely with the regions Culture Response Unit to coordinate information about support and guidance to cultural organisations, and make the case to Government for additional resource. • The Cultural Leadership Board are now focussing on supporting the cultural sector post-COVID-19, and ensuring that culture is at the heart of the region's recovery. Working with the Cultural Officers Group, which brings together culture leads from each LA, they have scoped research on culture in the region to establish baselines and focus investment, designed a programme to support cultural and creative social enterprises, and shaped our investment asks to Government as part of the CSR and 'Recharge the West Midlands' document. • COVID-19 also highlighted the importance of digital connectivity in our region, and gave a new focus to the refresh of our digital strategy. We have established a digital strategy group, appointed leading industry figures and academics to an external advisory group, and will bring a Digital Strategy to January Board, enabling us to make the case for investment in Spring 2020. • WM5G – is continuing to deliver against the Infrastructure Acceleration targets and have successfully renegotiated dates with Telefonica to offset delays associated with COVID-19 and have secured approval for £10m of funding. 	
Update on High Level Deliverables	
<p>Support the deployment of c£100m funding (government, private sector and regional contributions) to an emerging 5G mobile network for the region.</p>	<p>There are three workstreams underpinning this work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Acceleration - continue to deliver against targets and remain on track for the next phase of delivery, the fibre and shared infrastructure work. • Application Accelerator/s - successfully re-negotiated dates with Telefonica due to COVID-19 implications and offset the impact of the delay with on-line events, successfully delivered the 1st two engagements. • Transport - successfully signed of the full business case and secured approval for £10m of funding. Awarded use case competitions on time and on track for the next set of competitions and roll out of the sensor network trail.
<p>Develop our capacity to support digital public services across the region</p>	<p>Digital Strategy steering group and External Advisory Group have been established, scope for work has been agreed, and interviews have taken place with Local Authorities to understand areas where CA could add value to digital activity. Digital Strategy on track for January WMCA Board.</p>
<p>To support delivery of the Cultural Leadership Board's ambition to maximise the contribution of culture to enhance quality of life for our citizens.</p>	<p>Cultural Leadership Board has been established and scoped research on the cultural sector in the region, shaped a programme to support Cultural and Creative Social Enterprises, and influenced cultural proposals in the 'Recharge the West Midlands' submissions and Comprehensive Spending Review representation.</p>

Wellbeing

Progress Summary: Wellbeing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPS Trial recruitment at 75% despite COVID-19 and additional funding secured till Jun-21 • Physical Activity strategy presented to Wellbeing Board • RHIC Task and Finish Group established and interim report published • Thrive at Work Awards Night held with 400 businesses now engaged • Population Intelligence Hub established and delivering Health of Region Report 	
Update on High Level Deliverables	
Refresh of Thrive Action Plan and Physical Activity strategy	Both programmes have had refreshed draft strategies presented at Well Being Board
Develop and deliver a childhood obesity strategy for the West Midlands	Programme paused by Well Being Board in January 2020
Develop and deliver an innovative new funding mechanism, the Radical Prevention Fund	In its Comprehensive Spending Review submission, WMCA has requested £11.3m in funds from central government for the Radical Health Prevention Fund. An additional £18.5m has been requested for linked work, including social prescribing, supporting and preventing multiple and complex needs, proposals under the Regional Health Impact of Covid-19, and digital diagnostic and treatment hub.
Host a population intelligence hub within the Inclusive Growth Unit which provides holistic, real time data on the region's health and socioeconomic outcomes	Hub established and delivering important RHIC work and Health of the Region report.
Supporting place-based health and care	Place-based health and a focus on wider determinants is part of the Regional health Impact of COVID-19 (RHIC) recommendations which will be taken forward post report publishing.
Regional Health Impact of Covid19 Task-and-Finish Group and Health of the Region Report	RHIC interim report published and draft of final report presented to Well Being Board in October.

Inclusive Communities

Progress Summary: Inclusive Communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabled the Young Combined authority to provide challenge and insight from the 16-25-year olds within WMCA policy development and worked with the YCA members to develop an operating model that will enable greater impact and outreach in the future. • Repurposed planned activity, in response to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on disadvantaged communities, to oversee the renewal of West Midlands Leadership Commission activity which will provide critical friend challenge to the WMCA. • Supported the Leadership Commission to identify key aims for improving economic opportunities for underrepresented groups: improving diversity at board level, providing practical examples of how organisations can change, and systematically improving equalities, diversity and inclusion outcomes. The Commission identified five themes of activity within a report to WMCA Board in September 2020. • Championed the WMCA's equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda, and the development of further actions to improve diversity and inclusion outcomes. Updates have been shared with WMCA Board in July and September 2020, and include work on a programme of Equality Impact Assessments for key delivery portfolios. • Supported unplanned activity which has demonstrated the value of engaging citizens in policy development – e.g. engaging the Citizens Panel and Young Combined Authority to help inform the RCG's priorities for community recovery from COVID-19. 	
Update on High Level Deliverables	
Young Combined Authority	The Young Combined Authority (YCA) has contributed to the development of WMCA policy development, such as informing the RCG's community recovery priorities for COVID-19 and challenging the WMCA on Black Lives Matter. The YCA operating model has also been reconfigured to increase the capacity for insight and challenge from the under 25's in policy development, via a more focused YCA Board (in place) and the development of a new YCA Community for wider engagement (Winter 2020 launch). As part of this, the YCA Board has established 'Leads' who can build closer working relationships with WMCA officers and Portfolio Lead members.

Inclusive Leadership initiatives	<p>The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 has highlighted the inequalities experienced by some communities across the West Midlands.</p> <p>In response, the Portfolio has repurposed its planned deliverables to oversee the renewal of the West Midlands Leadership Commission, which will provide critical friend challenge so that inclusion and diversity is better embedded in how we plan, decide and deliver.</p> <p>The Commission has identified key priorities for improving economic opportunities for underrepresented groups, along with a set of five areas of indicative activity:</p>
Campaigning and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theme: improving diversity at board level - Theme: practical examples of how organisations can achieve change - Theme: systematically improve equalities, diversity and inclusion outcomes - Activity: unequal representation on boardrooms - Activity: diversity in the workplace - Activity: social inclusion, including work with faith communities - Activity: supporting Regional Health Inequalities from COVID-19 taskforce - Activity: economic inequality, including women and young people.
Coordinate activity across portfolios	<p>The Portfolio has championed the WMCA's equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda, supporting current work and the development of specific activities which will enable WMCA to plan, decide and deliver in a more inclusive way.</p> <p>This year has demonstrated the value of engaging citizens in policy development – through the engagement of a Citizens Panel and the YCA in shaping the RCG's community recovery priorities. The intention is to build on this by mapping and identifying gaps in WMCA's access to lived experience.</p>

Enabling our Delivery

The portfolio activity set out in the sections above, is enabled by our governance and decision-making, budget and financial resources, including investment decisions, and our strategic support functions. This section summarises some of the key organisational developments and activity during the last six months that have supported our portfolio delivery and supported the region to plan its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Governance and decision-making

Following the initial decision to impose lockdown it was impossible to maintain the normal public meeting arrangements for WMCA Boards and Committees and a number of meetings were cancelled. Inevitably some decisions were simply postponed however in some cases reliance was placed on the Chief Executive's delegated power to take urgent action in the interests of the authority. A mechanism was put in place to ensure that any key decisions that had to be taken in this way had the informal approval of Board members.

Following the introduction of Regulations to enable local authorities (including WMCA) to hold formal meetings by remote attendance we were able to re-start our normal meeting arrangement through the medium of video conferencing. There have since been a substantial number of meetings held in this way including WMCA Board meetings, Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Investment Board and a number of thematic Boards. The meetings are subject to the same formalities as before in terms of freedom of information, the publication of agendas and the ability of the public to observe the meetings (via webcasting).

A report to Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (8th September 2020) reviewed the impact of COVID-19 on the corporate governance procedures of the Combined Authority and presents the revised Strategic Risk Register:

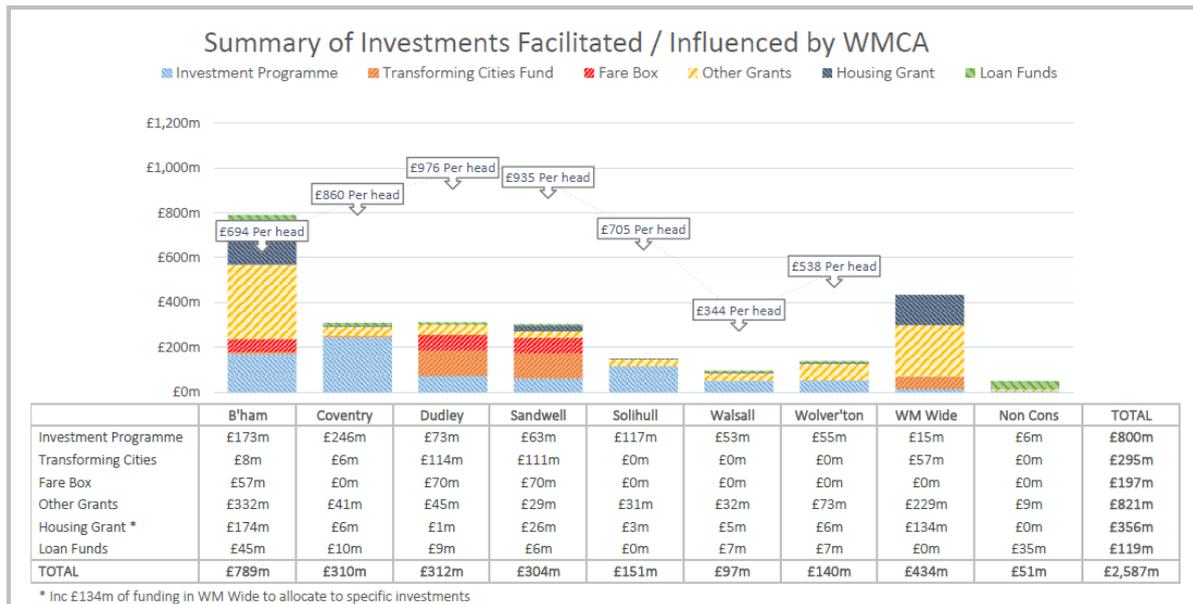
<https://governance.wmca.org.uk/documents/s4583/Review%20of%20Governance%20Procedures%20and%20Risk%20Impacts%20of%20the%20COVID%2019%20Pandemic%20Report.pdf>

Financial management

The financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the Combined Authority's finances. The day to day financial position has been closely monitored through the WMCA Executive team, Finance and Investments Portfolio Holder and regularly reported to the WMCA Board. An initial high-level forecast of the anticipated position for the current year reported to WMCA Board on 24 July 2020 indicated a significant budget deficit for the year of £11.1m. Work has been undertaken to refine the latest forecast taking into consideration the additional government grants awarded and reforecasting income streams based on the latest available information. This work has enabled an improved forecast budget deficit for the year of £2.0m -reported to the WMCA Board in September 2020. A programme of productivity and efficiency savings has now been developed to deliver organisational operating savings along with a fundamental business transformation review also underway, to deliver efficiencies into the next financial year and beyond

A report to the WMCA Board on 18th September 2020 set out the latest financial outturn position: <https://governance.wmca.org.uk/documents/s4633/Report.pdf>

The diagram below are shows a per capita breakdown of investments facilitated and/or influenced by WMCA since the first Devolution Deal.



Organisational development and improvement: Business Transformation

The Business Transformation programme commenced in March this year, with the aim of creating a clear and consistent operating model that would drive greater efficiency and impact. There are 8 key workstreams identified – which will support the WMCA to achieve its vision and to work as one high performing organisation with the right processes, systems and capability in place.

Good progress has been made to date around: reviewing the organisation design, supported by key principles; developing and implementing our Digital and Data strategy; improving business processes and policies, creating a new individual performance management regime that is linked to our organisational performance measures; redefining our values and behaviours and hardwiring these into our people processes.

Investment Programme

At the end of October the Investment Programme had invested in more than 60 interventions across the WMCA region. It has committed £777m of the currently available £801m at its disposal. The projects are in delivery and spend on these is accelerating with £227m of funds drawn down by project sponsors.

The major projects are gathering pace. The office development at Friargate in Coventry is due to break ground in November and Coventry City Centre South masterplanning is developed, with a planning application imminent in Q4. The Metro projects account for £233m of commitments and are in delivery with some projects nearing completion. UKC has benefitted from a further £13.5m of commitments this year and has drawn down £17m to date, supporting the key work in maximising the benefit of the new HS2 stations.

The Gateway review is currently in progress and will determine future receipts of the 30 year devolution settlement. To date the feedback appears positive with a Ministerial decision expected in Q1 of 2021. The Investment Board maturity was particularly singled out as an achievement.

We are focussed on working with all Sponsors to maximise the benefits from the Investment Programme and have worked with the new Strategic Hub to implement the Single Assurance Framework to facilitate this.

Corporate Assurance

The Strategic Hub was formed in March 2020 bringing together the specialisms of risk, performance and assurance within one team to support WMCA in delivering its objectives and priorities. The functionality includes developing a strategic risk framework and an appraisal process for project development and approval. Assurance are providing 2nd line of defence across project management and delivery and supporting stakeholders to ensure those projects are assured against the regional priorities. Meanwhile the performance arm is providing reporting and monitoring to CMT, SLT and the WMCA Board to inform and drive evidence-led decision making and developing a monitoring and evaluation regime so there can be better understanding of the benefits and outputs from programmes.

A new assurance framework (SAF) was adopted in July 2020 and this new approach to initiation, development and approval is supported by the Hub functionality who have developed the tools, templates and guides necessary to ensure a consistent and proportionate approach to project delivery and will raise the understanding of assurance and its benefits.

Overview and Scrutiny

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to play an active role in the governance of the Combined Authority. The committee meets every other month and considers issues that arise out of the work of the Combined Authority Board and other committees, hearing evidence from Officers of the CA and Portfolio lead Members. The committee also undertake specific targeted studies resulting in reports and recommendations. This the Committee has focussed its attention on the Combined Authority's role in supporting the region's response to, and recovery from, COVID-19. The Committee has continued its practice of involving members of the Young Combined Authority (YCA) which has brought the voice of young people to the table.

Supporting the region's response and recovery planning

The Authority has been a key participant in regional local resilience forum activity (LRF) has been a key member of the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) chaired by WM Police (and subsequently Local Government) and we have taken on the responsibility for convening and chairing the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG). Membership of these groups gives the Combined Authority the opportunity to be at the heart of the pandemic planning and decision-making and has afforded a number of important opportunities for added value where we can act and convene on a regional basis. The Transport Cell, part of the LRF structure and led by TfWM, has ensured a multi-agency coordinated response to managing transport through lockdown to the current recovery stages in order to provide a safe and secure network for those that needed it most.

The Combined Authority has also played a substantial role in leading and convening the region's economic response to the pandemic, complementing and supporting activity at both a regional and national level. The COVID-19 economic impact was formed early in the crisis, bringing together over 40 of the region's business, political, university and trade union leaders who continue to meet weekly. They have acted to identify and lobby government to address gaps in support to mid-sized firms, self-employed people. More recently, they have helped share vital insight across major businesses from different sectors about how the transition from lockdown is supporting business recovery. The Economic Impact Group, plus the Strategic Economic Development Board and Recovery Forum are guiding an approach to economic recovery that is agile, where the right interventions are delivered at the right moment to meet economic and social needs. This approach supported the development of the Recharge West Midlands submission to government ahead of the financial statement in July and continues to support ongoing work on a more substantial economic strategy refresh.



WMCA Board

Date	13 November 2020
Report title	Supporting the Economy Through Inward Investment, Capital Attraction and Tourism Activity
Portfolio Lead	Economy & Innovation - Councillor Ian Brookfield
Accountable Chief Executive	Neil Rami, Chief Executive, West Midlands Growth Company
Accountable Employee	Roger Mendonça, Chief Operating Officer, West Midlands Growth Company email: roger.mendonca@wmgrowth.com tel: 07375 084399
Report has been considered by	Strategic Leadership Team - 14 October 2020 Investment Board - 21 September 2020 Met Leaders - 22 July 2020 Met Chief Executives - 15 July 2020

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Agree to extend for two years (from April 2021) the current investment of £0.7m per annum from the WMCA revenue budget to the West Midlands Growth Company to support inward investment, capital attraction and tourism promotion activity.
- (2) Endorse the extension of £1.8m per annum from the investment programme agreed by the Investment Board on 21 September, thereby approving a total investment by WMCA of £2.5m per annum (£5m total) to the West Midlands Growth Company from April 2021.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 In the current environment, it is crucial that the West Midlands maximises opportunities for sustainable economic growth. Inward investment, capital investment and tourism are key activities in this regard. Currently, the West Midland Growth Company (WMGC) receives £2.5m per annum from WMCA to deliver this activity on behalf of the region. Of this, £1.8m originates from the Investment Programme and £0.7m from the revenue budget. On 21st September, the Investment Board agreed to extend the £1.8m contribution for a further two years from April 2021. The Board is requested to agree to similarly extend the contribution from the WMCA revenue budget. Met Leaders indicated their 'in principle' support for this proposal at their meeting on 22nd July.

2. Background

Outputs

- 2.1 Since April 2019, WMGC has received £2.5m per annum from WMCA to deliver the outputs set out in its business plan. As shown in the summary table below, despite uncertainties arising from Brexit and the US-China trade war, in the first year of operation all targets were exceeded. Due to Covid-19, the forecast for 2020/21 is less optimistic but, despite this, jobs and GVA targets will still be exceeded across the two year period.

	2019/20			2020/21			Total		
	Forecast	Actual	Variance	Forecast	Revised	Variance	Forecast	Revised	Variance
Businesses attracted	34	43	+9	36	12	-24	70	55	-15
GVA increase £m	104	314	+210	109	37	-72	213	351	+138
Jobs created/safeguarded	1,497	4,125	+2,628	1,570	530	-1,040	3,067	4,655	+1,588
Business rates increase £m	8.3	10.5	+2.2	8.7	2.9	-5.8	17.0	13.4	-3.6

- 2.2 Forecasting for beyond April 2021 is difficult because of the uncertainties around Covid. The exact outputs (direct and indirect) from the programme will be dependent on the continued impact of the pandemic, the manner of Britain's departure from the EU, and other geo-political forces. A range of scenarios have been developed to account for this uncertainty and a detailed review of these scenarios was provided to the July Investment Board¹. Even under the most pessimistic scenario, a cost per job created/safeguarded of circa £2,000 still provides excellent value for money compared to other investments. These forecast outputs under each scenario are summarised in the table below.

	Strong bounce back				Sluggish recovery				Second wave			
	21/22	22/23	23/24	TOT	21/22	22/23	23/24	TOT	21/22	22/23	23/24	TOT
Businesses attracted	38	42	47	127	28	32	36	96	14	15	17	46
Jobs created/safeguarded	1,657	1,875	2,049	5,581	1,221	1,395	1,569	4,185	611	675	741	2,027
GVA increase £m	111.9	130.1	138.6	380.6	82.5	96.8	106.2	285.5	41.2	46.8	50.1	138.1
Business rates uplift	8.9	10.4	11.1	30.4	6.6	7.7	8.5	22.8	3.3	3.7	4.0	11.0

¹ The three year time horizon has been adopted for planning purposes even though a two year funding extension has been proposed. Delivery of year 3 outputs is dependent on securing additional income in 2023/24.

Areas of focus over the next two years

2.3 WMGC’s value chain, as set out in the diagram below, is the same across all three areas of activity.



2.4 From April 2021, activity to deliver the activities set out in the value chain will predominantly be clustered under four programmes that have been created since April 2019 – the Commonwealth Games Tourism, Trade & Investment (TTI) Programme, the West Midlands India Partnership, Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) Programme and the Key Account Management (KAM) programme.

2.5 Key regional priorities during the business planning period are expected to be the attraction of a Gigafactory, developing the ‘Bike Valley’ concept, establishing the region as the home of the modular and sustainable construction industry, co-ordinating the development of a multi-facility film and media campus, and bidding to be one of the UK’s first Tourism Action Zones.

2.6 For Met authority shareholders, activity will be tailored to the key issues they face and the ‘gearshift’ projects² they have identified – which include a mix of public and privately owned assets. For each area these projects are set out in the table below:

	Business/Capital Attraction	Tourism Assets
Birmingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peddimore • Paradise • Wheels • Arden Cross • Arena Central • 103 Colmore Row • Very Light Rail scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility Arena • Edgbaston • Aston Villa and Birmingham City • The Bullring • BMAG and cultural offer • Hippodrome and theatres • The ICC and BV&E venues
Coventry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friargate • Railway Station masterplan • Ricoh Masterplan • City Centre South • 8 City Centre regeneration schemes • Very Light Rail scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ricoh Arena • Stratford upon Avon • FarGo Village • Coventry Cathedral • Belgrade Theatre • Herbert Museum • The Wave Waterpark
Dudley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dudley Town centre • DY5 Enterprise Zone • Institute of Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Country Living Museum • Dudley Castle and Zoo • Himley Hall and Gardens

² Gearshift projects are those that create a wider positive catalytic effect either for a sector, a location or both. Note that the final list is subject to change following detailed workshops with Councils

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Centre and Technology Campus • Very Light Rail innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merry Hill Shopping Centre • The Red House Cone
Sandwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friar Park • Canal Corridor – Grove Lane Smethwick • Rolfe Street Smethwick • West Bromwich Town Centre • Tipton Shopping Centre (Unity Walk) • Tollgate Shopping Centre (Smethwick) • Chances and Soho 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandwell Valley Country Park • Aquatic Centre • West Bromwich Albion • Oak House Museum • Balaji Temple • Chances and Soho • Lightwoods House and Park • Canal Network • West Bromwich Town Hall
Solihull	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Central Hub • HS2 Interchange Station • Birmingham International Station Integrated Transport Exchange • Eastgate, Church Hill and Homer Road, Solihull Town Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEC Campus • Resorts World • National Trust Estates • Touchwood Shopping Centre • Birmingham Airport
Walsall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walsall Town Centre • M6 Junction 10 Cluster • Phoenix 10 • Walsall Waterfront Lex Development • Black Country Enterprise Zone, Darlaston • Reedswood • Retail and logistics cluster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New Art Gallery • Leather Museum • Arboretum • Walsall FC • Barr Beacon
Wolverhampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elite Centre • National Centre for Sustainable Construction and the Circular Economy • Wolverhampton Science Park • SPARK incubator • i54 extension • i9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum and Art Gallery • Wolverhampton Wanderers • West Park • Civic Halls • Grand Theatre • Wightwick Manor • Wolverhampton Racecourse

2.7 For each gearshift project, WMGC will agree with individual local authorities a series of realistic deliverables and success measures - recognising that many of these schemes are some years away from being market-ready. Updates against these success measures will be included in the reports back to the Combined Authority. Where support is provided in relation to a privately held asset, the relevant Local Authority and WMGC will be responsible for determining that the support is in accordance with State Aid measures and it represents the best Value for Money for public funds. A record of the decisions taken will be kept and made available to WMCA for audit purposes should it be required.

Reporting arrangements

2.8 All of WMGC's Board Directors are appointed, and can be dismissed, by the shareholders (WMCA, seven Met authorities, six Universities and Cannock Chase District Council on behalf of non-constituent members of the WMCA). This includes the private sector and Executive Directors. Membership was refreshed in 2020 to reflect WMGC's focus on the Local Industrial Strategy. Board meetings are held quarterly and there is an AGM, held in December. All shareholders are entitled to attend the AGM, where they approve the appointment of Directors and agree the Company's Business Plan. Current Board membership is set out in the table below.

WMGC Board Directors			
Local Government	Universities	Private Sector	Executive
Cllr Gordon Alcott Cannock Chase District Council	Sir David Eastwood University of Birmingham	Matthew Hammond (Chair) PWC	Neil Rami (CEO)
Cllr Ian Brookfield City Wolverhampton Council	Geoff Layer University of Wolverhampton	Liz McKenzie (Vice Chair) NED	Roger Mendonça (COO)
Cllr Patrick Harley Dudley Council		Karl Edge (Chair Audit & Risk) KPMG	Dan Storer (CIO)
Cllr Ian Ward Birmingham City Council		Fiona Allan Birmingham Hippodrome	
Deborah Cadman West Midlands Combined Authority		Sally Scott Advanced	
Tim Johnson City Wolverhampton Council		Paul Thandi NEC Group	
Martin Reeves Coventry City Council		Rob Valentine Bruntwood	
Alison Knight Sandwell Council		Tom Westley Westley Group	

2.9 Additionally, WMGC currently reports progress informally to Regeneration/Economy Directors on a quarterly basis, and provides a bi-annual updates to WMCA's Investment Programme. Given the importance of the relationships with Councils, WMGC is proposing that in future a number of additional measures are put in place:

- An annual planning meeting with each Met authority to agree priorities, including gearshift projects. WMGC will provide an evidence base showing the current position, and provide insight into market expectations for the coming year.
- Standing offer to provide input into any local authority activity that requires strategic inward investment, capital attraction, tourism or place marketing support
- Standing offer to provide WMGC input into all project boards for gearshift projects
- Regular operational engagement at working level on individual investment leads and key account management activity on an as and when required basis – supplemented by a quarterly review meeting
- Detailed collective workshop offered to all local authorities on any new or proposed WMGC programme
- Quarterly (CEO/Regen Director) review meetings to track progress against agreed priorities and reprioritise activity if required
- Six monthly Met Leader-Chair review meetings to review strategic engagement

- A dedicated C-suite lead officer from WMGC for each Met authority with personal responsibility for ensuring an effective relationship (to be mirrored with a senior officer in each Met authority)
- A dedicated account manager at WMGC managing the process and ensuring it works
- A monthly dashboard to WMCA Strategic Hub
- A quarterly report to Investment Panel and WMCA's Senior Leadership Team.
- A quarterly update report to LEPs and Non-Constituent Members

2.10 This level of reporting is essential for WMGC to deliver optimum benefits to local authorities. However, it does create significant overhead for a small business. WMGC has established a dedicated team to ensure that the relationships are managed effectively and that robust systems and processes are in place to minimise the work required to produce timely, accurate and high-quality insights and reports for its shareholders.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Extending the investment into the WM Growth Company for a further two years requires a total investment of £5m (£2.5m per annum). Not extending would put at risk the deliverables outlined above, including the business rate uplift, the third party investment levered in by WMGC, and the delivery of the TTI Programme, which WMGC secured on behalf of WMCA and is due to deliver for the region over the next two and a half years.

3.2 In the current Business Plan cycle, just under half of annual revenue came from shareholder contributions (WMCA and Universities). As set out below, for the first two years of the new Business Planning period, the vast majority of income will originate from third party funding (commercial partner subscriptions; income from SLAs and contracts successfully secured by the Company) – mainly as a result of securing the TTI Programme. The WMCA contribution is also expected to be more than offset by the business rates uplift the Company generates – for comparison, in the financial year 2019/20, WMGC attracted projects that will generate £10.5m of business rates uplift. This is over four times WMCA's total annual investment in the Company.

2021/22		Business Attraction £	Visitor Attraction £	Capital Attraction £	TOTAL £
Revenue	Regional	1,626,000	542,000	542,000	2,710,000
	Third Party	3,308,452	3,321,750	662,245	7,292,446
Expenditure	Third Party	(2,216,722)	(2,195,156)	(531,621)	(4,943,498)
	Direct staff	(2,035,841)	(1,343,564)	(467,292)	(3,846,697)
	Indirect Staff	(232,169)	(77,390)	(77,390)	(386,948)
	Overheads	(483,907)	(161,302)	(161,302)	(806,512)
	Contingency	(10,800)	(3,600)	(3,600)	(18,000)
TOTAL		(44,987)	82,737	(36,960)	790

2022/23		Business Attraction £	Visitor Attraction £	Capital Attraction £	TOTAL £
Revenue	Regional	1,626,000	542,000	542,000	2,710,000
	Third Party	3,371,604	3,379,381	678,433	7,429,427
Expenditure	Third Party	(2,259,709)	(2,231,369)	(541,086)	(5,032,165)
	Direct staff	(2,076,558)	(1,370,435)	(476,638)	(3,923,631)
	Indirect Staff	(236,812)	(78,937)	(78,937)	(394,687)
	Overheads	(468,907)	(156,302)	(156,302)	(781,512)
	Contingency	(4,200)	(1,400)	(1,400)	(7,000)
TOTAL		(48,583)	82,963	(33,921)	432

3.3 On 21 September 2020 WMCA Investment Board approved a further £3.6m contribution to the continuation of WMGC for 2 years from April 2021. To deliver this WMCA Board will also need to agree to commit the £0.7m existing provision from the Annual Revenue Budget paid for by constituent member authority fees for the 2 years to March 2023.

3.4 Critically the Board will be taking this decision to commit to this funding in advance of finalisation of ongoing discussions on the Authority's own financial position for the 2021/22 financial year.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 This report looks at the future funding of the WMGC. Directors and Officers of the Company are under a legal duty to keep its financial position under review and ensure that it remains a "going concern". The company would need to ensure that at all times it has sufficient funding or assets to meet its liabilities including the costs of closure, winding up or transfer. Should adequate funding not be available the company would need to demonstrate that it had plans in place to ensure these matters are dealt with

5. Equalities Implications

5.1 None from this paper.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

6.1 WMGC's work supports the achievement of WMCA's inclusive growth aspirations, in particular from directly supporting entry-level jobs in the tourism sector, and attracting investment into green technologies. Following discussion at the Investment Board, WMGC has committed to working with WMCA to identify where these outputs can be tied more closely to the region's inclusive and sustainable growth agendas.

7. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

7.1 WMGC operates across the whole WMCA area (three LEP geography), including non-constituent members.

8. Other Implications

8.1 None.

9. Schedule of Background Papers

9.1 None for this report.



WMCA Board

Date	13 November 2020
Report title	WMCA HS2 Growth Strategy Refresh
Portfolio Lead	Environment, Energy & HS2 - Councillor Ian Courts
Accountable Chief Executive	Deborah Cadman, West Midlands Combined Authority email: deborah.cadman@wmca.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7552
Accountable Employee	Laura Shoaf, Managing Director, Transport for West Midlands email: laura.shoaf@tfwm.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7444
Report has been considered by	WMCA HS2 Growth Delivery Board WMCA HS2 operational Board TfWM Leadership Team – Decision Making Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee Strategic Transport Officers Group Strategic Leadership Team Programme Board Transport Delivery Committee

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the publication of the WMCA HS2 Growth Strategy refresh – The Defining Decade.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the WMCA an update on the publication of the WMCA HS2 Growth Strategy Refresh – Defining Decade and to advise of the Communication and engagement that will take place to promote the launch of the strategy with key local and national stakeholders.

2. Background

- 2.1 The ‘Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy’ was first published in April 2015 and was the first such strategy delivered to government that evidenced the direct benefits that would be realised within the West Midlands with the arrival of HS2.
- 2.2 The strategy clearly outlined in detail the regions aspirations for both of the proposed new stations at Curzon and Interchange as well as the other wider transport initiatives that would be delivered as part of this strategy. Key transport elements contained in the document were contained within the HS2 Wider Connectivity Package that include key transport schemes such as Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension, East Birmingham to Solihull Metro extension and Sprint Bus Rapid Transit.
- 2.3 The document also went into detail about how the region would look to respond to both the challenges faced around the skills agenda, not just during construction but in later years and also on the necessary support that businesses would require to help them benefit either directly or indirectly from the arrival of HS2.
- 2.4 The total ‘ask’ at the time of publication was £4.4bn which would fund the entire HS2 Growth Delivery Programme funding requirement. It was also acknowledged at the time of publication, that there were areas that the strategy had not addressed in some way shape or form and that in due course a review would be undertaken to ensure that things such as environmental opportunities, digital inclusion etc. were considered as potential areas to cover.
- 2.5 Following its publication, the Growth Strategy became an integral part of the discussions with Government on a potential ‘devolution deal’. Many elements of the original strategy we considered as key components of evidence to prove the impact and importance of HS2, not just the region but the UK as a whole.
- 2.6 As the WMCA devolution deal was finally agreed, the HS2 Delivery programme, through the various financial instruments and grants that were proposed, made up 55% of the total package of £8bn having had the total £4.4bn ‘ask’, as laid out in the strategy, agreed with Government.

3. HS2 Growth Strategy Refresh – The Defining Decade

- 3.1 Following the outcome of the Oakervee Review in to HS2, it was agreed that the time may be right to ‘refresh’ the HS2 Growth Strategy and to look at the progress made to date and to review whether the priorities as set out in the original strategy were still as important today as they were in 2015.

- 3.2 Discussions on this were held with the Chair of the HS2 Growth delivery Board (GDB) and a proposal was forwarded in due course to the Board via the HS2 Operational Board. The updated strategy was collated using the knowledge and expertise from across a wide spectrum of partners in the region including Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Birmingham City Council, Midlands Connect, GBS LEP, Coventry & Warwickshire Growth Hub, Coventry City Council, Black Country Transport, Urban Growth Company, TfWM, WMCA, Cities and Local Growth Unit, Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, West Midlands Growth Company and West Midlands Rail Executive.
- 3.3 The actual refresh has been built on the original strategy, but rather than look and feel the same as the previous document, which was a direct ‘ask’ of government, this document looks to celebrate the progress done so far to date as well as outline what the key next steps will be within the West Midlands region on delivering maximum growth from the HS2 delivery programme, whilst not shying away from some of the key challenges that we still face.
- 3.4 It must be noted that the following achievements have been realised across the region since the original HS2 Strategy was published in 2015:
- 2,750 jobs directly from HS2 Ltd, its Tier 1 contractors and their supply chains;
 - 1,600 jobs from the HS2 Business Growth Programme;
 - 6,656 jobs from the Birmingham City Council HS2 Masterplan for Growth
 - 158 apprentices have been supported so far to date;
 - The Construction Gateway programme has trained more than 1,400 people, with 700 having secured employment, including HS2 related sites;
 - The £2.3m skills and employment contract for CITB over 16 months creating four on site construction training hubs, across the three LEPs in Wolverhampton, Birmingham, and Coventry which will train 1,450 local people in the first two hubs.
 - 313 businesses across the West Midlands have been supported to date in the HS2 supply chain;
 - £33m of funding delivered by the Business Growth Programme is responsible for 1,600 jobs;
 - The £20m National Rail Fund’s has created 126 new jobs and 95 existing jobs safeguarded.
- 3.5 As you will also be aware, HS2 is seen as a key component in the post Covid-19 recovery and was extensively mentioned within the WMCA Covid-19 recovery plan, ‘Recharge the West Midlands’. In developing the refresh document Cllr Courts has rightly been insistent that HS2 and the regional activities linked to the programme are both accelerated and delivered as part of the wider UK recovery from the pandemic.
- 3.6 Since the original HS2 Growth Strategy was published, much has changed, not least the focus on the climate crisis. The WMCA is a leading force behind the changes being proposed across this region. With the publication of the ‘WMCA 2041 Environmental Strategy’ the region set the benchmark for others to follow and the HS2 programme is aligned to help these aspirations.

3.7 To this end, the HS2 programme have reviewed the governance arrangements in place and has created a triangulated approach whereby the three key regional elements come under one governance structure. This will allow for clear and transparent evaluation and reporting at a regional level of all environmental projects and activities, and will facilitate greater opportunities for collaborative working placing the environment at the very heart of the overall WMCA governance led by the Leader of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Cllr Ian Courts.

4. Communication & Engagement

4.1 Following the publication of the refreshed strategy, GDB and DfT/MHCLG have asked that a comprehensive communications and engagement plan be developed and delivered not only launch the revised document but to also to promote what has been delivered by the WMCA as an example of 'best practice'.

4.2 To this end, we are developing an official Ministerial Launch event with the Mayor's office and the Minister for HS2, Andrew Stephenson MPs team as well as with DfT and the communications team at No.10.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from the refresh of the HS2 Growth Strategy. All of the costs outlined are either currently allowed for within the original devolution deal or form part of other regional 'asks' of Government as outlined in previous submissions to Government.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no additional legal implications directly arising from the refresh of the HS2 Growth Strategy.

7. Equalities Implications

7.1 There are no additional equalities implications directly arising from the refresh of the HS2 Growth Strategy. All projects and programmes will undertake individual equalities assessments as part of the standard project development and delivery process and will be recorded via the standard project and programme reporting practices applied within the respective governance arrangements.

8. Inclusive Growth Implications

8.1 The scale, duration, and potential impacts of the HS2 investment make it a significant inclusive growth opportunity: but one that may be missed if the changing needs of the people and places of the West Midlands are not taken into account. The strategy provides a helpful framing of some of the main shifts – including Covid-19 and Brexit – but there are some specific implications to highlight in line with three dimensions of the WMCA Inclusive Growth Framework, which are as follows:

1. **Economy:** while 175,000 new jobs will make a huge difference to the people of the West Midlands, many of these will be created from 2022 onwards, so will not be available during a period of economic hardship in 2021. To ensure efficient join up with regional skills provision, it will be necessary to look at ‘similar’ jobs holistically, to assess where – for example – expansions of heat networks, or neighbourhood retrofit, could bring jobs onstream faster. In general, WMCA, HS2 and central government will need to be in lockstep on how to ensure that jobs associated with HS2 provide people with a route out of poverty, to prosperity.
2. **Education and learning:** over the lifetime of HS2, there will be thousands of contracts to be let, which will need to have a commitment to local employment at their heart, as far as practicable. There is a risk that these commitments become diluted at Tier 3, 4 and 5. At this stage, ensuring the consistency and credibility of contractual commitments to local employment – particularly from people who live in areas which contain levels of high unemployment and will be affected by HS2 construction (for example, in the East Birmingham North Solihull Inclusive Growth Corridor) – will help to ensure that the potential of HS2 is delivered.
3. **Sustainability:** while HS2 is national infrastructure, how it is built and resourced within the region must be consistent with WM2041, including but not limited to the 2041 net zero target. The positive environmental impact of HS2 is substantially predicated on expanding capacity on the heavy rail network so that people and goods can move via that network instead of via road – but emissions associated with construction will need to be minimised, offset, or ‘inset’ (specifically, by investing into regional carbon reduction efforts like retrofit). The other important issue is biodiversity net gain, a key objective in ensuring climate resilience. There will need to be close collaboration between HS2 Ltd, WMCA and the West Midlands National Park to ensure that there is the right level of investment, into the right natural capital, to ensure biodiversity net gain can be achieved and sustained. This will also lock in the wealth of natural spaces for future generations.

9. Geographical Area of Report’s Implications

- 9.1 The impact of the HS2 delivery programme will be felt and seen across the entire WMCA geography and therefore the content of this report is also relevant to Coventry, Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton and other such areas within the region.

10. Other Implications

- 10.1 No further implications have been identified so far to date but will be reviewed on an on-going basis.

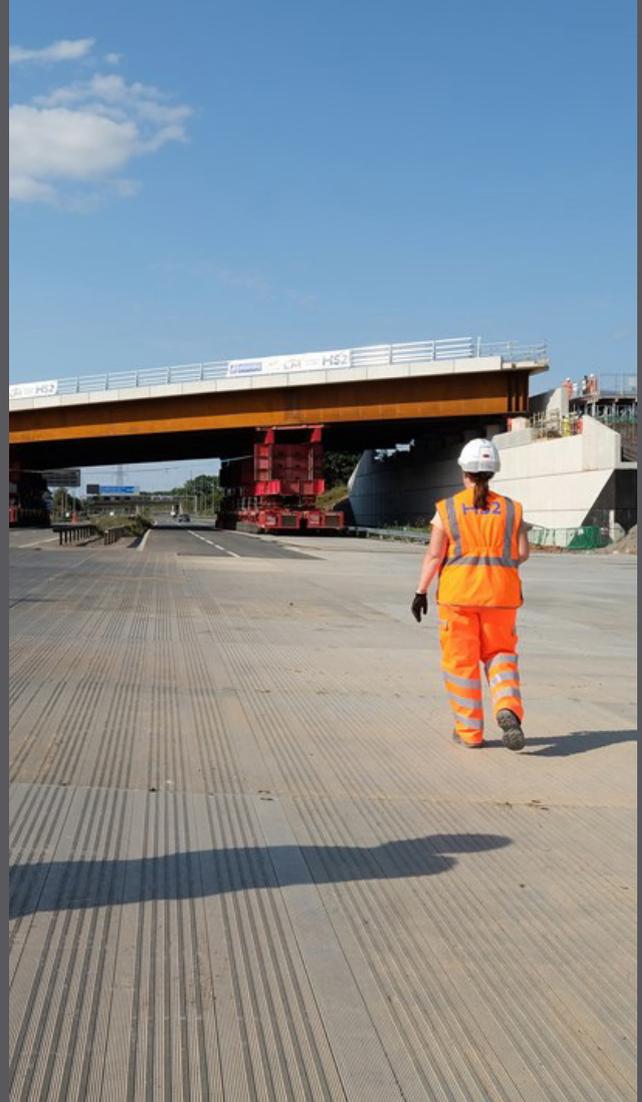
11. Schedule of Background Papers

N/A

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West Midlands
Combined Authority



Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy 2020: The Defining Decade – The Midlands high speed path to recovery



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Foreword

The West Midlands is at the heart of the HS2 network. HS2's HQ is here at Snow Hill. Its critical Infrastructure Control Centre is at Washwood Heath. And, of course, we have two of the flagship HS2 stations - Curzon Street in Birmingham and Interchange in Solihull - which will act as focal points for widespread economic regeneration and cultural renewal. HS2 will not only present a once-in-a-generation opportunity to drive economic growth and prosperity in the West Midlands: its benefits will be felt across the UK.

Even now this opportunity is being realised. While HS2 trains may not be here for a few years, we are already seeing exactly how major infrastructure investment accelerates regional growth. HS2 has already led to more than 12,000 jobs being created, including many apprenticeships key to addressing the UK's skills shortage. 313 businesses are directly involved in the HS2 supply chain and this will rise dramatically as construction on the main civils work increases in the coming months. And there is far more to come. It is now clear that our earlier projections were too cautious. The impact HS2 is having across the region has led us to revise our targets upwards, with forecasted jobs now at 175,000.

It is true that climate change, technological developments and, more recently, COVID-19, have dramatically changed the world in which we live. What has not changed is the importance that HS2 has as a driving force for economic, environment and social transformation in the Midlands and across the UK. Before COVID-19 the West Midlands had become the fastest growing regional economy.

HS2 was a vital component of this and will be all the more important as we drive forward the recovery and recharge the West Midlands.

This strategy outlines the positive impact that HS2 is having on the West Midlands today and sets out the project's integral place in the region's future, levelling up economic opportunity by investing in infrastructure, innovation and people. It shows how HS2 is key to the government's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, and how HS2 will strengthen the UK's place in the world as we look to a new, brighter future on the global stage. And it includes our plans to accelerate the ambitious developments at our HS2 stations. As we lead the recovery from the pandemic, these developments will be a critical part of our programme of action.

I am proud to have championed HS2 during my time as Chair of GBSLEP and now as Mayor of the West Midlands. It is clear that HS2 will bring great economic regeneration and cultural renewal to people of the West Midlands. And it is clear that realising these benefits is all the more crucial as we recover from the pandemic. Working together, we must tackle any impediments or delays, so that these benefits can be felt as soon as is possible. And as we attend to the detail of delivery, we must retain our focus on creating bold new opportunities to maximise the return on our investment. These are the challenges we now turn to meet.

Andy Street
Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority



Introduction

When the West Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy launched in 2015, it mapped out how the region would respond to the opportunities HS2 presented, as well as some of the challenges created by the largest infrastructure project in Europe.

The last five years has seen remarkable changes regionally, nationally, and globally, which have influenced our plans and shaped this new strategy, including:

- The foundation of the West Midlands Combined Authority in 2016
- Royal Assent for Phase One in 2017
- Leaving the EU in 2020
- COVID-19 recovery
- ● The Climate Change agenda – targeting net zero by 2050, and 2041 in the WMCA

HS2 provides the opportunity for West Midlands to be transformed in the next decade. By 2030 we will have:

- Two new world class, high speed rail stations
- High speed rail links accessible by 2 million people in the region
- More than 100,000 new jobs
- More than 200,000 new homes
- New high skilled industries based in the Midlands
- Inward investment of more than £10bn
- A comprehensive public transport system that encourages sustainable travel
- New development zones that will drive the economy forward

Deliverables

The original Growth Strategy set a number of key deliverables. We are now increasing these targets to take into consideration evidence from the impacts seen across the region since 2015 and the increased development of plans across the West Midlands:

	Original Target	Current	Revised Target
Jobs - new or safeguarded scheme	104,000	>12,000	175,000
Jobs for local residents currently unemployed (EATF) Tranche 1 Schemes:	10% of all jobs	N/A	10% of all jobs
Skills	36% local population qualified to NVQ level 4+	34.1%	36% local population qualified to NVQ level 4+
Apprenticeships	2000	158	5000
Business supported	700	313 in HS2 Supply Chain	2000
GVA	£14bn additional	+3.6% (+£3.5bn) growth rate	£20bn
Accessibility	over 2 million of region's population connected to HS2 by public transport within 45 minutes	N/A	over 2 million of region's population connected to HS2 by public transport within 45 minutes

Purpose

This document looks to build on the original ‘Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy’ that was submitted to Government in April 2015. The original submission outlined key aspirations that the region had as it looked to capitalise on the construction of HS2. Our approach takes into account both the short and long term needs of the region, ranging from our immediate response to repair the economic and social damage from COVID-19 through the delivery of the West Midlands’ recovery plan, to our role in the global commitment to combat climate change.

The Growth Strategy is testament to the spirit of collaboration that exists across the West Midlands, uniting organisations across public and private sectors to work closely to achieve their common goals. Stakeholders from across the political spectrum in the region are united on HS2, underlining the importance of the project. This Growth Strategy would not exist without the commitment of our wide range of partners, including: Black Country Transport, Birmingham City Council (BCC), Cities and Local Growth, Coventry City Council (CCC), Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce (GBCC), HS2 Ltd, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Midlands Connect, Solihull MBC (SMBC), Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), Urban Growth Company (UGC), West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), and the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE).

In this document we will look at the achievements to date as well as outline what will be included in the next phases to be undertaken by the region to build upon this.

This document also addresses other areas of opportunity that have emerged over the past five years where public interest and social conscience have increased, including such areas as the environment; growing regional economies; and additional rail capacity, along with the opportunities this brings. Finally, since that time there has been considerable development of the project and changes in the economic outlook, with the two most significant and pressing events being the publication of the Oakervee Review, followed by the Government’s decision to progress with Notice to Proceed; and the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. We will address these two factors directly.



Global Britain: Ensuring the UK takes centre stage

The UK is about to enter a new era of global growth with a liberated economy that will unleash the productive power of Britain post Brexit.

Key to this success will be vibrant regional economies across the UK. Once complete HS2 will create a network that links the economies of the North West and Yorkshire to the South East, with the Midlands at the heart.

The West Midlands is part of one of the fastest growing and most economically significant areas of the UK, and ensuring the region remains a primary destination for overseas investment is fundamental to Britain thriving after Brexit.

Railways helped established Britain as a global economic superpower, creating today's mature local and regional network. Now high speed rail is bringing back leading edge engineering skills to Britain, putting the UK at the forefront of the rail industry, producing the knowledge and people that will not only build HS2, but will lead the global growth of high-speed rail as we export our talent around the world.



It is essential Britain is ready to increase trade with the rest of the world, and a critical part of export growth is having the right infrastructure. HS2 will improve connections to, and release more capacity for, the region's international gateways, including Birmingham Airport, the UK's busiest pure – airfreight gateway at East Midlands Airport, and the UK's largest port by tonnage in Immingham.

The West Midlands has seen business confidence boosted by the government's commitment to building HS2 and this will be more important than ever the UK forges a new path in the global economy. HS2 demonstrates the confidence that the UK has in its future, it shouts out a message to the world that the UK is building a stronger economy, and that we are open for business.

COVID-19: Delivering a rapid recovery through HS2

The government has committed to strengthening the UK's economic recovery from COVID-19 by prioritising jobs and skills. HS2 is a project that epitomises this ambition, it has never been as it has the potential to act as a catalyst to help the nation and especially this region recover.

The West Midlands recovery plan has immediate asks of government with respect to our HS2 Growth Strategy:

Accelerate the ambitious development plans around the HS2 Interchange Station.

Only by releasing land currently planned to be used for car parking and by building new infrastructure such as access routes, will the planned growth at Arden Cross be possible. This will also accelerate commercial development with a focus on high-tech manufacturing and innovation facilities, including the potential for a world-class Healthcare & Innovation Campus, by at least 3-5 years.

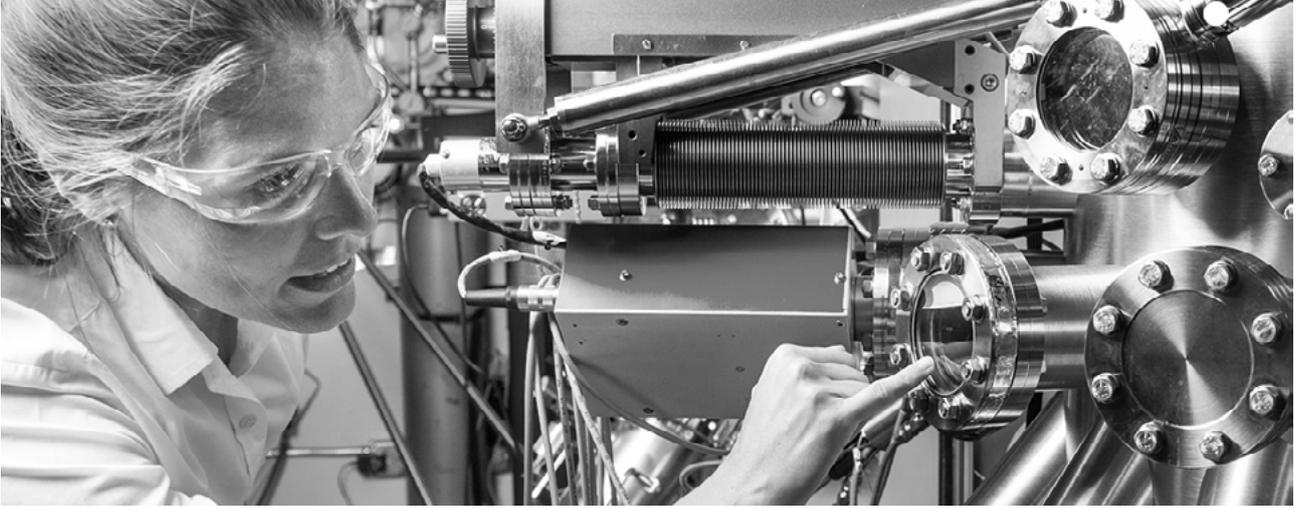
Cost: £95m

Benefits:

- Gross Development Value: £3.2bn.
- GVA: £1.4bn.
- Bring forward the creation of at least 16,000 net new jobs and 3,000 net new homes.

Fast-tracking Birmingham International Connectivity Project (BICP)

The only project that ensures the region is truly HS2-ready by providing multi-modal transport connections, the transformed station will become an international gateway at Birmingham Airport. This landmark building, within 45 minutes of an extra 1.3m local people from some of the region's most deprived communities, will also enable wider growth and investment on a global scale.



Regenerate the Curzon Street/Digbeth area

Including £70m for the Martineau Galleries development, which is a core gateway development that is part of the HS2 Curzon Street Masterplan. The proposal also includes a £61m investment into the Creative Quarter, which will accelerate the development of the Creative Content Hub and Studio UK - anchors to fuel high growth creative industries.

Cost: £131m

Benefits:

- Martineau Galleries will boost the economy by £255m, create 8,000 jobs and 1,300 homes.
- Create 10,800 job years in construction in the short term.
- Creative Quarter will enable content businesses to pivot and scale, attracting 10 new FDI projects per year in creative industries and creation of 6,000 jobs.
- Creative Quarter will attract 50 new businesses to the region in the next 3 years to meet growing demand across the country and upskill 3,000 people in the Creative Sector in the next 3 years with a focus on levelling up the workforce.
- Create a world-class innovation hub (StudioUK) to enable a digital technology first approach for recovery of the UK's media production sector.
- Position the area for the potential development of the Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry, which will attract 2 million visitors and bring £30m to the local economy.

Energise the area through Dudley Interchange

By providing high quality facilities within an architecturally modern Interchange building that will enhance Dudley Town Centre. The Interchange will be an integral link between Metro, bus services and Town Centre, providing a significant improvement in public safety and access. Accessibility will be significantly improved for disabled users, providing both facilities and access/egress arrangements to meet their needs, encouraging mobility. This project will increase competitiveness and support the growth in our key sectors.

Cost: £31.2m (Total Cost) £11m (DfT)

Benefits:

- 12,000m² of new facilities.
- A world class multimodal facility that optimises commercial opportunities, retail, and ticketing.
- Improved waiting and interchange facilities, including enhanced passenger information and RTI.
- Improved cycle parking facilities.
- Sustainable development through reducing environmental and whole life carbon impact across construction, operation, and reduced ongoing management/maintenance costs.

Environment: Assisting net zero by 2050

In 2015, the regional WMCA HS2 Environment and Landscape Board was formed to support and deliver on some of the regional environmental challenges that were faced not only by the HS2 programme but also by the wider regeneration and growth that would be taking place.

The HS2 E&L Board was independently chaired by the Chief Executive of Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust and had members from the WMCA, Environment Agency, Natural England, HS2 Ltd as well as all of the regional nature partnerships and other local authority bodies. This group undertook a lot of work to identify a number of potential projects that could be used to help mitigate the impacts of HS2 in the region, such as the promoting the 'River Cole' project as one that could be used by HS2 Ltd as part of any wider mitigation proposals that were being developed and as part of the Green Corridor initiative.

The last five years has seen the rise in importance of the Climate Change agenda. Rising carbon levels, global warming, and high levels of pollution, especially in cities, are requiring methods of restraint on car use such as clear air zones which are planned or being implemented throughout the UK.

The UK is leading the way in responding to this challenge, becoming the first

major economy in to pass laws to end its contribution to global warming, setting a target to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Here in the West Midlands we have taken this commitment one step further setting our own target of 2041, and HS2 will be a key part to our success.

The [WMCA 2041 Environmental Strategy](#) has direct links to both HS2, and the wider economic growth being seen across the Midlands. We see this as a critical part of the 'Green Recovery' that will need to take place in the coming years.

In light of this, the WMCA has taken a fresh look at how we can prioritise our local green assets to better utilise them and to look at how HS2 and the wider regeneration taking place can both support and facilitate additional growth in the 'Green Recovery'.

The WMCA has reviewed the governance arrangements in place and has created a triangulated approach whereby the three key regional elements come under one governance structure. This will allow for clear and transparent evaluation and reporting at a regional level of all environmental projects and activities, and will facilitate greater opportunities for collaborative working placing the environment at the very heart of the overall WMCA governance led by the Leader of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Cllr Ian Courts.

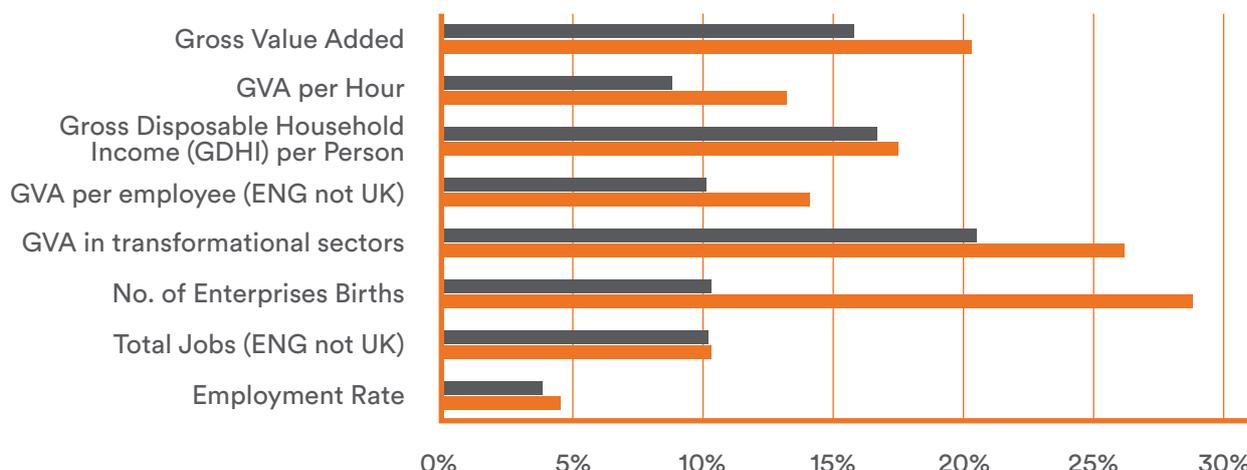


The economic impacts of HS2

In 2012, the government confirmed its strategy for high speed rail, giving HS2 limited the green light to develop the Hybrid Bill for Phase One. In an economy still recovering from the financial crisis, the effect of this new rail line to the West Midlands economy was to start a wave of confidence that has continued to deliver tangible benefits to the region.

The WMCA economic data below demonstrates how this has enabled the region to outperform the rest of the UK and meet the government’s ambition of levelling up economic opportunity .

West Midlands Combined Authority vs UK



Change in UK average since 2013

Change in West Midlands since 2013

Visitor Economy

The Midlands has a very strong visitor economy which ballooned in both numbers and value in recent years. According to a new report published by the University of Birmingham's City-Region Economic Development Institute (REDI), the city's visitor economy was worth £7.1 billion in 2017, up 9.2 per cent on the previous record set in 2016.

Residential

HS2 is boosting the desirability of the region as place to live driving demand for new homes, with current forecasts predicting that the West Midlands' population will grow by around 400,000 by 2043, equivalent to a city the size of Bristol.

The response to this demand can be seen in the 2019 Deloitte Crane Survey, which showed City centre residential development had reached an all-time high with more than 5,000 units under construction and student accommodation was at its highest ever level with 2,667 units under construction.

The WMCA's target of 215,000 homes by 2031, is an integral part of the UK's housing provision and economic growth. Our track record for housing delivery is well established, 16,938 properties were built in 2018/19 - a 15% rise on the previous year and twice the UK average increase.

Commercial

Since the publication of the original strategy, we have seen significant growth in both the economy and wider business activity in the region. The 2019 Deloitte Crane survey for Birmingham, showed that office development surpassed 1.4 million sq. ft. for the third consecutive year.

The region is continuing to demonstrate its strong track record on delivery, with a numerous schemes recently completed or completing in the next few years, ahead of the planned activity at the station development areas, which will provide an additional 1.5m2 of commercial floor space, including 650,000m2 at Interchange Station and 600,000m2 at Curzon Street Station



ONE Eastside, Birmingham

- A 51-storey build to rent (BTR) scheme, set to be the tallest building in Birmingham
- 667 luxury residential units
- Cinema, gym, and rooftop bar, and public realm improvements
- Gross development value of £160m
- Completed late 2022.

Arena Central, Birmingham

- Planning consent for > 1 million sq ft of mixed-use development
- HSBC has forward-purchased 1 Centenary Square, a 210,000 sq ft Grade A office building
- UK Government has pre-let 3 Arena Central, a 240,000 sq ft Grade A office building to house HMRC's regional HQ
- The south east corner is home to a 250 bedroom hotel
- Work underway on the delivery of 323 residential apartments

Paradise, Birmingham

- 10 brand new, high quality buildings in the city centre
- Over 14m sq. ft of commercial floor space
- 250-bedroom 4* hotel
- 3 new public squares £700m investment

Exchange Square, Birmingham

- 375-home build-to-rent development
- Opposite HS2 Curzon Birmingham. Works commence in July 2020
- Completion scheduled for Summer 2023

Oval Estates - Digbeth

Plans for a £1bn transformation of the area around the iconic Custard Factory have been submitted, to deliver:

- Up to 2.2 million sq ft of commercial space
- 1,850 homes
- Shops, restaurants, cafes, and additional leisure facilities
- The 42-acre scheme is expected to create more than 16,000 jobs

Friargate – Coventry

- Spanning 3,200,000 sq ft, the largest regeneration project Coventry has seen in a generation
- 2,350,000 sq ft of Grade A office space across 14 buildings
- 215,000 sq ft of shops, restaurants and bars
- 450,000 sq ft of hotel space across two buildings
- 400 new homes, and 110,000 sq ft of leisure use
- Once complete will bring 15,000 new jobs

Employment and Skills

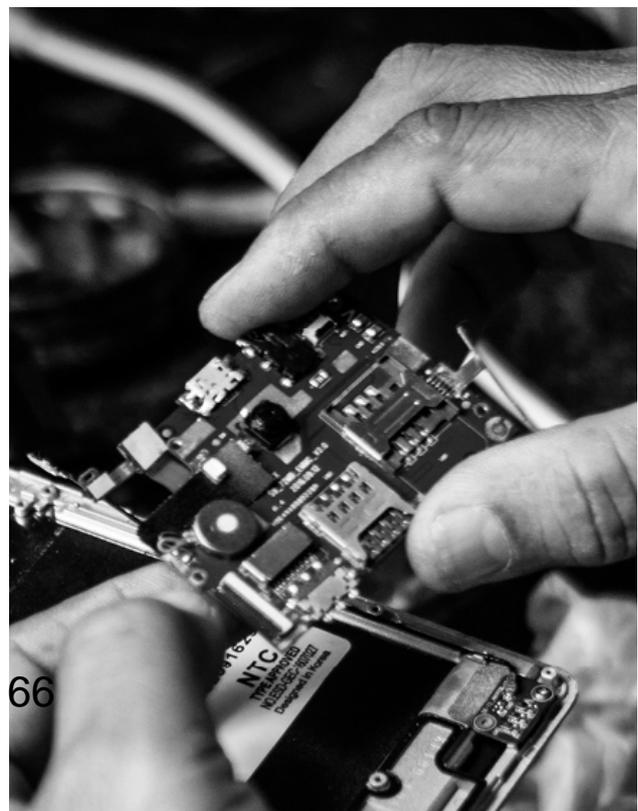
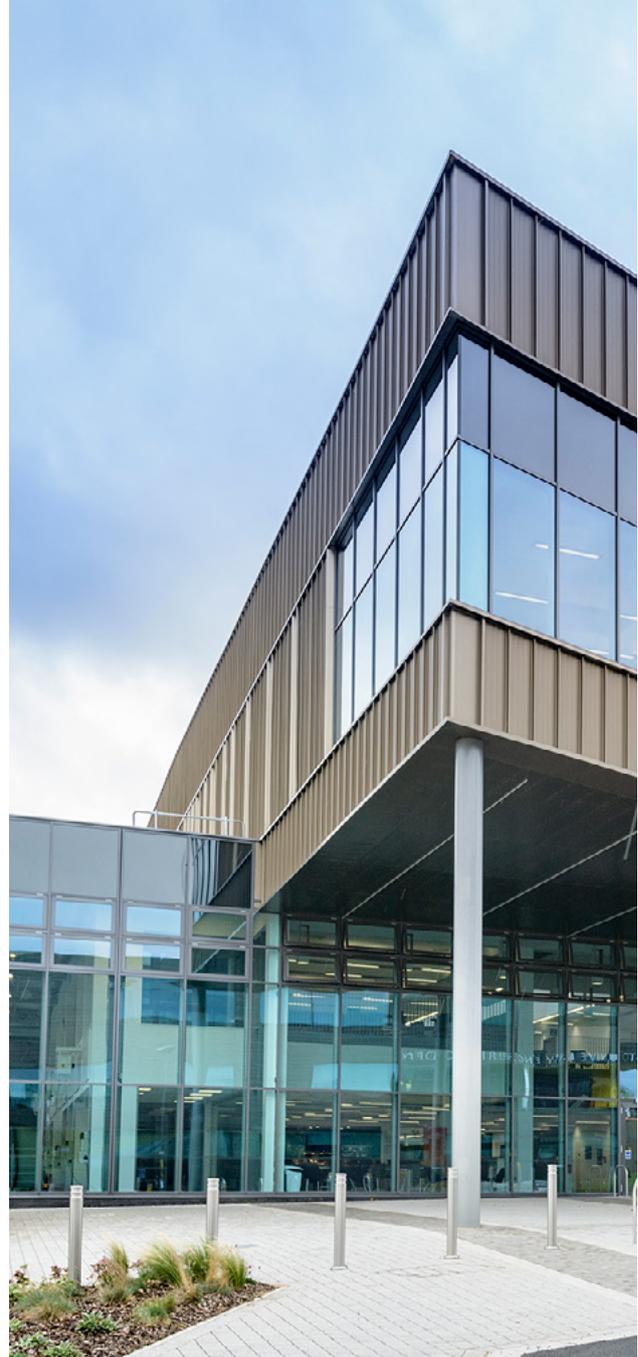
The opportunities offered for employment associated with HS2 are particularly welcome in the economic environment, which will follow lockdown, as the country emerges slowly with businesses unable to operate efficiently due to social distancing requirements, staff off on sick leave and lower spending power among large sections of the population.

The jobs provided by HS2 will play an essential and key role in our recovery ensuring the adverse impacts of a recession are reduced. The roles HS2 is creating provide a good mix of entry level positions, which help facilitate inclusive growth, and high skilled roles, that require above average qualification levels (Level 3+), driving up wage levels and increasing productivity. Already the West Midlands has seen a positive direction with regards to higher level skills (+1% change at L4 and above), while the proportion of those with no qualifications is decreasing.

Wider Economic Benefits

The DfT's Full Business Case High Speed 2 Phase 1 April 2020, shows that the Wider Economic Benefits for the full Y network are £20.5bn (Present Value 2015 prices), a large percentage of these will be realised across the West Midlands including significant potential agglomeration effects through labour market efficiencies, competition effects and knowledge spill overs.

Indirect independent research undertaken for Centro/WMITA, estimated that HS2 would create £2bn GVA p.a. and create 22,000 jobs in the West Midlands, which are not dependent on complementary action by government and local authorities, and demonstrated that the West Midlands HS2 Connectivity Package of transport improvements would double the potential economic benefits of HS2, generating 51,000 new jobs across the West Midlands region and increasing our economic output by £4.1bn GVA per year.



The HS2 Growth Strategy

Transforming the West Midlands through HS2. Our approach focuses on three interlinking strands of PEOPLE, BUSINESS and PLACE and targets action over the short, medium, and long term as we plan for the sustainable impact of HS2 within the region and across the UK.

Together these key areas encompass the multiple workstreams that form the West Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy:

- **People** – including jobs & skills, apprenticeships and the National College of Advanced Transport and Infrastructure
- **Business** – Supply chain support for the construction of HS2 as well as the wider regional impacts of business growth and the necessary support that could be provided
- **Place** – considering the station locations and how these could be developed to become destinations in their own right and the wider ‘connectivity’ that would link over 2m regional residents to the key growth nodes in this region within 45 minutes.



People: The West Midlands' most valuable asset

We are raising ambition, awareness, and skills across the region so that our people are ready to embrace our inclusive economic growth.

HS2 is an employment accelerator, our original Growth Strategy set out a delivery target of 104,000 new or safeguarded jobs. More up to date data suggests this figure will now be more than 150,000 jobs, and we have set ourselves the target of 175,000 new jobs.

To date more than 12,000 jobs across the West Midlands have been attributed to HS2 project, this includes:

- 2,750 jobs directly from HS2 Ltd, its Tier 1 contractors and their supply chains; on the back of HS2 locating its headquarters in Birmingham the city has seen a number of companies and joint-ventures move to the city including Balfour Beatty Vinci; Jacobs Engineering; Fusion JV; Arcadis; Bechtel; and WSP, creating more than 1,000 jobs.
- 1,600 jobs from the HS2 Business Growth Programme
- 6,656 jobs from the Birmingham City Council HS2 Masterplan for Growth

These are just some of the examples of the work that has been done in the region, but by no means all. Work continues to develop additional programmes to help local people secure new and exciting employment opportunities on the HS2 programme.

Our aim is to continue to use HS2 as a catalyst for growth, to build a more inclusive and balanced economy, improving social mobility through employment, unleashing the incredible potential of the West Midlands' young and diverse population.

It was important to recognise there were specific issues at the extremes of the skills spectrum with too many people with no qualifications and not enough people with qualifications at level 4 and above, while the region was also home to a highly skilled workforce and a great graduate pool. Our approach was shaped to ensure that all residents of the region, including those furthest from the labour market, are aware of and can access employment and skills opportunities.

Building on the back of HS2

The immediate focus was on the construction sector, which is forecast to grow rapidly, ensuring that we have the talent to meet the demand that building HS2 creates.

Across the UK more than 8,000 people have been employed, either directly or indirectly on the HS2 construction programme. The next ten years is set to open up new opportunities for up to 100,000 trained workers. However, currently there is a shortage of people with the right skills to fill these jobs.

To maximise the potential employment opportunities created by HS2, the West Midlands formed a 'Jobs & Skills Regional Task Group'. This group, made up of both employers and training providers, including HS2, BBV and LM, looked to understand what the skills gaps would be before,

during, and after construction of HS2 and looked to put in place regional plans to help address these shortages, ensuring sufficient capacity in place to meet the needs of not only HS2, but the wider construction industry in the region.

The series of activities and schemes implemented to get local people into these jobs, and our successes to date include:

- The **Construction Gateway** programme launched in 2018. This has trained more than 1,400 people, with 700 having secured employment, including HS2 related sites.
- The launch of the **Women into Construction** programme in partnership with the WMCA, South and City College Birmingham, Women in Construction, HS2 and Birmingham City Council, which has placed an initial 15 learners.
- **The Black Country Skills** Factory, set up to help bridge the skills gap that would be created by HS2, and the forecast growth of other businesses and industries in the region, both in advance of and after the arrival of HS2.
- **HS2/Rail specific T Level implementation** with Walsall College and lead contractor for N1/N2 Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV). BBV has confirmed that the students it hosts will get to work on HS2.
- The launch of new **Plant and Civil Engineering training centres** at Wolverhampton College, Dudley College, and RMF Construction Training Birmingham and Solihull, along with the development of a construction sector simulator suite at Solihull College.
- Delivering a **£5m skills and employment pilot project for DfE** over 2 years investing in skills and training development for new sector employees led specifically by and for employers.
- Delivered a **£2.3m skills and employment contract for CITB** over 16 months creating four on site construction training hubs, across the three LEPs in Wolverhampton, Birmingham, and Coventry. The WMCA hopes 1,450 local people will be trained at the first two hubs.
- **Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund** which allows the WMCA to partner large organisations with local small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and supercharge apprenticeships, to date £627,500 has gone to construction companies, resulting in an additional 36 apprentices benefiting 17 SMEs.

Fast track to employment

HS2 will see Britain return to the top table of high speed rail development, a key strategic industry that will create high-paid, high skilled jobs addressing the UK's productivity gap. The arrival of HS2 Ltd started this process with 1,300 employees located at headquarters in Birmingham, and the Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot and Network Infrastructure Control Centre at Washwood Heath, will create long-term career opportunities at the heart of one of the region's most deprived areas.

Key to the West Midlands' preparations to meet the demands for the next generation of high speed rail employees is the development of the **National College for Advanced Transport & Infrastructure (NCATI)**. Since opening in September 2017, 480 learners have attended the college, which has the capacity for 1,200 learners each year, across the two sites.

In addition, HS2 has led to the development of rail sector training at BMet, Wolverhampton, and Solihull Colleges, as the region's institutions respond to demand.

Business: Accelerating growth through high speed rail

Our Growth Strategy focused on ensuring that our supply chains were able to capitalise on the unprecedented business opportunities presented by HS2 and the Midlands promotes itself on an international scale attracting significant inward investment.

The region is one of the fastest growing and economically significant areas, generating £105bn of GVA and 5.5% of the UK's economic output. Our distinctive strengths, from world-leading automotive innovation, green technology to health and life sciences, are globally competitive and set us apart from other regions.

In the last five years we have seen the positive effects of HS2 arriving in the region, achieving successes in both of our objectives. While the main civils works have just started in 2020, the West Midlands has experienced clear benefits from the project.

Sector Growth and Inward Investment

The immediate focus was on the construction sector, which is forecast to grow rapidly, ensuring that we have the talent to meet the demand that building HS2 creates.

Our approach was to utilise HS2 to promote the opportunities of the region, driving business growth and investment, focusing on supporting initiatives that accelerate growth, including skills and place-based approaches.

Building on our existing robust inward investment strategy, designed to both attract new businesses to the region and retain existing businesses, and by articulating a compelling rationale for targeted sectors/industries to move to the region, our Growth Strategy looked to focus on explaining the benefits that HS2 will bring to the region, to persuade businesses to locate their European/international headquarter offices in the area and not simply to move operational or production facilities.

Since the launch of our Growth Strategy, HS2 has become an integral part of the West Midlands success story. We have seen our economic output increase by



25%, and up until the current crisis, we were the fastest-growing region outside London. Following Royal Assent in 2017, we have experienced a strengthened performance in FDI, attracting more projects than any UK region outside London and the South East, with a total of 157 new FDI projects recorded in the region during 2019/20, and the number of new and associated jobs created totalling 6,103.

HS2 has helped with domestic relocations, and expansions, and the project continues to be a key topic of conversation with potential investors as a major driver of decision-making. A good example of this is making the case for the relocation of Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), evidenced by HS2 itself, HMRC in Birmingham and Homes England in Coventry. Their presence in the region has prompted the private sector to agglomerate around them, because they want access to relevant decision-makers, demonstrating how locating such bodies contributes to the levelling up of regional economies.

HS2 will ensure that the region is particularly well placed to attract national organisations looking to move out of the South East, helping to rebalance

the UK economy. Recruitment firm Ford & Stanley for example, moved to Birmingham as a result of the new employment opportunities linked to the project. Internationally operating heavyweights such as Barclays Bank and HSBC UK have cited the potential it creates for businesses looking to grow outside the London. As more organisations look to make their operational model more efficient by moving activities outside of the South East, HS2 will be core to making this a success. This is a view echoed by government departments and non-departmental agencies currently relocating from the capital to the region.

The announcement from the government at the start of 2020 confirming its commitment to HS2, will provide a further boost to investor confidence, as will conformation of Phase 2b, which links the region to the East Midlands, the North West and Yorkshire. This confidence will be essential as the region looks to regain momentum following COVID-19 and as it leaves the EU.

Supply Chain

The arrival of HS2 Ltd, and associated companies and joint-ventures such as Balfour Beatty Vinci; Jacobs Engineering; Fusion JV; Arcadis; Bechtel; and WSP, has had a direct impact on the region with more than 300 businesses becoming part of the supply chain.

To ensure West Midlands companies were “HS2” ready, we worked in partnership with our three local LEPs, utilising their Growth Hubs to provide services and assistance to businesses.

The Growth Hubs formed a ‘one stop shop’ bringing local and national offers, and support into one place, offering one-to-one guidance, advice and support, as well as providing online Growth Hub Portals, telephone helplines and face to face support, if required.

The support offered covered four key areas:

- Business Engagement, Diagnostic and Support.
- Access to Finance.
- Skills Training – including Building Information Modelling (BIM) – to accelerate the adoption of BIM throughout the HS2 construction supply chain by adopting level 2 principles.
- Procurement Tools.

To date more than 20,000 businesses across the West Midlands have been supported through the three Growth Hubs. The two main finance streams have directly contributed to economic growth in the region, the £33m Business Growth Programme is responsible for 1,600 jobs, while the £20m National Rail Fund’s current position is 126 new jobs created and 95 existing jobs safeguarded.

Work has already begun on the reformation of the HS2 Business & Supply Chain activities that were first piloted after the submission of the original Growth Strategy. A task group has been brought together that includes Greater Birmingham Chamber of

Commerce, HS2 Ltd, GBSLEP, CWLEP, Black Country Consortium, C&W Growth Hub, Birmingham City Council, and Coventry City Council.

This group has been tasked with identifying the business support needed to help facilitate delivery of HS2 and this has now been extended to include addressing potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. A major priority is to support more of our businesses, especially manufacturers, to innovate and diversify both in terms of nature of products/services and markets served to take advantage of the wide range of possibilities that HS2 and associated investment projects bring.

Places: Bringing the benefits of HS2 to everyone

Our Places strategy will transform connectivity across the West Midlands and unlock development in key economic areas.



HS2 is instrumental in building a brighter future, and nowhere will this be more visible than the two world class stations, Curzon Street in Birmingham, and Interchange in Solihull. These new iconic buildings will be the public face of HS2 in the West Midlands, providing a gateway to 30 million people across more than 20 towns and cities.

Our ambitions exploit the unrivalled connectivity the integrated stations will provide by unlocking land in strategic development areas that will build on our sectoral strengths and target key growth areas.

HS2 Stations – Gateways to prosperity

The two new HS2 stations have the strategic advantage of being located at the centre of the proposed new HS2 network, with the Interchange Station just 38 minutes and Birmingham Curzon St 49 minutes from the capital, and Manchester and Leeds less than an hour away.



Interchange Station at UK Central Hub in Solihull

Solihull Council has developed a strategy and detailed programme of interventions to realise the full potential of the UK Central area, a unique concentration of economic assets and growth drivers in Solihull, which has the potential to become a major growth accelerator for the region and the UK.

The Hub's uniquely strong connectivity (by rail, road, and air) will enable it to attract mobile global investment to the UK and stimulate export growth. It will enhance global competitiveness by increasing transport and business efficiency and, thereby, improve productivity.

This will create Europe's best-connected destination for business, leisure and living at The Hub; a new and outstanding gateway to the UK, with the [Arden Cross masterplan](#) at the heart.

Overall, growth across The Hub is expected to:

HS2 and local investment impacts – The Hub area

- Support 70,000 new and existing jobs
- Accommodate up to 5,000 new homes
- Create 650,000m² of commercial space (bigger than Paradise, Arena Central and Brindleyplace combined)
- Generate an additional £6.2bn GVA per annum (greater than the GVA of Southampton, Sunderland, or Peterborough)
- Bring 1.3m people to within a 45-minute public transport commute of The Hub (above the impact of HS2)
- Arden Cross alone has a gross development value of £3.2bn and will contribute 16,000 new jobs, £1.4bn net GVA, and 3,000 new homes.

To realise these benefits the UGC has seven strategic priorities for The Hub to support and enable planned and future growth. They currently comprise:

- **Birmingham International Connectivity Project** – The UGC is leading the transformation of Birmingham International Station into a world-class, fully integrated transport facility, seamlessly connecting the Airport, the NEC, Interchange Station and Birmingham Business Park. Work is programmed to start after the 2022 Commonwealth Games and will complete by 2026.
- **Energy upgrade** – Supporting the broader sustainability agenda linked to zero carbon emission ambitions, this will be driven by the needs of JLR, Arden Cross and Birmingham Airport. The aim is to establish their revised energy needs and agree a delivery strategy in 2021. That is likely to include the establishment of an ESCO/MUSCO for delivery.
- **Car parking solution for the HS2 Interchange Station** – The UGC is working closely with HS2 to deliver a multi-storey car parking solution as an alternative to the planned surface car parking proposal. This solution will release high quality, valuable land to provide opportunities for commercial development and job creation.
- **Automated People Mover (APM) and realignment** – Connecting Interchange Station to the NEC, Birmingham International Station and Birmingham Airport, the realignment will bring the APM closer to redeveloped Birmingham International Station, improving waiting and transfer times for passengers.
- **Enhancements to the traffic roundabout over the HS2 track** – The UGC has secured £20m to upgrade HS2's design for a key roundabout at Arden Cross. Originally planned to accommodate HS2-related traffic, the new design will support the additional traffic associated with growth, ensuring capacity for housing and mixed-use development.
- **M42 public transport bridge** – This new bridge will link the NEC and Arden Cross, carrying pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and enabling the key development assets across The Hub to become a single 'place'. Prioritising pedestrians and cyclists will contribute to the modal shift and alleviate congestion issues in the areas.
- **Junction pinch points and traffic management** – The development of a Junction Pinch-Points and Traffic Management Strategy will provide additional capacity to support the proposed developments above and beyond the HS2 requirements, resulting in the smoother movement of traffic across The Hub and improving the visitor experience.

Curzon Street Station

Birmingham will be at the heart of the new HS2 network with a city centre terminus at Curzon Station, which represents a once in a century opportunity to radically transform areas of the city centre by unlocking major development sites and accelerating growth.

To realise this potential Birmingham City Council launched the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan in 2015, which covers 141ha of the city centre extending across the Eastside and Digbeth quarters and the eastern fringe of the city centre core. This is in line with the wider Birmingham Development Plan (BDP).

Curzon Masterplan area

The strategy of the masterplan is focused on five Big Moves to ensure the station becomes a focal point for transformation, development, and economic growth:

- **Station design to create a landmark building and arrival experience** – Birmingham Curzon station shall be of outstanding architectural quality, with an exemplary passenger experience and full integration with its surroundings, establishing a strong sense of place both inside and outside of the station.

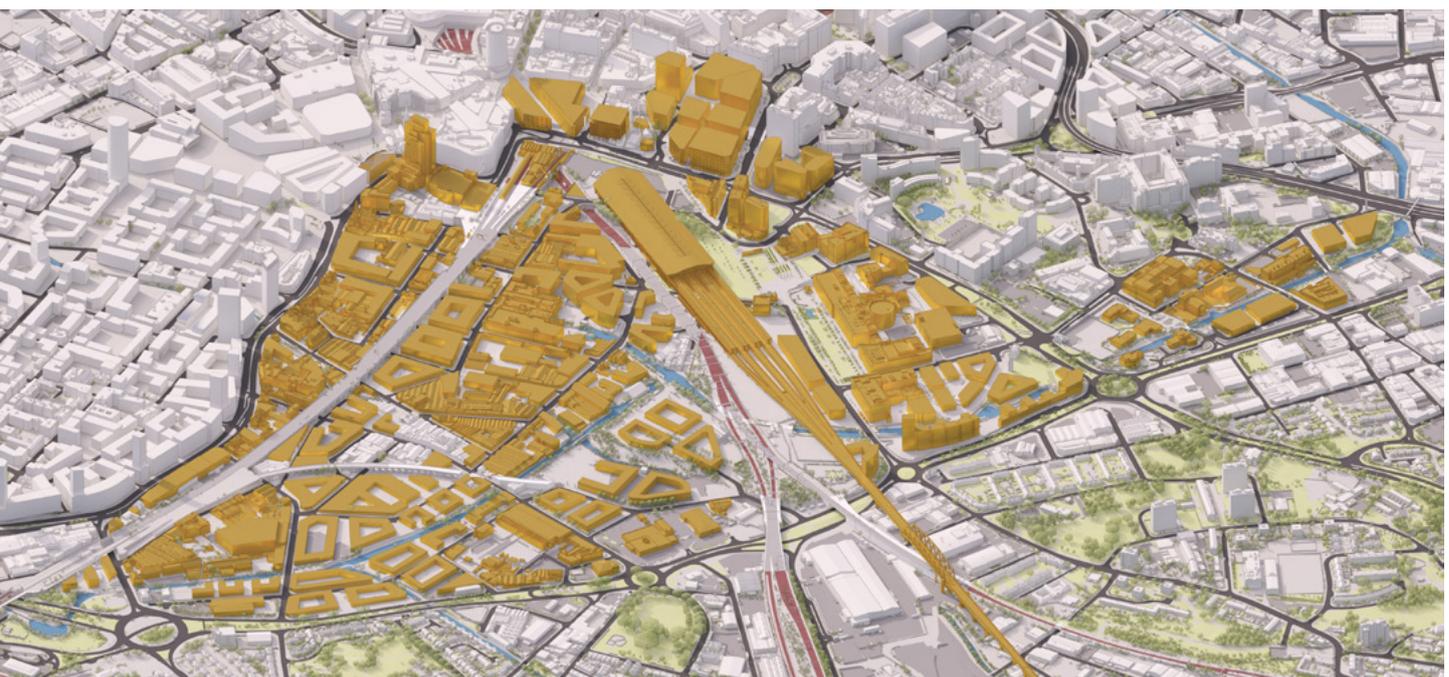
- **Paternoster Place** – A wide, landscaped plaza that will transform pedestrian connections into Digbeth and create gateway development opportunities.
- **Curzon Promenade and Curzon Square** – An extension of Eastside City Park, the Promenade will set Birmingham Curzon station in a landscaped, green setting with cafes, shops and restaurants creating a vibrant edge to the station and the park. Curzon Square will be an extension of the park’s event space providing a high-quality setting for the Grade I Listed former Curzon Street Station and The Woodman public house (Grade II Listed).
- **Station Square and Moor Street Queensway** – A new high-quality pedestrian destination space fronting Birmingham Curzon and surrounded by new development including a new pedestrian route through the Pavilions focussed on the landmark Rotunda.
- **Curzon Station Metro Tram Stop** – An integrated Metro stop at New Canal Street will provide HS2 travellers with fast and efficient connections to the wider city centre, with additional stops transforming connections and boosting the regeneration potential of Digbeth.

Overall, new development within the Curzon area could exceed 800,000 sq. m and 4,400 homes could be developed. The Birmingham city centre Enterprise Zone was extended to cover the Curzon area to enable the delivery of local infrastructure and to drive growth associated with the arrival of HS2.

The immediate impact of HS2 has been assessed on the Curzon area and once the additional Enterprise Zone investments are included the full effect of HS2 and associated local investments is estimated to be:

HS2 and local investment impacts – Curzon area

- £3.0 billion of additional private sector investment
- 3,800 full time-equivalent (FTE) construction jobs (excluding direct HS2 work)
- 43,600 gross and 19,600 net additional permanent FTE jobs.
- £1.6 billion per annum in net additional GVA once the development is complete; and 2,200 additional new homes.





Without HS2, redevelopment of the Curzon area would continue but at a very much slower pace and lower quality. Large areas would remain underused and dilapidated. The type and nature of activity would be lower value and the area would not be transformed.

Washwood Heath

Home to the HS2 Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot (RSMD) and the Network Infrastructure Control Centre (NICC) for the whole high speed rail network, Washwood Heath will be the beating heart for HS2.

Located in one of the country's most deprived neighbourhoods, the development at Washwood Heath will have numerous positive outcomes for residents.

The RSMD is identified as an operational and maintenance hub which will include all light and heavy maintenance requirements, as well as a range of other jobs. It will operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and will employ up to 500 people. The NICC will manage train control and communications for the entire network.

The early civils demolition works have been completed on site and the ground works are due to commence in 2020. The RSMD and NICC are set to be complete by 2028.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, the City Council and HS2 are

progressing the masterplan for the employment land opportunity. The Masterplan targets the creation of at least 24 hectares (including the Aviva site) of employment land at Washwood Heath with the anticipation of creating:

HS2 and local investment impacts – Washwood Heath

- 20 hectares (c.50 acres) retained by HS2 Ltd
- 4 hectares (c.10 acres) retained by Aviva
- 2,000+ new jobs for the area (including the RSMD & NICC)
- Up to 900,000 sq ft of employment space across the 24 hectares
- Improving local economic activity, and where possible the early phased release of surplus land ahead of the opening of the HS2 depot (anticipated to be around 2029/30)
- Enhanced accessibility and linkages to the site for local people
- Creation of a high-quality built environment which fully considers sustainability issues.

To progress the plan a working group has been established and HS2 has appointed Avison Young as its Commercial Development Consultants for the site. As part of Stage 1 numerous workstreams have been undertaken, including the preparation of initial Masterplan concept designs and associated financial appraisals. The Masterplan will be progressed over the next 24 months.

Coventry Station Masterplan

A Grade-II listed railway station, Coventry Station has seen little change since the current station buildings were opened in 1962. Unprecedented passenger growth over the last 10 years has resulted in the station operating beyond its design capacity, which is suppressing demand for travel and choking off current and future economic and jobs growth in the city. The [Coventry Station Masterplan](#) will address these constraints, by providing new passenger and car parking capacity, additional rail service capacity, and improving connectivity to UKC and HS2. The Masterplan will support adjacent major development at Friargate and City Centre South, by providing a suitably attractive gateway for travel into the city. This will in turn boost jobs and economic growth in the city centre by making the journey into Coventry easier, more comfortable, and enjoyable for business and leisure visitors alike.



Connectivity

Regional Connectivity and HS2

Effectively connecting the region's two HS2 station hubs and their associated development zones to other key transport hubs and the wider region will provide momentum for further transformation, radically improving access across the West Midlands and accelerating growth and regeneration at key centres and locations.

Transport for West Midlands has set out a vision of how the expansion of the West Midlands Metro network and proposed new SPRINT bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors can deliver a step-change in local connectivity to our two HS2 station hubs to complement the step-change in national connectivity provided by the new high speed line.

Across the wider region, the 2019 West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy sets out a clear programme for aligning the future development of our "West Midlands Railway" to order to maximise the potential transport and transport-related economic benefits and to ensure that HS2 is fully integrated into the region's rail network.

The combined economic benefits of HS2 and these regional rail network development proposals will be £325m GVA per annum following completion of HS2 Phase 1/2a and Midlands Rail Hub, and almost £500m GVA per annum once Phase 2b of HS2 has been completed.

Realising the full connectivity and economic potential of HS2 for the West Midlands focuses on three key transport strands:

1 Maximising HS2's national (and International) connectivity

HS2 will deliver a step-change in national connectivity for the West Midlands region, bringing London, Nottingham, Manchester, Sheffield, and Leeds within less than an hour's travelling and taking almost an hour off our current rail journey times to Edinburgh and Glasgow.

In international terms, HS2 also has the potential to reduce journey times from the West Midlands to Paris, Brussels and beyond through the frequent Eurostar services from St Pancras station, a short walk from HS2 London Euston terminus. And with dramatically reduced access times to many parts of the UK, Birmingham Airport is very well positioned to play a much greater role in the country's future international aviation strategy.

However, it is clear from the "Statement of Intent" HS2 train service proposals (2020) that there is still some way to go before the full potential benefits to the West Midlands can be regarded as secured.

Phase 2a provides 60 miles of new high speed line between our two HS2 stations and Crewe, offering potential early benefits of saving 30 minutes on journey times to the North West and Scotland. There is little sense in economic, and transport, terms for the West Midlands, the North West and Scotland, to wait until the much longer term completion of the Phase 2b route in order to benefit from HS2's improved connectivity, when using Phase 2a alone could deliver a substantial proportion of such benefits.

2 Improving access to our region's two HS2 Hubs and spreading the benefits

By investing in connectivity improvements that will facilitate access to the HS2 hubs for workers, residents and businesses we will expand the extent of the potential agglomeration benefits by increasing the economic mass of key sectors gravitating around the new hubs.

The revised HS2 connectivity programme aims to:

- Improve access for appropriately qualified labour to the stations and associated development zones.
- Improve access to HS2 for key business sectors.
- Improve access to opportunity for key regeneration areas such as East Birmingham and North Solihull.

3 Released Capacity

The [West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy](#) sets out our released capacity objectives for rail services, which include: more direct cross-regional trains between our key centres and new HS2 hubs, increased train frequencies, more frequent direct London services, and more paths for freight services. This will enhance our ability to attract inward investment through a cluster approach, enabling a larger supply base and the widening of labour-pooling opportunities.

Midlands Connect

Working with Midlands Connect ensures that a more integrated transport network can be delivered to maximise the benefits of HS2 not just in the West Midlands but across the whole of the Midlands.

Midlands Connect is a partnership spanning 22 local authorities, eight chambers of commerce, nine Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and two international airports, as well as national delivery bodies: Network Rail, Highways England and HS2 Ltd, plus the Department for Transport itself. It is playing an active role in ensuring central Government is fulfilling its commitment on levelling up infrastructure spending outside the South East.

Since publishing its strategy in 2017, Midlands Connect has researched, developed, and recommended projects that can deliver the greatest social and economic value to people and businesses. Its Midlands Engine Rail programme comprises of strategic rail projects that will improve regional connectivity through faster and more frequent services on key rail corridors. The flagship project is the Midlands Rail Hub, a £2bn series of upgrades to the existing track as well as building new infrastructure to improve both commuter and interregional services between towns and cities in the Midlands. On this project, Midlands Connect works very closely with partners including West Midlands Rail Executive.

Midlands Engine Rail



The benefits make a significant impact upon our work to address major challenges with traffic congestion, delays, poor journey reliability, crowding, poor service frequencies and long journeys on many rail services through the region, which are impacting on the competitiveness and environment of both the Midlands and the wider UK.

A core element of Midlands Engine Rail is the integration with HS2. Most of the rail projects either maximise or accelerate the benefits including making use of the released capacity the new high speed network will release across the existing rail lines, enabling new local and regional rail services between our towns and cities.

Midlands Connect is working with partners to ensure that all phases of HS2 are delivered. This year, the Government announced an Integrated Rail Plan would be published by the end of 2020. It will consider how both the Eastern and Western legs of HS2 Phase 2b can be integrated with wider transport plans. Midlands Connect along with other partners is providing evidence-based responses to the DfT and other bodies such as the National Infrastructure Commission.

Delivering our HS2 Growth Strategy

The West Midlands was the first region to create a Growth Strategy and in the last five years we have started to see the benefits this will deliver.

Central to our success has been the establishment of the West Midlands Combined Authority through the devolution deal, which included the £4.4bn HS2 Growth Package.

This has provided the means to implement a comprehensive package of interventions and investments, to maximise the true impact and ensure our vision for HS2 becomes a reality. Together our Growth Strategy comprises the following:

- Coventry UK Central Plus
- Sprint Programme
- Rail Programme
- Metro Programme
- UK Central Infrastructure Package
- UK Central HS2 Interchange
- Curzon Street Station Masterplan
- National College for Advanced Transport & Infrastructure
- High Speed Supply Chain & Business Support

Further details of these individual elements the strategy are set out in the supporting business cases.

Our approach is to remain flexible going forward, adapting to the changing landscape, and shifting priorities, to ensure we avoid closing off opportunities.

Making our strategy a reality

The delivery of our strategy has been underpinned by an investment programme that brings forward the infrastructure to maximise the growth and business opportunities and ensure that our people have the skills and training.

	Original Target	VALUE (millions) 2019/20 Baseline
HS2 Growth Strategy	Coventry UK Central Plus	713
	Sprint Programme	335
	Rail Programme	213
	Metro Programme	1,593
	UK Central Infrastructure Package	1,387
	UK Central HS2 Interchange	530
	Curzon Street Station Masterplan	554
	National College for High Speed Rail	26
	High Speed Supply Chain & Business Support	350
Total		5,699

Funding and Financial Instruments

Many of the projects identified above are already fully or part funded. This funding has been provided by previous ‘devolution deals’ or through other Government grant schemes, whilst others are made up of a ‘cocktail of funding’ that has been achieved with both direct and indirect funding from partners.

It must however be recognised that in light of the COVID-19 crisis, alternative future funding sources will need to be sought to deliver some of the key regional and national ‘big ticket’ projects so to maximise the benefits of HS2 for the West Midlands.

HS2 creates an environment that presents good opportunities for the private sector to find attractive returns by investing in parts of the

infrastructure. The HS2’s Chairman’s Stocktake Aug 2019 makes several references to this, specifically Recommendation 4:

“As part of this work, it is important to acknowledge that HS2 is creating large value uplifts in the places it serves and in the assets it creates. Alternative funding and finance opportunities must be considered in addition to the ongoing activities on cost and schedule. We should continue to explore opportunities with the private sector, local authorities, development agencies and other local stakeholders to assist with funding in return for future revenues. In parallel with maintaining pressure on costs, HS2 Ltd, with Government, should take further steps to realise value from its assets, especially around land and property in city centres”.

This potential for private sector investment was also highlighted in the Oakervee Review, stating:

“Stations also have an important role in driving commercial value and contributing to the funding of rail projects. Over site development and private sector contributions have been used for Crossrail and innovation in this area needs to continue for funding future infrastructure projects”.

The West Midlands has looked to new funding mechanisms and private sector investment to reduce the level of investment from Government as part of the developments withing the Growth Strategy. including the expansion of the Metro and the development of the multi-storey car park at Interchange.



Interchange Station multi-storey car park (MSCP) Funding Waterfall

Opportunity

Building the MSCP is key to unlocking value at the Interchange site, to realise this a funding waterfall has been proposed.

Provisional cost range

£134.5m-£169m

Stakeholders:

- SMBC/UGC
- WMCA
- DfT/MHCLG
- HS2 Ltd
- Arden Cross Ltd

Funding sources:

- WMCA – £5.4m subject to approval of current business case
- c£15m HS2 cost savings

- £95m requested from HMG
- Car park revenue share
- Business Rates
- Land Value Capture

Next steps:

- UGC to develop scope proposal for HS2 review
- UGC/Arden Cross to sign Land Value Capture agreement
- Pre-application consultation has begun
- UGC to secure planning consent and procure D&B contractor
- Delivery obstacles to be cleared by mid-2023
- DfT/UGC/SMBC/HS2/WMCA to commit to waterfall funding delivery
- Provisional build programme 2027-'29

Birmingham Eastside Extension

The Metro Birmingham Eastside Extension (BEE) is funded by a mix of local and DfT funding in order to maximise benefits from HS2 (as the BEE is intended to be the key link to HS2/Curzon St).

Birmingham CC has committed £15m towards the BEE in order to redevelop the Digbeth area in order to drive more investment, jobs and skills into the area.

The BEE is also essentially the Phase 1 of the development, after which will be, if funding can be sourced and approved, the extension to Solihull and HS2 link at Birmingham International – further connecting HS2 to the rest of the West Midlands.

Estimated Capital Cost (QCE) of £227.2 million, funded by:

	Total
Birmingham City Council	15.0
GBSLEP	5.5
DfT	121.7
DfT Advanced Funding	10.0
WMCA Investment Programme ¹	18.5
Prudential Borrowing ²	56.5
Total	227.2

Stakeholders:

- Birmingham City Council
- HS2 Ltd
- Several third party developer in the Digbeth area (Smithfield, Lunar Rise, etc)
- Tram Operator (MML)
- National Express
- Businesses/landowners/occupiers on the route (South City College, McDonalds, Martineau Galleries, Hammerson, etc)
- GBSLEP

Next steps:

- Review of MMA TC1 and submission of an Owner's brief to MMA
- Notice to be served to parties for access to land, as per the TWAO and in line with programme requirements
- Continued engagement, to ensure stakeholders are suitably informed of upcoming works
- Co-ordination with HS2 in respect of section 3 construction and utility diversions
- FBC for urban realm funding from GBSLEP – submission to board in Q4 2020
- Utilities diversions to commence in August 2020

1 WMCA Investment Programme is underwriting £18.5m funding towards the HS2 Utilities Diversions

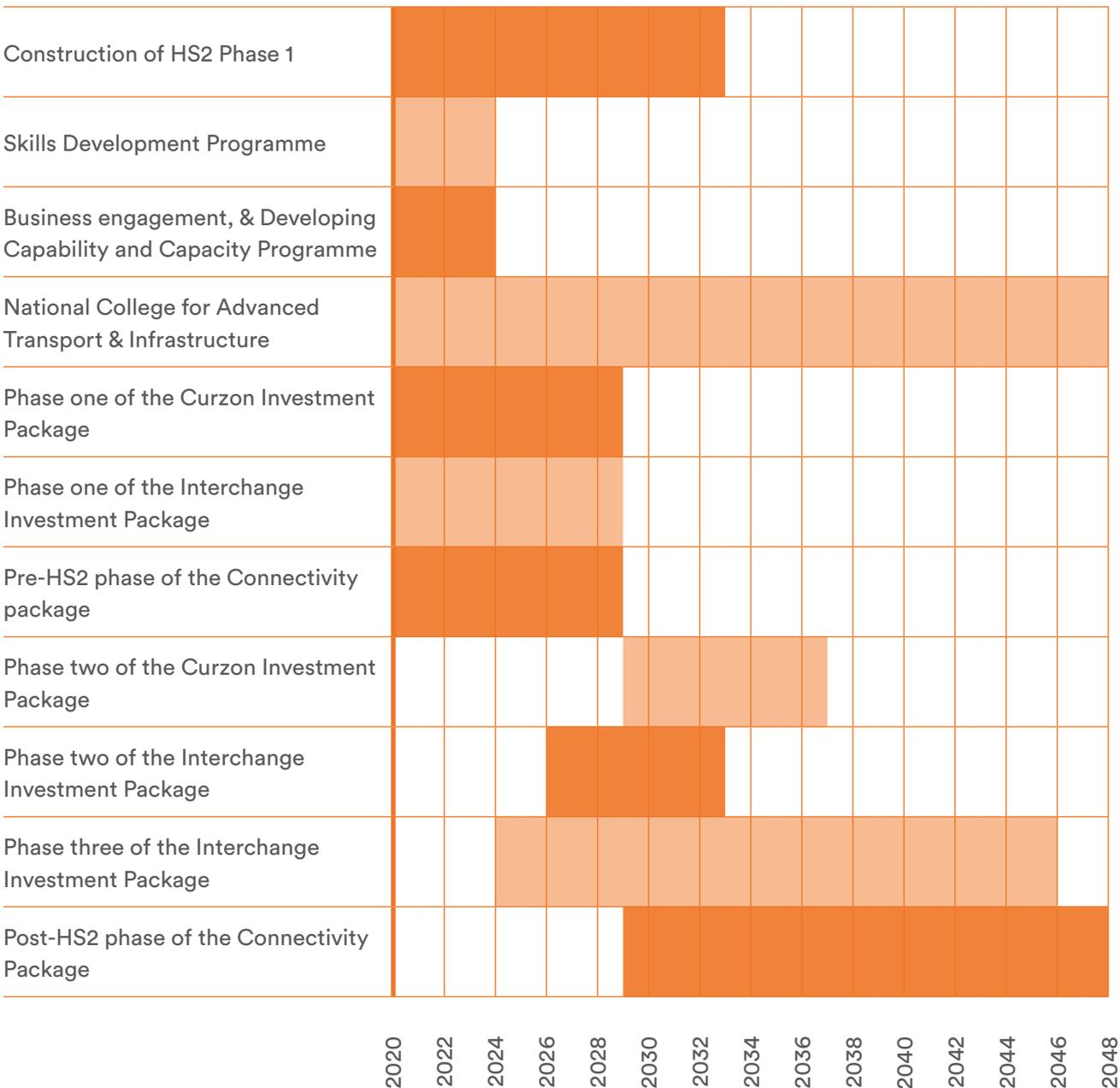
2 The Prudential Borrowing (via Public Works Loans Board PWLB) is borrowing underpinned by Farebox revenues / operating surpluses from Metro.

Phasing our approach

The delivery of our HS2 Growth Strategy Investment Programme is phased over a 20+ year period. It is focused on the investments and interventions in the period leading up to and including the construction of HS2 to create the conditions for maximising growth.

The current timings are based on HS2’s revised Phase One timings, opening between 2030 and 2033. We are working in partnership with government and HS2, to identify where we are able to accelerate plans to bring forward benefits to the region.

Building on this first wave of investment a longer-term programme will then create sustained conditions and widen the impact of HS2 generating further benefits both locally and nationally.



Local Governance

Responsibility for managing the delivery of our Growth Strategy and the investment programme, in terms of the operational overview and decision making, resides with the HS2 Growth Delivery Board.

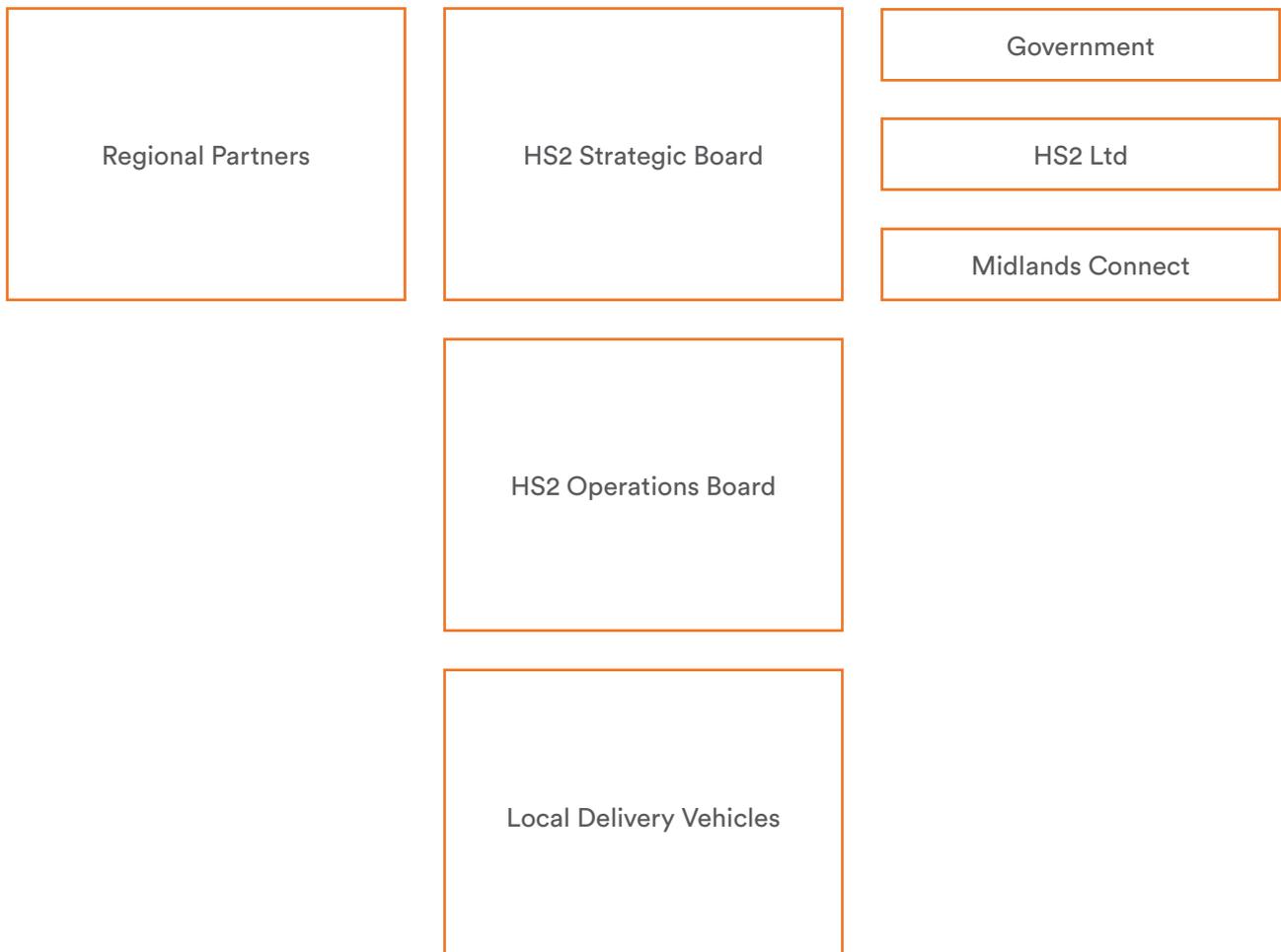
The board is chaired by Steve Hollis, with the membership coming from local authorities and partners across the Midlands, Government, HS2 Ltd, as well as direct representation from the LEPs.

Supporting the Growth Delivery Board is the Operational Board, which provides programme management functions, and includes representatives from the organisations responsible for the specific delivery elements of the programme.

Following the formation of the West Midlands Combined Authority in 2016, the majority of workstreams, including Connectivity, Network

Resilience and Jobs & Skills, have become embedded within the organisation, allowing greater integration with the overall plans for the West Midlands. The latest example is the Environmental and Landscaping workstream, which is becoming part of the WMCA’s Environmental Board, under the aegis of Cllr Ian Courts, leader of Solihull Council, portfolio holder for environment and the portfolio holder for HS2.

To reflect the vastly different nature of the propositions and local circumstances, created by the growth opportunities at the station locations and at Washwood Heath, specific local delivery vehicles have been created, to facilitate the joint/collaborative working between a variety of organisations to lever in private sector investment, share/transfer development risk and deliver comprehensive schemes.



UK Central Hub including Interchange Station site

The Urban Growth Company (UGC) is a special purpose vehicle established by Solihull Council in 2016 to realise and maximise the economic potential associated with the arrival of HS2 in Solihull. The UGC has brought key stakeholders together to look at the challenges and the opportunities ahead to jointly plan and deliver the world-class infrastructure and development needed to power growth across the region for decades to come.

The UGC is now at a stage where additional funding from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is enabling it to move from planning to delivery of major projects, all of which are focused on delivering maximum economic growth alongside social and environmental benefits.

Curzon Street Station area – The Curzon Growth Strategy is led by Birmingham City Council, which will bring together key stakeholders to drive forward the vision and develop a programme of activity. Much of the area is within the GBSLEP Enterprise Zone and projects to be considered for funding will be developed in accordance with the governance set out in the EZ Investment Plan 2019.

Washwood Heath – The Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot and Network Infrastructure Control Centre will be brought forward by HS2 Ltd as part of the overall high speed rail project. HS2 Ltd and Birmingham City Council have signed a Memorandum of Understanding setting out how they will work together to bring forward the employment opportunity on the remainder of the land (24 hectares) following construction. A joint working group has been established and HS2 Ltd has appointed Avison Young as its commercial development consultants for the employment site (including advice on delivery and the procurement of a potential development partner). This governance structure will include the consideration and preparation of any future funding bids necessary (such as for access improvements) to help unlock the opportunities at the site.

Working in partnership

Strong and inclusive partnership working across the Midlands, with key stakeholders including local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, the business community, education, national agencies, Government and HS2 Ltd, will be vital in getting the region ready to maximise the opportunities. Robust and established arrangements are already in place which have facilitated the development of this Growth Strategy.

Joint working with partners across the Midlands has produced strong outputs which we will build on as we develop our growth and reform agenda and work with Government to develop implementation strategies and packages. Ultimately, successful delivery will be driven by the success of these partnerships together with long term planning and commitment ensuring the Midlands is ready to drive growth from HS2.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

Our 2020 Growth Strategy builds on the work of the last five years, while adapting to the changing environment, and responding to the new challenges that we face.



Levelling up

HS2 is turbocharging the levels of employment and investment in the West Midlands. These economic benefits will be seen in new jobs, improved places to live, work and visit, and strengthened economic outlook for the region and the UK.

We now have the opportunity to work together with HS2 to ensure that our plans can progress in parallel and bring forward the economic benefits, while reducing the cost to the taxpayer through public private funding.

Covid Recovery

By advancing our existing development plans, we have the opportunity to accelerate and maximise the benefits of HS2. This will allow the government to assist in our efforts to rebuild and recharge the West Midlands economy, bringing forward more than 16,000 jobs, build more than 4,000 new homes and deliver an instant boost to the economy of more than £250m.

Climate Change

HS2 through the greener travel it unlocks is critical to the UK's response to global warming, including the net zero target of 2050 and the West Midlands target of 2041. The released rail capacity is essential to our efforts to switch people into public transport, improving our local train services. At the same time HS2 will provide the rail paths for freight, enabling the UK to take 2.6m lorries off the roads each year.

Phase 2

The full benefits of HS2 come from the whole network. It is essential that Phases 2a & 2b are delivered in full as soon as possible, directly linking Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester, and Leeds, to create an economic area equivalent to Germany's North Rhine-Westphalia.

In addition, the 60 miles of high speed track, which will link the West Midlands to Crewe should be utilised to bring the forward benefits of HS2 to the West Midlands, North West and Scotland.

Strong Relationships

Delivering HS2 in the region has seen palpable progress in terms of collaborative working between HS2 and the West Midlands delivery partners. A faster, more transparent and joined-up decision-making process, facilitates more efficient use of resources both by HS2 and other public and private sector partners, reducing delays and costs.

Recommendation One: That this partnership approach increases further, building on the groups established, to ensure engagement at the critical junctures between HS2 and the regional plans, which will deliver the wider economic benefits of the programme.

Interregional collaboration

The scale of the impact of HS2 in the region has led to the West Midlands becoming a testbed for the delivery of the project. This has led to a shared understanding on the importance of regional ambitions and how they build upon the work of HS2. The vision, governance and funding mechanisms that have been developed form a blueprint for the regions benefiting from future phases of the HS2 network.

Recommendation Two: That going forward there is more importance placed on wider, more collaborative work between the key regions along the route, enabling the learnings from Phase One to be adopted in Phase Two.

National Governance

The recent Oakervee Review revealed the need to ensure transparency, clarity, and openness and that there needs to be a new approach to the delivery of HS2, not just in the Midlands, but across the entire trace. The review also highlighted that there were gaps in our evidence base that in reality mapped directly back to some of the strategic challenges that we are faced with in not only the delivery of HS2 within the Midlands, but also in addressing wider national context.

Recommendation Three: That a National HS2 Growth Delivery Board (NHGDB) be formed, that would look to provide strategic guidance and advice across the entire HS2 programme and would give an objective view on how the programme was progressing. The NHGDB would offer direction and clarity to the existing Places Group. Acting as a 'unitary board' the NHGDB would be expected to act in the best interests of the nation as a whole and to have an impartial input into the decision-making process.

Environment

HS2 has the potential to be a catalyst for the green revolution that is required for the nation to meet its climate targets and shape the emerging economies of the 21st century. The opportunities HS2 enables are much greater than existing approaches, highlighting the need for further thinking in this area.

Recommendation Four: We recommend that we work directly with DEFRA to shape future policy to detail how across the UK, regions can exploit the wider impacts and opportunities, beyond the trace of HS2, to deliver the essential improvements to the land environment and green economy.



West Midlands
Combined Authority



WMCA Board

Date	13 November 2020
Report title	Financial Monitoring Report 2020/21
Portfolio Lead	Finance - Councillor Bob Sleigh
Accountable Chief Executive	Deborah Cadman, West Midlands Combined Authority email: deborah.cadman@wmca.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7552
Accountable Employee	Linda Horne, Director of Finance email: linda.horne@wmca.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7508
This report has been considered by	Senior Leadership Team - 21 October 2020 Programme Board - 26 October 2020

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the financial outturn position as at the end of September 2020.
- (2) Note the latest forecast for 2020/21, incorporating the estimated impact of COVID-19 as set out in section 3.
- (3) Note the updated Medium-Term Financial Planning position for the period 2021/22 to 2025/26 as detailed in Section 4.
- (4) Note the final confirmed project allocations made under the Get Britain Building initiative set out in paragraph 8.15.
- (5) Note the Treasury Management Strategy Mid-year update included within Appendix 9.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide updates on the Combined Authority's finances as at the end of September 2020 (including the financial implications of Covid-19), the medium-term financial planning process and on the WMCA treasury management activities.

2.0 Background - Financial Monitoring

- 2.1 A summary of both the revenue and capital spend against the approved budget are attached as appendices 1-5. A summary of the Investment Programme along with current commitments is included in appendices 6 and 7.
- 2.2 The second capital forecast of the year was completed in September and has been reduced to £215.2m, which is £65.3m below the annual budget of £280.5m.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 shows the overall consolidated revenue position for the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 2.4 The overall year to date position at the end of September shows a £0.417m favourable variance from budget. This consists of a favourable variance within the Transport budget of £0.579m largely due to lower concessionary patronage volumes and RTCC efficiency savings offsetting the Covid-19 impact on advertising revenue and departure charge income.
- 2.5 There is an adverse variance of £0.162m within the Delivery budget largely as a result of lower than budgeted investment income owing to the 0.1% bank rate which has impacted the returns on cash balances.

3.0 Forecast Update

- 3.1 On 24 July 2020 the Combined Authority received an update on the financial impact of COVID-19 in 2020/21 and beyond. Early indications at that time were that there would be an adverse movement of around £11.1m when compared with the revenue budget for 2020/21, primarily driven by transport related income drops as a consequence of COVID-19 and the restrictions introduced to limit the spread of the virus.
- 3.2 On 18 September 2020 the Combined Authority received an update on the forecast in-year impact of COVID-19 in 2020/21, following a detailed reforecast exercise carried out in July 2020, effectively forecasting an improved overall deficit position for the year of £2.0m.

3.3 To recap, the results of the July reforecast are summarised in the following table:

Table 1: Latest Forecast Deficit 2020/21

	Transport	Delivery Budget	Shared Services	TOTAL
Forecast Deficit - 24 July 2020	-8.6	-2.0	-0.5	-11.1
<u>Income changes:</u>				
Improved income forecasts	2.0	0.9	0.1	3.0
Government grant received for subsidised services	1.0	-	-	1.0
Estimated Light Rail Restart Grant up to 31 Oct 2020	0.9	-	-	0.9
Estimated grant for lost sales, fees and charges	0.7	-	-	0.7
<u>Expenditure changes:</u>				
Savings on concessionary travel owing to lower patronage	1.0	-	-	1.0
Metro lifecycle costs rescheduled	0.7	-	-	0.7
Other discretionary expenditure savings	0.7	0.8	0.3	1.8
Latest Forecast Deficit	-1.6	-0.3	-0.1	-2.0

- 3.4 It is important to note that the underlying assumptions used to forecast the latest position in the table above do not reflect the impact of Tier 2 restrictions recently introduced in parts of the region or indeed any further potential restrictions associated with the pandemic. A fully updated forecast position will therefore be provided within the November financial position which will be shared at the next meeting of the Board in January 2021.
- 3.5 It is also important to note that TfWM is continuing to see drops in income and the commercial bus and metro network are still seeing reduced levels of patronage, however, it has been confirmed that the Combined Authority is able to access a package of funding to support a proportion (75% of losses after the first 5% which will not be funded) of the loss of income from fees and charges for services. The claim for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 July 2020 has been submitted and awaiting payment.
- 3.6 The Department for Transport has also indicated that short-term funding for Metro in the form of Light Rail Restart Grant is anticipated to continue until the end of the financial year.
- 3.7 Given the inherent uncertainty around the significant number of constantly changing assumptions that underly the latest forecast position for 2020/21, the forecast clearly only represents a best estimate. The underlying assumptions are changing on a daily basis, leading to movements in the forecast position and will therefore be kept under constant review. WMCA are to an extent protected from the 3 largest ongoing financial pressures in terms of the bus and metro network and loss of sales, fees and charges income for the remainder of the financial year.
- 3.8 The latest forecast therefore sets out the **best assessment at the time of writing** of the forecast impact on WMCA's financial position in 2020/21 including the specific impact of COVID-19 but is clearly subject to constant change. A further detailed reforecast exercise is currently being carried out and will be reported with the November 2020 financial position in the next financial update report to the Board at the next meeting in January 2021.

- 3.9 As endorse at the September Board it is proposed that the latest forecast deficit for 2020/21 of £2.0m is met from the one-off use of reserves summarised in the following table:

Table 2: Use of one-off reserves to fund the 2020/21 latest forecast deficit

Use of reserves	£m
COVID-19 earmarked reserves	1.3
Reprioritised earmarked reserves	0.4
Metro earmarked reserves	0.3
Total	2.0

- 3.10 These reserves can only be used once and therefore do not provide a sustainable funding solution. This position has only been achieved by reprioritising existing reserves that cannot now be used to support the efficiency saving projects and workstreams they were originally intended to fund.
- 3.11 The following table summarises the latest reforecast position following the application of one-off earmarked reserves:

Table 3: Latest forecast position 2020/21

	Transport	Delivery Budget	Shared Services	TOTAL
Latest Forecast Deficit	-1.6	-0.3	-0.1	-2.0
Use of COVID-19 Earmarked Reserves	1.2	0.1	-	1.3
Reprioritised earmarked reserves	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.4
Metro earmarked reserves	0.3	-	-	0.3
Latest Forecast / Balanced Budget	-	-	-	-

4.0 Medium Term Financial Plan Update

- 4.1 The July 2020 report to WMCA Board documented the work undertaken on WMCA's medium term financial planning processes. This indicated significant financial deficits forecast from 2021/22, onwards mostly driven by the impact that the Coronavirus pandemic was expected to have on income. Since July 2020, work has been undertaken to refine the forward forecasts resulting in a worsening of the position as detailed below:

Portfolio / Area £M	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Transport	(9.6)	(12.1)	(12.0)	(15.6)	(19.9)
Delivery	(4.2)	(4.9)	(5.8)	(6.0)	(6.1)
Mayoral Office	(0.8)	-	-	-	-
Shared Services	0.2	(0.6)	(2.7)	(4.5)	(5.4)
Funding Gap (July WMCA Board)	(14.4)	(17.6)	(20.5)	(26.1)	(31.4)
Latest View	(17.9)	(18.2)	(21.3)	(26.6)	(31.2)
Variance	(3.5)	(0.6)	(0.8)	(0.5)	0.2

- 4.2 Whilst income and expenditure forecasts have been fundamentally reassessed over the last 4 months since July 2020, the variance detailed above is mostly driven by the potential impact on transport provision as a result of the current pandemic and is therefore subject to uncertainty.
- 4.3 Significant work has been undertaken in consultation with WM Mayor and Leaders to reaffirm the plans and priorities WMCA are working towards in light of the financial deficits detailed above and this work has been important in terms of helping to confirm the core deliverables of the WMCA.
- 4.4 Work to reduce the funding deficit is continuing throughout the autumn with a view towards providing a draft balanced budget for 2021/22 for the WMCA Board meeting on 15th January. This work will be closely supported by the West Midlands Finance Directors. The key factors which may enable WMCA to close the gap are as follows:
- The extent to which UK Government are able to make good income losses arising from the reduced patronage on the public transport network;
 - An assessment of the financial impact the pandemic will have on the operation of commercial bus services and the subsequent cost to WMCA of subsidising those services in line with access standards;
 - The extent to which WMCA are able to identify efficiencies within current working practices or discretionary expenditure via the Productivity and Efficiencies Board, to contribute towards reducing the funding gap;
 - The extent to which UK Government are able to reimburse WMCA for additional expenditure incurred as a result of the pandemic under the Sales Fees and Charges reimbursement arrangements;
 - The extent to which UK Government are able to commit towards funding the 2021 Mayoral Election in May;
 - The extent to which WMCA are able to realise additional income;
 - The extent to which any subsequent local or national restrictions brought on by the pandemic further worsen the financial forecasts.
- 4.5 As detailed above, it is expected that WMCA will work closely with West Midlands Finance Directors and other key stakeholders with the aim of presenting a draft balanced budget for 2021/22 for approval by WMCA in January 2021 and emerging proposals will be discussed with the Mayor and Leaders at their meeting 13th November.

5.0 Transport

- 5.1 The year to date position on the Transport revenue budget as at the end of September 2020 shows an overall favourable variance of £0.579m against budget.
- 5.2 This favourable variance is primarily driven by lower patronage volumes across the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme and Child Concessions reflecting operators continuing to be paid at pre-COVID-19 levels, as well as savings realised during the set-up of the RTCC through prudent purchasing decisions. The full year forecast also reflects government support in the form of Coronavirus Bus Services Support Grant and Light Rail Restart Grant along with favourable staffing variations.
- 5.3 These savings are largely offset by the impact of Covid-19 driving lower than budgeted digital advertising revenue and the implementation of a departure charge holiday until the end of June 2020, aiming to support bus operators during the crisis.

6.0 West Midlands Combined Authority Delivery Budget

- 6.1 Appendix 3 sets out the position on the West Midlands Combined Authority Delivery Budget as at the end of September 2020, showing an adverse variance of £0.162m from budget.
- 6.2 The adverse variance is primarily as a result of a reduction in the bank base rate, which has led to lower than budgeted returns on cash balances.
- 6.3 This adverse variance is partly offset by savings across portfolios as a result of the rescheduling of expenditure as a result of the impact of Covid-19 coupled with staffing variations.

7.0 Mayoral Office

- 7.1 The Mayoral Office shows a favourable variance of £0.049m from Budget as at the end of September 2020 as a result of staffing variations alongside some smaller savings against the travel budget. The full year outturn is expected to be in line with Budget.

8.0 Capital Programme

- 8.1 Appendix 5 sets out the position on the Capital Programme as at the end of September 2020. Actual costs totalled £98.2m, resulting in a favourable variance of £88.5m against a budget of £186.7m. The annual forecast has been reduced in September 2020 to £373.7m, which is £135.9m below the Budget of £509.7m.
- 8.2 The year to date budget variance is contained primarily within Transport (£50.4m), Grants to Local Authorities within the Investment Programme (£19.3m) and Housing (£18.9m).
- 8.3 The Transport Programme has been categorised into five sub programmes. The largest of these is the Investment Programme with a budget of £146.9m, including all the Rail/Sprint & Metro extension schemes. At the end of September, actual costs totalled £42.2m, which was £25.3m below the budget of £67.5m. The main variances at the end of September were contained within the Metro Programme totalling £19.0m. Although delivery schedules are not currently anticipated to be impacted by rephasing of expenditure plans, it's likely that the Covid-19 pandemic will lead to further rescheduling and prioritisation of capital expenditure plans.
- 8.4 The variance against the Metro Wednesbury to Brierley Hill of £10.6m is reflective of Covid-19 restrictions, where utility operators are only responding to emergency works therefore some diversions have not commenced as scheduled. WMCA are working on mitigation measures to overcome this delay and progress diversions where possible.
- 8.5 The Birmingham Eastside extension variance of £5.3m relates to HS2 utility diversions which have not commenced due to the pending final sign off on the development agreement with HS2.
- 8.6 The SPRINT-Hagley Road scheme was favourable by £3.1m. There is an ongoing review of design with Birmingham City Council and a s278 agreement requires a revised Target Cost (TC2) so works have not progressed as quickly as anticipated.
- 8.7 The Metro Network-Comms & Control scheme was £1.6m below budget due to commissioning work proceeding later than anticipated due to Covid-19.

- 8.8 The Commonwealth Games Programme with a budget of £84.8m includes all the schemes (SPRINT, Perry Barr & University Rail Stations, and Games) scheduled to be delivered in advance of the Games in July and August 2022. At the end of September 2020, actual costs totalled £13.2m, which was £13.6m below the budget of £26.8m. The main variances of note related to the Sprint A34 Walsall to Birmingham which was below budget (£4.9m), owing to the Covid-19 restrictions impacting on utility diversion works, and the Sprint A45 Birmingham to Airport & Solihull (£5.2m) due mainly to lower than expected progress of utility diversion costs, as a result of temporary Covid-19 restrictions on the highways. Both projects have received approval to commence phase one works, receiving WMCA Board approval to submission of final business case to DfT in March 2020.
- 8.9 At the end of September 2020, Other Major Programmes actual costs totalled £7.1m, which was £6.7m below the budget of £13.8m. The main variance relates to Connected and Autonomous Vehicles Testbed (CAV) (£1.0m) due to a delay in appointment of the construction contractor, coupled with Covid-19 restrictions. In addition, the Longbridge Connectivity Package (£0.4m) favourable variance reflects construction of the decked car park being broadly complete, with only minor power utility work to complete as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. Final snagging and commissioning work will be completed in Quarter 2 by our main contractor. The A435 Alcester Road Bus priority revitalisation Programme (£1.7m) variance is due to temporary disruption of construction works (expected 3-month timing impact) by the Coronavirus restrictions.
- 8.10 The Minor Works Programme with a budget of £14.7m includes several small schemes. At the end of September 2020, actual costs totalled £2.0m, which was £1.9m below the budget of £4.0m. The main variance is driven by ADEPT Live Lab (£0.5m) as the anticipated costs haven't materialised due to Covid-19 restrictions. Real Time Information Upgrades (£0.4m) represents additional favourable variance as the contract award is now expected to take place in November.
- 8.11 The Grants to Local Authorities Budget of £8.2m relates primarily to the schemes funded within the Transforming Cities Fund. At the end of September 2020, nothing has been spent against a budget of £2.9m as a result of a revised delivery programme.
- 8.12 The Grants to Local Authorities Investment Programme with a budget of £172.8m includes those schemes delivered by Local Authorities as part of the Investment Programme grant arrangements. At the end of September 2020, actual costs totalled £292m, which was £19.3m below the budget of £48.4m. The favourable variance is broadly related to Covid-19 restrictions impacting on the progression of Coventry Station Masterplan (£5.2m), Very Light Rail (£4.1m) and the City of Culture Regeneration (£5.1m). The HS2 - UK Central Interchange (£2.8m) primarily relating to the Roundabout-Over Trace works, has also seen less work undertaken in first quarter due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- 8.13 The Housing Programme with an annual budget of £56.3m includes the WMCA Land Fund, WMCA land remediation funds including the BCLEP managed Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF). At the end of September 2020, actual costs totalled £4.4m, which was £18.9m below the budget of £23.3m. The variance is primarily contained within the LPIF (£12.9m) due to the Phoenix 10 manufacturing site scheme, where the final agreements and planning application that were expected in April 2020, have now been rescheduled. The WMCA Brownfield Land & Property Development Fund favourable variance (£6.0m) is also due to reduced drawdown as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.

- 8.14 Following a review of the Q2 position, the annual forecast has been reduced to £373.7m, against the annual budget of £509.7m. The main variances are contained within the Transport Programme (£65.3m), the Housing Programme (£20.5m) and the Grants to Local Authorities Investment Programme (£5.9m). Within the Transport Programme, the main variances are contained within the Metro Programme (£20.3m), related to Metro Eastside (£1.2m), Metro Wednesbury Brierley Hill (£11.9m), and Metro Westside (£1.3m) reflecting the up to date position. A further £21.6m of the variance is in the Sprint Programme as utility works expected to complete in September have been re-phased over the rest of the financial year due to the impact of Covid-19. The Rail-Walsall-Wolverhampton (Package 1) Local Enhancements underspend of £2.8m is due to land acquisition costs (Willenhall Land Triple R Site) now projected for April 2021 (from Q2 2020). The main variance within the Housing Programme is contained within the WMCA Brownfield Land & Property Investment Fund (£22.3m), primarily relating to the Phoenix 10 project as set out in paragraph 8.13.

Get Britain Building Capital Fund

- 8.15 The WMCA, in consultation with Local Authorities and LEPS, recently assembled a bid into Government for the Get Britain Building Fund resulting in £66m being awarded to the region. WMCA are currently finalising agreements with delivery agencies for the fund. The projects awarded funding under the initiative are confirmed as follows:

Project Name	£m
Precision Health Technology Accelerator	10.9
Very Light Rail Innovation Centre	12.4
Regional WM5G Application Accelerator extension	1.0
Completing the Cultural Capital	6.1
Commonwealth Economic Legacy at Ricoh Arena, Coventry	3.9
University Station	15.1
National Brownfield Land Institute	14.9
VLR Coventry	1.8
Total	65.9

9.0 Investment Programme

- 9.1 The financial results for the Investment Programme run one month behind the regular management accounts due to the requirement to consolidate outputs across the metropolitan area. The August expenditure is shown at Appendix 6, which reports the gross delivery totals for programmes delivered by both WMCA and other entities (being primarily local authorities).
- 9.2 The 2020/21 year to date cash spend to August 2020 is £148.0m behind the rebased 2020/21 budget, mainly because of the current Coventry UK Central Plus, Metro and UK Central Infrastructure programmes.

- 9.3 In respect of full project costs to completion, the financial summary has been adjusted to reflect the revised budget, based on the 2020/21 programme baseline. It should be noted that the impact of COVID-19 on projects within the WMCA Investment Programme is continuously being assessed by the accountable bodies, with each respective delivery entity required to manage the schemes within the funding available to them.
- 9.4 The cost to completion against UK Central HS2 Interchange remains red status due to the funding gap of circa £131 million against the Birmingham International Station redevelopment project.
- 9.5 The Sprint programme is red status because of the A34 Walsall to Birmingham and A45 Birmingham to Airport and Solihull projects. Phase 1 of these projects were approved by WMCA Board on 14th February 2020. Discussions to confirm the funding package for the second delivery phase of these projects are continuing.
- 9.6 Appendix 7 details approved funding from the WMCA Investment Programme, which totalled £776.7m as at 30th September 2020 (£768.7m as at 31st August 2020).
- 9.7 In addition to the projects listed at Appendix 7, an application for repayable funding for the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre was approved by WMCA Board on 13 September 2019.

Investment Programme Funding

- 9.8 In November 2019, WMCA Board agreed to hold current Investment Programme approvals at the current affordable limit, whilst arrangements to secure additional funding into WMCA are developed and delivered.
- 9.9 Based upon what is available to date, the affordable limit was determined by WMCA Finance Directors to be £801m and endorsed by WMCA Board.
- 9.10 As such, a number of programmes for which the full extent of the funding required is not yet secure are amber status whilst these issues are being resolved. Specifically, these programmes include Coventry UK Central Plus, Sprint Programme; Rail Programme, UK Central Infrastructure Package, UK Central HS2 Interchange, Innovation Programme, Land Reclamation & Remediation and Employment, Education & Skills.

Independent Evaluation of Local Growth Interventions ('Devolution Deal Gateway Review')

- 9.11 Five-yearly gateway review periods formed part of the Devolution Deal agreement in 2016. The 2020/21 financial year is the fifth and final year of the first gateway review period.
- 9.12 SQW have been commissioned by MHCLG to review a selection of projects within the Investment programme and will issue a recommendation in November 2020.
- 9.13 SQW have completed the stakeholder interviews and are finalising the report drafts in consultation with the WMCA Strategic Hub.

10.0 Balance Sheet

- 10.1 Appendix 8 presents the West Midlands Combined Authority Balance Sheet which shows a healthy financial position as at 30 September 2020.

10.2 The decrease in debtors is largely due to grants received and lower trade receivables. In contrast, the increase in short-term creditors/accruals is mainly due to spending on capital projects, namely the Coventry UKC Plus programmes.

10.3 The MHCLG Get Building Fund was received in the month, thereby contributing to the net increase in grants receipts in advance and in cash and short-term deposits.

11.0 Administered Funds

Funding Stream	Latest Forecast Grant Award £'000	Spend to date £'000	Purpose
Midlands Connect	7,355	2,122	Work is continuing on delivering the Midlands Engine 'Vision for Growth'.
Housing First Pilot	9,600	9,600	WMCA are the accountable body for this grant award that has now been paid to Birmingham City Council to develop work streams to help rough sleepers off the streets
One Public Estate	926	926	It was agreed by WMCA Board that WMCA would assume accountable body status for this grant award, that is delivering various projects that secure more from public sector assets through collective action. Sandwell MBC are in the process of transferring the funds to WMCA.
Highways Maintenance Block	13,112	13,112	Distributed to the 7 Mets. excluding Birmingham City Council which has separate PFI arrangements, to deliver programmed highways maintenance works in line with the conditions of the grant award
Integrated Transport Block	17,618	17,618	Supporting delivery of the 7 Mets. Capital Programmes & WMCA's Minor Works Capital Programme
Total	48,611	43,378	

12.0 Financial Implications

12.1 The Financial Implications are set out in the report.

13.0 Legal implications

13.1 There are no legal implications.

14.0 Equalities implications

14.1 There are no equalities implications.

15.0 Inclusive Growth Implications

15.1 The WMCA budget includes implications of inclusive growth in the region.

16.0 Geographical Area of Report's Implications

16.1 The report encompasses the West Midlands region.

17.0 Other Implications

17.1 There are no other implications

18.0 Appendices

- Appendix 1 – WMCA Consolidated Summary – September 2020
- Appendix 2 – WMCA Transport Revenue Summary - September 2020
- Appendix 3 – WMCA Operational Revenue Summary – September 2020
- Appendix 4 – WMCA Mayor Revenue Summary – September 2020
- Appendix 5 – WMCA Capital Transport Delivery Programme – September 2020
- Appendix 6 – WMCA Investment Programme Summary – August 2020
- Appendix 7 – WMCA Investment Programme Commitments – September 2020
- Appendix 8 – WMCA Balance Sheet – September 2020
- Appendix 9 – WMCA Treasury Management Update

Appendix 1

WMCA Consolidated Summary – September 2020

£000's	Year to Date			Full Year		
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	Variance
Transport Levy	57,360	57,360	0	114,720	114,720	0
Commonwealth Games	418	909	(491)	1,905	2,157	(252)
Devolution Deal Grants	5,549	6,612	(1,063)	12,106	12,227	(121)
Adult Education Funding	71,736	74,815	(3,079)	128,534	128,534	0
Share of Business Rates	0	2,183	(2,183)	7,500	7,500	0
Constituent Membership	2,322	2,322	0	4,644	4,644	0
Non Constituent Members	213	213	0	425	425	0
Investment Programme	2,701	2,140	561	36,500	36,500	0
Investment Income	617	986	(369)	1,505	1,921	(416)
3rd Party / Other Grant Income	1,029	502	527	1,900	871	1,029
Use of Reserves	0	0	0	5,990	4,053	1,937
Total Funding	141,945	148,042	(6,097)	315,729	313,552	2,177
Transport for West Midlands	57,029	57,606	577	119,979	118,353	(1,626)
Commonwealth Games	418	911	493	1,905	2,157	252
Economy & Innovation	1,416	1,155	(261)	3,309	2,312	(997)
Environment, Energy & HS2	180	172	(8)	345	345	0
Housing and Land	884	1,260	376	1,384	2,521	1,137
Wellbeing	465	472	7	1,110	941	(169)
PSR & Social Economy	543	345	(198)	821	689	(132)
Culture and Digital	82	105	23	210	210	0
Productivity & Skills	76,038	79,927	3,889	138,358	137,715	(643)
Inclusive Communities	32	54	22	118	118	0
Business Support	1,709	1,583	(126)	3,228	3,229	1
Investment Programme	2,753	4,426	1,673	44,155	44,155	0
Mayoral Office	355	404	49	807	807	0
Total Expenditure	141,905	148,419	6,514	315,729	313,552	(2,177)
Transport	331	(248)	579	0	0	0
Delivery	(291)	(129)	(162)	0	0	0
Mayoral Office	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	40	(377)	417	0	0	0

The year to date position at the end of September shows a £0.417m favourable variance from budget.

This is made up of £0.579m within Transport as a result of lower patronage across ENCTS and Child concessions, additional government grants to fund subsidised bus and Metro, efficiency savings within the RTCC and lower operational costs during Covid-19 alongside staffing variations. This position is offset by significantly reduced advertising revenue and a departure charge holiday designed to support bus operators during the crisis.

This is offset by an adverse variance of £0.162m within the Delivery budget due to lower investment income as a result of a reduction in the bank base rate, partly offset by savings across portfolios as programme expenditure has been rescheduled for later in the year.

In addition, the Adult Education Budget has seen reduced delivery as a result of Covid-19 and new contracts with training providers are starting later than planned.

Lower grant drawdown has been required within Housing & Land due to increased capitalisation of staff costs and savings on external advice. In addition new grants to support Brexit preparations (Economy & Innovation) and Homelessness (PSR & Social Economy), have been reflected in the forecast and have started to be drawn down, and which are offset by the associated increase in expenditure.

Appendix 2

Transport for West Midlands year to date revenue position – September 2020

Headlines

As at the end of September 2020 there is a £0.579m favourable year to date variance. This is primarily driven by lower bus patronage leading to savings across Concessions budgets along with efficient RTCC purchasing decisions offset by significantly reduced advertising revenue and a departure charge holiday for operators as a result of Covid-19.

Key:

- Favourable Variance
- No Variance or Offset by Grant
- Adverse Variance

	SEPTEMBER 2020 YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR 2020/21			VARIANCE EXPLANATION(S)
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	
TRANSPORT FOR WEST MIDLANDS							
INCOME							
Specific resources:							
Transport Levy	57,360	57,360	0 0%	114,720	114,720	(0) 0%	●
Commonwealth Games	418	909	(490) 54%	1,905	2,157	(252) 12%	●
Use of Reserves	0	0	0 0%	5,259	3,633	1,626 45%	●
TOTAL INCOME	57,779	58,269	(490) 1%	121,884	120,510	1,374 1%	
EXPENDITURE							
Concessions							
National Bus Concession	24,936	25,499	563 2%	48,938	51,006	2,067 4%	●
Metro / Rail	2,209	2,219	10 0%	4,557	4,575	17 0%	●
Child Concession	2,751	3,640	888 24%	6,579	7,837	1,258 16%	●
Bus Services	29,896	31,358	1,462 84%	60,075	63,417	3,342 44%	
Bus Stations / Infrastructure	4,070	2,213	(1,857) 84%	6,546	4,542	(2,005) 44%	●
Subsidised Network	5,204	5,204	0 0%	10,409	10,409	(0) 0%	●
Accessible Transport	3,263	3,309	46 1%	6,617	6,617	0 0%	●
Rail and Metro Services	12,537	10,726	(1,811) 15%	23,572	21,567	(2,005) 15%	
Metro Services	520	612	91 15%	6,630	2,642	(3,988) 15%	●
Rail Services	1,404	1,339	(65) 5%	2,827	2,805	(22) 1%	●
Integration	1,924	1,951	27 33%	9,457	5,447	(4,010) 11%	
Safety and Security	410	614	204 33%	1,136	1,274	138 11%	●
Passenger Information	2,774	2,857	83 3%	5,666	5,729	62 1%	●
Sustainable Travel	232	279	47 17%	527	567	40 7%	●
Network Resilience	3,416	3,750	334 40%	7,330	7,570	241 19%	
Network Resilience	915	1,533	618 40%	2,501	3,100	599 19%	●
Commonwealth Games	418	911	492 54%	1,905	2,157	252 12%	
Commonwealth Games	418	911	492 54%	1,905	2,157	252 12%	●
Business and Democratic Support	1,724	1,773	49 3%	3,723	3,764	41 1%	
Business and Democratic Support	1,724	1,773	49 3%	3,723	3,764	41 1%	●
Strategic Development	1,719	1,614	(104) 6%	2,975	3,141	166 5%	
Strategic Development	1,719	1,614	(104) 6%	2,975	3,141	166 5%	●
Transport Governance	63	66	3 5%	133	132	(1) 1%	
Transport Governance	63	66	3 5%	133	132	(1) 1%	●
Capital Finance Charges	4,836	4,836	0 0%	10,214	10,214	(0) 0%	
Capital Finance Charges	4,836	4,836	0 0%	10,214	10,214	(0) 0%	●
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	57,447	58,517	1,069 2%	121,884	120,510	(1,374) 1%	
NET	331	(248)	579 234%	(0)	(0)	0 15%	

The profile of CWG expenditure has been impacted by Covid-19, as such grant draw down will be lower than budgeted in year. Additional reserves will be utilised to balance the revised full year position.

Forecast spending on concessions reflects the latest patronage and fare reimbursement assumptions.

Loss of bus infrastructure income (bus stations, shelter advertising, IBSS) as a result of Covid-19.

Subsidised bus is currently being supported by the Bus Services Support Grant to help mitigate against the impact of Covid-19.

The award of the DfT Light Rail Restart grant to the end of October assumes a largely breakeven position up until then. However, from that point the forecast assumes revenue will only return to 75% of pre-Covid levels.

Driven by increased CCTV income

Favourable variance driven by efficient purchasing decisions meaning the budgeted contingency for delivery of RTCC is no longer required, alongside staffing variations.

The CWG external advice budget has not been spent as plans and recruitment were updated to account for Covid-19. Fully offset by lower grant draw down.

Appendix 3

West Midlands Combined Authority Delivery Budget – September 2020

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS AT SEPTEMBER 2020	SEPTEMBER 2020 YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR 2020/21			
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	
Operational Income							
Mayoral Capacity Funding	0	96	(96)	193	193	0	
Investment Interest Income (1)	565	883	(318)	1,350	1,766	(416)	(1) The bank base rate was substantially lowered as a result of Covid-19, and which has resulted in approximately a £50k a month reduction in investment income.
Contribution - 7 Met Council's	2,323	2,323	0	4,644	4,644	0	
Contribution - Non constituent members	212	212	0	425	425	0	
Use of Reserves (2)	0	0	0	731	420	311	(2) Additional reserves will be utilised to balance the revised full year position.
Total Income	3,100	3,514	(414)	7,343	7,448	(105)	
Shared Services Recharges to Portfolios	(1,709)	(1,583)	(126)	(3,228)	(3,229)	1	
Total Expenditure	(1,709)	(1,583)	(126)	(3,228)	(3,229)	1	
Operational Income Net Total	1,391	1,931	(540)	4,115	4,219	(104)	
Economy & Innovation							
Other Industrial Strategy Income	25	0	25	0	0	0	
Office of Data Analytics	74	128	(54)	173	257	(84)	
DDCMS - Creative Scale Up	357	325	32	774	650	124	
MHCLG - Brexit Support Preparations (1)	118	0	118	991	0	991	(1) An additional grant to support Brexit preparations has been reflected in the forecast and is beginning to be drawn down, offset by the associated expenditure.
Total Income	574	453	121	1,938	907	1,031	
Funding For Growth	(350)	(350)	0	(700)	(700)	0	
Industrial Strategy (2)	(372)	(232)	(140)	(431)	(465)	34	(2) Adverse YTD variance driven by the commission of PwC to support in establishing a Covid-19 recovery plan for the West Midlands.
Office of Data Analytics	(74)	(128)	54	(173)	(257)	84	
DDCMS - Creative Scale Up	(357)	(325)	(32)	(774)	(650)	(124)	
Economic Intelligence	(145)	(120)	(25)	(240)	(240)	0	
MHCLG - Brexit Support Preparations (1)	(118)	0	(118)	(991)	0	(991)	
Total Expenditure	(1,416)	(1,155)	(261)	(3,309)	(2,312)	(997)	
Economy & Innovation Net Total	(842)	(702)	(140)	(1,371)	(1,405)	34	
Environment & Energy, HS2							
Energy Capital	84	0	84	0	0	0	
Total Income	84	0	84	0	0	0	
Environment (1)	(96)	(172)	76	(345)	(345)	0	(1) Initial plans were disrupted as a result of Covid-19. However revised plans are now in place for delivery of programmes over the remainder of the year.
Energy Capital	(84)	0	(84)	0	0	0	
Total Expenditure	(180)	(172)	(8)	(345)	(345)	0	
Environment & Energy, HS2 Net Total	(96)	(172)	76	(345)	(345)	0	
Housing and Land							
Director of Housing & Regeneration (1)	884	1,260	(376)	1,384	2,521	(1,137)	
Total Income	884	1,260	(376)	1,384	2,521	(1,137)	(1) Increased capitalisation of staff costs and agreed savings on external advice have driven the lower expenditure and in turn the lower grant drawdown. The lower spend has been reflected in the forecast and will allow the grant to be utilised further into future years.
Director of Housing & Regeneration (1)	(884)	(1,260)	376	(1,384)	(2,521)	1,137	
Total Expenditure	(884)	(1,260)	376	(1,384)	(2,521)	1,137	
Housing and Land Net Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Wellbeing							
Other Mental Health Income	0	0	0	21	0	21	
Well Being	9	16	(7)	36	31	5	
IPS Programme (1)	126	42	84	198	83	115	(1) Work & Health Unit grant that was due to end in October 2020 has been extended until March 2022, offset by an associated increase in expenditure.
Fiscal Incentive Programme (2)	136	53	83	195	105	90	
Total Income	271	111	160	450	219	231	
Mental Health Commission (3)	(123)	(282)	159	(522)	(563)	41	(2) Increased drawdown of the grant as the project concludes, offset by the associated increase in expenditure.
Well Being	(80)	(95)	15	(195)	(190)	(5)	
IPS Programme (1)	(126)	(42)	(84)	(198)	(83)	(115)	
Fiscal Incentive Programme (2)	(136)	(53)	(83)	(195)	(105)	(90)	(3) Staffing variations have driven savings year to date.
Total Expenditure	(465)	(472)	7	(1,110)	(941)	(169)	
Wellbeing Net Total	(194)	(361)	167	(660)	(722)	62	

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS AT SEPTEMBER 2020	SEPTEMBER 2020 YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR 2020/21				
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000		
Public Service Reform & Social Economy								
Other PSR Income	18	20	(2)	33	40	(7)	(1) Additional grant has been awarded and is offset by an associated increase in expenditure. (2) The favourable variance year to date is driven by staffing variations. However, over the full year it is forecast that these savings will be more than offset by additional workstreams to support the regions system and social economy responses to Covid-19..	
Homelessness (1)	257	20	237	133	39	94		
Total Income	275	40	235	166	79	87		
Public Sector Reform (2)	(263)	(295)	32	(642)	(591)	(51)		
Inclusive Growth	(23)	(30)	7	(46)	(59)	13		
Homelessness (1)	(257)	(20)	(237)	(133)	(39)	(94)		
Total Expenditure	(543)	(345)	(198)	(821)	(689)	(132)		
Public Service Reform & Social Economy Net Total	(268)	(305)	37	(655)	(610)	(45)		
Skills and Productivity								
Productivity and Skills (1)	37	0	37	148	0	148		(1) Additional funding secured for delivery of a Skills Advisory Panel. (2) Delivery plan revised in light of Covid-19, and reflected in forecast. (3) Construction Industry Training Board delivery increased in Q1 of this year, thus requiring additional grant drawdown. (4) Reduced delivery as a result of Covid-19 alongside delays in the commencement of new contracts with training providers. (5) Delivery plan revised in light of Covid-19, and reflected in the forecast.
Employment Support (2)	648	957	(309)	1,920	2,070	(150)		
Technical Education	32	48	(16)	98	98	0		
Construction Skills (3)	1,139	920	219	1,787	1,576	211		
Adult Education (4)	71,736	74,815	(3,079)	128,534	128,534	0		
Careers	19	46	(27)	48	61	(13)		
Digital Skills (5)	2,092	2,581	(489)	4,622	4,157	465		
Investment Programme (Skills)	115	199	(84)	445	410	35		
Total Income	75,818	79,566	(3,748)	137,602	136,906	696		
Productivity and Skills	(257)	(361)	104	(904)	(809)	(95)		
Employment Support (2)	(648)	(957)	309	(1,920)	(2,070)	150		
Technical Education	(32)	(48)	16	(98)	(98)	0		
Construction Skills (3)	(1,139)	(920)	(219)	(1,787)	(1,576)	(211)		
Adult Education (4)	(71,736)	(74,815)	3,079	(128,534)	(128,534)	0		
Careers	(19)	(46)	27	(48)	(61)	13		
Digital Skills (5)	(2,092)	(2,581)	489	(4,622)	(4,157)	(465)		
Investment Programme (Skills)	(115)	(199)	84	(445)	(410)	(35)		
Total Expenditure	(76,038)	(79,927)	3,889	(138,358)	(137,715)	(643)		
Skills and Productivity Net Total	(220)	(361)	141	(756)	(809)	53		
Culture and Digital								
Culture & Tourism Commission (1)	52	0	52	0	0	0	(1) BFI Creative Clusters Growth Fund secured to fund BFI project, offset by associated expenditure	
Total Income	52	0	52	0	0	0		
Culture & Tourism Commission (1)	(82)	(55)	(27)	(110)	(110)	0		
Digital	0	(50)	50	(100)	(100)	0		
Total Expenditure	(82)	(105)	23	(210)	(210)	0		
Culture and Digital Net Total	(30)	(105)	75	(210)	(210)	0		
Inclusive Communities								
Total Income	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Youth Combined Authority	(32)	(54)	22	(118)	(118)	0		
Total Expenditure	(32)	(54)	22	(118)	(118)	0		
Inclusive Communities Net Total	(32)	(54)	22	(118)	(118)	0		
Operational Expenditure Net Total	(291)	(129)	(162)	0	0	0		

West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral Budget - September 2020

	SEPTEMBER 2020 YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR 2020/21		
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000
MAYORAL OFFICE						
Other Grants	355	404	(49) 12%	807	807	0 0%
TOTAL INCOME	355	404	(49) 12%	807	807	0 0%
Staff Costs	(344)	(377)	33 9%	(734)	(753)	19 3%
IT	(5)	(5)	0 0%	(11)	(10)	(1) 10%
External Advice	0	0	0 0%	(30)	0	(30) 0%
Travel & Subsistence	(1)	(21)	20 95%	(25)	(42)	17 40%
Other Running Costs	(5)	(1)	(4) 400%	(7)	(2)	(5) 250%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(355)	(404)	49 12%	(807)	(807)	0 0%
NET	0	0	0 0%	0	0	0 0%

The favourable variance to date is largely due to staffing variations plus some smaller savings against the travel budget. Staffing costs will increase over the remainder of the year as a result of recruitment to vacant posts and costs associated with the temporary cover of roles. Therefore, final outturn is expected to be in line with budget.

Appendix 5

West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Capital Programme – September 2020

	YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR		
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000
Metro	38,311	57,306	18,995	108,890	129,230	20,340
Rail	2,801	5,916	3,115	7,782	13,338	5,556
Sprint	1,113	4,322	3,209	2,662	4,322	1,660
TRANSPORT - INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	42,225	67,544	25,319	119,334	146,890	27,556

ACTUAL V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

At the end of September 2020, actual expenditure was £25.318m lower than budget. The main variances are contained within the Metro Programme, and relate to the following;

Metro Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension £10.580m. Due to Covid-19 some utility undertakers were only responding to emergency works therefore some diversions did not commence as scheduled. The Railway Corridor was acquired on 10th July 2020 following prolonged negotiations with Network Rail which has limited construction that has taken place to date. WMCA are working on mitigation measures to overcome this delay and progress diversions where possible. This plan will be worked through in the coming weeks and months.

Metro Birmingham Eastside £5.343m. Utilities works relating to HS2 diversions have not commenced as forecast due to final sign-off on the development agreement being delayed with HS2. Billing is expected to catch up in the next few months as work commences. The HS2 spend profile has been re-phased as a result of this change to the Development Agreement.

SPRINT - Hagley Road £3.140m. Ongoing review of design with Birmingham Council and agreement for Highway Improvements (S278) requires a revised Target Cost (TC2) so Midland Metro Alliance works have not progressed as anticipated.

Rail Package 1 Walsall to Wolverhampton Local Enhancements £2.080m. Darlaston and Willenhall Land Costs £2.25m put back to April 2021.

Metro Network - Comms & Control £1.556m. Commissioning work proceeded later than anticipated as a result of Covid-19.

FORECAST V BUDGET COMMENTARY

Metro Birmingham Eastside £1.242m. The variance is due to utilities re-phasing as a result of the protracted signing of the Development Agreement, which is currently with HS2 for final signature. However, it will not impact the overall project budget or schedule.

Metro Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension £11.921m. Driven by the impact of the Covid-19 restrictions on the progression of Utility diversion works.

Rail - Walsall-Wolverhampton (Package 1) £2.791m. Land acquisition costs (Willenhall Land Triple R Site) now projected for April 2021 put back from April 2020.

Metro Network - Comms & Control £2.227m Full year reflection of the YTD variance.

Metro Westside £1.340m. Despite the Covid impact the project remains on track to be delivered on time and within the funding envelope by December 2021.

Metro Network - Wednesbury Depot Upgrades £1.542m. The project is at the early stages of defining the scope of work, but which was initially impacted by Covid-19.

Metro Network - Traction Power £1.551. Midland Metro Alliance cost stack still under discussion for finalisation.

	YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR		
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000
Highway	1,144	3,321	2,177	9,319	12,403	3,084
Other	25	25	0	53	53	0
Rail	4,986	6,248	1,262	21,208	22,013	805
Sprint	7,016	17,210	10,194	28,701	50,302	21,601
TRANSPORT - COMMONWEALTH GAMES	13,171	26,804	13,633	59,281	84,771	25,490

ACTUAL V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

At the end of September 2020, actual expenditure was £13.631m lower than budget. The main variances are as follows;

SPRINT-A34 Walsall to Birmingham £4.883m. Due to lower utility diversion costs owing to the Covid-19 restrictions on the highways during March-June 2020.

SPRINT A45 Birmingham to Airport & Solihull £5.170m. Due mainly to lower than expected progress of utility diversion costs, hampered by the temporary Covid-19 restrictions on the highways.

RTCC - Highway Interventions £1.278m. Covid-19 has impacted on the progress of work.

FORECAST V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

SPRINT A45 Birmingham to Airport & Solihull £13.253m. As a result of Covid-19 utilities work expected to complete in period 6 are now expected to continue over the rest of the financial year.

SPRINT A34 Walsall to Birmingham £8.348m. As a result of Covid-19 utilities work expected to complete in period 6 are now expected to continue over the rest of the financial year.

RTCC - Highway Interventions £3.036m. Impacted by Covid-19.

Appendix 5 (continued)
West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Capital Programme – September 2020

	YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR		
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000
Bus	1,049	1,648	599	3,028	3,768	740
Highway	168	3,187	3,019	3,120	5,814	2,694
Other	5,500	7,899	2,399	13,725	14,844	1,119
Rail	426	1,062	636	961	1,480	519
TRANSPORT - OTHER MAJOR PROGRAMMES	7,143	13,796	6,653	20,834	25,906	5,072

ACTUAL V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

At the end of September 2020, actual expenditure was £6.652m below the budget. The main variances are as follows;

Connected and Autonomous Vehicles Testbed (CAV) £1.002m. Due to the delay in appointment of the construction company Siemens. Also the Covid-19 lockdown hasn't enabled the work to be carried out in the time frame. Some of the work has been restarted with the remainder reprofiled over the rest of the year.

A435 Alcester Road Bus priority revitalisation £1.724m. Construction works have been temporarily disrupted (expected 3-month timing impact) by the Coronavirus restrictions.

Longbridge Connectivity Package £0.385m. The construction of the decked car park is broadly complete. The variance is due to the power utility company starting work late in August as a result of Covid 19. Final snagging and commissioning works to be completed in Quarter 2 by the main contractor.

Clean Bus Technology Fund £0.403m. Slow down in the delivery of the programme due to Covid-19. Not anticipated to have an annual impact.

FORECAST V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

Future Transport Zone WP3 Transport Network Data £0.841m. Costs have been transferred into 21/22, as timelines for data collection have been impacted dramatically by Covid-19 travel patterns.

Snow Hill 3rd Access £0.520m. The scheme was paused in March-20, in consideration of a wider solution around the public realm.

Dudley Interchange £0.666m. As a result of funding uncertainty hasn't yet progressed past the design stage to formal tender.

A435 Alcester Rd Bus Priority Revitalisation £2.535m. Formal approval has been pushed back as a result of the pandemic, and as such the work earmarked for Q2 will not now commence until Q4.

	YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR		
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000
Minor Work Programme	2,063	4,012	1,949	13,435	14,718	1,283
TRANSPORT - MINOR WORKS	2,063	4,012	1,949	13,435	14,718	1,283

ACTUAL V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

At the end of September 2020, actual expenditure was £1.948m below budget.

ADEPT Live Lab £0.487m. The anticipated costs in Q1 have not materialised due to Covid-19. Not anticipated to have an annual impact.

DfT Tackling Nitrogen Dioxide (Wolverhampton MBC) £0.237m. Slow down in the programme delivery due to COVID19, as social distancing measures have been implemented, whilst still maintaining overall delivery by March 2021.

Real Time Information Upgrades £0.397m. Contract award now expected to take place in November following finalisation of the tender documentation.

FORECAST V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

Park and Ride Delivery £0.322m. Majority of the budget has been re-profiled into 21/22 pending a strategic review of sites.

DfT Tackling Nitrogen Dioxide £0.317m. As a result of Covid-19 other grants are being utilised this year, enabling the subsidised tendered contracts to be utilised next year.

	YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR		
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000
Grants to Local Authorities	0	2,854	2,854	2,277	8,209	5,932
Total Grants to Local Authorities	0	2,854	2,854	2,277	8,209	5,932

ACTUAL V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

At the end of September 2020, actual expenditure was £2.854m below budget.

B4106 Spon End (Coventry CC) £1.692m. Legal agreements signed later than expected.

New St/High St/Victoria Sq Public Realm (Birmingham CC) £0.925m. Due to revised Programme from the Local Authority. The full business case is scheduled for approval in Nov-20, at which point draw down against the grant is expected to begin.

FORECAST V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

New St/High St/Victoria Sq. /Public Realm (Birmingham CC) £2.235m. Reflection of YTD performance.

B4106 Spon End (Coventry CC) £3.697m. Reflection of YTD performance.

GRAND TOTAL TRANSPORT PROGRAMME	64,602	115,010	50,408	215,161	280,494	65,333
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Appendix 5 (continued)
West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Capital Programme – September 2020

Capital Programme Investment Programme Grants to Local Authorities

	YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR		
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000
Investment Programme (Grants to Local Authorities)	29,158	48,430	19,272	122,776	172,840	50,064
Total Investment Programme Grants to Local Authorities	29,158	48,430	19,272	122,776	172,840	50,064

ACTUAL V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

At the end of September 2020, actual expenditure was £19.272m below budget. The main variances are as follows;

Coventry UKC £14.655m

Station Masterplan £5.243m. Reduced progress of onsite construction works and ancillary support work due to Covid-19 restrictions, has meant draw down on WMCA funding has not begun (Local Authorities funding and Prudential borrowing have been utilised in priority to WMCA funding)

Very Light Rail £4.060m. The first quarter spending impacted by Covid-19 restrictions, but work has steadily progressed back to capacity following the easing of restrictions May-July.

UK City of Culture £5.124m. Due to disruption caused by Covid-19. Spend has been accelerated in August to meet milestones and target dates.

UK Central

HS2 £2.837m. Work undertaken in first quarter reduced by Covid-19 restrictions, primarily relating to the Roundabout-Over Trace works.

FORECAST V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

Very Light Rail £5.125m. The knock on impact due to the Covid-19 restrictions in Q1.

City of Culture Regeneration £3.697m. The knock on impact due to the Covid-19 restrictions in Q1.

UK Central HS2 Interchange £41.650m. The knock on impact of Covid-19 restrictions in Q1.

Housing Capital Programme

	YEAR TO DATE			FULL YEAR		
	ACTUAL £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000	FORECAST £000	BUDGET £000	VARIANCE £000
Housing	4,428	23,279	18,851	35,803	56,348	20,545
Total Housing	4,428	23,279	18,851	35,803	56,348	20,545
TOTAL OTHER PORTFOLIOS	33,586	71,709	38,123	158,579	229,188	70,609

ACTUAL V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

At the end of September 2020, actual expenditure was £18.852m below budget. The main variances are as follows;

Black Country Land and Property Investment Fund LPIF £12.917m. Phoenix 10 Manufacturing site scheme. Final agreements and planning application expected in Apr-20, now rescheduled with design works to April-21.

Brownfield Land and Property fund BLPDF £5.969m. The main projects include Redsun (£0.915m) awaiting a formal decision notice pushed back to September, Pipe Hall (£0.300m) pushed back to Q3, and Far Gosforth (£0.400m) due to prior year corrections.

FORECAST V BUDGET VARIANCE COMMENTARY

Black Country Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF) £22.331m. Reflection of the YTD variances concerning the Phoenix 10 manufacturing site.

Appendix 6

WMCA Investment Programme Financial Summary period ending 31st August 2020

WMCA Investment Programme Financial Summary

Period Ending 31st August 2020

PROGRAMME	2020 / 2021 YEAR TO DATE			2020 / 2021 FULL YEAR			COST TO COMPLETION					
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE	BUDGET	FORECAST	VARIANCE	PRIOR PERIOD SPEND	2020/21 FORECAST	FUTURE YEARS FORECAST	TOTAL FORECAST OUTTURN	TOTAL BUDGET	VARIANCE
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
COVENTRY UKC PLUS	18,313	45,380	27,067	113,191	101,037	12,155	61,277	101,037	551,415	713,729	704,851	(8,878)
SPRINT PROGRAMME	7,441	16,687	9,246	54,302	50,341	3,962	12,287	50,341	271,845	334,472	334,515	42
RAIL PROGRAMME	2,472	5,420	2,949	13,238	8,621	4,618	8,050	8,621	193,744	210,415	213,015	2,600
METRO PROGRAMME	30,409	49,497	19,087	123,634	107,158	16,476	275,784	107,158	1,281,969	1,664,911	1,664,639	(272)
UK CENTRAL INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE	2,764	49,077	46,312	117,784	27,101	90,683	18,299	27,101	1,353,383	1,398,783	1,386,688	(12,095)
UK CENTRAL HS2 INTERCHANGE	4,671	13,342	8,670	74,870	76,270	(1,400)	17,395	76,270	435,898	529,563	529,563	-
CURZON STREET STATION MASTERPLAN	2,154	2,154	-	5,169	5,169	-	7,059	5,169	541,620	553,848	553,848	-
NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR HIGH SPEED RAIL	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,553	-	-	25,553	25,553	-
HIGH SPEED SUPPLY CHAIN & BUSINESS SUPPORT	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,270	-	338,730	350,000	350,000	-
HS2 GROWTH STRATEGY TOTAL	68,224	181,556	113,332	502,188	375,696	126,493	436,975	375,696	4,968,603	5,781,274	5,762,671	(18,603)
COVENTRY CITY CENTRE SOUTH REGENERATION	3,351	3,711	360	19,864	20,439	(575)	27,854	20,439	296,079	344,372	342,938	(1,434)
INNOVATION PROGRAMME	3,146	6,130	2,983	14,601	11,343	3,258	11,703	11,343	171,954	195,000	195,000	-
LAND RECLAMATION AND REMEDIATION	1,881	15,585	13,704	49,727	16,629	33,098	36,708	16,629	146,663	200,000	200,000	-
COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2022	2,187	15,601	13,414	37,442	38,399	(957)	-	38,399	58,035	96,434	72,534	(23,900)
EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION & SKILLS	93	185	92	444	445	(1)	283	445	19,273	20,000	20,000	-
COLLECTIVE INVESTMENT FUND	8,338	12,438	4,100	54,307	43,104	11,203	43,949	43,104	912,947	1,000,000	1,000,000	-
DEVOLVED TRANSPORT INVESTMENT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,299,000	1,299,000	1,299,000	-
EZ EXPANSION EXCLUDING CURZON STREET	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	-
OTHER INVESTMENT PROGRAMME SCHEMES	18,996	53,650	34,653	176,384	130,359	46,026	120,496	130,359	2,923,951	3,174,806	3,149,472	(25,334)
GRAND TOTAL	87,220	235,206	147,986	678,573	506,054	172,518	557,471	506,054	7,892,554	8,956,080	8,912,143	(43,937)

Appendix 6 (Continued)

WMCA Investment Programme Financial Commentary for the period ending 31st August 2020

In respect of full project costs to completion, the financial summary has been adjusted to reflect the revised budget based on the 2020/21 programme baseline. The project budgets for the Sprint A34 Walsall to Birmingham, Sprint A45 Birmingham to Airport & Solihull and Metro Birmingham Eastside Extension schemes have been revised, as approved by the WMCA Board on 14 February 2020. In quarter 1 of 2019/20, the UK Central HS2 Interchange programme was revised in respect of the HS2 Parallel Design process. A change request was submitted through the WMCA assurance framework and approved in July 2019. The budget has been adjusted to reflect the revised UK Central HS2 Interchange programme.

The cost to completion against UK Central Interchange remains red status due to the reduced funding gap of circa £131 million against the Birmingham International Station redevelopment project.

The Sprint programme is red status because of the A34 Walsall to Birmingham and A45 Birmingham to Airport & Solihull projects, for which discussions to confirm the funding package for the second delivery phase of these projects are continuing.

At the WMCA Board meeting on 8th November 2019, the WMCA Board agreed to hold Investment Programme approvals at the current affordable limit of £801 million. As a consequence, programmes that are funded from the Investment Programme beyond the current affordable limit are amber status.

For 2020/21, the year to date variance of £148.0 million compared with the 2020/21 programme baseline primarily comprises:

- *Coventry UKC Plus variance of £27.1 million, including Coventry Station Masterplan (£12.3 million) and Coventry Very Light Rail (£5.1 million);
- *Metro programme variance of £19.1 million, including Birmingham Eastside Extension (£8.7 million) and Wednesbury to Brierley Hill (£8.4 million);
- *UK Central Infrastructure Package variance of £46.3 million, across a wide array of projects within the programme.

The above variances are not considered to have an impact on the overall delivery of the projects.

Appendix 7

 WMCA Investment Programme Commitment Profile as at 30th September 2020

£m	Total Expected Approvals	Approved Commitments	Actual Spend
UK Central HS2 Interchange	398.0	65.4	21.2
UK Central Infrastructure Package	288.0	34.2	12.8
Sprint Programme	217.4	47.0	9.7
Rail Programme	160.1	18.0	10.4
Metro Programme	119.8	119.8	83.5
Coventry Station Masterplan (CSMP)	39.4	39.4	-
Coventry City of Culture Trust (2021)	4.0	4.0	1.9
Coventry UKC Plus - Very Light Rail: 'Transforming Connectivity'	55.0	12.2	6.4
Coventry North Package	21.6	0.2	0.2
Coventry South Package	136.5	7.4	0.3
Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension	103.0	103.0	0.0
Coventry UKC Plus - UK City of Culture 2021 Regeneration	31.6	31.6	7.4
SUB TOTAL HS2 GROWTH STRATEGY	1,574.4	482.3	153.9
Coventry City Centre South Regeneration	150.0	150.0	15.0
Innovation Programme	50.0	12.5	5.1
Land Reclamation and Remediation	200.0	103.0	38.6
Commonwealth Games 2022	27.6	27.6	-
Employment, Education & Skills	20.0	1.3	0.4
OTHER INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	447.6	294.4	59.0
TOTAL	2,022.0	776.7	212.9

WMCA Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2020

	30 September 2020 £'000	31 August 2020 £'000	Movement £'000
Property, plant and equipment	452,221	447,965	4,256
Investments	21,436	20,309	1,127
Loan Receivables	18,000	18,000	-
Long-term assets	491,657	486,274	5,383
Debtors	56,203	64,392	(8,189)
Short-term deposits	274,970	257,075	17,895
Cash and bank	870	191	678
Current assets	332,042	321,658	10,384
Loans - interest due	(2,230)	(1,710)	(520)
Short-term creditors/accruals	(89,420)	(83,730)	(5,690)
Current liabilities	(91,650)	(85,440)	(6,210)
Net current assets	240,393	236,219	4,174
Provisions	(2,751)	(2,744)	(7)
PWLB	(113,616)	(113,616)	-
Other loans - Barclays	(10,000)	(10,000)	-
Dudley MBC	(6,427)	(6,427)	-
Grants receipts in advance	(285,909)	(265,040)	(20,869)
Long-term liabilities	(418,703)	(397,827)	(20,876)
Net assets	313,347	324,666	(11,319)
General fund balance	2,338	2,350	(12)
Earmarked reserves	244,911	249,734	(4,823)
Capital grants unapplied reserve	247	247	-
Usable reserves	247,496	252,331	(4,835)
Revaluation reserve	6,521	6,523	(2)
Deferred capital grants account	460,579	456,321	4,258
Capital financing account	(400,753)	(390,013)	(10,740)
Accumulated absences account	(496)	(496)	-
Unusable reserves	65,851	72,335	(6,484)
Total reserves	313,347	324,666	(11,319)

The WMCA Balance Sheet reflects a healthy financial position. Main changes since August reflect TfWM capital spend and work-in-progress funded mainly by grants in advance, resulting in an increase of £4.3m net of depreciation in property, plant and equipment.

The decrease in debtors is largely due to grants received and lower trade receivables. On the other hand, the increase in short-term creditors/accruals were contributed by higher trade payables and capital spend on Coventry UKC Plus schemes. The grants receipts in advance have increased mainly due to the receipt of MHCLG grant for Get Buidling Fund. These factors contributed to the net increase in short-term deposits and cash and bank.

The decrease in usable reserves was driven by the payments for the Adult Education Budget.

Appendix 9

Treasury Management Strategy Mid-Year 2020 / 2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report provides an update on the West Midlands Combined Authority Treasury Management Strategy at the 2020/21 mid-year point and is being submitted as a requirement under the CIPFA Treasury Management Code.

2. Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2020/21

- 2.1 Table 1 shows WMCA borrowing and investments held at 1 April 2020 and 30 September 2020. It shows that net borrowing has decreased by £196.8m mostly as a result of grants being received in advance of need as documented below.

	April 2020 £m	Change	Sept 2020 £m	Notes
Borrowing	(130.2)	0.2	(130.0)	Minor reduction due to repayments against annuity loans.
Investments	78.4	196.6	275.0	Increase due to receipt of grants in advance of need including AEB, Investment Programme and Transforming Cities.
Net	(51.8)	196.8	145.9	

3 Borrowing Activity

- 3.1 Effective cash flow management and the use of grants received in advance have negated any requirement to borrow in the first 6 months of the 2020/21 financial year. The WMCA cash flow forecast is updated daily and latest versions suggest there may be requirement to borrow in quarter 4 of 2020/21 as WMCA and Local Authority / Investment Programme requirements erode WMCA cash balances.

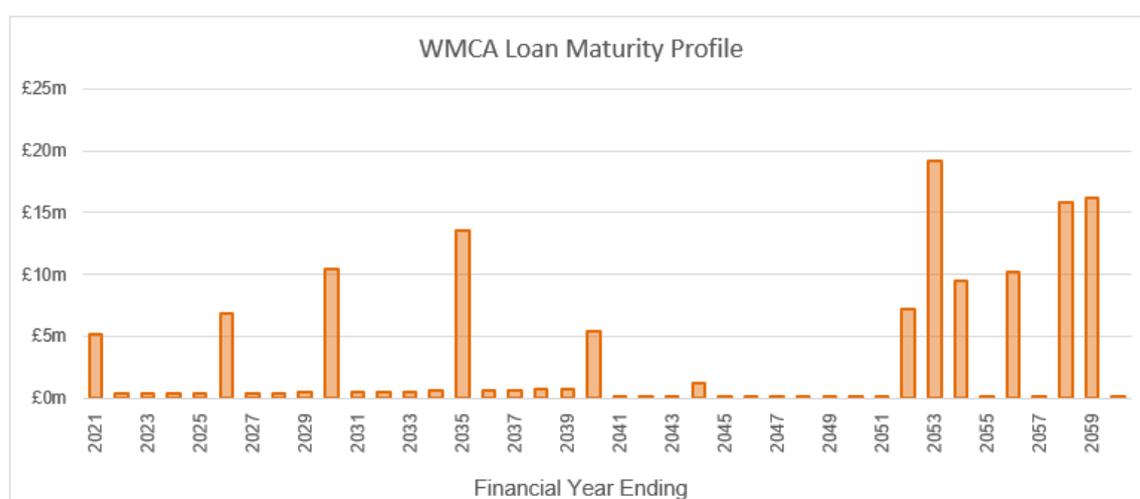
4 Historic Borrowing

- 4.1 The main source of borrowing for WMCA is the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). The Treasurer of the Authority continues to review the opportunities to reschedule debt and continues to work closely with specialist treasury advisors to explore alternative best value borrowing options. The costs associated with early repayment in current market conditions are too onerous to be beneficial. During 2020/21 there will be one significant maturity of £5m in December together with further minor principal repayments against annuity loans.
- 4.2 Table 2 shows borrowing held at 1st April 2020 and 30th September 2020. It shows that borrowing has decreased by £156k due to annuity principal repayments during the year.

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £m	Repaid in Year £m	Raised in Year £m	Balance at 30 Sept 2020 £m
PWLB	113.8	0.2	-	113.6
Barclays	10.0	-	-	10.0
Ex WM County Council	6.4	-	-	6.4
Total Long Term Borrowing	130.2	0.2	-	130.0

5 Long Term Debt Profile

- 5.1 As detailed in the chart below, WMCA have a £5m maturity during 2020/21 and then the next significant maturity will occur in 2025/26 with sporadic maturities from that point onwards. The maturity profile is important for WMCA to monitor and ensure when new debt is taken out to sufficiently gaps are maintained between maturities to aid cash planning. It is possible that upon maturing, WMCA will need to re-finance the debt but these decisions will be taken at the point of maturity, influenced by available cash levels and prevailing rates of interest.



6. Investment Activity

- 6.1 As at the 30th September 2020, all short term investments have given a return to the Authority of £0.358m. All treasury management activities undertaken during the year complied fully with Treasury Management Strategy approved by WMCA Board in February 2020. Investments are placed directly with financial institutes, or using various brokers: ICAP, Tradition, Prebon, Martin Brokers, BGC and King & Shaxson. Investments held as at the 30 September 2020 totalled £275m as detailed below:

Counterparty	Interest	Investment	Maturity Date
Birmingham City Council	0.10%	£10.0m	Nov 20
	0.18%	£10.0m	Feb 21
Surrey CC	0.04%	£5.0m	Oct 20
	0.06%	£5.0m	Nov 20
Blackpool	0.04%	£2.0m	Jan 21
City of Bradford District Council	0.10%	£10.0m	Jan 21
Conwy	0.04%	£2.0m	Jan 21
Coventry City Council	0.85%	£20.0m	Oct 20
Kirklees Council Huddersfield	0.08%	£5.0m	Jan 20
London Borough of Havering	0.03%	£5.0m	Oct 20
Lincolnshire	0.04%	£5.0m	Mar 21
Thurrock Council	0.25%	£10.0m	Nov 20
Trafford Council	0.15%	£10.0m	Feb 21
Wokingham Borough Council	0.90%	£10.0m	Oct 20
Sub Total Local Authorities (Interest Average)	0.20%	£109.0m	
DMO (UK Government / HM Treasury)	0.01%	£10.0m	Oct 20
	0.01%	£32.0m	Oct 20
	0.01%	£14.6m	Oct 20
	0.01%	£28.0m	Nov 20
Sub Total UK Government (Interest Average)	0.01%	£84.6m	
Santander (Call Account)	0.03%	£10.0m	Liquid
Sub Total UK Banks (Interest Average)	0.03%	£10.0m	
CCLA	0.08%	£20.0m	Liquid
Federated	0.03%	£20.0m	Liquid
HSBC	0.01%	£20.0m	Liquid
Overnight Balances Invested	0.01%	£11.4m	
Sub Total Money Market (Interest Average)	0.03%	£71.4m	
Total Investments 30 September 2020	0.13%	£275.0m	

- 6.2 The interest rate environment has been severely depressed in recent months. Since the onset of the pandemic and particularly since the initial lock-down measures, interest for short-term, secure investments have remained marginally above zero with investments with HMT offering a negative yield for durations under two weeks and a 'yield' of 0.00% for durations under one month. As such, the total forecast investment income for the second half of 2020/21 are pessimistic and losses in such income are factored into the forecasting and medium term financial plans.
- 6.3 Whilst WMCA are yet to place investments in any products returning 0.0% or negative yields, its ability to avoid doing so in the future will be dependent on market conditions and other external factors. It should be noted that WMCA's priorities when investing surplus cash remain the security, liquidity and yield of those resources, in that order.

7 Performance measurement and Treasury Indicators

- 7.1 The WMCA treasury management function participates benchmarking which compares WMCA's treasury management performance with other Local Authorities, to ensure that relative to other local authorities the Authority is achieving a fair investment return without any undue risk. Performance is also regularly reviewed at the monthly Treasury Management Group.
- 7.2 The Treasury Management Strategy approved by WMCA Board in February agreed a number of Treasury Management Indicators which as at the mid-year point have all been complied with as follows:

Indicator	Target	Status
Credit Risk	A Minus	Green
Liquidity Risk	£50m Minimum	Green
Price Risk	< £10m invested longer than 1 year	Green
Refinancing Risk	Under 1year 15% Max 1 to 2 Years 20% Max 2 to 5 years 20% Max 5 to 10 Years 20% Max 10 Years and Over 25% Max	Green

- 7.3 In addition to the above, compliance with the debt limit is confirmed. WMCA debt stands at £130.0m with no new debt being undertaken in the financial year. For clarity, the published operational and authorised limits for debt are £583m and £623m respectively.
- 7.4 In summary, the Section 151 Officer can confirm that all treasury management activities undertaken during the first half year complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the WMCA Treasury Management Strategy.

8 Borrowing Update

- 8.1 WMCA are closely monitoring external debt markets and developing appropriate debt strategies in light of the need to fund the Investment Programme over the Medium Term Financial Plan term. The anticipated debt requirement published within the 2020/21 Treasury Management Strategy were as follows:

2020/21 TM Strategy	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
Forecast New Debt	305.0	338.0	100.0	10.0	10.0

- 8.2 Due to significant re-forecasting of the capital programme in 2020/21 as a result of the pandemic, it is likely that the quantum of debt undertaken in 2020/21 will be significantly lower as WMCA will only look to borrow where there is a clear and obvious need; affordability and the "cost of carry" remain important influences on WMCA's borrowing strategy

- 8.3 In October 2019 HM Treasury raised the cost of rate borrowing by 1.0% making it relatively expensive. Market alternatives are available, however the financial strength of individual authorities will be scrutinised by investors and commercial lenders.
- 8.4 The Chancellor's March 2020 Budget statement included significant changes to Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) policy and launched a wide-ranging consultation on the PWLB's future direction. The consultation allowed stakeholders to contribute to developing a system whereby PWLB loans can be made available at improved margins to support qualifying projects. It contained proposals to allow authorities that are not involved in "debt for yield" activity to borrow at lower rates as well as stopping local authorities using PWLB loans to buy commercial assets primarily for yield.
- 8.5 The consultation closed on 31 July 2020 with the announcement and implementation of the revised lending terms expected in the latter part of this calendar year or early next year.
- 8.6 Whilst the outcome of the consultation is pending, WMCA will continue to develop its borrowing strategy to ensure the borrowing arrangements are optimised.
- 8.7 It should be noted that WMCA have access to £100m of discounted borrowing (UK Gilts plus 60 basis points) from PWLB as part of the Local Infrastructure Rate competitive bidding process and further bids for an additional £100m are being evaluated by HM Treasury.

9. **Outlook for the remainder of 2020/21**

- 9.1 The scale of the economic shock to demand following the onset of coronavirus, on-going social distancing measures, regional lock downs and reduced fiscal support will mean that the subsequent pace of recovery is limited. Early signs of this are already evident in UK monthly GDP and PMI data, even before the latest restrictions.
- 9.2 This situation will result in central banks maintaining low interest rates for the medium term. In the UK, Brexit is a further complication. The Bank Rate is therefore likely to remain at low levels for a very long time, with a distinct possibility of being cut to zero. Money markets have priced in a chance of negative Bank Rate.
- 9.3 Longer-term investment yields will also remain depressed, anchored by low central bank policy rates, expectations for potentially even lower rates and insipid inflation expectations. There is a chance yields may follow a slightly different path in the medium term, depending on investor perceptions of growth and inflation, or if the UK leaves the EU without a deal.
- 9.4 While the central case is for the Bank Rate to remain unchanged from the current level of 0.1%, further cuts to Bank Rate to zero or even into negative territory cannot be completely ruled out.
- 9.5 Gilt yields which influence the cost of borrowing are expected to remain very low in the medium term. Shorter-term gilt yields are currently negative and will remain

around zero or below until either the Bank of England expressly rules out negative Bank Rate or growth/inflation prospects improve.

- 9.6 Downside risks remain in the near term, as the government dials down its fiscal support measures, reacts to the risk of a further escalation in infection rates and the Brexit transition period comes to an end.

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WMCA Board

Date	13 November 2020
Report title	Bus Byelaws
Portfolio Lead	Transport - Councillor Ian Ward
Accountable Chief Executive/TfWM Director	Laura Shoaf, Managing Director, Transport for West Midlands email: laura.shoaf@tfwm.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7444
Accountable Employee	Anne Shaw, Director of Network Resilience, Transport for West Midlands email: anne.shaw@tfwm.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7881
Report has been considered by	Strategic Transport Officers Group Transport for West Midlands Leadership Team Transport Delivery Committee Programme Board

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the progress made with regards to bus byelaws since May 2019.
- (2) Approve the progression to the next steps detailed within section 4.
- (3) Delegate authority to the Managing Director of Transport for West Midlands and WMCA Monitoring Officer to conclude the works on bus byelaws in line with process detailed in section 4.

1. Purpose

- To provide the WMCA Board with an update on the development and implementation of bus byelaws.
- To provide an overview of the next steps required to implemented additional powers.
- To seek a delegated authority to senior officers of WMCA to conclude this work stream.

2. Background

- 2.1 Reducing crime and disorder and making passengers feel safer remains a priority not only for Transport for West Midlands but also the Police and Crime Commissioner (through the Safer Travel Plan) and also British Transport through their Annual Plan. Key to achieving these objectives is tackling low level nuisance and anti-social behaviour.
- 2.2 WMCA were provided additional powers to tackle ASB and nuisance across the transport network through the West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2017, and these powers are being used with partners. However, there are still some gaps in powers, or there are enforcement powers that exist, but these sit with organisations who don't have the capacity to prioritise public transport.
- 2.3 Speaking to front line officers it has become clear that a number of powers that already exist on rail and Metro, do not currently translate into equivalent powers on bus. Therefore, WMCA have been working with partners to implement byelaws or seek wider powers to address these gaps. It is understood that byelaws on buses do not exist anywhere within the UK, however working with the Urban Transport Group it is clear that other areas have expressed a similar desire for additional powers.
- 2.4 In January 2019 WMCA Board approved a set of Bus network related Byelaws. And in Feb./March 2019 an 8-week stakeholder consultation exercise confirmed significant public support for the same. In May 2019, WMCA Board agreed the next step of submitting a regulatory assessment to Government. After further work the regulatory assessment was submitted the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for consideration at the end of Summer 2019. This submission was based on existing legislation within their domain, namely S.235 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3. Feedback from MHCLG

- 3.1 Following discussion between departments at the end of 2019, and some further clarification sent by WMCA Officers, WMCA received a response to their submission in February 2020. The feedback from MHCLG said that the submission was not supported in its current format for all of the byelaws.
- 3.2 Due to the impact of Covid response with teams within TfWM and MHCLG focused on those new priorities in terms of emergency planning and keeping the network safe, there has been some delay in reviewing the feedback together with MHCLG. Attention has now returned to this and MHCLG have provided some positive engagement with WMCA towards during August and September of 2020, which has enabled the next steps to be set out.

3.3 Although MHCLG were of the view that the mechanism used by WMCA for its 2019 submission was not appropriate for all of the powers, it is felt that this remains the right mechanism for some, which could probably be addressed through the formulation of byelaws. It is therefore proposed that the powers which remain a desire of WMCA Officers should be dealt with through two separate mechanisms, the first being the formulation of byelaws under the mechanism detailed on 2.4, the second be the application for the remaining powers under devolution similar to the previous powers given under the 2017 Order.

4. Next Steps

4.1 It is proposed that WMCA submit a new regulatory assessment to MHCLG based on Byelaws under existing legislation within their domain, namely S.235 of the Local Government Act 1972. The new assessment would be based on those powers that it is felt are appropriate to be dealt with by the formulation of byelaws. Following discussion with Government departments, the list of powers proposed under this mechanism are detailed in Appendix A.

4.2 It has been confirmed that no previous stages of the process need to be re-visited with regards to 4.1, and the regulatory assessment will be viewed on a power by power basis rather than as a single application.

4.3 If approved by the Board WMCA Officers would submit the regulatory assessment to MHCLG before the end of 2020, with an expectation of a response within 30 days. If approved the byelaws would need to be advertised before going live in Spring 2021.

4.4 To complete the process, it is proposed that approval of the regulatory assessment and other related steps be delegated to the Monitoring Officer and the Managing Director of Transport for West Midlands. Subject to a successful regulatory assessment with MHCLG the final Byelaws will be prepared and brought to the Board for final approval.

4.5 The remaining powers (identified in appendix B), that are still desirable, will be fed into the devolution discussions for mayoral combined authorities and possible reform options contained within the 'Local Recovery and English Devolution White Paper', planned for publication in 2021. These are still considered necessary to remove the barrier to using public transport has from the perception of crime and antisocial behavior but working with MHCLG, are more appropriate through this alternative mechanism.

4.6 Each of the powers detailed within Appendix B will be subject of a further review to ensure that they are still powers that are required, and this will be conducted before the end of 2020.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The associated cost of advertising a Public Notice to publicise the bus byelaws can be funded from the available Safety and Security budget. There is no need to increase numbers of Safer Travel Police Officers as the use of byelaws would be an additional tool for the existing safer travel officers to tackle anti-social behaviour and delivering on the outcomes already contained within the Police and Crime Commissioners Local Transport Policing Plan. Hence the bus byelaws should not financially impact our partnerships with WMP and BTP as the wider Police organisations will be able to enforce them and it covers low level crime. Financial implications may arise during the implementation phase. For example, there may be some back office administration of Fixed Penalty Notices and fines.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The law and procedure around the making of bylaws is prescriptive and bylaws may only be introduced in certain circumstances. The principle is that bylaws should not duplicate any statutory provisions that may already exist. Review of this matter by both MHCLG and WMCA has identified a way forward which can deliver some of the benefits originally sought by the proposal to introduce bylaws together with other proposals to secure additional powers in due course.

7. Impact on Delivery of Strategic Transport Plan

- 7.1 Safety concerns are highlighted in Movement for Growth as one of the transport barriers for undertaking journeys. It is vital that passengers feel safe whilst waiting for and on-board public transport. The perceived safety risk of public transport is also a barrier, and the greater presence of uniformed officers will help to provide additional comfort and security for passengers.
- 7.2 In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the safety and security of passengers remains a priority, and this will help to encourage passengers back onto using public transport, avoiding a shift to private cars.

8. Equalities Implications

- 8.1 The byelaws are likely to have a positive impact on public transport/bus users as they will help a) reduce anti-social behaviour for bus users b) improve perceptions of safety on buses. They will be especially beneficial for those equality groups that are more reliant on public transport, and those equality groups who are more concerned about public transport/bus safety and anti-social behaviour. An up to date Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for this scheme.

9. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 9.1 The powers contained within Appendix A and B would apply within the boundary of the West Midlands only.

Conduct and Behaviour**1. Management of queuing**

- (1) A requirement for any person to queue in order to regulate order or safety on or near the premises, or, on or near the vehicle.
- (2) Any person directed by a notice to queue, or when asked to queue by an authorised person, shall join the rear of the queue and obey the reasonable instructions of any authorised person regulating the queue.

2. Smoking or Vaping

1. No person shall smoke or carry a lit cigar, cigarette, lighter, match, pipe or other lighted item on any part of the premises or vehicle on or which there is a notice indicating that smoking is not allowed.
2. No person shall vape on any part of the premises or vehicle on or which there is a notice indicating that vaping is not allowed.

3. Intoxication

- (1) No person shall enter, attempt to enter or remain at premises or on a vehicle where such a person is unfit as a result of being in a state of intoxication. Intoxication means being under the influence of intoxicating liquor, or illegal drugs.
- (2) No person shall enter, attempt to enter or remain at premises or on a vehicle while in possession of an open container of alcohol unless expressly permitted to do so by the Operator in a particular area.
- (3) No person shall consume alcohol on the premises or on a vehicle unless expressly permitted to do so by the Operator in a particular area.
- (4) If an authorised person reasonably believes that;
 - (a) any person is unfit to enter or remain on the premises or vehicle
 - (b) is in possession of an open container of alcohol,

then the authorised person may require him to leave; remove any alcohol and prevent him from entering or remaining on the premises or vehicle.

4. Unfit to travel

- (1) No person shall enter or remain on the premises or vehicle, if, in the reasonable opinion of an authorised person, he is;
 - (a) in an unfit or improper condition and causing nuisance or annoyance to any other person,
 - (b) his clothing may soil or damage the premises or vehicle, or any property or clothing of other users of the premises or vehicle.

Safe and proper use of premises and vehicles

5. General safety

- (1) No person shall enter or leave by an emergency exit except in an emergency or when directed to do so by an authorised person.

6. Loitering

- (1) No person shall loiter on any part of the premises;
 - (a) to the nuisance or annoyance of any other person
 - (b) if asked to leave by any authorised person.

7. Pedestrian only areas

- (1) Any person who enters, or is on, any part of the premises to which the public have access must be on foot, except where there is an identified need for those using a specified means of transport e.g. mobility scooter, wheelchair, baby or child pushchair or pram.

8. Control of animals

- (1) The Operator or an authorised person may refuse entry or carriage to any person with an animal which, in their reasonable opinion, may threaten or annoy any person on the premises or vehicle.
- (2) No person shall bring an animal on any part of the premises or vehicle to which it has been refused access pursuant to this byelaw.
- (3) No person in charge of an animal shall;
 - (a) leave or place it unattended
 - (b) allow it to annoy or threaten any person
 - (c) allow it to foul, soil or damage any property, person, vehicle, or part of the premises.
- (4) These byelaws do not apply to any assistance or guide dogs for people with disabilities.

Ticketing and fares

9. Name and Address

- (1) Any person reasonably suspected by an authorised person of breaching or attempting to breach any of the Byelaws shall give his name and address when requested to do so by an authorised person.
- (2) The authorised person requesting details under this Byelaw shall state the nature of the suspected breach of the Byelaws in general terms at the time of the request.

10. Enforcement and penalty

- (1) Anyone reasonably believed to be in breach of these byelaws shall leave the premises or vehicle immediately if asked to do so by an authorised person.
- (2) Any person who is reasonably believed by an authorised person to be in breach of any of these byelaws and who fails to desist or leave when asked to do by an authorised person may be removed from the premises or vehicle by an authorised person using reasonable force. This right is in addition to the imposition of any penalty for the breach of byelaw.

(3) No person shall fail to carry out the instructions of an authorised person acting in accordance with the powers given by these Byelaws or any other enactment.

Conduct and behaviour

Control of potentially dangerous items

- (1) No person, except a Police Officer acting in the course of their duties, shall bring with him, attempt to bring with him or allow to remain on the premises or vehicle any potentially dangerous item.
- (2) A potentially dangerous item is an item which, in the reasonable opinion of an authorised person, may be used to threaten, annoy, soil or damage any person or any property. For example: a weapon of any kind; flammable, explosive or corrosive substance; any item which is or may become dangerous.

Unacceptable behaviour

- (1) No person shall use any threatening, abusive, obscene or offensive language on the premises or vehicle.
- (2) No person shall behave in a disorderly, indecent or offensive manner on the premises or vehicle.
- (3) No person shall write, draw, paint or fix anything on the premises or vehicle.
- (4) No person shall soil any part of the premises or vehicle.
- (5) No person shall damage or detach any part of the premises or vehicle.
- (6) No person shall spit on the premises or vehicle.
- (7) No person shall leave litter or waste on the premises or vehicle, except into receptacles specifically provided by the Operator for that purpose.
- (8) No person shall molest or wilfully interfere with the comfort or convenience of any person on the premises or vehicle.
- (9) No person shall beg for money on the premises or vehicle causing nuisance or annoyance to any person.
- (10) No person shall place, throw, drop or trail anything on or from the premises or vehicle, which is capable of injuring, damaging, or endangering any person or any property.

Music, sound and advertising

- (1) No person on the premises or vehicle shall, to the annoyance of any person, sing or use any instrument, article or equipment for the production or reproduction of sound.
- (2) Except with written permission from the Operator no person on the premises or vehicle shall, display anything for the purpose of advertising or publicity, or distribute anything.
- (3) No person shall sell anything or expose or offer anything for sale; or, tout or solicit for money, reward, custom or employment of any kind.

Safe and Proper use of premises and vehicles

General safety

- (2) No person shall move, operate, obstruct, stop, or interfere with any vehicle, equipment on the vehicle or premises except in an emergency, by means of any controls/equipment on or near where there is a notice indicating that it is intended to be used in an emergency or intended for the use of passengers in normal operating circumstances.
- (3) No person shall disobey reasonable instructions without good cause, on or near to the vehicle or premises relating to safety or in the event of an emergency by means of;
 - (a) a notice
 - (b) an instruction from an operator or authorised person
- (4) No person whilst on the premises or vehicle, shall wilfully obstruct or impede any authorised person in the execution of his duty.

Ticketing and fares

Ticketless travel

- (1) No person shall enter a vehicle unless he has with him a valid ticket or purchases a valid ticket whilst on board the vehicle.
- (2) A person shall hand over his ticket for inspection and verification of validity when asked to do so by an authorised person.
- (3) No person shall be in breach of this byelaw if the Operator or an authorised person gave him permission to travel without a valid ticket.
- (4) If an authorised person has good reason to believe a person is travelling without a valid ticket, he may require him to leave the vehicle and provide name and address for a fare penalty fine.

Altering tickets

- (1) No person shall alter any ticket in any way with the intent that an Operator shall be defrauded or prejudiced.
- (2) No person shall knowingly use any ticket which has been altered in any way in breach of this byelaw.

Unauthorised buying and selling of tickets

- (1) No person shall transfer or receive any unused or partly used ticket, intending that any person shall use it for travelling unless the conditions of use for that ticket specifically permit such transfer.
- (2) No person shall buy, transfer or produce a ticket on behalf of another intending to enable another person to travel without having paid the correct fare.
- (3) No person shall knowingly use any ticket which has been obtained in breach of this byelaw.

Enforcement and penalty

- (4) Prior to removal of a person, the authorised person shall state the nature of any breach of any of these byelaws in general terms prior to exercising the power conferred upon him.
- (5) An authorised person shall produce a form of identification when requested to do so if exercising this power: This identification should state the name of his employer and contain a means of identifying the authorised person.
- (6) No person shall be subject to any penalty for breach of any of the Byelaws by disobeying a notice unless it is proved to the satisfaction of the Court before whom the complaint is laid that the notice referred to in the particular byelaw was displayed.
- (7) Penalty: Any breach of these Byelaws ultimately resulting in conviction for a summary offence may be liable to a penalty not exceeding Level 3 (maximum £1,000) on the standard scale of fines.



WMCA Board

Date	13 November 2020
Report title	West Midlands Rail Ltd Governance Evolution
Portfolio Lead	Transport - Councillor Ian Ward
Accountable Chief Executive	Deborah Cadman OBE, West Midlands Combined Authority email: deborah.cadman@wmca.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7200
Accountable Employee	Laura Shoaf - Managing Director Transport for West Midlands email: laura.shoaf@tfwm.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7444
Report has been considered by	Programme Board - 26-30 October 2020 Strategic Leadership Team - 14 October 2020 Transport for West Midlands Leadership - 28 September 2020 Strategic Transport Officers Group - 14 September 2020

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the changes to the Articles of Association shown in Appendix B, which in summary permit for the Mayor of the West Midlands to become the non-Director, non-voting Chair of West Midlands Rail Limited (WMRL), and also for the creation of two new Vice Chair roles;
- (2) Approve that the power described in 3.1(i) of the WMRL Articles of Association is delegated to the Chair. This is a wide power to represent and publicise WMRL through lobbying and related activities and survey to advance WMRL's purpose.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 WMRL wishes to evolve its governance arrangements to strengthen its ability to achieve its policy aims, namely delivering local leadership for local rail services by working with the rail industry to deliver a step change in rail services across the region. As a Member of WMRL, WMCA is entitled to vote on any changes to WMRL's Articles of Association.

2. Background

- 2.1 The principles underpinning the governance of WMRL were developed in 2015, before the emergence of the Mayoral Combined Authority. The existence of this senior elected position has, inevitably, led to a political, media and public expectation that the Mayor will intervene on rail matters, as was evidenced during the period of poor rail performance in autumn 2019.
- 2.2 Furthermore, emerging government policy direction indicates that any further regional rail devolution is to involve a single accountable elected position, most likely a Mayor, and informal conversations with DfT civil servants and members of the Williams Rail Review team have indicated a reluctance to devolve further authority to a political partnership such as WMRL.
- 2.3 Nevertheless, WMRL, working with TfWM and trading as West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) has developed a strong reputation, and has been effective at promoting and delivering change and investment in the region's rail network. The political partnership has proved itself to be both stable and effective, and appropriately maps the geography of both the 'travel to work' area for the conurbation, as well as the network of commuter and regional services over which further local influence and control might be desirable in the longer term.
- 2.4 The Combined Authority area, by contrast, whilst home to half of the WMRL area's residents, does not feature a sensible geography for the oversight of rail services, but does feature a directly elected Mayor.
- 2.5 There is also the risk that the rail priorities of the Mayor and WMRL could conflict. Such disagreement is in neither parties' interest. It would diminish the likelihood of either achieving its goals, and give central government reason to limit further devolution, or even take back those powers already granted. Whilst it is difficult to entirely avoid this risk, by bringing together the role of Mayor with WMRL through the creation of aligned rail priorities, this risk is minimised and converted into an opportunity.
- 2.6 Therefore, in early 2020 the WMRL Board agreed to explore options to evolve its governance to include a role for the Mayor of the West Midlands. This work was delegated to the Board Devolution Sub-Committee, a group of six WMRL Board members drawn equally from the Shire/Unitary and Metropolitan councils that comprise WMRL. The Board Sub-Committee in turn asked the Officers' Devolution Sub-Committee to draw up options for evolution that would meet the following criteria (the Officers' Sub-Committee also being formed of six members drawn equally from the Shire/Unitary and Metropolitan councils):
 - a) Would include a role for the Mayor in the governance of WMRL, enabling the influence of the office to promote investment in rail for the wider region;

- b) Would involve no changes to voting rights – maintaining the existing balance of votes between Shire/Unitary and Metropolitan Boroughs;
- c) Would provide a stronger role for vice chairs;
- d) Would be sufficiently flexible to permit for a restoration of the previous arrangements, should this be desired; and
- e) Would not affect the day to day operation of the Company

- 2.7 In total six alternatives were identified, including a Do-Nothing option. A short summary of each option is provided in Appendix A. Following several meetings of the Board Devolution Sub-Committee, Option 6 – the Mayor as a non-voting, non-director chair – was agreed as being the preferred option. This was on the grounds that it was the option that came closest to meeting the principles outlined in Paragraph 2.6.
- 2.8 Under this Option, the Mayoralty gains direct and formal influence over local rail services and rail strategy. For WMRL, the non-voting nature of the Mayor's involvement means that the delicate political and geographical balance is undisturbed. Furthermore, under Option 6, the Mayor's formal role increases the likelihood that WMRL will be able to successfully lobby DfT for greater powers and funding. Finally, the power of the Board is increased through the creation of two more powerful Vice Chair roles.
- 2.9 Option 6 was approved in principle by the WMRL Board at its meeting on 15 September 2020. Following that approval, each of the WMRE partner authorities has begun taking the proposal through their own governance processes. All 14 partner authorities will have concluded this exercise by December 2020, ahead of an Extraordinary Meeting of the WMRL Board in January 2021.
- 2.10 The Extraordinary Meeting is necessary as the implementation of Option 6 requires amendments to the WMRL Articles of Association, and the Articles can only be amended by a Special Resolution of the Members eligible to vote. Under the provisions of the Articles, these Members are defined as the seven Shire and Unitary authorities plus WMCA. A Special Resolution requires a majority of 75% to pass (a minimum of six votes). A tracked changes copy showing the proposed amendments to the Articles of Association can be found in Appendix B.
- 2.11 The WMRL's Articles also contain the broad powers of the company, which include things like entering into contracts for the provision of rail services, borrowing and raising money, and lobby and related activities to promote WMRE's purpose of advancing rail passenger services in the West Midlands and Northamptonshire. On 15 September the WMRL Board approved in principle that Power 3.1(i) - a wide power to represent and publicise WMRE through lobbying and related activities and survey to advance WMRE's purpose – be delegated to the non-Director, non-voting Chair. The WMRE Board of Directors are able to delegate exercise of these Powers by a resolution which is passed by 50% or more of the WMRE Board of Directors eligible to vote. Any delegation remains subject to the oversight of the WMRE Board of Directors as the WMRE Board of Directors retain overall responsibility.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implication linked to the recommendations of this report. Finance has acknowledged the changes proposed.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Meetings of the Board would ordinarily be chaired by a Director however this is a matter for the Board and the reasons for the proposed change are set out in this report. Whilst the Mayor is not a Director, they will not have a vote and the Directors retain the decision-making power. A Director must always act in the best interests of the company in considering decisions. It would be expected that the Mayor, whilst non-voting and not a Director, will need to keep this legal requirement in mind in the role they perform.

5. Equalities Implications

- 5.1 There are no equality implications in relation to this report.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 6.1 The inclusive growth implications of this shift are focused on how citizen power and influence is brought to bear on local rail services through the elected Mayor, and through the leaders of their respective local authorities. The changes outlined in this report ensure that there is a consistency to WMRL's governance, which enhances the Mayor's influence without disadvantaging local leadership. On implementation of these changes, it will be important for all parties to ensure that citizen voice remains a consistent part of how the Board does business.

7. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 7.1 The proposed changes to the governance of WMRL will have implications for all its partner authorities across its entire geographical coverage (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley Herefordshire, Northamptonshire, Sandwell, Shropshire, Solihull, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall Warwickshire, Wolverhampton, Worcestershire, Cheshire East,) and therefore inherently includes the entire CA area.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 None.

9. Schedule of Background Papers

- 9.1 None.

Appendix A – Table of Options

Option and description	Deliverables	Benefits	Disbenefits	Mitigations	Compliance with the principles
1 – Do Nothing	Continuation of current arrangements.	No change to composition of Board or articles of association.	DfT preference for devolved control linked to clear lines of political accountability means reduced likelihood of further powers being granted, whilst separation between Mayor and WMRL risks existing powers being reallocated, either to Mayor or back to DfT.	Structured and regular meetings with Mayor and Mayor's office, and with DfT civil servants and Williams review team. Adopt one of options 2 to 6.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expanded influence for WMRL NO 2. No change to voting rights YES 3. Stronger Board governance NO
2 – Mayor as observer	Mayor attends WMRL Board in similar capacity as Chair of TfWM TDC.	The Board and Mayor gain the ability to regular brief one another, share ideas and approaches, and privately deal with any disagreements. No amendments to the articles of association are required.	Informal nature of the Mayor's involvement means that DfT's prerequisite for further devolved control has not been met. Mayor may also be unhappy with subordinate nature of the observer role, and may decide not to attend, thus maintaining separation between WMRL and Mayor. Therefore, disbenefits are similar to option 1.	Structured and regular meetings with the Mayor and the Mayor's office. Strong chairmanship to enable Mayor to make contributions at Board. Adopt one of options 3 to 5.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Expanded influence for WMRL NO b) No change to voting rights YES c) Stronger Board governance NO
3 – Mayor as non-voting director	Mayor attends WMRL Board as a director, without voting rights.	The Mayor gains a more formal role in WMRL, and as in option 2 both parties benefit from the ability to share and challenge one another in a safe and private environment. Some changes required to articles of association, which would need to create a new category of director not currently provided for.	Although the role of the Mayor in WMRL is more formal than in option 2, it is still marginal, and thus it is unlikely that the DfT would grant an extension of powers on that basis. Like option 2, the Mayor may feel there is little value in participating, thus maintaining the risk of conflict between WMRL and the Mayorality. Such an act could destabilise the political balance of WMRL. Changes to articles of association required to formalise role and set the basis for the Mayor becoming a director.	Structured and regular meetings with the Mayor and the Mayor's office. Strong chairmanship to enable Mayor to make contributions at Board. Redraw articles of association to create a new category of director specifically for the Mayorality. Adopt one of options 4 to 6.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Expanded influence for WMRL NO b) No change to voting rights MAYBE c) Stronger Board governance NO
4 – Mayor as voting director (similar to Principal Directors nominated by a member authority)	Mayor attends Board as a director with voting rights	Increased engagement from Mayor, as they would have a stake in the future of the WMRL Board and a say in policy. The WMRL Board would in turn be able to influence the Mayor. Greater likelihood that conflict would be avoided, and that the credibility of both the Board and Mayor would increase in the eyes of external parties. This would include from DfT.	DfT may feel that despite the Mayor's formal role, this option still represents distributed accountability, and thus it is disinclined to allow further devolved control to WMRL. Giving the Mayor full voting rights presents several constitutional challenges in respect of quorum, balance of voting and the basis on which the Mayor would become a director, which is not provided by the current articles of association, as the role is nominated by the member authorities.	Like any Principal Director nominated by a member authority, the Mayor could be elected as the Chair, which might address the concerns of DfT. However, this is not guaranteed, and in any case, terms are limited to two years. The constitutional questions could	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Expanded influence for WMRL MAYBE b) No change to voting rights NO c) Stronger Board governance NO

Option and description	Deliverables	Benefits	Disbenefits	Mitigations	Compliance with the principles
			<p>Apart from the need to amend the articles of association, it would give the Mets a build in majority of one, which could undermine the political balance of the Board and encourage block voting. Equally, it could politicise votes.</p> <p>Changes to articles of association required to formalise role and set the basis for the Mayor becoming a director, as well as potential changes to quorum and voting rights.</p>	<p>be addressed by increasing the number of Shire/Unitary authority full members to even out the number of votes, or by vesting all seven of the Met votes in the person of the Mayor.</p> <p>Both mitigations would require considerable changes to the articles of association.</p> <p>Adopt options 5 or 6.</p>	
5 – Mayor as voting director and voting chair	Mayor Chairs the WMRL Board and has one vote, as well as a casting vote as Chair (to break a deadlock).	As per option 4, but with the increased likelihood that WMRL would be able to secure further control from the DfT and utilise the influence of the Mayoral role to promote the objectives of the WMRL Board.	As per option 4 but with the addition that the Mayor could use their casting vote to force the Board into adopting Mayoral policies.	As per option 4.	<p>a) Expanded influence for WMRL YES</p> <p>b) No change to voting rights NO</p> <p>c) Stronger Board governance NO</p>
6 – Mayor as non-voting, non-director chair PREFERRED OPTION	Mayor Chairs a strengthened WMRL Board and has no voting powers	<p>Mayor is formally the Chair of the WMRL Board and provides the public face of WMRL. This would address the question of distributed accountability and increase the credibility of the Board in the eyes of DfT and other stakeholders. It would help align WMRL and Mayoral aspirations, thus reducing risk of conflict, and increasing the potency of each other's objectives. The lack of formal voting powers means the political balance, quorum and voting rights of the board are unaffected.</p> <p>The Mayor could also be delegated certain powers of the directors (such as lobbying and dealing with central government) by the directors as opposed to through amendments to the articles of association.</p>	<p>Changes will be required to the articles of association, and each member authority will be required to ratify the changes (exact arrangements differ across levels of membership). Mayor may find lack of voting powers frustrating, and the Board loses the rotating Chair/Vice Chair structure that has helped to maintain a strong cross-party relationship.</p>	<p>Two new Vice Chair roles created – one for the Shire/Unitary partners, and one for the Mets – to support the Chair.</p> <p>Clarify through the articles of association the exact roles and powers of the Chair and Vice Chair positions to avoid overlap and mission creep.</p> <p>Provide mechanism for review and ability to alter arrangements if they cease to be suitable.</p>	<p>a) Expanded influence for WMRL YES</p> <p>b) No change to voting rights YES</p> <p>c) Stronger Board governance YES</p>

Appendix B – Proposed Changes to WMRL Articles of Association

17 Chairing Of Directors' Meetings

- 17.1 ~~The Directors shall appoint one of the Directors as the Chair of the Company and one of the Directors as the Vice Chair of the Company, such appointments to take effect (subject to early termination in accordance with article 17.2) either until the next but one annual general meeting of the Company (if the Company holds annual general meetings) or until the start of the first Directors' meeting to take place after the second anniversary of his or her appointment (if the Company does not hold annual general meetings), provided that: The Mayor of the West Midlands (from time to time) shall be the Chair of the Company and shall be entitled to chair (and speak at) Directors' meetings (but, for the avoidance of doubt shall not vote).~~
- (a) ~~where the Chair is a Director appointed by an Associate Member then the Vice Chair must be a Director appointed by an LTA Member (and vice versa); and~~
- (b) ~~the position of Chair and the position of Vice Chair shall alternate between a Director appointed by an Associate Member and a Director appointed by an LTA Member.~~
- 17.2 There shall be two Vice-Chairs of the Company. Each Vice-Chair shall be a Director and one shall be appointed by the LTA Members (other than the Combined Authority) and one shall be appointed by the Associate Members. Each Vice-Chair shall (subject to early termination in accordance with article 17.3) be appointed for a period of two years (eligible for reappointment).
- 17.3 ~~17.2~~ The LTA Members or Associate Members (as case may be) may terminate the appointment of the ~~Chair or~~ Vice-Chair of the Company appointed by them at any time, provided they appoint a replacement under article 17.2.
- 17.4 ~~17.3~~ The Chair (or ~~one of the Vice-Chair~~ Chairs if the Chair is not participating in the relevant meeting) shall chair ~~Director's meetings provided that if neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair is~~ Directors' meetings. If the Chair is not participating and both Vice-Chairs wish to chair the relevant meeting, then the chair of that meeting shall be selected by the Vice-Chairs drawing lots. If there is no Chair or Vice-Chair participating in a Directors' meeting within ten minutes of the time at which it was due to start, the participating Directors shall appoint one of themselves to chair it.
- 17.5 ~~17.4~~ The chair of a Directors' meeting shall not have a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes cast for and against a proposal at the meeting.

35 Chairing General Meetings

35.1 The Chair appointed pursuant to article 17.1 (or if not present and willing to do so, one of the Vice-ChairChairs appointed pursuant to ~~that~~ article 17.2) shall chair general meetings if present and willing to do so.~~35.2 If neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair, if the Chair is not participating and both Vice-Chairs wish to chair the relevant meeting, then the chair of that meeting shall be selected by the Vice-Chairs drawing lots.~~

35.2 If none of the Chair and Vice-Chairs are willing to chair the meeting or are not present within 10 minutes of the time at which a meeting was due to start:

- (a) the Directors present, or
- (b) (if no Directors are present), the meeting, must appoint a Director or Member (or Member representative) to chair the meeting, and the appointment of the chair of the meeting must be the first business of the meeting.



WMCA Board

Date	13 November 2020
Report title	Health of the Region Report
Portfolio Lead	Wellbeing - Councillor Izzi Seccombe
Accountable Chief Executive	Deborah Cadman OBE, West Midlands Combined Authority email: deborah.cadman@wmca.org.uk tel: (0121) 214 7200
Accountable Employee	Ed Cox, Director of Public Service Reform email: ed.cox@wmca.org.uk tel: 07788 224179
Report has been considered by	Wellbeing Board Regional Health Impact of COVID-19 Task-and-Finish Group Programme Board, WMCA

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Consider the Health of the Region report (final draft for publication) in light of the impact of Covid-19 pandemic.
- (2) Agree the recommendations to Central Government on the basis of the findings in the report.
- (3) Endorse the commitments to action of the WMCA and its partners.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Health of the Region report explores the overall health of people living in West Midlands and in particular the impact of Covid-19 on the local population. It identifies a set of recommendations for central government in tackling health inequalities in the region and a series of '**commitments to action**' on for WMCA and its partners. This cover paper introduces the report and highlights key findings.

2. Background

- 2.1 Public Health England (PHE) published two key reports on the impact of Covid-19 in June, 2020. These reports highlighted the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on vulnerable groups. As a result of these reports, the WMCA's Wellbeing and Prevention Thematic Board suspended work on the proposed Health of the Region report as a consequence of the coronavirus crisis. Instead, it commissioned a task-and-finish group to consider the regional health impact of Covid-19 and bring forward a revised report taking into account the health inequalities exposed by the crisis.
- 2.2 This work included an interim report, published in August 2020, and a call for evidence to gather wider research and community insights into the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on different communities. It has also involved engagement with a variety of groups including the Young Combined Authority, the Leadership Commission and a special BAME roundtable hosted by the Mayor.
- 2.3 This revised report sets out in some detail both the extent of health inequalities in the region that pre-dated the Covid-19 pandemic, but also the impact of the pandemic, not least on Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and other vulnerable communities.

3. Health of the Region Report

- 3.1 The Health of the Region report describes the extent of health inequalities in the WMCA region and opportunities for action, considering the relationship between health and wealth and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report is intended to sit alongside the State of the Region report, which focuses on the economy and growth.
- 3.2 The first part of the report describes the **health of the people who live in the West Midlands**. It uses local and national intelligence data to identify where change was needed even before Covid-19, for example poor deprivation scores, lower life expectancy, infant mortality and mortality from preventable causes, levels of obesity (including childhood obesity) and overall poorer health outcomes. It shows how existing inequalities have been exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic, especially for certain groups. This part also shows the underlying causes behind the poorer outcomes and inequalities, which lie in the wider determinants of health like housing and employment as well as structural inequalities.

- 3.3 The second part discusses **how change can happen to build community resilience and embed prevention** across all we do. This part embeds the evidence presented through the call for evidence and empirical work carried out with stakeholders to underscore a new approach, which focuses on a system-wide prevention while recognising the two-way relationship between health and wealth on both individual and population level. This approach to tackling inequalities will take full advantage of the many opportunities presented by a Combined Authority – and emerging opportunities following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.4 The final part sets out four priority areas for action that have emerged from the analysis, namely:
- Improving outcomes for BAME communities
 - Tackling the wider determinants of health
 - Widening access to health and care
 - People-powered health
- 3.5 The final part also includes a series of commitments for action from key partners and recommendations for Government.
- 3.6 Crucially, the report sets out a series of ‘**commitments to action**’ (selected commitments listed below, full list available in full report) proposed by a range of organisations from across the region including local authorities, NHS bodies and trusts, universities, voluntary organisations as well as the WMCA. Together, these commitments represent a collective endeavour to tackle health inequalities in the region and build community resilience in the face of the on-going crisis and indeed any future crises of a similar nature.
- **Improving outcomes for BAME communities**
 - CCG/STP System Transformation Recovery (STaR) Board will ensure ICSs are supported to plan and be held accountable for addressing health inequalities within the populations they serve
 - PHE West Midlands have committed BAME and Disparities workplan to ensure improving health outcomes for BAME communities is a cross cutting consideration across priorities of health and wellbeing programmes, wider determinants, and Health Inequalities Cell Projects and recovery work.
 - University Hospitals Birmingham Trust has signed up to the NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard, which seeks to ensure employees from black and minority ethnic backgrounds have equal access to career opportunities and receive fair treatment in the workplace.
 - Black Country and West Birmingham STP have established an Equality & Diversity leads group across the BCWB STP to ensure a consistent and unbiased approach in supporting our BAME colleagues
 - WMCA will develop a targeted Thrive mental health programme co-designed with BAME employers and employees.
WMCA will carry out rigorous equalities impact assessments of all of its directorates and wider agencies.

- **Tackling the wider determinants of health**
 - CCG/STP System Transformation Recovery (STaR) Board will ensure ICS be required to oversee place level multi-agency, cross sector partnership working to address relevant local issues for example: access to employment, skills gaps, access to housing, social isolation, environmental challenges etc.
 - PHE West Midlands, in partnership with NHS Midlands, developing standards for tackling health inequalities and equity in NHS planning, Integrated Care Systems and Sustainability and Transformation Plans, including the wider determinants of health and life course
 - Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust are committed to deploying a minimum of 2% of its future annual budget with local suppliers and are committed to paying all staff at or above the 'living wage'.
 - Birmingham and Solihull STP will support vulnerable people through shielding, particularly in the context of a local 'lockdown', with additional support delivered through our partner organisations to address issues relating to food poverty, specialised primary care services for people who are homeless, rough sleepers and vulnerable children.
 - WMCA will incorporate a Health in All policies (HIAP) approach into its Inclusive Growth Framework.
 - WMCA will continue to pay the Real Living Wage and ensure its contractors do so too.
 - WMCA will look to target underrepresented groups for training programmes to support access to jobs, particularly where groups are under-represented in the workforce – for example, our work with Black CodHers helps black women gain digital skills and careers

- **Widening access to health and care**
 - CCG/STP System Transformation Recovery (STaR) Board will ensure Consideration of differential experience of access and delivery of services to be an intrinsic part of service design and evaluation
 - PHE West Midlands are working with national colleagues, DHSC, NHS Midlands, and voluntary sector partners, promoting evidence and resources to widen access to health and care services and test and trace, especially for those inclusion health groups who typically struggle to access appropriate services and in the context of digital exclusion and learning from lived experience.
 - Black Country and West Birmingham STP are developing an Academy. The Academy will provide population health management capacity to the system.
 - Birmingham and Solihull STP will restore services based on 'place' and continue the process for developing population health management within Primary Care Networks (PCNs)
 - WMCA will train and support healthcare professionals to refer disabled citizens to physical activity as part of its IncludeMe initiative
 - WMCA will roll-out its Thrive-into Work programme to over 450 people living with poor mental health
 - WMCA will support the utilisation of transport hubs as digital screening centres and for 'pop up' heart / CV checks, breast screening, sexual health etc.

- **People-powered health**

- PHE West Midlands are working with national colleagues and NHS Midlands advocating for community centred and asset based approaches, providing resources, tools and products to enable 'people-powered health' including support and leadership for the Regional Social Prescribing Network, promoting the role of the NHS as an anchor institution, maximising opportunities through volunteering (including PHE staff role modelling this) and landing social marketing campaigns
- Black Country and West Birmingham STP will develop and expand Physical and mental health and wellbeing, including reduction in sickness absence
- Black Country and West Birmingham STP will develop a common approach to supporting and improving the wider H&WB agenda across the system
- Birmingham and Solihull STP will support behaviour change for staff and community leaders through various wellbeing initiatives including a targeted campaign on flu vaccination with a focus on the most vulnerable and those disproportionately affected by COVID-19
- Walsall Council's Walsall for All Board will engage with all communities through a network of community/faith leaders and active communication and engagement
- WMCA will continue to develop its Include Me WM programme working with disabled citizens and citizens with long term health conditions to get active.
- WMCA is committed to increase cycling from 3% to 5% of mode share by 2023 through the delivery of the WM Cycling Charter and extending the 195m of cycling and walking routes and delivery of the Government's Emergency Active Travel Fund.
- WMCA will work with other Commonwealth Games Delivery Partners to develop a long lasting physical activity and wellbeing legacy for the region
- WMCA will roll out an Making Every Contact Count programme amongst its employees and encourage and influence other anchor institutions / businesses / employers to support people-powered health in their workplaces

3.7 Alongside our own regional commitments to act on health inequalities, there are a series of **'asks' of central government**. These include existing agreed CSR asks but also flag the importance of the effective funding of public health and for local authorities and other agencies to have a greater role in co-ordinating local health and care provision.

- **Improving outcomes for ethnic minorities**

- Government should produce a clear and comprehensive action plan setting out how it will work with local and regional partners to take action on race disparities and associated risk factors.
- Government should commission further data, research and analytical work at the local and regional level to understand the geographical and place dimensions of race disparities in health.

- **Tackling the wider determinants of health**

- Local action on tackling health inequality should be the focus of the NSH Phase 4 Letter on Covid19

- Health and well-being outcomes should be included as part of economic development policies including industrial strategy and local industrial strategies; the UK Shared Prosperity Fund; Towns Fund; devolution deals etc.
- Government should double the proportion of health and social care spending focused on prevention and public health from 5 to 10 per cent over time.
- **Widening access to health and care**
 - Government should support the WMCA's proposal to establish digital screening hubs in high footfall transport locations.
 - Government should do all it can to close the gap in primary care provision between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods in terms of funding per patient and serving GPs.
 - Government should look to widen its plans and increase its investment to tackle digital poverty with a particular focus on those who do not access health and care services online.
- **People-powered health**
 - Government should invest in the WMCA's Radical Health Prevention Fund to drive forward innovation and social prescribing initiatives in the region.
 - Government should pilot the Kruger report's *Community Right to Serve* provisions for health and social care in the West Midlands.

4. Future steps

- 4.1 The Health of the Region report represents a 'call to action' for a wide range of regional players and the commitments described above will be monitored and reviewed through the Wellbeing and Prevention Board.
- 4.2 The report will also be used to engage with central government concerning the recommendations.
- 4.3 The report will also provide a basis for developing the Well-being and Prevention programme for the PSR directorate for 2021/22 which will report into the Wellbeing and Prevention Board and form part of the WMCA Annual Plan.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 In its Comprehensive Spending Review submission, WMCA has requested £11.3m in funds from central government for the Radical Health Prevention Fund. An additional £18.5m has been requested for linked work, including social prescribing, proposals under the Regional Health Impact of Covid-19, and digital diagnostic and treatment hub. These proposals have all been approved by the WMCA Board at previous meetings.
- 5.2 The commitments to action of other partners are undertaken at their own cost and there is no direct cost to the WMCA.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications connected to this report or its recommendations.

7. Equalities Implications

- 7.1 This is a comprehensive report with a primary focus on equalities and it is in line with the Equalities Impact Assessments conducted. Positive equality impact is envisaged in relation to this report.

8. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 8.1 Inclusive growth is a more deliberate and socially purposeful model of economic growth – measured not only by how fast or aggressive it is; but also by how well it is created and shared across the whole population and place, and by the social and environmental outcomes it realises for our people. This is a shift away from considering growth purely in terms of measures of the local economy, and towards a view that the economy should serve people’s broader aspirations for their lives and their place.
- 8.2 In considering the inclusive growth implications, all four of the Inclusive Growth Tests are relevant: Locking in Wealth, Future Generations, Sharing Power and Universal Design. As such, the report considers inclusive growth within its broader context of an inclusive economy, seeking to reduce inequalities across the life course, with a resilient and engaged population as a foundation of sustainable growth that envisions not only a healthier region, but also a fairer and greener region.

9. Geographical Area of Report’s Implications

- 9.1 This report applies to all areas of the West Midlands region and has learning and engagement which is actively shared within the broader region including the non-constituent members.

10. Other Implications

- 10.1 Not applicable.

11. Schedule of Background Papers

- 11.1 The Health of the Region Report

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West Midlands
Combined Authority

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Health of the Region 2020

Addressing health and wellbeing inequalities and
the impacts of COVID-19 in the West Midlands

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Foreword

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Since the publication of the Marmot Review in 2010, life expectancy in England has stalled and health inequalities have continued to widen. Across the West Midlands Combined Authority, both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy remain lower than the national average. This has been both exposed and exacerbated by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, with our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities among those most affected.

To reduce widening and persistent health inequalities, a radical shift is needed to put communities at the heart of public health, to tackle systemic discrimination and disadvantage as a public health problem, and build healthy, resilient, connected and empowered communities.

While empowering individuals and communities to improve their own health is important, it is crucial to recognise that we all live within social and environmental contexts. Radical prevention is about tackling entrenched social disadvantage, working across the whole system to bring about a fundamental shift towards addressing the underlying causes of poor health.

The interdependence between health and wealth is the core theme that unites the work of the WMCA with that of health partners in the region. Health and wealth are two sides of the same coin; the impact of socioeconomic deprivation on health has long been recognised, but equally prosperity cannot be achieved without good health.

The key to building a healthier, fairer and greener West Midlands is to put health and wellbeing at the heart of our social, economic and environmental policies, and to ensure that every citizen is able to maximise their full potential at every stage of their lives. Despite the challenges faced in responding to and recovering from the coronavirus pandemic, the renewed focus on health inequalities gives us a once-in-a lifetime opportunity to re-evaluate, reset and redress the balance. And we must do this now.

In a recent interview, Sir Michael Marmot was asked about the urgency of tackling these issues and his response was very clear: “We address structural racism today, right now. We don’t say, ‘Oh, we’ll put it off while we deal with the crisis.’ No, we do it right now because it’s causing the problems right now.”

This report is a call to action for all of our partners and stakeholders to work together to address long-standing inequalities in the West Midlands, and to make a collective commitment to achieving positive change in our region.



Mayor Andy Street
Mayor of the West Midlands
Combined Authority



Cllr Izzi Secombe
Portfolio holder for Wellbeing
and Prevention, WMCA



Ed Cox
Director for Inclusive Growth and
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Acknowledgements

This report was written by the Core Group members to the WMCA Regional Health Impact of COVID-19 Task and Finish Group. We are grateful to Dr Francis Howie, who contributed to the development of the initial draft. The authors are grateful to all of the members to the Task and Finish Group who offered their time and expertise to steer this work.

We are also grateful to the Mayor of WMCA, Andy Street, the WMCA Strategic Leadership Team and the WMCA Health & Wellbeing Board members who have greatly supported this piece of work and its next steps.

We are particularly grateful to the organisations and individuals who responded to the Call for Evidence for their invaluable insight into the activities across the West Midlands in response to COVID-19, and the impact this has had. We are also grateful to participants in two BAME roundtables hosted by the mayor who provided helpful insights at the beginning and the end of this work. Without the submissions to the Call for Evidence and the roundtables, this report would not have been possible. A summary of evidence is listed in Appendix 1.

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Paul Maubach	Black Country and West Birmingham CCG
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Executive Summary

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The Health of the Region 2020 report presents a comprehensive analysis of the health of the West Midlands population. In particular, it highlights national and regional evidence of the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic which shows that long-standing inequalities in physical and mental health have widened as a consequence of the pandemic, both through direct effects of the virus, and through indirect effects of the control measures taken – and particularly among our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.

The report shows that:

- We must begin with the urgent task of improving outcomes for BAME communities. Targeted and immediate action to tackle structural racism is an urgent and immediate priority.
- But lasting change will only happen when we take a systemic approach to tackling the wider determinants of health and dealing with the structural inequalities we find in our economy, housing market, education, justice and transport systems.
- Similarly, we must tackle inequalities in the health and care system and widen access to health and care services. This requires a fundamental rebalancing of funding and focus on primary and preventative care.
- These challenges, in turn, will create the conditions in which people-powered health can flourish and healthy lifestyles can become the norm.

Health inequalities in the West Midlands:

- Even prior to the pandemic, there were entrenched and persisting health inequalities in our region. On average people in the WMCA have a shorter life expectancy than England overall, and spend more of their lives in poor health. Women in the WMCA live for 82.2 years on average (England 83.2) and spend 22 years in poor health; men live for 78.0 years on average (England 79.6) and spend 18 years in poor health.
- This is due largely to above national average rates of premature deaths from preventable causes (cardiovascular disease, cancer, liver disease and respiratory disease) as well as higher infant mortality rates. These correspond to higher rates of problem drinking, obesity (child and adult) and physical inactivity as well as lower cancer screening cover.
- Premature deaths from preventable causes in turn correspond to wider determinants of health, or the ‘causes of the causes’. Most areas in the WMCA have a greater level of socioeconomic deprivation than the national average, with approximately a quarter of children living in low income households. Gross Disposal Household Income (GDHI) per person in 2017 was £16,479 compared with £19,514 in the UK as a whole.
- The lives of many people in the WMCA are hard, and unhealthy behaviours are often coping mechanisms for people who live in challenging circumstances, or reflect the limitations of the environments they live in. Often people want to make positive changes to improve their health, such as being more active or giving up smoking, but are not supported to do so and feel powerless to make positive change.

The impact of Covid-19 in the West Midlands

- In line with national findings, the pandemic has exposed and exacerbated existing health inequalities. The WMCA has a higher rate of cases overall than the region as a whole, with Birmingham and Sandwell most affected; rates are also high in Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton. The highest rates of COVID-19 related deaths are in more deprived areas, and areas with a greater proportion of residents from BAME communities.
- Lockdown and social distancing measures have had direct impacts on wellbeing and on health behaviours. Anxiety has increased significantly in the West Midlands region, with almost half of people surveyed (47.9%) reporting high levels of anxiety compared to a 2019 average of 21.9%. On average, people reporting feeling ‘often lonely’ ranged from 4.9% to 6.5% over this period; and was generally higher for younger people.
- Although the pathways are complex and multi-faceted, the fundamental link between health and wealth is still clear. Ultimately, where people are already marginalised and excluded, they are likely to be left further behind as we respond to and recover from COVID-19 unless we actively work to address this. Engagement with stakeholders has consistently highlighted the need to address structural racism and discrimination, which interacts with social and economic determinants of health across the whole system.

A 'radical prevention' approach

- In order to address the immediate and emerging health impacts of Covid-19 and take steps towards a happier and healthier population, more resilient to future pandemics, we need to adopt a 'radical prevention' approach.
- Radical prevention means taking action as a whole system to tackle the underlying causes of poor health and health inequalities (the 'causes of the causes') and shifting to more person and community-centred approaches to health and wellbeing. Early intervention and prevention in the early years can have lifelong impact, as well as yielding significant return on investment.
- Radical prevention also involves demanding more inclusive economic growth which can reduce health inequalities. This can be done through improving access to employment, raising income, increasing community safety, improving housing quality and affordability, raising aspirations and improving educational outcomes, providing a high quality local environment and green space, enhancing social relationships and connectedness, and increasing opportunities for participation.

Commitments to action and recommendations

We have identified 4 key challenges arising from this work and for each of these challenges, the WMCA and its partners have made over 50 commitments to action and set out a series of 12 recommendations to government. These are summarised in the tables on the following two pages.

- Challenge 1: Improving outcomes for BAME communities
- Challenge 2: Tackling the wider determinants of health
- Challenge 3: Widening access to health and care
- Challenge 4: People-powered health

Challenge 1: Improving outcomes for BAME communities

Selected Commitments to Action (full list in Section 3)

- PHE West Midlands will develop a BAME and Disparities workplan
- Birmingham and Solihull STP will routinely produce data with detailed analysis of factors including ethnicity and deprivation
- WMCA will develop a targeted Thrive mental health programme co-designed with BAME employers and employees

Recommendations to government

- Government should produce a clear and comprehensive action plan setting out how it will work with local and regional partners to take action on race disparities and associated risk factors.
- Government should commission further data, research and analytical work at the local and regional level to understand the geographical and place dimensions of race disparities in health.

Challenge 2: Tackling the wider determinants of health

Selected Commitments to Action (full list in Section 3)

- WMCA will work with partners to become a Marmot City-Region and develop a 3-year action plan for change.
- The new multi-agency Midlands System Transformation Recovery (STaR) Board, working with PHE WM, will establish a Health Inequalities Working Group which will:
 - support Integrated Care Systems to plan and be held accountable for addressing health inequalities within the populations they serve;
 - provide standards, guidance and tools to ensure health inequalities are considered in the design and evaluation of new NHS services.

Recommendations to government

- The NHS should make local action on tackling health inequalities the focus of the NHS 'Phase 4 Letter' on Covid19.
- Government should make health and wellbeing outcomes a key driver of economic development and levelling-up policies including industrial strategy and local industrial strategies; the UK Shared Prosperity Fund; Towns Fund; and future devolution deals.
- Government should double the proportion of health and social care spending focused on prevention and public health from 5 to 10 percent over time.

Challenge 3: Widening access to health and care

Selected Commitments to Action (full list in Section 3)

- Black Country and West Birmingham CCG will develop an Academy to provide population health management capacity to the system. It is developing a number of population health management projects that will widen access to health and care including early diagnosis of cancer in vulnerable groups.
- Birmingham and Solihull STP will develop population health management within Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and ensure its primary care estate is under one digital domain by March 2021 promoting digitally enabled care for staff to work together in virtual multi-disciplinary teams.
- University Hospitals Birmingham will use digital transformation to reduce health inequalities by enabling people to access healthcare and information in a more accessible way, including creating community diagnostic hubs in local neighbourhoods.

Recommendations to government

- Government should ensure that Local Authorities have sufficient powers to improve public health and reduce health inequalities, with Mayoral Combined Authorities providing support where they can add value.
- Government should support the WMCA's proposal to establish digital screening hubs in high footfall transport locations.
- Government must close the gap in primary care provision between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods in terms of funding per patient and serving GPs.
- Government must widen its plans and increase its investment to tackle digital poverty with a particular focus on those who do not access health and care services online.

Challenge 4: People-powered health

Example commitments

- WMCA is committed to increase cycling from 3% to 5% of mode share by 2023 through the delivery of the WM Cycling Charter and extending cycling and walking routes.
- WMCA will work with other Commonwealth Games Delivery Partners to develop a long lasting physical activity and wellbeing legacy for the region.
- Black Country & West Birmingham CCG PCNs will have recruited 63 social prescribing link workers, 38 care coordinators and 12 Health and Wellbeing Coaches by March 2021 and plan to recruit more than 200 posts by March 2024.
- The Walsall for All Board will raise public awareness about the support available to improve mental and physical wellbeing through the Walsall Together partnership.

Recommendations to government

- Government should invest in the WMCA's Radical Health Prevention Fund to drive forward innovation, social prescribing and other initiatives to tackle health inequalities in the region
- Government should pilot the Kruger report's Community Right to Serve provisions for health and social care in the West Midlands.

Introduction

Background

National and regional evidence on the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19) shows that inequalities in physical and mental health have widened as a consequence of the pandemic. This is a result of both the direct effects of the virus, and the indirect effects through the control measures taken.¹

Although this has led to an increased focus on health inequalities, particularly those affecting BAME communities,² the reality is that these disparities have persisted for a long time. The recent update to the Marmot Review³ showed that even before the pandemic increases in life expectancy were slowing down, particularly in the most deprived areas of the country and especially for women. There is also a marked social gradient in healthy life expectancy, with people in the most deprived areas spending more of their lives in ill health.

It has long been recognised that the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age have important implications for our physical and mental health, as individuals and across wider society – and that for many citizens in the West Midlands, these conditions are far from optimal. Broadly, greater socioeconomic deprivation is associated

with poorer health outcomes. This is due to the impact of deprivation on the wider determinants of health – our social, physical and economic environments. Housing, employment and skills, and social connections – ‘jobs, homes, friends’ – are key, and can be interpreted in their broadest senses. Again some of these effects are direct, and others are indirect, or mediated by health behaviours; for example, a lack of green space and poor air quality can have a direct impact on respiratory health and mental wellbeing, and also an indirect impact through reducing participation in physical activity.

Health inequalities across the life course

Health problems in working age and older adults reflect the impact of cumulative disadvantage across the life course. Child poverty rates have increased nationally and will continue to have long-term negative impacts on the lives of children, families and communities. On average, 22% of children were living in poverty before housing costs in England in 2017/18 – 30% after taking into account housing costs, and higher in areas with high housing costs. This increased to 47% for children in lone parent families, and over 70% for those living in workless families.⁴

Taking a life course perspective to reduce health inequalities means acting as early as possible to reduce the cumulative disadvantage that begins in early childhood. However, it also means recognising that there are opportunities to improve health & wellbeing at any age.

Recognising the impacts of COVID-19

The Royal College of Physicians and Public Health England have worked with NHS Providers and the Provider Public Health Network to identify groups that may be disproportionately affected by COVID-19 (Figure 1).⁵ These include people with protected characteristics; those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged or live in deprived areas; and inclusion health and marginalised groups.

Social distancing and isolation can also have a detrimental impact on mental health and wellbeing, including through harmful health behaviours and reducing access to services and support. People who misuse or are dependent on drugs and alcohol may be at increased risk of becoming infected with the virus, and infecting others. They may also be more vulnerable to the impact of infection due to underlying conditions. Rough sleepers are a particularly vulnerable group and are unable in the ordinary course of events to self-isolate.

Understanding population vulnerabilities, risk factors and inequalities is important to inform both the acute response phase and the recovery and repair phase over the longer term. As well as mitigating the

impact of COVID-19 it is important to ensure existing physical and mental health and wellbeing needs are being met, and that we continue to address health inequalities through improving the social and economic conditions in which people live.

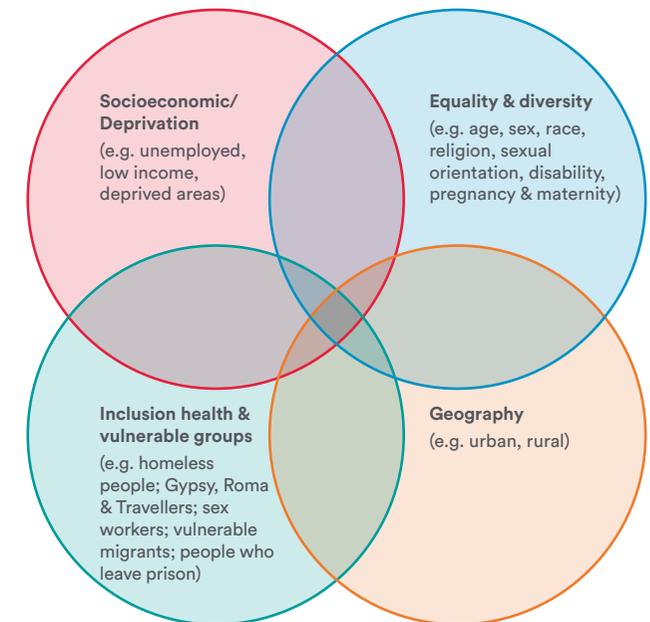


Figure 1: Groups that may be disproportionately affected by COVID-19 (adapted from PHE/RCP, 2020)

The Regional Health Impacts of COVID-19 Task & Finish Group

The Regional Health Impacts of COVID-19 (RHIC) Task & Finish Group was convened in June 2020 to focus on the relationship between the disparities in the health and economic impacts of the pandemic identified by the PHE review and wider health inequalities in the WMCA Region. The group includes representation from the WMCA, PHE, local authorities, the NHS, universities and the voluntary & community sector.

among individuals and communities; challenges and barriers for citizens, communities and organisations; examples of good practice in improving accessibility; and changes in approach and further support needs. A variety of reports, quantitative data and qualitative feedback was received in response to the call for evidence, which have informed subsequent sections of the report. A thematic analysis of qualitative submissions can be found in Appendix 2.

An interim report⁶ was published by the WMCA and the PHE Population Intelligence Hub for the RHIC group in August 2020. This included analyses of population vulnerabilities, risk factors and inequalities, and occupational inequalities intersected with ethnicity which are discussed in the following section. The interim report also identified stakeholder concerns around the upcoming challenges facing the West Midlands over the coming months and the unique opportunities for action and partnership working presented by the pandemic.

The report was accompanied by a call for evidence⁷ which sought to understand experiences and impacts of COVID-19

Aims and purpose of report

This report is divided into three sections to describe the extent of health inequalities in the WMCA region and opportunities for action, considering the relationship between health and wealth and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. It should be viewed alongside the State of the Region report,⁸ which focuses on the economy and growth.

Part 1 of the report describes the health of the people who live in the West Midlands. It shows where change was needed even before COVID-19, and how existing inequalities have been exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic.

Part 2 discusses how change can happen to build community resilience and embed prevention across all we do. It considers a new approach, taking full advantage of the many opportunities presented by a Combined Authority and its partners – and emerging opportunities following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part 3 sets out priority areas for action and next steps, with a series of commitments for action from key partners.

Comment on Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) phrase and representation

In the aftermath of the PHE reports on adverse impact of Covid-19 on Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, there has been an important debate around the appropriateness of the use of the phrase BAME as a collective for all ethnic minorities. The use of BAME has been debated for a few years^{9,10,11} and the phrase is mainly used in the UK, while the US prefer to use “person of colour” to identify the collective.¹² While useful in relating to national policy documents, there are a number of reasons why the phrase is problematic.

First, if the only qualification for inclusion in BAME is being non-white, then we miss out on many ethnic minority groups that identify as White Other, such as Roma people, Traveller communities or some Turkish or Arab communities.¹³ Secondly, experiences of people within the BAME categorisation are quite different, owing to their group identities and journeys within the UK. The nuances between South Asian groups’ experiences and also between Black African and Black Caribbean are important, and these are in danger of being masked with a collective phrase such as BAME¹⁴. There are also issues of intersectionality and multiple disadvantage within groups, based on gender, language, religion and/or sexual orientation.

Different phrases are used to describe people from ethnic minority backgrounds, but even the phrase ‘ethnic minority’ is contested. Some suggestions have included the use of ‘racialised communities’ as an alternative, to describe groups of people who have essentially been at the receiving end of structural racism or othering. While others have opted to spell out BAME to indicate a heterogenous group and then go even more granular and state Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Vietnamese instead of Asian or Nigerian or Jamaican instead of Black or Black African or Caribbean.

Given there is a lack of a clear alternative, it seems there is still usefulness in the use of BAME classification, as it ensures consistency with current wide usage amongst public bodies and many other institutions. It is important to acknowledge the discourse and sensitivities around the classification and continue to use BAME as a collective phrase until a widely used alternative is agreed upon.

Section 1

Health and health inequalities in the West Midlands region

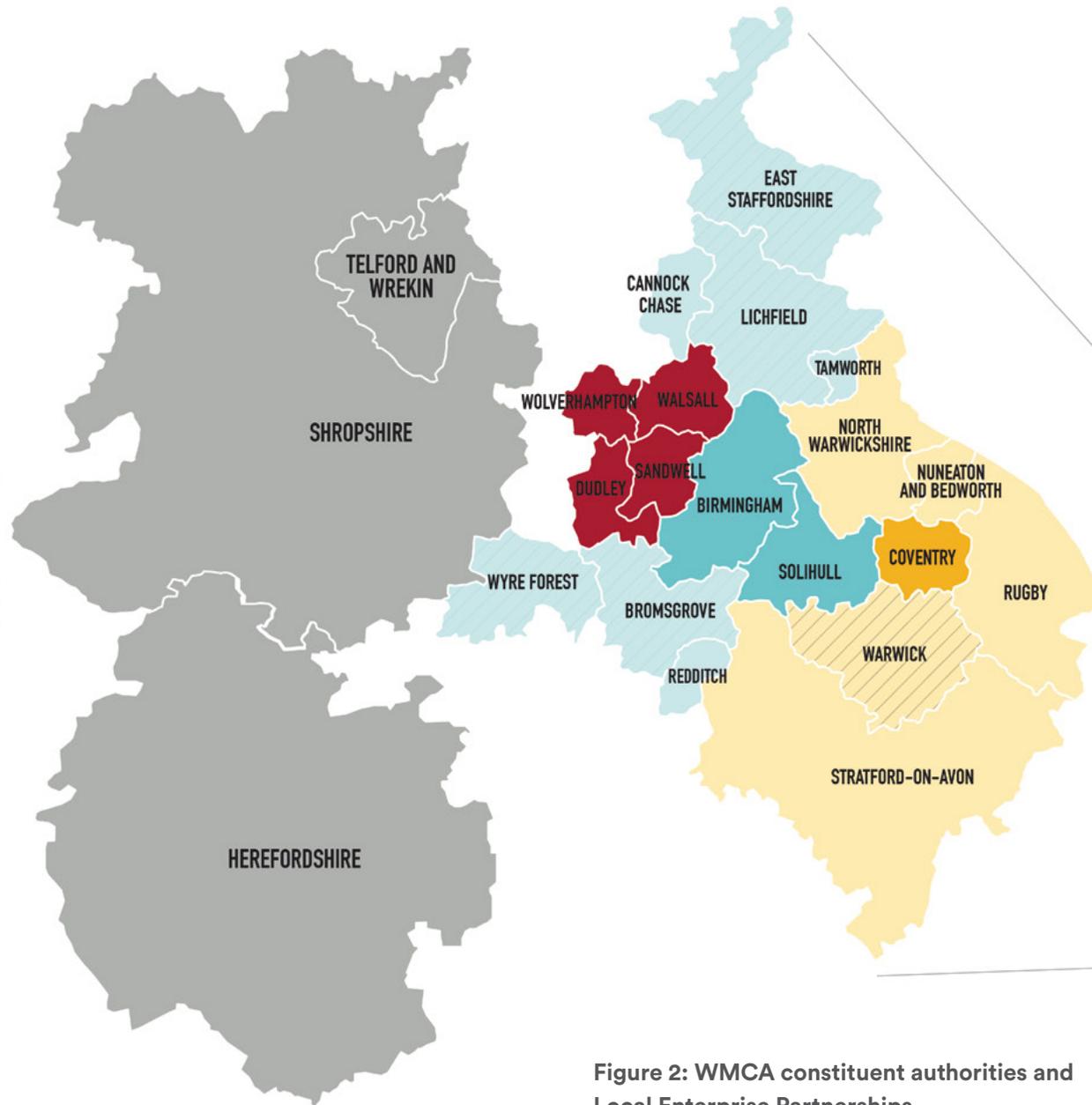
This section describes the people who live in the WMCA's seven constituent local authority areas, how long they live, and the factors that contribute to inequalities in health, wellbeing and quality of life. It also considers who is most vulnerable to COVID-19, both in terms of health and economic impacts.

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1.1 Who are our people?

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) membership consists of 18 local authorities (seven of which are constituent members) and three Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) (Figure 2). For the purpose of this report, the main focus will be on the seven constituent authority areas: Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton. However, many of the issues and approaches identified will be applicable across the West Midlands region as a whole, particularly in relation to groups that may be disproportionately affected by the health and economic impacts of COVID-19.

The WMCA has a population of approximately 2.9 million people. Birmingham is the largest constituent authority with approximately 1.1 million residents; the remaining population is more or less evenly distributed between the other six constituent local authorities.¹⁵ The population of the WMCA is diverse, both between and within Local Authority areas.



Population density is the highest in Birmingham, with 42.6 people per hectare and lowest in Solihull with 12.2 people per hectare.¹⁶ The population has grown faster than previously anticipated and is projected to increase by 9.6% by 2038.

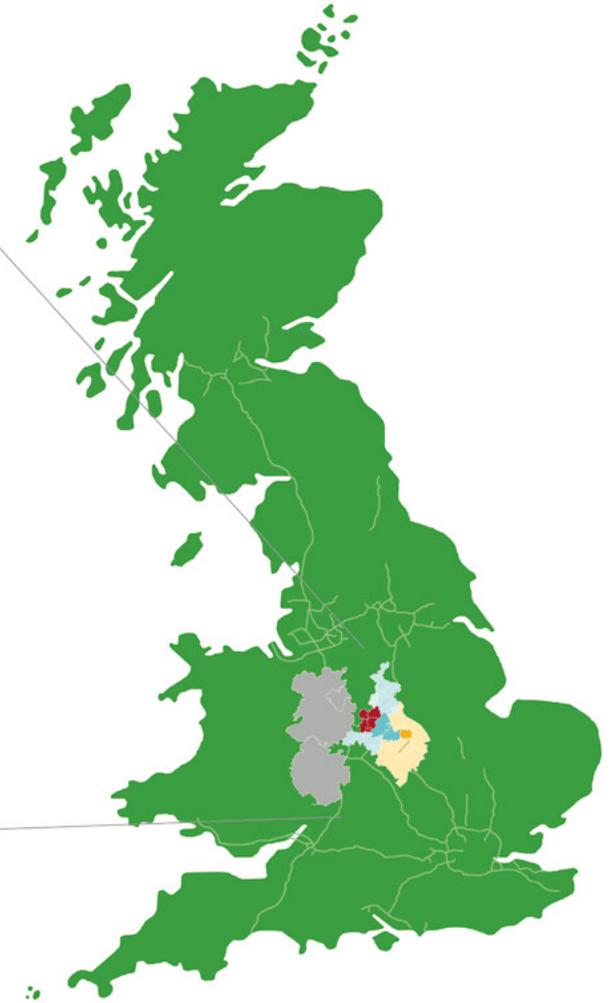


Figure 2: WMCA constituent authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships

Age and sex

Figure 3 shows the distribution of female and male residents across 5-year age bands. On average, the population is slightly younger than the England average and has a slightly higher proportion of working age people. However, this varies considerably across the region, ranging from 32.1 years in Coventry to 43.1 years in Solihull.¹⁷

Table 1: WMCA population estimates by age group

Total Population	Aged 0-15	Working age population	Aged 65+	Dependency ratio
2,916,415	626,190	1,839,350	450,875	0.59
49.5% male; 50.5% female	21.5% (England average = 19.2%)	63.1% (England average = 62.6%)	15.5% (England average = 18.2%)	England average = 0.60

Source: Mid-year estimates, ONS (2018)

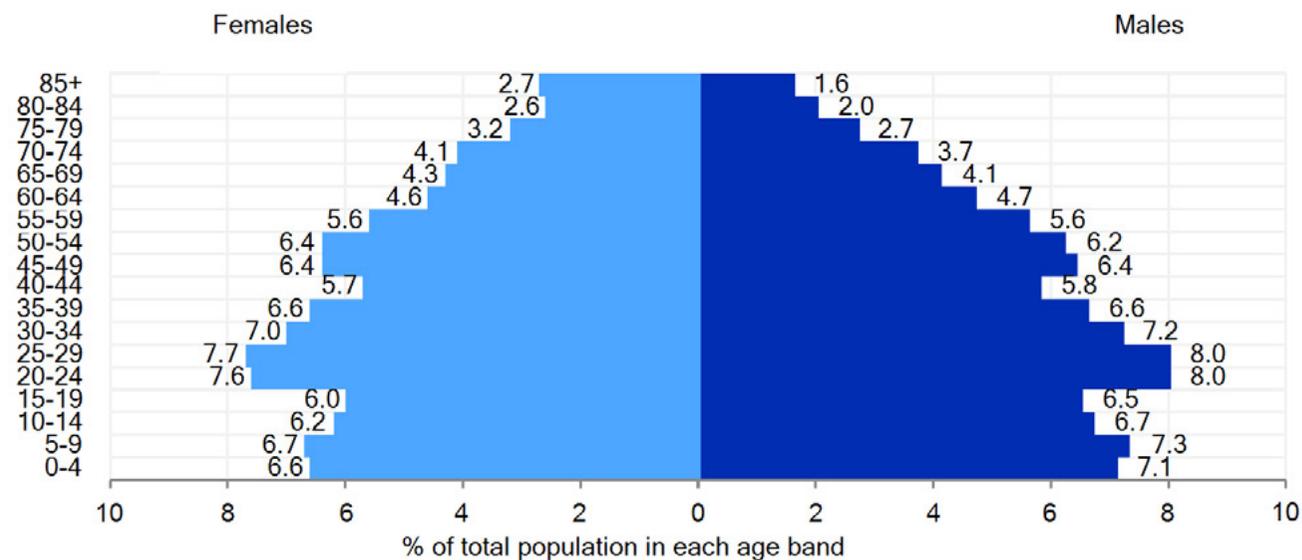


Figure 3: WMCA population Estimates by 5-year age band

Mid-year estimates, ONS (2018)

Ethnicity

The WMCA population is more ethnically diverse than that of both England and the West Midlands region overall, and a high rate of international net in-migration with variations in the origins of migrants means that this diversity is likely to increase with our growing population. In the WMCA an estimated 30.6% of our residents are from BAME groups compared with 14.0% in England and 17.4 across the whole of the West Midlands. This ranges from 9.0% in Dudley to 43.0% in Birmingham.

We also have slightly more residents who were born outside the UK or do not have English as their main language, though the gap is far smaller. In the WMCA 16.6% of the population were born outside the UK (England average 13.8%), and just 5.7% are in households where no members have English as a first language (England average 4.4%).¹⁸ These figures will include people from White non-British backgrounds.

This reflects the nuanced relationship between ethnicity and nationality, and the fact that many families from diverse ethnic backgrounds have been settled in the UK for a number of generations. This is especially relevant when considering approaches to community engagement: although there may be characteristics and experiences that are common among specific groups, the categories are broad and it is important to understand the diversity of the populations – and their needs and experiences as individuals and families - within them. Rather than providing an in-depth analysis of the issues affecting specific demographic groups, these profiles serve as indicators of where further attention may be needed.

Sexual Orientation

2.3% of the West Midlands population identified themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual in 2018. However, key organisations such as Stonewall estimate the figure to be higher at 5-7%.¹⁹

Faith or Belief

People in the West Midlands region have a greater level of religious affiliation than in England & Wales overall. The majority of the population (60.2%) are Christian (E&W 59.0%), and 6.7% are Muslim (E&W 5.0%). 22.0% declared that they have no religion compared with 25% in England & Wales.²⁰

1.2 Life expectancy and quality of life

How long are lives?

Life expectancy is the average number of years that an individual is expected to live based on current mortality rates. People in the WMCA have shorter lives than the average for the UK, with women living a little longer than men in line with national trends (Table 2). Life expectancy in the WMCA is 82.2 years for females and 78.0 years for males – this is 1.0 years lower than England for females and 1.6 years lower for males respectively. This corresponds to a higher level of socioeconomic deprivation across the WMCA overall compared to the national average.

The length of life also varies significantly within the WMCA area. People live longest in Solihull and lives are shortest in Sandwell and Wolverhampton, again reflecting patterns of socioeconomic deprivation. There is also variation within these areas. Inequality in life expectancy at birth is a measure of disparity which shows how much life expectancy varies with deprivation within England as a whole and within local areas. Within the WMCA region, inequality in life expectancy at birth is greatest in Coventry and Solihull, indicating that the relative advantages these areas have are not distributed evenly across their populations (see Table 2).

Whilst most people live long lives, it is also sadly true that more babies die here before the age of one than they do on average in the rest of England. Our infant mortality rate is 6.7 per 1,000 live births compared with a national figure of 3.9. Again, there are differences across the region, from 4.4 per 1,000 live births in Dudley to 8.2 in Sandwell.

Table 2: Overview of health inequalities in the WMCA

Indicators	Period									
		England	WMCA	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
Deprivation score (IMD 2019)	2019	21.7	31.9	38.1	25.6	24.1	34.9	17.4	31.6	32.1
Life expectancy at birth (Female)	2016-18	83.2	82.2	82.2	82.1	82.8	81.1	84.1	82.0	81.4
Life expectancy at birth (Male)	2016-18	79.6	78.0	77.7	78.5	79.0	76.9	80.3	77.5	77.2
Inequality in life expectancy at birth (Female)	2016-18	7.5	-	5.6	8.3	7.6	8.0	9.8	8.8	6.3
Inequality in life expectancy at birth (Male)	2016-18	9.5	-	8.3	10.7	9.0	8.6	12.3	10.4	7.8
Infant mortality (persons <1 yr) – crude rate per 1000 live births (2016-18)	2016-18	3.9	6.7	7.4	5.0	4.4	8.2	5.4	7.1	6.0
Mortality from causes considered preventable - age-standardised rate per 100,000 population (2016-18)	2016-18	180.8	219.0	225.7	217.6	207.2	241.3	165.3	226.0	237.2

Compared with England: Better Similar Worse

Quintiles: Best Worst Not applicable

Source: PHE Public Health Profiles.

Quality of life

Health is not only measured in how long we live. It is also measured by the quality of our lives. Here too, the picture is generally not as good here as it is elsewhere in the UK. Healthy life expectancy is measured as the number of years we live in generally good health. Data show the same pattern of below average outcomes, and of variation across and within our region (Table 3 & Figure 4).

Table 3: Quality of life measures in the WMCA – local area comparisons.

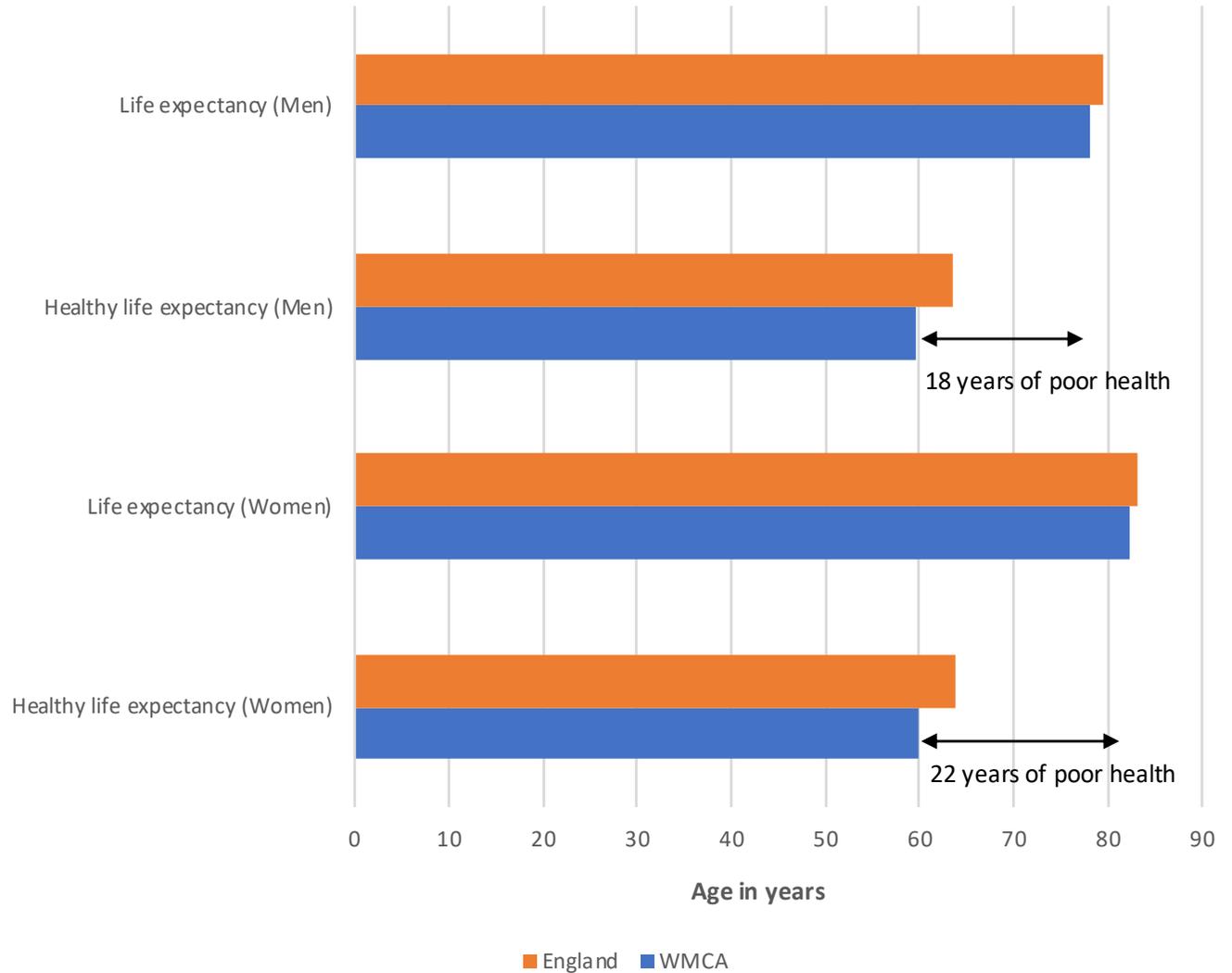
Indicators	Period	England	WMCA	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
Healthy life expectancy at birth (Female)	2016-18	63.9	59.8	59.6	62.5	60.3	57.9	64.3	55.7	58.0
Healthy life expectancy at birth (Male)	2016-18	63.4	59.6	59.2	61.9	59.4	57.1	65.3	56.4	58.7
School readiness: percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception - %	2018/19	-	71.8	-	68.0	69.0	67.1	66.8	72.6	67.5
Health-related quality of life for older people	2016/17	0.735	0.696	0.696	0.703	0.713	0.660	0.744	0.683	0.697
Self-reported well-being - high satisfaction score: % of respondents	2018/19	7.8	-	7.4	9.8	8.1	8.9	6.7	10.5	7.8
Self-reported well-being - high happiness score: % of respondents	2018/19	19.7	-	17.2	21.7	17.8	17.2	19.4	23.8	14.4

Compared with England: Better Similar Worse

Source: PHE Public Health Profiles.

Figure 4: Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy in the WMCA (2016-18)

The foundations for good health begin in the earliest stages of life. School readiness is a key measure of early years development across a wide range of developmental areas, and is a useful indicator of whether children have had a good start in life. Children from poorer backgrounds are more at risk of poorer development and the evidence shows that differences by social background emerge early.²¹ In the WMCA the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception year is lower than the England average in all areas except Solihull. However, even in Solihull almost a third of children are not school ready at this stage (Table 3).



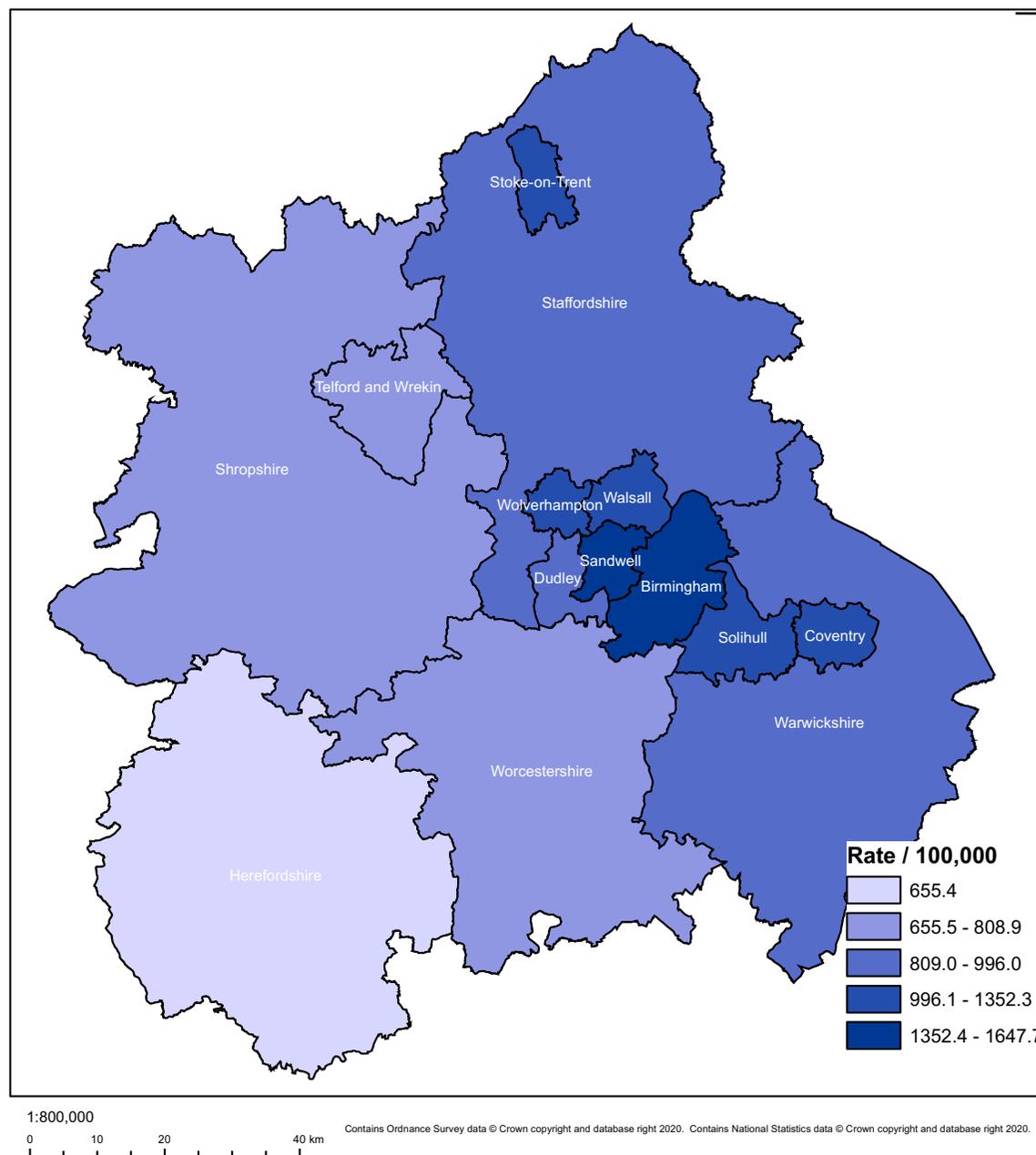
Impacts of COVID-19 on length and quality of life

At present it is too early to say how life expectancy and healthy life expectancy may change over the longer term as a result of the pandemic. In addition to deaths resulting from COVID-19, it is also important to look at what is happening with trends in deaths from other causes.

Figure 5 shows rates of confirmed COVID-19 cases across the West Midlands region as of 29th October 2020. It is clear that the WMCA has a higher rate of cases overall than the region as a whole, with Birmingham and Sandwell most affected. Rates are also high in Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Figure 6 shows that there was an increase in excess deaths from the week ending 27 March, peaking in the week ending 10 April before declining and returning to baseline levels in the week ending 22 May. While many of these were COVID-19 related, a marked proportion of excess deaths during this period did not have COVID-19 mentioned on the death certificate, suggesting an increase in deaths from other causes during this period. As of October 2020, the overall rate of deaths in the WMCA region is not significantly different to previous years, with 6.0% of those deaths known to be COVID-19 related.

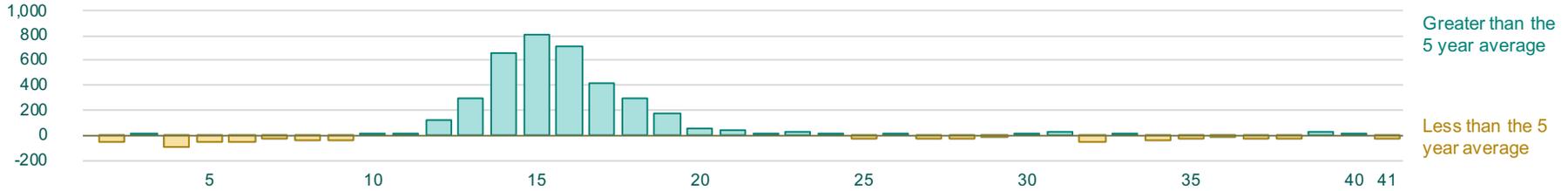
Figure 5: Confirmed COVID-19 cases in the West Midlands (up to 29 Oct 2020)



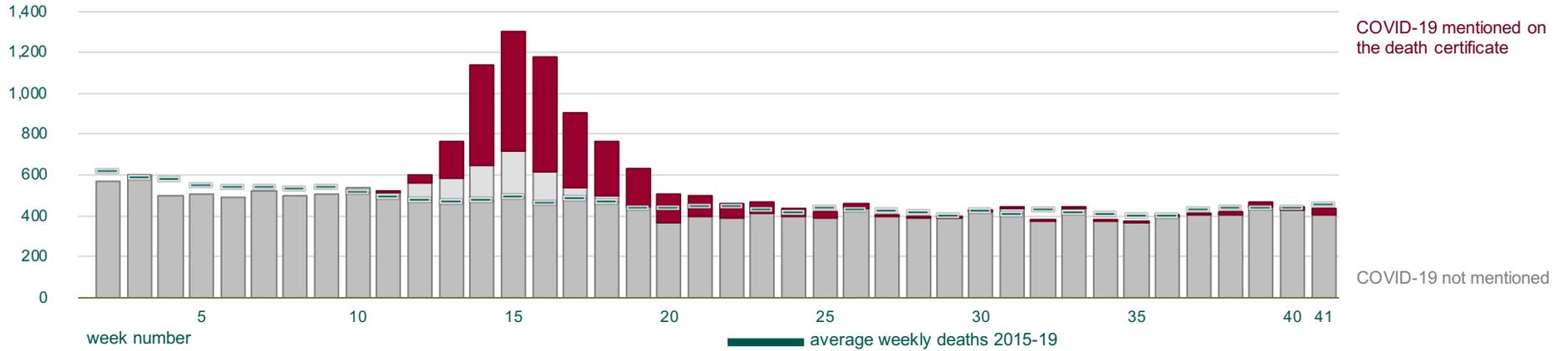
Weekly provisional figures on deaths occurring, minus the weekly average occurrence 2015 to 2019, with proportion where coronavirus (COVID-19) was mentioned on the death certificate (week 41 - up to 9 October 2020)

Week 41: WEST MIDLANDS LRF, death occurrences

Excess deaths (2020 deaths minus 2015 to 2019 average) up to 9 October 2020



All deaths in 2020 by week, with proportion where COVID-19 is mentioned



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ONS - Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional

Death occurrences in week 41 =	435
Excess death occurrences in week 41 (using 2015-19 weekly averages) =	-22
Death occurrences mentioning COVID-19 in week 41 =	26
Death occurrences mentioning COVID-19 in weeks 1 to 41 =	3,302

*(Note: Week 1 is currently not being displayed. Average counts were lower than expected and this is being investigated)
Historic average weekly deaths are presented here as the mean of the years 2015 to 2019*

Figure 6: Death occurrences in the WMCA (to 9 October 2020)

Who is most at risk?

Our interim report details existing risk factors and inequalities in the WMCA that are associated with increased risk of infection and death or complications from COVID-19. The risk associated with age – of those 80 or older – is lower in the WMCA area than

the national average; however, this appears to be countered by other risk factors and inequalities, most notably socioeconomic deprivation, ethnicity, occupation and prevalence of excess weight and diabetes.

Table 4: COVID-19 cases and deaths by Local Authority, WMCA.²²

Upper Tier Local Authority District name (2019)	IMD (2019) Average Rank per 1,000	Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases	Rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000	Number of COVID-19 related deaths	Rate of COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000	% Est. Population BAME groups 2019
Birmingham	25.32	17,896	1,567.3	1,036	90.7	43.0
Coventry	19.43	4,054	1,091.2	218	58.7	29.1
Dudley	18.19	2,924	909.2	256	79.6	9.0
Sandwell	25.28	4,721	1,437.4	337	102.6	35.4
Solihull	12.51	2,703	1,249.2	208	96.1	12.5
Walsall	22.15	3,765	1,287.3	307	107.5	17.4
Wolverhampton	23.27	3,288	1,248.5	258	92.0	31.0
WMCA	20.88	39,351	1,343.68	2,620	89.4	30.6
West Midlands	14.26	65,597	1,105.4	4,778	80.5	17.4
England	16.36	647,025	1,149.5	38,996	69.3	14.0

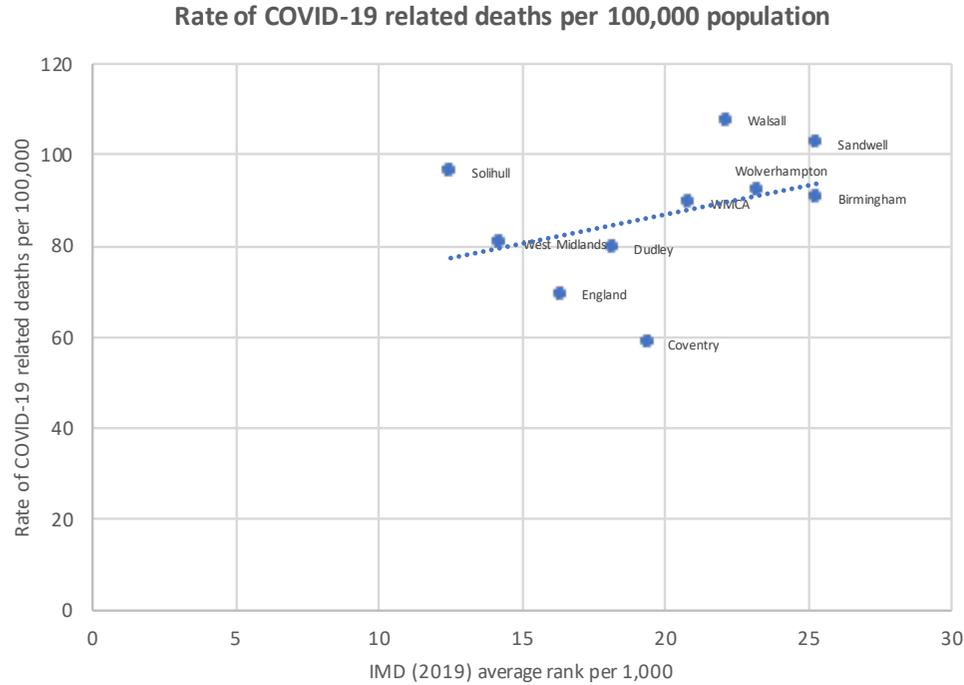


Figure 7a: Rate of COVID-19 related deaths and area deprivation (WMCA, 21 October 2020)

In line with national findings, aggregate data for the region shows that higher rates of COVID-19 deaths were broadly associated with greater levels of deprivation and a higher proportion of residents from BAME communities (Table 4 and Figures 7a and 7b). National analyses showed that as of April 2020, men and women in the black community were over four times (4.2 and 4.3 times respectively) as likely to die from COVID-19 than the white population once age had been accounted for. Men of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin were 3.6 times more likely to have a COVID-19 related death, while the figure for women was 3.4 times more likely.²³

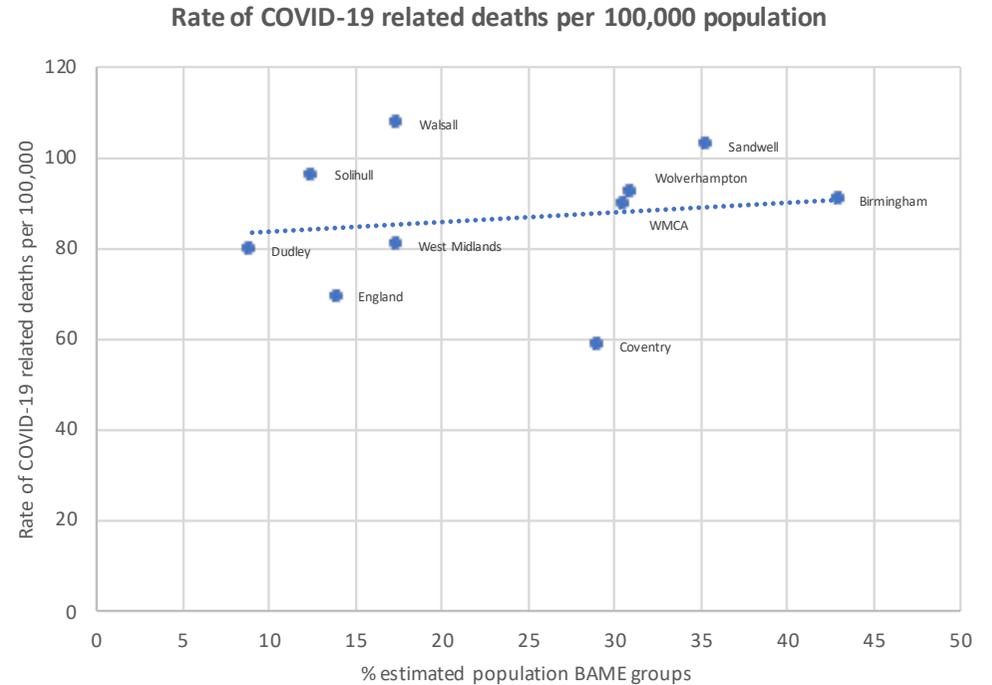


Figure 7b: Rate of COVID-19 related deaths and % estimated BAME population (WMCA, 21 October 2020)

Once geography (region, area deprivation and whether rural/urban), household composition, socio-economic status and health had been adjusted for, the risk reduced considerably: Black men and women were both 1.9 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than the white population, while the figures for men and women of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin were 2.1 and 1.6 respectively.

The SAVI is an empirically informed measure of COVID19 vulnerability for each Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) in England. The SAVI index investigates the association between each predictor (proportion of the population from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, income deprived, over 80 years old, living in care homes, living in overcrowded housing and having been admitted in the past 5 years for a chronic health condition) and COVID19 mortality using a multivariable Poisson regression, whilst accounting for the regional spread and duration of the epidemic.

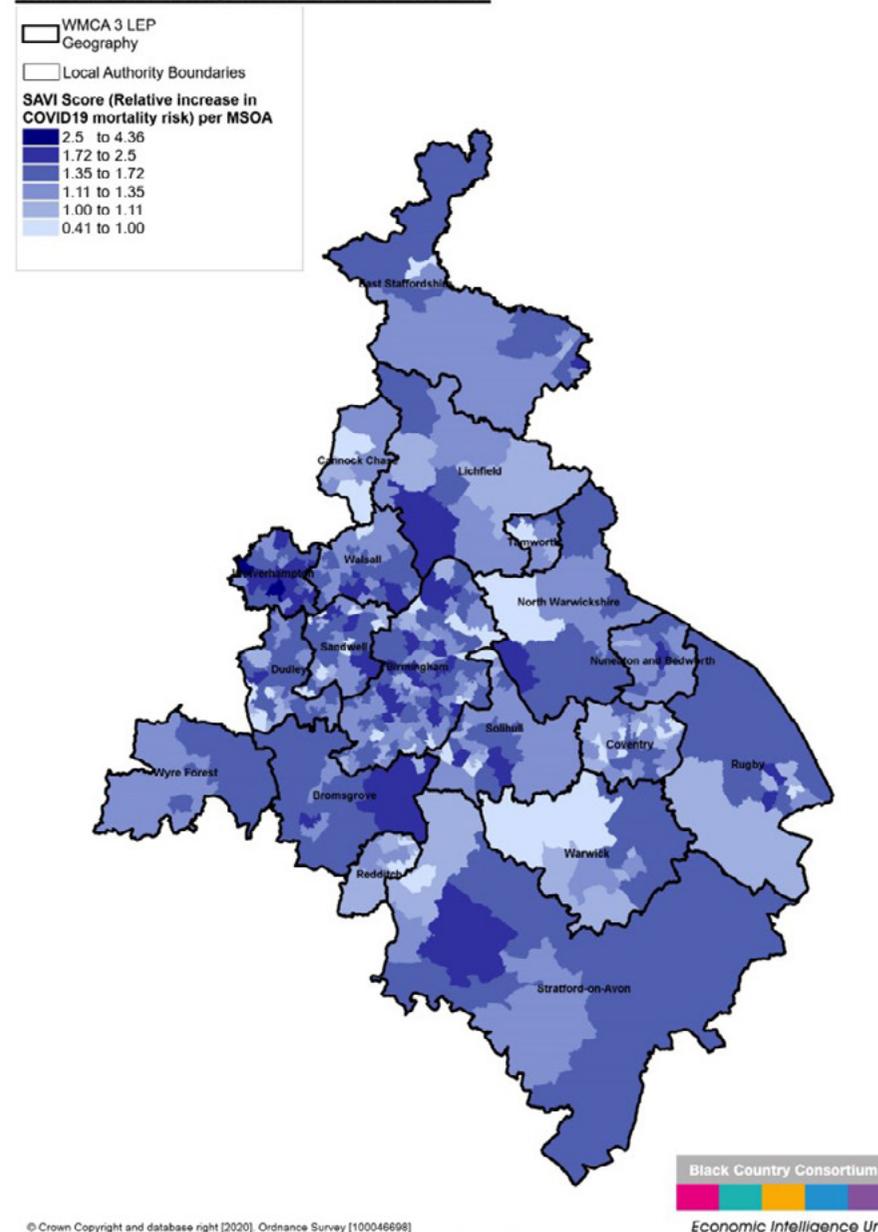
The SAVI provides a score for each MSOA in England that indicates the relative increase in COVID mortality risk that results from the level of each of the six vulnerability measures for each area.

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Nationally, high levels of vulnerability to COVID-19 have been found to cluster in the North West, West Midlands and North East regions. Out of the 513 MSOAs covering the WMCA 3 LEP area there were 49 MSOAs (10%) that had a score under 1 whilst 15 MSOAs had a score of 2 plus (3%). The most vulnerable MSOA within the WMCA 3 LEP area was Tettenhall South in Wolverhampton with a score of 2.89 for increase in risk (the 16th highest score in England). Within the West Midlands region, there were high scoring clusters in Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Wyre Forest, Stratford-on-Avon and Rugby.

Figure 8: Small area vulnerability index (SAVI) score by MSOA, West Midlands (12 Jun 2020)

SMALL AREA VULNERABILITY INDEX



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PHE's more recent analysis,²⁴ which included age, sex, deprivation, region and ethnicity, showed that the risk of dying following a positive test for COVID-19 (pillar 1) was:

- 70 times higher in people 80 years or older than those under 40
- Higher in males than females (2x in working ages)
- Higher in those living in the more deprived areas vs those living in the least deprived areas (2x)
- Higher in many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups than the White British ethnic group (up to 2x)

Compared with the White British group, the risk of dying following a positive pillar 1 test was:

- 2.0 times higher for the Bangladeshi group
- 1.4 times higher for the Pakistani group
- 1.3 times higher for the Chinese group
- 1.2 times higher for the Indian group

- 1.1 times higher for the Other Asian group
- 1.1 times higher for the Black Caribbean group
- 1.4 times higher for the Other Black group
- Not significantly different for those in the Other ethnic group

The analysis did not include comorbidities, and it was noted that other evidence had shown a marked reduction in risk of death by ethnic group among hospitalised patients when comorbidities had been taken into account. More recently, the Race Disparity Unit's first quarterly report on progress to address COVID-19 health inequalities confirmed that the evidence showed an increased risk for Black and South Asian ethnic groups, with a reduced relative risk of mortality when taking into account socioeconomic and geographical factors associated with different ethnic groups such as occupational exposure, population density, household composition and pre-existing health conditions. It was noted that deprivation is a good marker of many of these factors. However, despite most of the increased risk for ethnic minorities being readily explained by these

factors, it was not fully explained for some groups such as Black men.²⁵

What this tells us is not that the risks presented by COVID-19 are any less severe for people from ethnic minority groups than we had first thought. It tells us what is driving those risks - namely occupation, housing, income - and is a powerful illustration of how structural disadvantage is entrenched in the social, economic and environmental determinants of health.

Box 1: Why have our Black & Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities been most affected by COVID-19?

National and regional evidence suggests that increased risk among BAME communities is due to a number of intersecting factors, including:

- Increased prevalence of chronic disease
- Reduced likelihood of using primary care services
- Being more likely to work in sectors associated with increased risk, particularly in the health and care, hospitality and transport sectors
- Failure to protect key workers and a lack of PPE in the early stages of the pandemic
- Income inequality and deprivation, including household overcrowding
- A system that is inadequately equipped to address the issue, including a lack of complete and high-quality ethnicity data and a lack of funding where it is most needed

These factors are not independent of one another, but instead interact to increase not just the direct risks associated with COVID-19, but its socioeconomic and psychosocial impacts.

Systemic racism and discrimination operates across the health and wider system to influence all of these factors.

Regionally, this was explored in greater depth through the West Midlands Inquiry Into COVID-19 fatalities in the West Midlands published in August 2020.²⁶ The Inquiry reported evidence given to Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board that in March 2020, 64% of COVID-19 deaths in Birmingham City Hospital were from ‘the Black African and Asian communities’ and in April, the figure was 50%. It concluded that a ‘perfect storm’ of factors meant the BAME community was hit the hardest: increased prevalence of chronic disease, reduced likelihood of using primary care services and failure to protect key workers, particularly in the health and care, hospitality and transport sectors, placed individuals from BAME communities at disproportionate levels of risk. Income inequality was identified as a key factor in exacerbating the risk further.

These findings have been supported by regional analyses and additional evidence submitted by stakeholders. An analysis of occupation and its intersection with ethnicity revealed that the WMCA area has a higher proportion of jobs within sectors associated with a higher increase in excess all cause deaths and increased exposure to infection – and that jobs in these sectors are disproportionately held by ethnic groups associated with poorer COVID-19 health outcomes.²⁷ Exacerbation of existing

inequalities, disproportionate impacts on people from BAME communities and access to healthcare were prominent themes in the evidence provided by local stakeholders regarding the impacts of COVID-19 in their communities (see Appendix 2).

The inquiry also highlighted system issues that make us inadequately equipped to tackle entrenched systemic discrimination, including a lack of complete and high-quality data on ethnicity, and a lack of funding where it is most needed. It was revealed that the most diverse areas in the West Midlands – Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Sandwell – have suffered the greatest cuts in public health funding over the last 5 years, with cuts of 9%, 8% and 15% respectively (England average 5%).

A recent report from University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, which found that there were more admissions from South Asian patients than would be expected based on the local population. Those patients were admitted with a worse severity of COVID-19 respiratory compromise without a significant delay in presentation and experience a higher level of mortality even when differences in age, sex, deprivation and key comorbidities were taken into account.²⁸

Overall, the factors driving the association between ethnicity and COVID-19 risks and outcomes are multi-faceted and interact with one another. Later in this paper in Section 1.5, we also consider the role of structural racism.

The role of underlying inequalities and structural disadvantage is nevertheless key, and it is clear that change is needed over the longer term to address these inequalities. In the short to medium term, it is important to identify where action can be more readily taken to improve outcomes. A review paper by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) of the drivers of increased COVID-19 incidence, mortality and morbidity among minority ethnic groups concluded that although the relative importance of different pathways causing ethnic inequalities in outcomes is not well understood, we should focus on understanding those that are immediately modifiable – for example occupation and healthcare access.²⁹ The review also emphasised the importance of data quality, noting that limited information on the clinical presentation of the disease and the social determinants of health limits insights that can be gained from detailed quantitative analysis.



Impacts on wellbeing

Effects on wellbeing are more readily measurable at this point, although the issue of whether population wellbeing has declined as a result of the pandemic is less straightforward. Data on self-reported wellbeing measures from the first week post-lockdown (week ending 22 March) to the most recent data available (w/e 02 August) show that in England, percentages of people aged 16+ reporting high anxiety and low life satisfaction, self-worth and happiness were generally higher throughout 2020 than in 2019.³⁰

Nationally, while low self-worth and low life satisfaction have fluctuated over this period, anxiety and low happiness have generally declined since the start of lockdown. In the West Midlands region:

- The percentage of people reporting a **high anxiety** score was **47.9%** during the week ending 22 March compared with 41.2% during the week ending 02 August - baseline **21.9%** (England averages 50.6 and 35.2 respectively – baseline 22.6). In the West Midlands, anxiety was the only measure which showed a statistically significant increase from baseline to the most recent measure.
- The percentage of people reporting a **low life satisfaction** score was **3.8%** during the week ending 22 March compared with **9.4%** during the week ending 02 August – baseline **9.7%** (England averages 7.7 and 8.1 respectively – baseline 5.7).
- The percentage of people reporting a **low self-worth** score was **5.6%** during the week ending 22 March compared with **6.9%** during the week ending 02 August - baseline **4.9%** (England averages 7.0 and 7.7 respectively – baseline 2.9).

- The percentage of people reporting a **low happiness** score was **14.5%** during the week ending 22 March compared with **10.7%** during the week ending 02 August - baseline **8.4%** (England averages 20.9 and 10.0 respectively – baseline 8.2).

Loneliness is a key contributor to poor mental wellbeing. Figures 9a and 9b show the percentages of people in England who reported feeling ‘often lonely’ or ‘never lonely’ since the start of April 2020. On average, people reporting feeling ‘often lonely’ ranged from 4.9% to 6.5% over this period; when disaggregated by age group, this was generally higher for younger people (16-34) and lower for older people (65+), although this fluctuated over the lockdown period (Figure 9a). Conversely, the percentages of people who reported feeling ‘never lonely’ was consistently highest for older people (65+) and lowest for younger people (16-35), with those in the middle age group (36-64) consistently in between (see Figure 9b; England average range 17.9% to 21.7%).

This may reflect those in education or employment experiencing greater changes to their usual levels of social contact as a result of lockdown. However, people who had an underlying health condition were consistently more likely to report often feeling lonely, which is consistent with data showing that a large proportion of adult social care users experience social isolation (see 1.5 below).

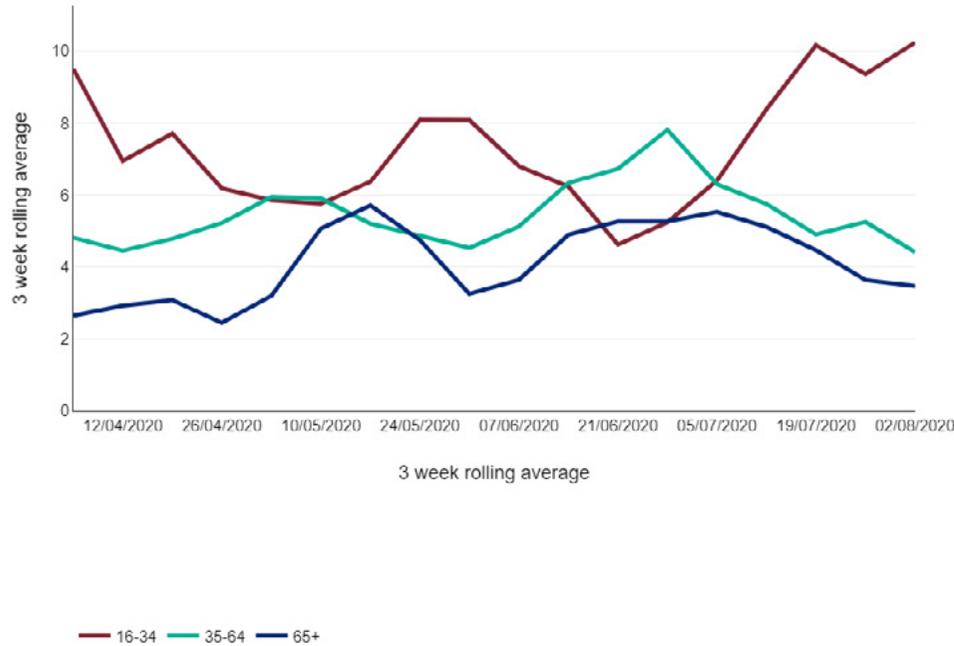


Figure 10a: Trend in percentage of respondents who are often lonely in England, by age group

Data from the online mental health support services Kooth and Quell^{31,32} released in May 2020 demonstrated an increase in requests for support nationally compared to the same period in 2019, for both children and young people (33% increase) and adults (53% increase). In areas that were most affected by COVID-19, there was a sharp increase in children and young people seeking support for bereavement and loss of families. Among adults, the health of others was a key concern, as well as the pressures of changing work cultures and environments, and increases in loneliness, sadness and depression. In the Midlands

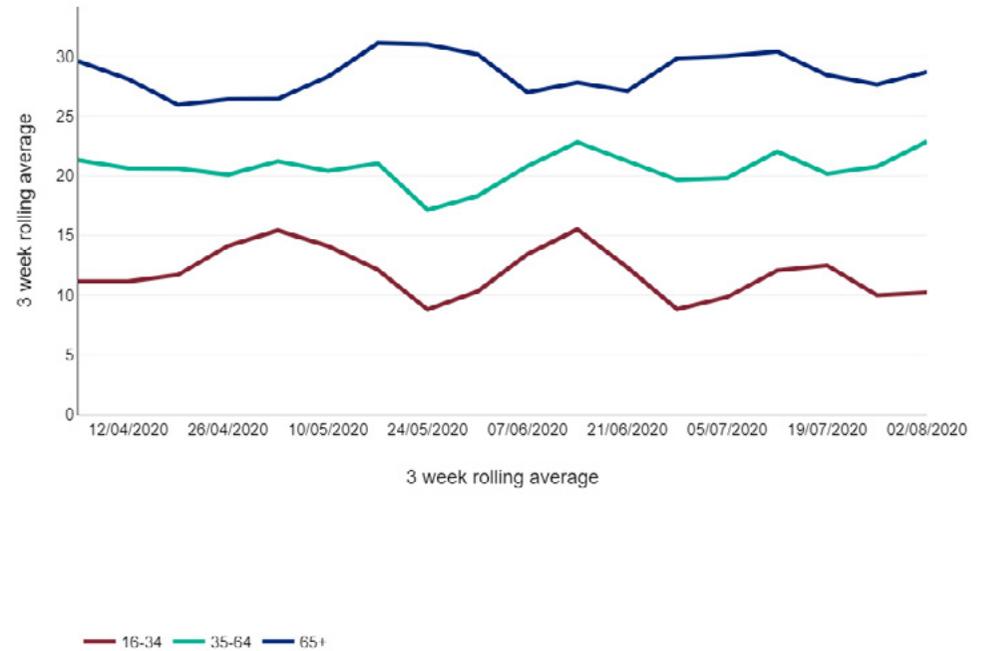


Figure 10b: Trend in percentage of respondents who are never lonely in England, by age group

region overall, presentations to the service by children and young people decreased for sadness, sleep issues, family relationships and loneliness, but increased for eating issues, school/college worries and suicidal thoughts. Among both age groups there was a national increase in presentations relating to abuse; this is discussed further in section 1.5. It is important to note that these data only include those with access to online support, and may not reflect additional challenges faced by those who are digitally excluded (Box 4).

1.3 Causes of ill health, early death and preventable disease

There are many different ways to answer the question of what causes early death and ill-health. We need to know more about the different conditions which have led to the death, and we need to know more about what increases the risk of developing these conditions.

It is important to note that averages across local authorities may mask inequalities at smaller area levels, or between demographic groups. Nationally, there is a marked social gradient in the causes of premature death considered preventable, with significantly higher rates in more deprived areas. In addition, degree of caution is needed when interpreting data on service use and benefit claims. Higher values may reflect higher population prevalence of a condition, but alternatively they may indicate increased likelihood of diagnosis and access to support.

Conditions

Any death under the age of 75 years is considered to be a premature death, and many of the diseases that cause these deaths are preventable. The gap in life expectancy between the WMCA and England overall is due to increased premature death from a number of preventable conditions. Under 75 mortality from preventable cancers and from cardiovascular, liver and respiratory diseases are all higher in the WMCA than the national average. This is broadly consistent among all constituent authorities, with the exception of Solihull where rates are generally lower. Alcohol-specific mortality follows a similar pattern. Excess winter deaths, and deaths from drug misuse and suicide across the region generally reflect the national average, but this does not diminish their importance and impact.

Table 5: Health outcomes in the WMCA – local area comparisons.

	Indicators	Period	WMCA number	England	WMCA	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
Premature death	Under 75 mortality from cancer considered preventable - directly standardised rate per 100,000 population	2016-18	5,512	76.3	87.0	88.8	85.7	90.1	87.7	69.0	89.3	93.9
	Under 75 mortality from cardiovascular diseases considered preventable - directly standardised rate per 100,000 population	2016-18	3,706	45.3	58.5	61.9	56.2	48.6	68.5	39.7	61.6	68.1
	Under 75 mortality from liver diseases considered preventable - directly standardised rate per 100,000 population	2016-18	1,451	16.3	22.0	21.4	20.1	21.9	26.2	16.9	22.1	26.3
	Under 75 mortality from respiratory diseases considered preventable - directly standardised rate per 100,000 population	2016-18	1,402	19.2	22.6	23.2	24.5	20.1	27.7	15.5	22.6	23.4
	Excess winter deaths index (Aug 2017-Jul 2018)	Aug17-Jul18	2,263	30.1	29.0	27.9	28.2	28.2	27.8	30.7	31.6	31.1
	Alcohol-specific mortality - directly standardised rate per 100,000	2016-18	1,155	10.8	15.6	15.0	13.5	16.0	20.7	9.6	16.1	18.9
	Deaths from drug misuse - age-standardised rate per 100,000 population	2016-18	-	4.5	4.6	6.3	3.3	4.2	1.2	4.8	4.6	4.0
	Suicide (persons, 10+ yrs) – age-standardised rate per 100,000 population	2016-18	-	9.6	-	8.1	8.6	9.7	10.6	12.2	8.2	9.0
Long-term conditions	Diabetes: QOF prevalence (18+)	2018/19	210,154	6.9	8.4	8.7	6.7	8.0	9.5	7.3	9.2	8.4
	CHD: QOF prevalence (18+)	2018/19	98,372	3.1	3.1	2.7	2.3	4.1	3.6	3.2	3.9	3.1
	People reporting a long term musculoskeletal (MSK) problem - %	2018/19	-	16.9	17.5	17.9	18.5	15.4	16.5	21.5	20.3	16.9
Mental health problems	Depression: Recorded prevalence (aged 18)	2017/18	-	9.9	9.6	9.2	9.3	11.7	8.6	9.0	10.5	10.0
	Estimated prevalence of common mental disorders: % of population aged 16 & over (modelled)	2017	-	16.9	-	21.1	19.1	17.4	21.5	14.7	19.4	20.5
	ESA claimants for mental and behavioural disorders: crude rate per 1,000 working age population	2018	59,470	27.3	33.3	36.0	31.4	24.9	37.0	22.0	36.5	35.2

Compared with England: Better Similar Worse Lower Similar Higher

Source: PHE Public Health Profiles

Mental health problems and inequalities

Physical and mental health are inextricably linked. Poor mental health is both a cause and consequence of poor health in general across the life course, with most mental health problems developing before the age of 25. People with severe mental illness (SMI) die 15-10 years earlier on average compared with the general population and two thirds of these deaths are from preventable physical illnesses, including cancer and heart disease. The determinants of physical and mental health problems often overlap; mental health problems disproportionately affect people living in poverty, those who are unemployed and who already face discrimination.³³ Poor mental health also has a detrimental effect on health behaviours; for example, 40.5% of adults with SMI in England are smokers compared with 13.9% of the general population. In the WMCA these figures are 40.3% and 14.6% respectively.³⁴

The health data show that mental health and well-being in the WMCA is of concern as well as physical health. As might be expected from an understanding of the causes of the causes of poor physical health, it also shows the pattern of variation between the different parts of the WMCA area. Here, the comparison with

the UK average is not so stark; however, this should again be understood in the context that wellbeing across the UK is also of concern.

Walsall and Wolverhampton have a higher recorded prevalence of depression, and a higher proportion of people claiming ESA for mental and behavioural problems. This is in line with lower levels of self-reported wellbeing in these areas. For Solihull these are generally lower. Among other areas, however, there appears to be little consistency between these indicators (Table 5). Figure 11 shows the excess under 75 mortality rate in adults with serious mental illness in the WMCA; rates are highest in Birmingham and Wolverhampton and lowest in Sandwell and Solihull.



Excess under 75 mortality rate in adults with serious mental illness 2014/15

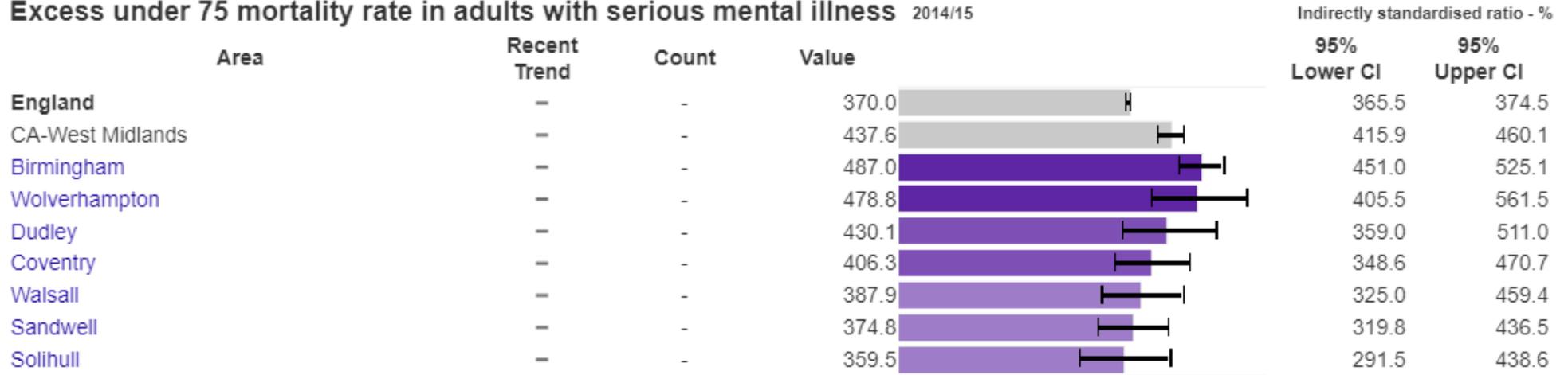


Figure 11: Excess under 65 mortality rate in adults with serious mental illness

People from BAME communities are significantly more likely to suffer poorer mental health outcomes due to facing more barriers to accessing treatment and poorer experiences of services. Ethnic minorities are at an increased risk of involuntary detention under the Mental Health Act, but less likely to access earlier intervention and treatment. High levels of inequality in access to, and experience of, mental health care are also evident for children and young people; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer/questioning ‘plus’ (LGBTQ+); homeless people; and people living with physical or learning disabilities. There is often intersection across these groups and with other determinants of health.³⁵

Causes of preventable disease

At its simplest, unhealthy lifestyles increase our chances of ill-health. There are four major, relatively straightforward, behaviours which will increase the risks of ill-health and death from these preventable diseases. These are smoking; taking too little exercise; eating too much of foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar; and drinking too much alcohol. Figures 12a and 12b show the main causes of preventable deaths in the WMCA, and the key health behaviours associated with those risks.

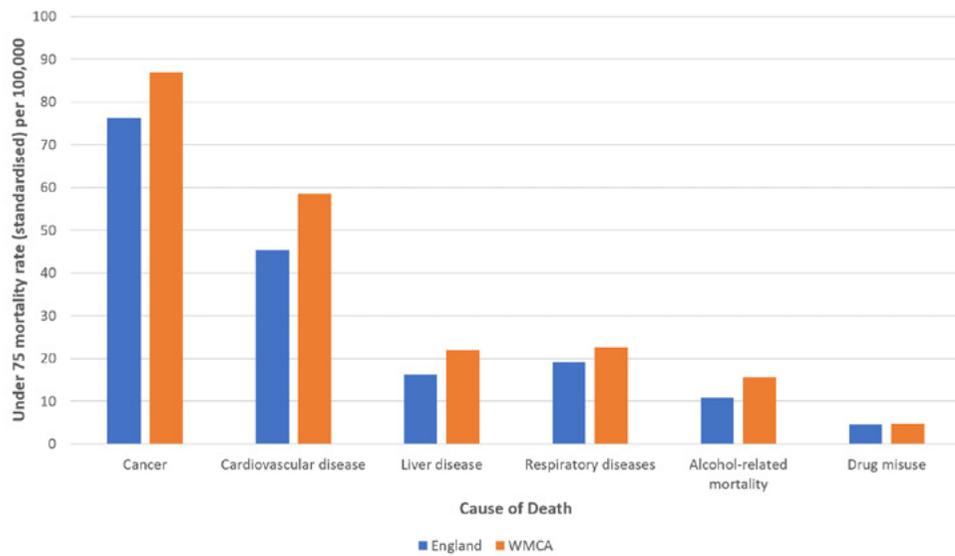


Figure 9a: Main causes of preventable mortality, WMCA 2016-18

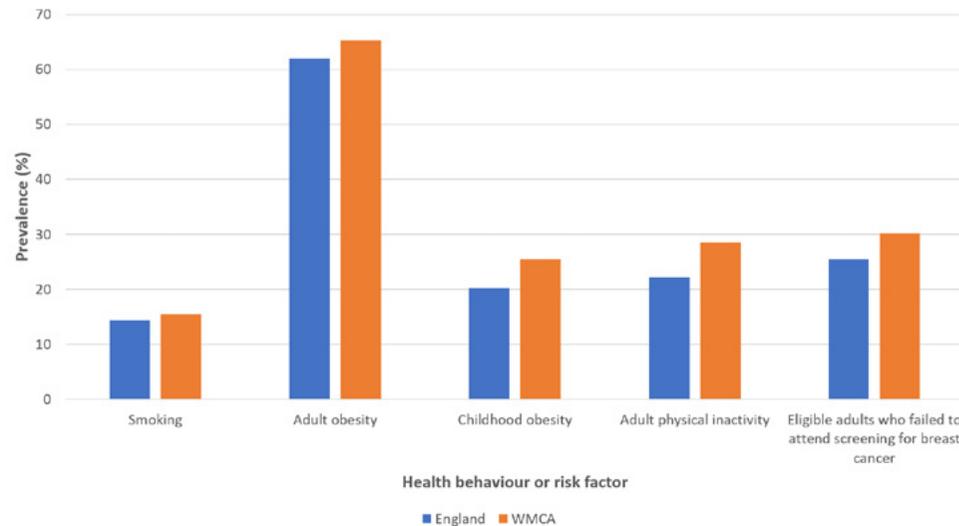


Figure 9b: Prevalence of key health risks and behaviours, WMCA

People in the WMCA are more likely than the England average population to smoke, drink too much alcohol, be overweight or obese, and be physically inactive (Figure 9b and Table 6). In some cases, it can be seen that the figures are high nationally too. It is important that this does not dilute the need to pay attention to reducing these figures in the West Midlands. These are worrying signs that unhealthy lifestyles across the UK are very common and that improvements are not yet being made across the wider system to support people to live healthier lives.

Unhealthy lifestyles are not only evident amongst adults. A younger generation of residents are now likely to grow up into being unhealthy adults, whose quality of life is not as good as it could be. Here, as nationally, this may be the first generation of children who do not live as long as their parents.

Table 6: Health behaviours and risks in the WMCA – local area comparisons.

	Indicators	Period	WMCA number	England	WMCA	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
Smoking	Smoking prevalence in adults (18+): current smokers - % (APS)	2019	-	13.9	14.6	14.8	15.1	13.5	15.3	12.6	15.0	15.1
	Smoking status at time of delivery - %	2018/19	3,514	10.6	10.5	8.6	10.6	12.8	10.1	8.3	11.5	16.7
	Smoking prevalence in adults with anxiety or depression (18+): current smokers (GPPS) - %	2016/17	-	25.8	25.6	26.6	24.9	22.9	27.2	17.4	28.1	25.5
	Smoking prevalence in adults with a long term mental health condition (18+): current smokers (GPPS) - %	2017/18	-	25.6	26.6	24.9	22.9	27.2	17.4	28.1	25.5	34.5
Alcohol and drug use	Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions – DSR per 100,000	2018/19	18,422	626	718	762	925	561	741	527	650	756
	Percentage of adults who abstain from drinking alcohol	2011-2014	-	15.5	-	30.9	16.9	14.6	28.4	13.5	22.7	36.0
	Percentage of adults drinking over 14 units of alcohol a week	2011-14	-	25.7	-	18.9	25.8	24.7	25.4	25.2	22.0	15.0
	Percentage of dependent drinkers	2014/15	35,660	1.39	1.67	1.66	1.81	1.56	1.95	1.09	1.61	1.84
	Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions (under 18s) – crude rate per 100,000	2016/17 – 18/19	440	31.6	21.3	16.2	30.0	29.1	24.7	28.6	14.9	22.2
	Estimated prevalence of opiate and/or crack cocaine use - crude rate per 1,000	2016/17	21,945	8.9	11.9	14.2	7.5	10.5	11.7	7.8	11.0	13.6
Nutrition and obesity	Baby's first feed breastmilk - % (2018/19)	2018/19	-	67.4	-	68.2	62.6	61.3	63.5	63.0	52.2	59.9
	Adults meeting the recommended '5-a-day' on a 'usual day' - % (2017/18)	2018/19	-	54.6	46.7	47.8	43.6	49.4	35.7	57.0	42.4	51.0
	Adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese - %	2018/19	-	62.3	65.5	61.7	62.9	71.5	70.9	62.8	73.2	67.3
	Reception: Prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) - %	2018/19	4,254	9.7	11.4	11.4	10.2	10.3	13.0	8.1	12.4	13.5
	Year 6: Prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) - %	2018/19	9,529	20.2	25.5	25.7	22.6	24.2	28.3	18.3	26.2	29.3
Physical activity	Physically active children and young people - %	2018/19	-	46.8	-	44.2	50.8	41.6	43.4	48.6	38.8	46.5
	Physically active adults - %	2018/19	-	67.2	60.9	63.3	61.1	59.5	54.7	68.1	55.9	58.0
	Physically inactive adults - %	2018/19	-	21.4	27.2	24.8	27.4	26.1	32.6	23.2	32.1	29.8
	Adults walking for travel at least three days per week - %	2017/18	-	23.1	-	22.5	24.0	18.6	21.9	19.2	20.5	21.6
	Adults cycling for travel at least three days per week - %	2017/18	-	3.2	-	2.9	2.4	1.0	2.1	1.6	0.3	0.8

Compared with England: Better Similar Worse

Source: PHE Public Health Profiles

Smoking

Smoking prevalence among adults in general and those with anxiety, depression or a long-term mental health condition are broadly similar in the WMCA to the England average. However, national data show a marked social gradient, highlighting smoking as a key cause of health inequalities. Over a quarter of adults with mental health problems are smokers compared with approximately 15% of the general population. Smoking status at delivery shows marked inequalities across the region; while overall WMCA prevalence is similar to the national average, it is significantly higher in Dudley and Wolverhampton.

Alcohol and drug use

The WMCA has a higher than national average prevalence of dependent drinkers. Above average rates of hospital admissions for alcohol-specific conditions are driven by high rates in Birmingham, Coventry, Sandwell and Wolverhampton. However, most of these areas also have a higher than average percentage of adults who abstain from drinking altogether, which may reflect the cultural diversity of localities. The rate of alcohol-specific admissions for under 18s is also lower than average overall. The percentage of adults drinking above the recommended 14 units per week is similar to or lower than the England average across WMCA areas; however, it should be noted that this still nearly 1 in 5 adults in the WMCA. The rate of opiate or crack cocaine use is similar in the WMCA to the national average, but masks significant inequalities across the region with high rates in a number of areas.

Nutrition and obesity

Nationally, just over two thirds of babies have breastmilk as their first feed. With the exception of Birmingham, this is significantly lower across constituent local authorities. Among adults, less than half in the WMCA report having the recommended '5 a day' portions of fruit and vegetables – significantly lower than the England average.

Physical activity

For adults across the WMCA, rates of physical activity are lower and rates of physical inactivity are higher compared with England overall. 27.2% of adults in the WMCA are doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week. Only 61% of adults and less than half of children and young people are meeting recommended weekly levels of physical activity. Both regionally and nationally, less than a quarter of adults walk at least three times per week for travel; only a small minority (<3%) cycle for this purpose.

Supporting people to live healthier lives would have substantial health and economic benefits for the region. Alcohol misuse is estimated to cost the NHS about £3.5 billion per year and society as a whole £21 billion annually. Reducing alcohol-related harm is one of Public Health England's seven priorities for the next five years (from the Evidence into action report 2014). Low physical activity is one of the top 10 causes of disease and disability in England, and regular physical activity can help to prevent and manage over 20 chronic conditions and diseases; persuading inactive people (those doing less than 30 minutes per week) to become more active could prevent 1 in 10 cases of stroke and heart disease in the UK and 1 in 6 deaths from any cause.³⁶ There are also significant inequalities in physical activity, with people

from BAME groups, women, people from lower socio-economic groups and disabled people less likely to be active. In the West Midlands, 52% of disabled adults are inactive.³⁷

Diet and physical activity habits often begin in childhood, and are influenced from pre-conception and beyond, so it is important to act as early as possible to embed positive behaviours at the earliest opportunity. However, it is never too late to support people to live healthier and more active lives, and taking action across the life course can help to reduce the health inequalities associated with obesity and physical inactivity.

Screening and early intervention

Unhealthy lifestyles increase the risk of developing preventable disease. However, many of these diseases are identifiable and treatable in their early stage. There are significant differences across the region, and between different groups of people, in terms of whether or not people receive this early help.

Screening is carried out on healthy populations, or those without symptoms of a disease, to identify those who may have an increased risk of a particular condition. Cancer screening is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of premature mortality. Breast screening is offered to women aged 50 to 70 to detect early signs of breast cancer, and is estimated to save 1,400 lives in England each year. Cervical screening enables detection of cell abnormalities that may become cancer and is estimated to save 4,500 lives in England each year. Bowel cancer screening targets older adults aged 60 to 74 to support early detection of cancer and polyps that may develop into cancers over time.

Screening is also important to identify early signs of poor health leading to opportunities for early interventions. The NHS Health Check programme targets adults aged 40 to 74 to help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease. Eligible people who have not already been diagnosed with one of these conditions are invited for a health check every five years to assess their risk, raise awareness and support them to manage their risk of cardiovascular disease.

Table 7: Screening and early intervention in the WMCA – local area comparisons.

Indicators	Period	WMCA number	England	WMCA	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
Cancer screening coverage - breast cancer	2019	193,280	74.5	69.8	68.2	69.8	75.4	70.7	73.4	73.5	60.1
Cancer screening coverage - cervical cancer (25-49 years old)	2019	354,810	69.8	65.8	61.9	65.7	72.1	66.0	72.5	71.2	66.7
Cancer screening coverage - cervical cancer (50-64 years old)	2019	173,834	76.2	74.2	73.4	76.1	73.2	72.7	77.4	76.0	72.7
Cancer screening coverage – bowel cancer	2019	195,329	60.1	53.4	48.9	55.5	58.5	50.7	61.4	56.5	52.1
Chlamydia proportion aged 15 to 24 screened	2019	62,669	20.4	15.3	17.1	15.6	12.4	13.6	17.6	9.8	13.6
Cumulative percentage of the eligible population aged 40-74 who received an NHS Health check	2015/16-19/20	386,098	41.3	52.8	54.5	51.3	69.1	53.6	48.8	54.3	28.5

Compared with England: Better Similar Worse

**Please note that there may be data quality issues with these figures
Source: PHE Public Health Profiles*

In 2019, the percentage of eligible WMCA residents who attended screening for breast, cervical and bowel cancer was significantly lower than the England average, with approximately a third to a quarter of the target populations not being screened (Table 7). Chlamydia screening was significantly lower than the national average for all WMCA areas. For NHS Health Checks, the WMCA generally performed better than the national average, with over

half the eligible population receiving their health checks during the 4-year period from 2015/16 to 2019/20. Screening coverage in the WMCA has declined in recent years for breast and cervical cancer.

If the WMCA reached the national average benchmark for the year:

- **12,196** more women would be screened for **breast cancer**
- **20,331** more women aged 25-49 and **4,554** more aged 50-64 would be screened for **cervical cancer**
- **21,779** more people would be screened for **bowel cancer**
- **15,667** more young people would be screened for **chlamydia**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on cancer services. Referrals on the urgent two week wait cancer pathway showed a significant reduction as the pandemic hit the Midlands. By September referral rates had increased to over 90% of previous activity levels and continue to grow. Restrictions in out-patients, diagnostics and treatment capacity, due to social distancing and infection control measures, have significantly reduced patient throughput, against increasing demand. Systems across the West Midlands have worked hard to return cancer services as quickly as possible, adopting alternative models of care and digital technologies such as telephone and video consultations, community tele-dermatology clinics and alternatives to endoscopy, such as FIT testing.

There are plans in place to protect cancer services with the cancer treatments and other clinically urgent patients being prioritised. There are some patients who are reluctant to attend, as they are concerned about the risk of infection, and work is ongoing to provide reassurance and encouragement to these patients to attend their appointments.

Breast screening

The four breast screening providers that cover the WMCA area have all restored screening. They are working through the backlog, and commissioners (NHSE/I) are supporting services to get to a capacity that is greater than 100% that will be needed to catch up to the required screening intervals. All services have implemented national changes to the programme to aid the return to the three-year screening intervals, including the open first appointments. There has been some excellent innovation in the WMCA screening providers in an attempt to return to the three year round length, such as novel invitation models, and services are putting in addition actions to improve uptake, such as additional phone calls to some women.

Bowel screening

All four screening centres in the WMCA area have restored the assessment element of the screening pathway, and have cleared the backlog of screen positive patient left during the first peak of the Covid pandemic. All centres have also switched on the new screening invites (and home test kits). This currently ranges from 91 to 138 percent of the pre-Covid invite rates. Commissioners have set providers a deadline of 31st August 2021 to return to the two-yearly screening rounds.

Cervical screening

The national call-recall system in the cervical screening programme has begun an invite schedule that will mean that the programme has caught up – with women returning to the correct screening intervals – by May 2021. The HPV laboratories will have increased numbers of samples to process compared to pre-Covid

through winter 2020/21, with primary care taking more samples.

Through the early stages of the Covid pandemic (~March-April 2021), colposcopy units deferred the appointments of some low-grade patients. They have now caught up, and are appointing women in line with the pre-Covid programme guidance.

Impacts of COVID-19 on health behaviours and risks

The pandemic has the potential to exert indirect effects on health in two ways: firstly, by altering health behaviours, and secondly by reducing access to services and routine care. Changes to health behaviours may include negative coping strategies to manage anxiety, for example drinking or smoking more, or lockdown measures providing more (or fewer) opportunities to take part in physical activity. Reduced access to services may present additional risk if existing or emerging health conditions are not adequately managed.

Health behaviours

In the West Midlands region overall:³⁸

- From 3rd April to 3rd August 2020, nearly a fifth of adults (18%) reported doing at least 30 minutes of physical activity on 0 days while just under a third (31%) reported doing it on 5 or more days (compared with 19% and 31% respectively in England). Nationally, men were significantly less likely than women to be physically inactive (21% vs. 18%) and significantly more likely to be active (34% vs. 29%).
- Compared with a typical week before introduction of

COVID-19 restrictions, 34% of adults reported doing less, 34% reported doing more while 30% reported doing the same amount of physical activity. Nationally, women were significantly more likely to report doing less exercise (40% vs. 36%).

- 18% of parents reported their children doing the recommended 60 minutes or more of physical activity per day in the period 3 April to 25 May 2020, 33% reported doing 30-60 minutes, 38% reported doing less than 30 minutes, and more than a tenth (11%) reporting doing nothing – the highest regional level in the country.
- In the West Midlands, the prevalence of smoking during lockdown (the 4-week period ending 19 April 2020) was lower than that reported in 2018 at (14% and 16% respectively).

Nationally, over half of respondents³⁹ (52%) said that the amount of alcohol they were consuming had not changed during lockdown. 24% said they were drinking more and 24% said they were drinking less.

Healthcare access and screening

Between 13th May and 10th August 2020, 13.1% of people surveyed in England reported having a worsening health condition during the last week. This generally increased with age, from 12.5% in 18-24 year olds and 17.6% in over 75s. Approximately half (50.4%) reported not seeking advice during this period; this varied by age group but was lowest in those aged 65+. Of these respondents, over half stated that this was to avoid putting pressure on the NHS, with approximately a third raising concerns about catching coronavirus or leaving the house, and another

third citing another reason. While significantly more women than men reported a worsening health condition (14.9% vs. 11.2%), were no significant sex differences in not seeking help.

The NHS are dealing with a significant backlog of non-COVID related morbidity and it is likely that the effect of this will widen existing health inequalities and lead to avoidable cancer death as a result of diagnostic delays.⁴⁰ Across the UK it is estimated that 2.1 million people have missed out on screening, while 290,000 people with suspected symptoms have not been referred for hospital tests. This means that more than 23,000 cancers could have gone undiagnosed during lockdown.⁴¹ Given that screening coverage is already lower in the WMCA than the national average, it is likely that these effects are also being felt in the region.

In the WMCA, barriers to healthcare access identified by voluntary, community and faith organisations were largely practical. These included reduced availability and capacity of services; challenges with online or telephone services; and lack of access to linguistically and culturally accessible public health information. Stigma, misinformation or lack of clarity, and mistrust in government were also cited. There were intersections with themes relating to disproportionate impacts on BAME communities and marginalised groups, including refugees and migrants, and the widening of existing inequalities (see Appendix 2). This links to the issue of digital inclusion, which is picked up in Box 4.

1.4 Causes of unhealthy lifestyles: understanding the ‘causes of the causes’

The conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age have important implications for our physical and mental health, as individuals and across wider society. We understand much more now about why so many people live in ways that affect their health so badly. The 2010 Marmot review on health inequalities⁴² first articulated the importance of understanding the ‘causes of the causes’ of ill-health. Often, unhealthy behaviours are coping mechanisms for people who live in challenging circumstances, or reflect the limitations of the environments they live in. Many times, people want to make positive changes to improve their health, such as being more active or giving up smoking, but are not supported to do so. The conditions of many people’s lives within the WMCA are hard. There is clear evidence that too many people live in challenging circumstances which may well result in their needing unhealthy coping strategies, and in their feeling powerless to make positive change.

This is not to say that those living in challenging circumstances are destined to have poor health. Rather, the focus should be on creating the conditions to enable people to live healthier lives, and to make healthier options the default. This means considering individual health-related behaviours in their social, cultural, economic and environmental contexts, and working to overcome the barriers these present (e.g. food poverty, limited time or skills, or lack of access to green space) rather than only targeting the behaviours themselves.

Table 8: Wider determinants of health in the WMCA – local area comparisons

	Indicators	Period	WMCA number	England	WMCA	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
Housing	Statutory homelessness: Eligible homeless people not in priority need - crude rate per 1,000	2017/18	-	-	-	0.9	0.6	3.6	0.5	1.4	0.1	2.2
	Statutory homelessness: Households in temporary accommodation - crude rate per 1,000	2017/18	2,668	-	2.3	4.7	2.0	0.1	0.3	1.1	1.0	0.7
	Adults in contact with a learning disability who live in stable and appropriate accommodation - %	2018/19	4,286	77.4	69.5	77.2	49.3	79.0	63.0	86.7	64.3	85.4
	Adults in contact with secondary mental health services who live in stable and appropriate accommodation - %	2018/19	-	58.0	41.0	57.0	16.0	63.0	53.0	5.0	3.0	15.0
Income	Children in low income families (under 16s) - %	2016	-	-	-	27.6	21.8	20.7	25.5	15.9	25.8	26.3
	Fuel poverty - % of households	2018	142,685	10.3	12.4	14.2	12.1	10.6	12.0	8.2	11.8	12.7
	Average weekly earnings - £	2018	-	-	-	417.6	454.2	425.9	398.5	474.2	399.9	402.4
Education & employment	16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) or whose activity is not known - %	2018	4,400	5.5	6.6	8.5	5.4	6.8	4.3	5.1	5.3	4.5
	People aged 16-64 in employment	2019/20	1,268,200	76.2	69.0	64.6	72.1	73.8	69.9	77.1	71.5	68.2
	Gap in the employment rate between those with a long-term health condition and the overall employment rate - % points (2018/19)	2018/19	-	11.5	11.6	7.1	14.9	11.8	17.6	11.3	15.3	15.2
	Gap in the employment rate between those with a learning disability and the overall employment rate - % points (2018/19)	2018/19	-	69.7	66.2	64.2	68.7	66.7	70.2	74.5	69.6	57.8
	Gap in the employment rate between those in contact with secondary mental health services and the overall employment rate - % points (2018/19)	2018/19	-	67.6	64.0	61.5	61.7	64.6	66.0	66.0	63.8	64.8
Built & natural environment	Density of fast food outlets - crude rate per 100,000	2014	2,573	88.2	91.6	96.1	83.6	81.7	114.3	54.3	93.7	95.7
	Access to Healthy Assets & Hazards Index: Population living in 20% poorest performing LSOAs - %	2017	550,682	21.1	9.5	8.0	8.7	6.9	20.3	11.0	9.6	5.2
	Air pollution: Fine particulate matter - mean: µg/m ³	2017	-	8.9	-	9.8	9.7	8.7	10.1	9.4	9.8	8.6
	Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise/health reasons - %	Mar2015-Feb2016	-	17.9	-	18.4	15.1	20.5	18.2	24.7	18.0	27.6

Compared with England: Better Similar Worse

Quintiles: Best Worst

Source: PHE Public Health Profiles

Housing

Adults in the WMCA with a learning disability and those in contact with secondary mental health services are significantly less likely to be in stable and appropriate accommodation, in line with national figures.

Income

Significantly more children in the WMCA are in low income families compared to England overall. In several areas this corresponds to increased rates of fuel poverty and a household income lower than the national average. National evidence demonstrates that childhood poverty leads to premature mortality and poor health outcomes for adults.⁴³ Reducing the numbers of children who experience poverty should improve these adult health outcomes and increase healthy life expectancy.

Education and employment

Employment rates are also low among adults with a learning disability and those in contact with secondary mental health services. In most WMCA areas the percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is lower than the England average, but higher in Birmingham. Overall employment rates across the WMCA are lower than the national average, which may reflect poorer health among adults in the older working age groups.

Built and natural environment

Overall the WMCA has a similar density of fast food outlets to England overall, but this varies across the region, with Birmingham and Sandwell having a higher rate of outlets per 100,000 population compared with the national average. Air quality and access to healthy assets and hazards vary across the region; however there is likely to be substantial variation within localities depending on proximity to town and city centres. Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise or health reasons is similar to the England average for most areas in the WMCA but significantly higher in Wolverhampton; nevertheless this is still less than a third of residents.

Health and Wealth

Global evidence shows that population health is a good measure of social and economic progress. Inequalities in health are not inevitable but reflect avoidable inequalities in society and can be reduced by putting wellbeing at the centre of economic policy. Health and wealth are two sides of the same coin: improving health and reducing inequalities is fundamental to wealth creation and brings a range of social and economic benefits through improving productivity, reducing demand on services, and increasing social cohesion.

An analysis by Liverpool City Region (LCR) found that closing their health and life expectancy gap would increase employment by 5.6 percentage points which equates to an increase in Gross Value Added (GVA) of £3,353 per head. It is estimated that 54% of the productivity gap between LCR and the rest of England is due to ill-health and reducing this health gap would generate an additional £5.2bn in GVA.⁵³ It can be safely assumed that there would be similar, if not greater, economic benefits for the West Midlands. In addition, increasing healthy life expectancy is likely to have wider implications for wellbeing and quality of life.

- The productivity gap between the WMCA and England is £14.8bn⁵⁴, approximately £5bn of which is accounted for by the gap in employment rate (based on 2018/19 estimates).
- In the WMCA, 31% of the working age population age 16-64 is unemployed and it is estimated that 22% (125,000 people approx.) is due to poor health - predominantly musculoskeletal problems and mental health problems, many of which are preventable and/or manageable. This therefore accounts for approximately £1.1bn of the gap in GVA - although the wider health impacts on our economy are likely to be much larger.
- There is a percentage point gap of 9.5 between people in the WMCA with a long-term health condition and the general population (England 10.5).
- For people in contact with secondary mental health services, the percentage point gap is 64.0 (England 67.6).



The economic and environmental impact of COVID-19

Economic shock has been a major consequence of the pandemic, with the measures needed to control the spread of the disease having a significant impact on the national and regional economy. There is substantial evidence on the detrimental impact of economic shock on physical and mental health and wellbeing, for example in times of recession.⁴⁴ However, the COVID-19 pandemic has an additional dimension of direct health impacts, which in turn has an effect on anxiety and wellbeing alongside that relating to economic factors. This has contributed to the exacerbation of existing inequalities, both with increasing unemployment in more precarious sectors, and increased risk among those who have needed to attend their workplaces rather than working at home. Some of the people working in the lowest paid and/or least secure jobs have also been those most likely to come into contact with the virus, meaning that they have faced the dual impact of increased infection risk and economic consequences.

There have nevertheless been some positive impacts through changes to ways of working in a number of sectors. With more people working remotely, human benefits have included improved work-life balance and more time to participate in activities to improve health and wellbeing. The increased availability of activities online and rapid adoption of online platforms for face-to-face communication have increased opportunities for social connection and participation in the arts for many who were previously limited by their ability to travel. However, these benefits have not been realised equally across the population. In addition to those unable to carry out their roles remotely, people who are digitally excluded or face additional challenges may be left behind if their needs are not considered. The disruption in

routine human activity ('anthropause') has also shown emerging benefits for the environment and climate, with lockdown measures (most notably the reduction in planned travel) having immediate impact on air quality worldwide.⁴⁵ While the longer term benefits remain to be seen depending on the direction of recovery approaches taken, it is clear that there is an opportunity to learn from the pandemic about what it is possible to achieve.

Employment and sector impacts

The State of the Region 2020 report⁴⁶ provides a detailed analysis of the economic impact of COVID-19 in the WMCA, considering both the short-term consequences of the pandemic and the implications for economic recovery over the longer term. The report presents a mixed picture for the region, highlighting the following key issues in relation to employment and the economy:

- The West Midlands may face the largest economic decline of all regions at 9.2% (fall in GDP), however it may see the largest growth in 2021 at 8.1%, based on having the largest number of temporary closures and an expectation of most reopening.
- Youth unemployment has almost doubled, with the youth claimant count rising to 41,225 by May 2020 - 8.3% of the young population. It now sits 5th amongst combined authority areas but the rate of increase was much higher than elsewhere.
- Overall claimants stand at 208k, which is 6.3% of the working age population a rise from 115,000 and 3.5% in February, however overall increase in claims has been slower than other areas despite extensive furloughing.
- The number of people furloughed currently stands at 496k in

the WMCA area, which equates to 26.9% of jobs. Headline analysis suggests that the public sector (including higher education) and the visitor economy sector will be the sectors most impacted from the Covid-19, followed by construction, manufacturing and retail. Analysis suggests that the life science and healthcare may be the only sector that will be relatively unscathed, but notably it is also one of main sectors that has taken the brunt of the human impact from Covid-19.

- The WMCA has the highest level of apprenticeship vacancies compared to other regions (1,643), which is a positive for the region. However this has declined recently, and recent business surveys show a decline in training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) show business activity has dropped from 51.2 (over 50 signals growth, under 50 signals contraction) to 10.9, the lowest levels ever and back to 27.9. However the PMI future business activity is holding up, rising from 55.9 to 62.1 (down from 72.3% signalling businesses are positive about the future once lockdown ends).

While the furlough scheme was generally seen as a positive policy approach by businesses, there is also concern that it may simply be delaying redundancies further down the line if the reduction in consumer spending and business activity continues over the longer term. Regionally, businesses are already concerned about the impacts of lockdown and social distancing measures on trade, and are reluctant to take on debt having already utilised spare funds and resources. There is considerable uncertainty around recovery of the worst hit sectors given the emergence of a second wave and continued lockdowns, including local restrictions in high-incidence areas which are already likely to be more deprived.

As described in our interim report, younger people are likely to be disproportionately impacted by closures due to being more likely to be employed in vulnerable sectors. This presents particular challenges in the WMCA due to the region having high numbers of young people, who also face additional difficulties through disruption to the education system and the weakening of transition points between school, further and higher education and employment.

The pandemic has also brought about changes in culture and behaviour that may persist beyond the crisis period. A reduction in travel, changes to ways of working and changing attitudes to what consumers need and value could have significant implications for economic recovery, particularly post-Brexit. Although there are a number of positive impacts of these changes which are described in the sections below, it is important that businesses are supported to adapt to ensure that existing socioeconomic inequalities are not exacerbated further.

Use of outdoor space for physical activity

Access to outdoor space, particular green space and ‘blue’ space (i.e. proximity to water) has direct benefits for mental wellbeing,^{47,48} as well as increasing opportunities to participate in physical activity. Access to natural outdoor spaces varies considerably across the region; areas bordering on Green Belt land in Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire are very different to the more urban areas in the centre of the region. Yet this is not to say that residents in more urban areas do not have access to outdoor spaces that enable them to connect with nature. Birmingham has 35 miles of canals, which is said to be more than Venice, and they are enjoyed by walkers, runners, cyclists and narrowboaters. Across the West Midlands as a

whole, there are 20,534.78 hectares of green space (34.53m² per person) – 1,032.66 hectares of which are legally protected – and approximately 95% of the population live within a 10m walk of green space.⁴⁹ West Midlands residents have a similar distance to travel to a park or public garden at 968m (average distance from an address in the region) compared with an average of 987m for England, and around 90% of addresses in the West Midlands had access to private outdoor space in April 2020 compared with an average of 88% in England.⁵⁰

Research by Fields in Trust (2018)⁵¹ indicated that lower socio-economic groups assign a higher relative value to parks and green spaces than higher socio-economic groups, and urban residents value parks and green spaces higher than the UK average. BAME groups value parks and green spaces more highly than white groups, particularly once income is accounted for, and also tend to use them more for social purposes (e.g. meeting friends, children’s activities and sports). Given that the WMCA area is more urban and more ethnically diverse than the region as a whole, our parks and green spaces are a valuable asset in reducing health inequalities in the region.

Transport and travel

Public opinion survey data from Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) show that the pandemic has seen unprecedented changes in travel demands and behaviours (see Figures 11a and 13b). The immediate impact has been a general reduction in all modes of transport (including car usage) as a result of lockdown. This in turn has had many positive aspects such as improved physical activity, air quality, reduced carbon emissions and safer roads, as more people have chosen to walk and cycle.

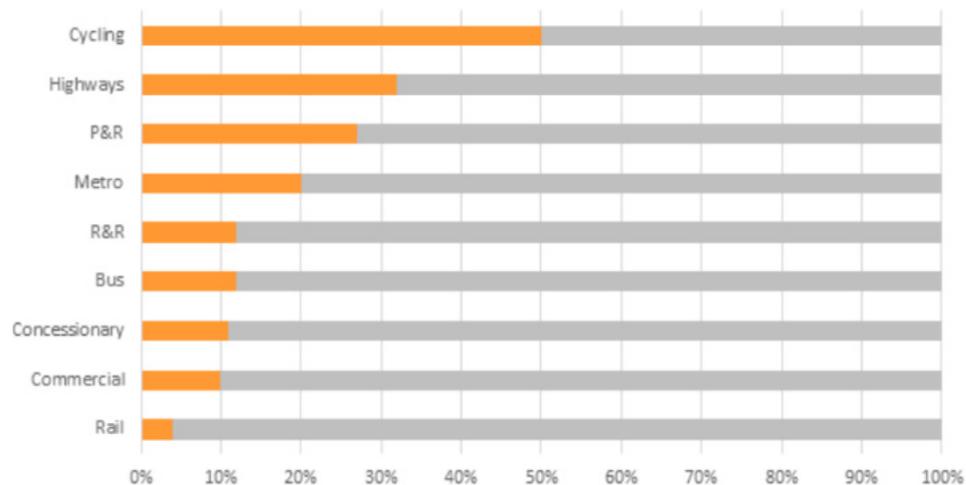


Figure 13a: Demand for different transport modes at Covid-19 peak against usual demand

Source: Phase 1 Public Opinion Survey

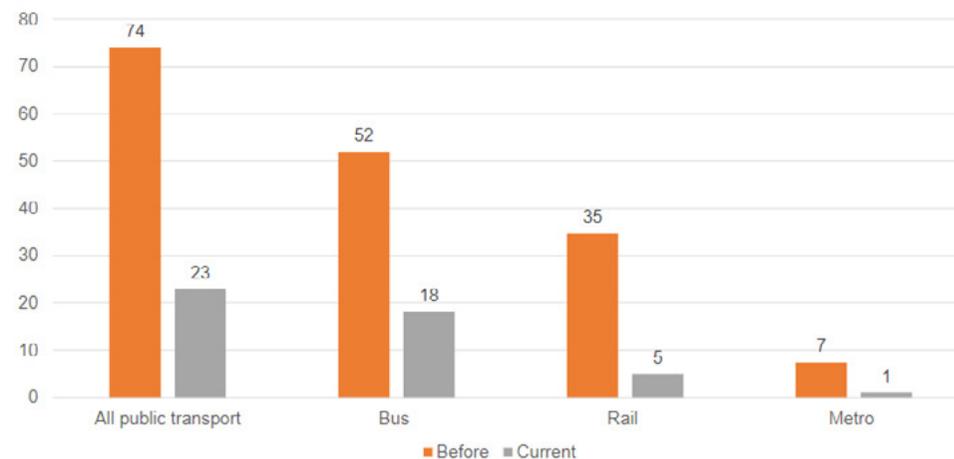


Figure 13b: Current levels of public transport usage before and after lockdown

Source: Phase 1 Public Opinion Survey

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TfWM’s Health and Transport Strategy (2019)⁵²demonstrates how encouraging physical activity by making it easier to walk, cycle and use public transport has significant impacts on everyone’s health, such as by reducing air pollution, increasing feelings of safety and creating environments in which people choose to participate and take up active travel. The region’s transport network has operated at around 50% to 75% coverage and frequency throughout the pandemic, thus ensuring that our most vulnerable communities and those without access to a car could continue to access vital services (retail/health) and key workers could continue to access work – which was vital during lockdown.

Our transport system often shapes what is possible and impacts on the people and places around it. COVID-19 has given us a new perspective on what our economic, social and environmental priorities are, and what changes may be possible. Therefore, there is an opportunity to reshape our transport network for the better. In surveys of public attitudes during the crisis (covering over 6,000 responses), the majority of respondents wanted to see changes in areas such as cleaner air (81%), reduced traffic on roads/ reduced car use (75%) and improved work/life balance (67%), demonstrating a need for a more inclusive transport system.

1.5 Living with challenges

There are a number of specific groups of people that not only have an increased risk of poor physical and mental health, but social, economic and digital exclusion. These groups are also more likely to face additional difficulties as a result of the pandemic. In this section we address a number of these key groups.

Structural racism and ethnic disparities as determinants of health

Structural racism has been consistently cited both regionally and nationally as a key factor in poorer health and wellbeing outcomes for people from BAME communities, including COVID-19 deaths and complications.^{55,56,57} Prof Sir Michael Marmot has emphasised the need to act now on systemic racism and the structural determinants of health, rather than putting it off until the immediate crisis has been dealt with.⁵⁸ This is because these are causal factors in the crisis, and addressing them is key to prevention and resilience over the longer term.

A national survey of over 14,000 adults by the mental health charity Mind revealed that existing inequalities in housing, employment, finances and other issues have had a greater impact on people from BAME groups than on white people.

The reduction in access to health and wider services due to control measures is also likely to have a disproportionate impact on BAME groups and people with severe mental illness.⁵⁹ Experiences of discrimination and structural racism as barriers to accessing services are well documented,⁶⁰ and was a key theme identified through community engagement activities in the region.^{61,62,63}

Key observations from the West Midlands Inquiry into COVID-19 Fatalities in BAME communities are summarised in Box 2. Many of these observations were echoed in the submissions received to the call for evidence, particularly around access to care and funding, disruption to ways of life, communication and lack of confidence for change (see Appendix 1).

Box 2: COVID-19 BAME Evidence Gathering Taskforce – Labour party Key observations from testimony

- 1 Fear of inequitable treatment that might be received in the NHS was a deterrent for many in the BAME asking for help quickly enough
- 2 Our BAME community experienced an NHS and care system that was overwhelmed
- 3 Public health messages about symptoms or what to do when in need were poorly communicated by Government to our BAME communities
- 4 The voice of the BAME community has simply not been heard in the way our health services are designed and delivered
- 5 The disruption to the traditions and process for grieving has created significant mental health risks
- 6 Many of the groups that worked with people with long-term health conditions have been underfunded
- 7 Many BAME frontline workers had direct experience of inadequate provision of PPE
- 8 Data we need to track the impact of the pandemic is not available, such as ethnicity recording on death certificates
- 9 A clear strategy for understanding the scientific evidence for the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the BAME community has not been communicated effectively
- 10 Confidence that lessons will be learned and change will come about is low to non-existent

While it is essential to address the role of systemic discrimination and racism in the system, care must be taken to avoid stereotyping and assuming that people from BAME communities all face the same challenges (even within specific ethnic groups) and therefore require the same approaches to engagement. Research has highlighted the importance of language in our communication (even around the term ‘BAME’ itself, as discussed previously), and the importance of developing ‘race fluency’ and confidence to enable meaningful and inclusive communication around issues affecting particular ethnic groups.⁶⁴

Vulnerable children and young people

As outlined in section 1.2, facing challenges earlier in life can limit opportunities later on and lead to poorer health outcomes. PHE West Midlands established a task and finish group to focus on vulnerable children and young people, considering the impacts of COVID-19 and identifying ways to strengthen multi-agency working in understanding vulnerability and supporting recovery.⁶⁵ Children in care (i.e. those looked after by the local authority); those subjected to trauma, violence and exploitation; youth offenders; and children with special educational needs & disabilities (SEND) were identified as being at potentially increased risk as a consequence of the pandemic.

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Children with experience of care have significantly poorer educational outcomes than their peers, which has implications for their future employment and life chances, and there is evidence that the gap persists even when additional needs are taken into account.⁶⁶ Children and young people at risk of offending or within the youth justice system often have more unmet health needs than other children, including an increased risk of suicide.⁶⁷ Providing unpaid care can have a significant impact on carers throughout the life course, affecting their education, employment, relationships, household finances, health and wellbeing. These effects tend to worsen with the more care provided.⁶⁸

Childhood trauma is both a cause and consequence of social disadvantage and inequalities in physical and mental health.⁶⁹ In addition to ensuring that disadvantaged children and young people are able to access the opportunities and support they need, it is also essential to adopt trauma-informed approaches in providing this support.



Table 9: Living with challenges in the WMCA – local area comparisons

	Indicators	Period	WMCA number	England	WMCA	Birmingham	Coventry	Dudley	Sandwell	Solihull	Walsall	Wolverhampton
Care and carers	Children in care - crude rate per 10,000 (2019)	2019	-	65	-	67	89	95	109	90	90	102
	Children providing unpaid care (aged 0-15) - % (2011)	2011	6,636	1.11	1.15	1.10	1.37	1.03	1.21	1.03	1.18	1.20
	Children providing 20+ hours/week of unpaid care (aged 0-15) - % (2011)	2011	1,442	0.21	0.25	0.25	0.30	0.21	0.29	0.18	0.23	0.24
	Young people providing unpaid care (aged 16-24) - % (2011)	2011	20,600	4.8	5.6	5.8	4.7	5.8	6.3	5.1	5.6	5.7
	Young people providing 20+ hours/week of unpaid care (aged 16-24) - % (2011)	2011	6,271	1.3	1.7	1.8	1.2	1.7	2.1	1.3	1.9	1.8
	Unpaid carers - % (2011)	2011	77,216	2.37	2.82	2.66	2.50	3.03	3.23	2.48	3.26	2.97
	Teenage mothers - % (2019)	2019	305	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.5	1.4	1.3
	Social Isolation: percentage of adult social care users who have as much social contact as they would like (18+ yrs) - % (2018/19)	2018/19	14,140	45.9	46.6	44.0	47.3	47.5	52.2	45.1	43.1	51.6
	Social Isolation: percentage of adult carers who have as much social contact as they would like (18+ yrs)	2018/19	830	32.5	32.4	25.1	38.2	43.4	27.7	28.6	25.5	36.1
Absenteeism & exclusions	Pupil absence - % of half days	2017/18	7,306,605	4.8	5.0	5.13	4.86	5.02	4.75	4.88	4.99	4.62
	Primary school fixed period exclusions: rate per 100 pupils	2016/17	4,735	1.4	1.6	1.95	1.88	1.52	1.27	1.29	1.67	0.75
	Secondary school fixed period exclusions: rate per 100 pupils	2016/17	16,291	9.4	8.5	7.5	11.0	10.0	9.6	8.3	7.6	8.3
	Sickness absence: Employees who had at least one day off in the previous week - %	2016-18	-	2.1	2.1	2.8	1.8	2.6	1.1	1.8	2.4	1.3
	Sickness absence: Working days lost - %	2016-18	-	1.1	1.3	1.6	0.9	1.7	0.9	1.0	1.3	0.7
Injury and crime inc. violent crime	Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children (aged 0-14 years) - crude rate per 10,000	2018/19	6,715	96.1	113.5	115.6	184.9	85.5	105.6	103.8	93.3	82.7
	Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in young people (aged 15-24 years) - crude rate per 10,000	2018/19	4,940	136.9	120.5	113.9	129.0	105.6	119.9	155.5	110.6	144.3
	Children in the youth justice system (10-18 yrs) - crude rate per 1,000	2017/18	1,686	4.5	5.2	5.2	5.2	4.5	6.4	2.5	3.9	8.4
	First time entrants to the youth justice system (10-17 yrs) - crude rate per 100,000	2018	88	238.5	308.0	377.7	244.8	260.1	239.9	120.3	248.7	423.6
	First time offenders - crude rate per 100,000	2018	5,926	211	238	266	228	174	244	127	206	328
	Reoffending levels - % of offenders who reoffend	2017/18	-	29.1	29.9	31.3	30.0	26.4	29.3	21.1	29.7	30.0
	Violent crime: Violence offences per 1,000 population - crude rate	2018/19	76,186	27.8	26.3	28.8	23.0	22.4	27.2	17.6	25.8	31.2
	Violent crime: Sexual offences per 1,000 population - crude rate	2018/19	7,175	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.4	2.2	2.3	1.8	2.2	2.7

Compared with England: Better Similar Worse Lower Similar Higher

Quintiles: Low ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ High

Source: PHE Public Health Profiles

Care and carers

The rate of children looked after by the local authority is higher than the England average in all areas except Birmingham. The WMCA has significantly more people providing unpaid care than the national average, including children and young people providing substantial levels of care. The population proportion of teenage mothers, who are at increased risk of poverty and poor health if they are not adequately supported, reflects the national average across most areas but is significantly higher in Birmingham, Walsall and Wolverhampton. Social isolation is a key issue for both providers and recipients of care. While more adult social care users in the WMCA reported having as much social contact as they would like, this is still less than half. Only a third of adult carers, both regionally and nationally, have as much social contact as they would like, with substantial variation across areas.

Absenteeism and exclusions

Rates of school absences and primary school exclusions are significantly higher for the WMCA than for England overall, but lower for secondary school exclusions. Among working age adults, sickness absence rates are broadly similar to the national average but the number of days lost to sickness is higher, which may be due to higher rates of longer-term absence.

Injury and crime

Hospital admissions for intentional or unintentional injuries in children and young people are significantly higher for the WMCA than for England overall, and appear to be driven by high rates in a few areas. First time entrants to the youth justice system and first time offences are significantly higher in the WMCA than the national average. Rates of children and first time entrants to the youth justice system, first time and repeat offences, and violent and sexual crimes are consistently lower in Solihull and Dudley, and consistently higher in Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

Inclusion health and vulnerable groups

People in excluded or marginalised groups are at a higher risk of being exposed to the virus, as well as being more likely to suffer adverse impacts on physical and mental health and wellbeing through social and psychosocial impacts; impact on employment and finance; and reduced access to housing and services.⁷⁰

A people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF)

In the West Midlands region in 2019, there were 5,236 asylum seekers in receipt of Section 95 support - 4,304 (82%) of which were in the West Midlands Metropolitan area, with the vast majority receiving both accommodation and subsistence support.⁷¹ During the pandemic the Home Office made the decision to suspend evictions from asylum accommodation, move some processes online, and extend payments for those granted refugee status until they received their first welfare benefits payment.

However, many asylum seekers are at increased risk of contracting COVID-19 through living in close quarters and sharing facilities with others, in addition to issues around access to testing, facilities and support.⁷²

People with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) are at high risk of homelessness and destitution because they cannot access mainstream housing, welfare benefits and employment.⁷³

Research by the University of Wolverhampton (August 2020)⁷⁴ found that:

- There was a lack of information available for people with NRPF: Only 5 of the 151 local authorities in England had publicly-available NRPF policies which were accurate, up to date and contained referral contact details. More than 40 percent of local authority websites did not contain any information at all about NRPF.
- Only 7 percent of local authority websites surveyed in April had information on COVID 19-related support for people with NRPF. When the survey was repeated a month later, this number had increased to 12 percent. 6 out of 10 organisations who responded to the call for evidence had not received updated information from their local authority since the start of the pandemic.
- Numbers of service users with NRPF who had COVID-19 symptoms were relatively small, but those who did have symptoms were particularly likely to die or become seriously ill: More than half of organisations that responded to the call for evidence knew of service users who had been diagnosed with COVID-19. Although most knew of relatively small numbers who were experiencing symptoms, of those who did, more than half had become seriously ill or died.
- People with NRPF struggled to access food, shelter and subsistence support during the pandemic: The most commonly reported impact of the pandemic was not having enough food. More than 8 out of 10 organisations identified this as a concern for their service users.

The study also found that the most commonly reported difficulty across all user groups was being refused support from the local authority. For those already accessing support, the most commonly experienced difficulty amongst children and families was inadequate accommodation for self-isolation. For adults with care needs, it was being unable to get in contact with the local authority. For homeless adults, the most commonly reported problem was having no provision made for their food or subsistence needs.

Homelessness and rough sleepers

People who sleep rough experience some of the most severe health inequalities and much poorer health than the general population.⁷⁵ The average age at death for people who experience homelessness is 44 years for men and 42 years for women – accidents (including drug poisoning), suicide and diseases of the liver accounted for over half of all deaths of homeless people in 2017. A University College London study found that a third of deaths among homeless people were due to preventable or treatable conditions such as tuberculosis and gastric ulcers.⁷⁶ This is related to exposure to poor living conditions; difficulty in maintaining personal hygiene; poor diet; high levels of stress; and drug & alcohol dependence. Access to primary care is still a major issue, despite homeless people having the right to register with a GP without identification or a fixed address.

Many homeless people have co-occurring mental ill health and substance misuse needs, physical health needs, and have experienced significant trauma in their lives. Data from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) in London shows that 50% of people sleeping rough have mental health needs, 42% have alcohol misuse needs, and 41% have drug

misuse needs.⁷⁷ The COVID-19 pandemic therefore presents additional risks not only in terms of infection, but in reducing access to support services for mental health and addiction problems.

Nationally, the pandemic has prompted rapid action⁷⁸ on homelessness, with over 90% of rough sleepers now in accommodation. As of the 1st of May across the WMCA region, over 800 potential and actual rough sleepers have been accommodated as part of the COVID-19 response – with almost 150 having no recourse to public funds. Of those coming in from the streets, 10 returned and a further 40 refused offers of help. The WMCA Homelessness Taskforce has observed evidence of greater engagement with the support and services that are offered, and emphasises the need to maintain and build on this trust as we enter the next phase.⁷⁹

Drug and alcohol dependence

Data from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System for the West Midlands region show that from February 2020 to date, compared to the average of the same periods between February 2018 to January 2020:⁸⁰

- The number of individuals in treatment and the number of deaths in treatment have increased

- The number of new presentations and successful treatment completions have decreased.
- Numbers of individuals with housing needs have also decreased.

People with complex needs and carers

People with disabilities or complex medical needs are significantly more likely to be at risk of complications from COVID-19 and are therefore more likely to be shielding. Parents Opening Doors (PODs) is a peer led charity based in Telford & Wrekin that involves and supports families of children and young people (aged 0-25 years) who have an additional need, or a disability, or SEND. The charity is becoming increasingly concerned by reports from families regarding a lack of support, and families of children with complex needs who are reaching breaking point. A survey of their members carried out in June 2020⁸¹ found that 71% of respondents were shielding; approximately 59% of families said they were 'doing ok', 26% were 'not doing very well' and around half of these said they were 'doing really bad'.

Many families reported positive aspects to lockdown, including more time to spend with their children and on play, and being able to access activities, music and virtual performances online. However, mental health and wellbeing was a major concern for both parents and children, particularly stress and loneliness. Parents had accessed emotional support from a range of sources, including family and friends (88%), the wellbeing line or befriender scheme (26%), social media (25%), mental health professionals (20%) and faith groups (2%). Many felt abandoned by services and the system, with many cancelled appointments, and there were concerns around furlough and economic recovery. Under half had

attended virtual meetings, with 35% of these saying it had worked for them and 8% saying it had not. Some parents did not receive their shielding letters and found that local authorities were slow to react, and felt that CCG commissioning changes needed to be communicated more effectively.

Prison population

People who are incarcerated experience a higher burden of chronic illness, mental health and substance misuse (drugs, alcohol and tobacco) problems than the general public, as well as significantly higher risks of infectious diseases including blood-borne viruses such as Hepatitis B. Members of this group often come from already marginalised and underserved populations in the wider community; improving the physical and mental health of people in prison would benefit wider society as well as individuals, including by reducing reoffending rates. As well as an increased risk of infection from coronavirus for those currently incarcerated, spending more time in isolation is likely to have a detrimental impact on mental health and exacerbate existing difficulties.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people

It is estimated that between 100,000 to 300,000 Gypsy/Traveller people and up to 200,000 Roma people are living in the UK. While they have historically lived nomadic lives, they have increasingly moved into housing; the 2011 census for England and Wales recorded 74% of Gypsies and Travellers as living in houses, flats, maisonettes or apartments.⁸² In January 2020, the number of traveller caravans in WMCA constituent authorities was 232, with the majority (91%) on authorised sites (i.e. with planning permission).⁸³ The count of travelling showpeople caravans was 37, all of which were on authorised sites.

People from Gypsy, Roma & Traveller (GRT) communities experience some of the poorest physical and mental health outcomes in society, even when compared with other socially deprived or excluded groups, and with other ethnic minorities.⁸⁴ Accommodation insecurity, living conditions, social exclusion and discrimination are among the main causes. Authorised and unauthorised caravan sites are often in environments that promote poor health (e.g. by busy roads or heavy industry), and a lack of recognition by local councils and communities of GRT people's social and legal entitlements to live and work in their areas has a direct detrimental impact on planning decisions, quality of accommodation, and health and wellbeing, as well as education and employment.⁸⁵

The higher prevalence of existing health conditions, and additional risks presented by insecure accommodation or restricted access to amenities as a result of the pandemic, means that people from GRT communities are at a disproportionate risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19. Guidance published by Friends, Families and Travellers for supporting people living on Traveller sites, unauthorised encampments and canal boats⁸⁶ sets out key recommendations for local authorities, Traveller site managers and organisations managing canals and waterways to ensure that households can isolate safely and securely, and have access to necessary facilities including water, sanitation and rubbish disposal.

Box 3: Impact of COVID-19 on women

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women could potentially result in significant reversals of the progress made over recent decades. Research from the Fawcett Society revealed that women are bearing the brunt of extra childcare and housework, and are losing jobs in greater numbers than men.⁸⁷ Women are also more likely to become infected due to being more likely to work in health and care settings, and are disproportionately more likely to be victims of domestic violence and abuse.

A survey carried out in the WMCA area by West Midlands Women's Voice and the Fawcett Society⁸⁸ found that four fifths of employed women have seen their job change in some way; more than a quarter are struggling to make ends meet; more than a third say their mental health has suffered; yet very few reach out to support networks. The survey noted some differences between how different demographic groups of women have handled the pandemic, but these tended to be small and usually, consistent across all questions, implying something more to do with cultural response biases rather than specific coronavirus-related demographic differences. Many are using an increase in available time to consider retraining and upskilling. Women in the West Midlands reported feeling positive towards their local and combined authorities - they were keen to access services, believed them to be important, and would feel comfortable in using them.

While 41% of women reported having more time for exercise and keeping healthy during lockdown, 31% reported no change in the time available for these activities, and 21% reported having less time. This is consistent with national data showing that women were more likely to be doing less physical activity during lockdown (see Health behaviours above), and is likely to contribute to a widening of sex-based inequalities in physical activity participation overall. In England, almost half of women (42%) are not active enough for good health compared with approximately a third of men (34%).⁸⁹



Increasing risk of harm through violence and exploitation

The additional risks presented by isolation and social distancing measures to people whose homes are not places of safety has been recognised from the outset. The British Crime Survey reports that only 43% of violence is reported to the police;⁹⁰ it is therefore important to develop ways of identifying those at risk in other settings where they may come into contact with public service professionals.

Injury Surveillance to Tackle Violence (ISTV) is a multi-disciplinary initiative led by the West Midlands Injury Surveillance System (WMISS) Steering Group, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner. The group is made up of multi-disciplinary partners with the aim of monitoring the patterns and trends of violence within the West Midlands. WMISS uses anonymised data on injury related consultations in emergency departments, West Midlands Ambulance injury data and West Midlands Police data across the West Midlands, with the aim to identify the root causes to violent related injury and inform local decision making in mitigating these causes.

A major issue with reduced access to face-to-face services during the pandemic is that there are fewer contact points and opportunities for these individuals to be identified and offered appropriate support. Nationally, Refuge reported a 700% increase in calls to its helpline at the start of lockdown, and a 25% increase in calls from perpetrators seeking support to change their behaviours.⁹¹ The Counting Dead Women project recorded 16 domestic abuse killings of women by men between 23 March and 12 April, which is double the average for that period; this rose to 25 women between 23 March and 20 May.⁹² Long-term

underfunding of the sector means that there are limited resources and refuge spaces to meet this growing demand.⁹³

While much of the focus is on victims of domestic violence and abuse, health, emergency and support services also provide opportunities for contact with victims of exploitation, including modern slavery. The most common forms of modern slavery include labour, sexual and criminal exploitation, and domestic servitude. TAs with domestic abuse and violence, modern slavery is a hidden crime where victims may be further isolated and hidden from view during the pandemic. The Home Office sets out guidance for identifying and supporting victims of modern slavery, including during the pandemic.⁹⁴

Box 4: Digital inclusion and the ‘digital divide’

The move towards many jobs and services, including healthcare, to online platforms presents an additional risk for widening health inequalities. COVID-19 has highlighted the ‘digital divide’, with the factors underpinning digital exclusion often the same as those underpinning social exclusion overall – which increase the risk of poverty and poor health. Just under 60% of individuals from lower income groups do not have access to the internet whereas 99% of individuals within higher income groups do.⁹⁵ The barriers by which people are excluded fall into three broad categories: accessibility and affordability of technology; lack of confidence; or lack of digital skills and education.⁹⁶ As society shifts more towards online systems and phasing out face-to-face interaction, those who face these barriers will struggle to adapt. As a result of this, the inequality gap will widen, with these individuals becoming more excluded and isolated.

In the West Midlands, 3% of the population do not have a bank account and rely solely on cash as a means of purchasing goods and accessing services. Nationally, 7.5% of adults have never used the internet and within the West Midlands Metropolitan area, 13% of residents have never sent an online message or email. In general, disabled individuals are more likely to be digitally excluded compared to those who are not disabled. 95% of non-disabled adults were listed as recent internet users whereas this was only 78% for disabled adults. However, the internet usage of young

disabled adults (age 16-14) is similar to that of non-disabled young adults (98% and 99% respectively), suggesting that digital exclusion is more prevalent among disabled older adults. This is consistent with lower internet usage among older adults in general; almost half of people aged 75+ are not recent internet users, and are also more likely to have issues around hearing, manual dexterity or proficiency with technology that may make digital solutions less appropriate for this group.⁹⁷

Even prior to the pandemic, digital exclusion was contributing to widening health, social and economic inequalities with the gradual shift towards online provision of services and goods, including government forms, bill payments and banking. With more and more services publicised and accessed via the internet, those who are digitally excluded are also less likely to access the unlikely to receive the right information or access the right opportunities and even money saving deals: according to recent government estimates, predominantly offline households spend an average of £560 more per year on shopping and utility bills, compared to families which use the internet to compare prices and access better deals.

During Covid-19 most services and social interaction shifted to online modes (in some cases with a long-term view to retain this, therefore further widening the digital divide and making accessing services more difficult for the most disadvantaged).

During lockdown primary care and outpatient consultations shifted to online, including mental health and drug & alcohol support services – which required service users to not only have the right equipment and internet access, but a physically and psychologically safe space in which to receive that support. Public libraries and local community centres closed, leaving behind those who previously depended on those places for internet access. The tasks which were previously difficult for people who are digitally excluded became impossible with lockdown. Given that the groups who are most likely to be digitally excluded are also those who are most likely to benefit from public services, this is likely to widen existing inequalities among these groups.

Digital technology has enabled an increase in home and flexible working during the pandemic, which for many has increased opportunities to improve work-life balance – for example, by balancing work with care responsibilities and using the time usually spent commuting to engage in health and wellbeing improving activities. However, not everyone has been able to benefit from this due to the nature of their roles; many key workers have had to continue attending their workplaces, including those in low paid and insecure employment. Moreover, low income and older workers (who are more likely to be digitally excluded) are also more like to lose pay as a result of the pandemic.



Section 1 summary

This first part of the report has described the health of the population of the WMCA, and where COVID-19 has had both direct and indirect impacts on health inequalities.

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It shows that, whilst most of the population is healthy, there are very large proportions who are not. It shows that health here is not in general as good as the national average. People live shorter lives here and a greater part of their life is lived in poor health. It shows too that much of the risk of poor health is predictable and is linked to the way people live, and that this in turn is shaped by the places where they live. And it is clear that different groups of people within areas have different outcomes, including those relating to COVID-19. In particular, sex, ethnicity, and deprivation, are all shaping the health outcomes of our residents differently.

There will always be new pressures in our society. Many future health challenges are known. For example, we know that our system cannot easily cope if the numbers of people living with long-term disease continue to rise; we know that we can extend length of life through technological advance but that this can be at the expense of quality of life; we know that a rapidly changing population brings new issues of social cohesion and access to

services; and we know that issues such as microbial resistance are emerging. We did not specifically know of the emergence of COVID-19, but we did know that any new pandemic would bring premature death and a threat to our health and care systems. It is important that the impact of COVID-19 is specifically understood so that we can build our future differently. In the short term, services are being expanded and are coping. In the longer term, the impact of the disease has been felt disproportionately by the very sectors of the population who are identified in this report as having the poorest outcomes. Those who are overweight or smoke, the BAME communities, and the lower paid have all had the highest risks of complications and death following testing positive for COVID-19. This is not consistent with our national values of a National Health Service and equality. We must make sure that our approach is 'future proofed' and that actions are taken now which reduce health inequalities in the longer term.

Description brings this informed understanding of our population. But this is only of real value if it enables decision-makers to have impact in bringing improvement. The second part of this report outlines an approach to far-reaching and impactful change.

Section 2

Opportunities for change

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Local authorities are ideally placed to develop new approaches for improving population health and reducing inequalities, particularly given their focus on place, wellbeing and cross-sectoral working. Working at a regional level also offers a range of opportunities to amplify, support and add value to local approaches through use of devolved powers, partnership working and networks, pooling of resources and expertise, sharing learning and good practice, and scaling up clear examples of good work in the area.

2.1 Closing the health and wealth gap through radical prevention

To reduce widening and persistent health inequalities, a radical shift is needed to put communities at the heart of public health and build healthy, resilient, connected and empowered communities.⁹⁸ Radical prevention means taking action as a whole system to tackle the underlying causes of poor health and health inequalities (the ‘causes of the causes’), and shifting to more person and community-centred approaches to health and wellbeing.

Figure 14 illustrates the key concepts underpinning a regional approach to radical prevention, focusing on the relationship between health and wealth. This is reflected in the Marmot policy objectives, which remain as relevant during COVID-19 as they always have been, and in the priority areas identified by Coventry City Council for their 2016-2019 Marmot City programme and

priorities for continuing the programme through 2020-2022.^{61,62} Action at each stage of the life course has the potential to improve health and social outcomes later on; raising aspirations and mental wellbeing in childhood increases likelihood of good educational outcomes, which in turn facilitates employment and career development (Figure 15).

Early intervention and prevention in the early years can have lifelong impact, as well as yielding significant return on investment. Proportionate universalism is fundamental to Marmot principles: balancing universal action on the wider determinants of health with targeted intervention to actively close the health and wealth gap, and improve the health of the most disadvantaged fastest.

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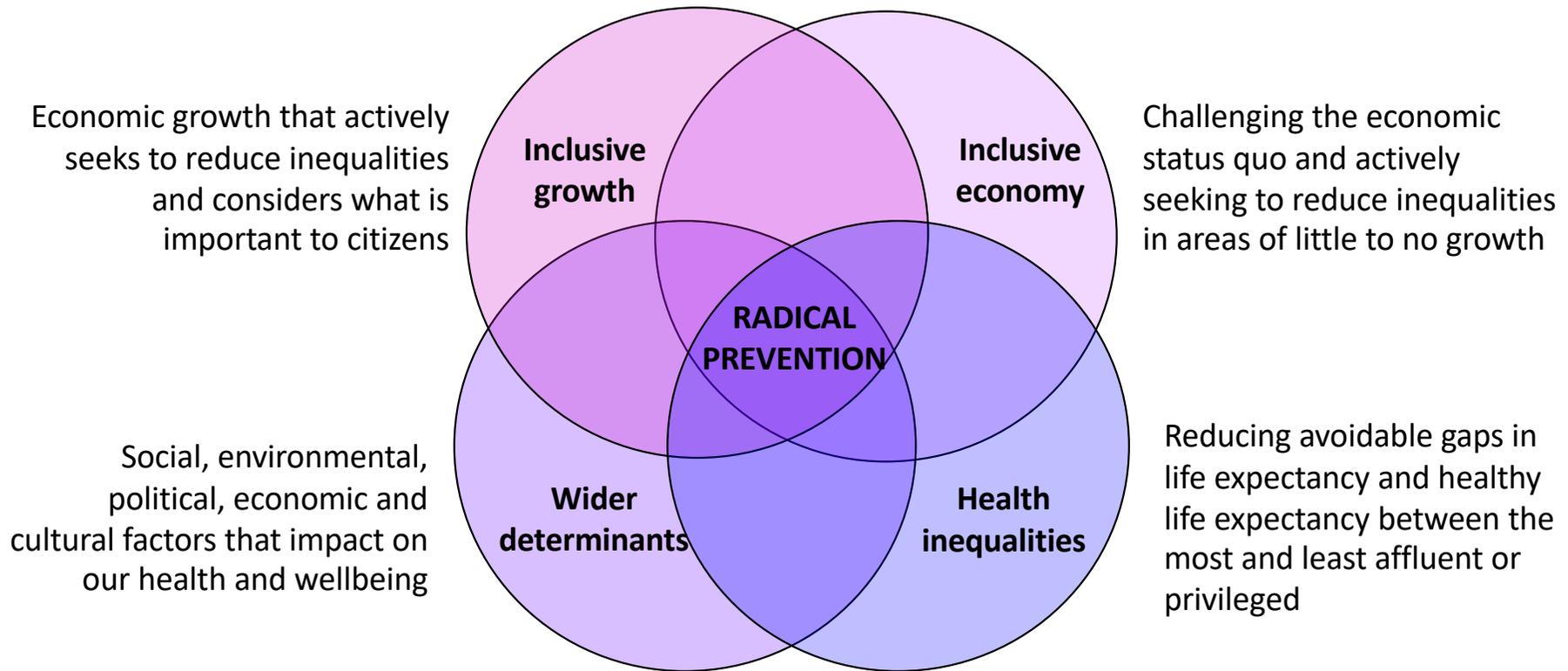


Figure 14: Elements of a radical prevention approach

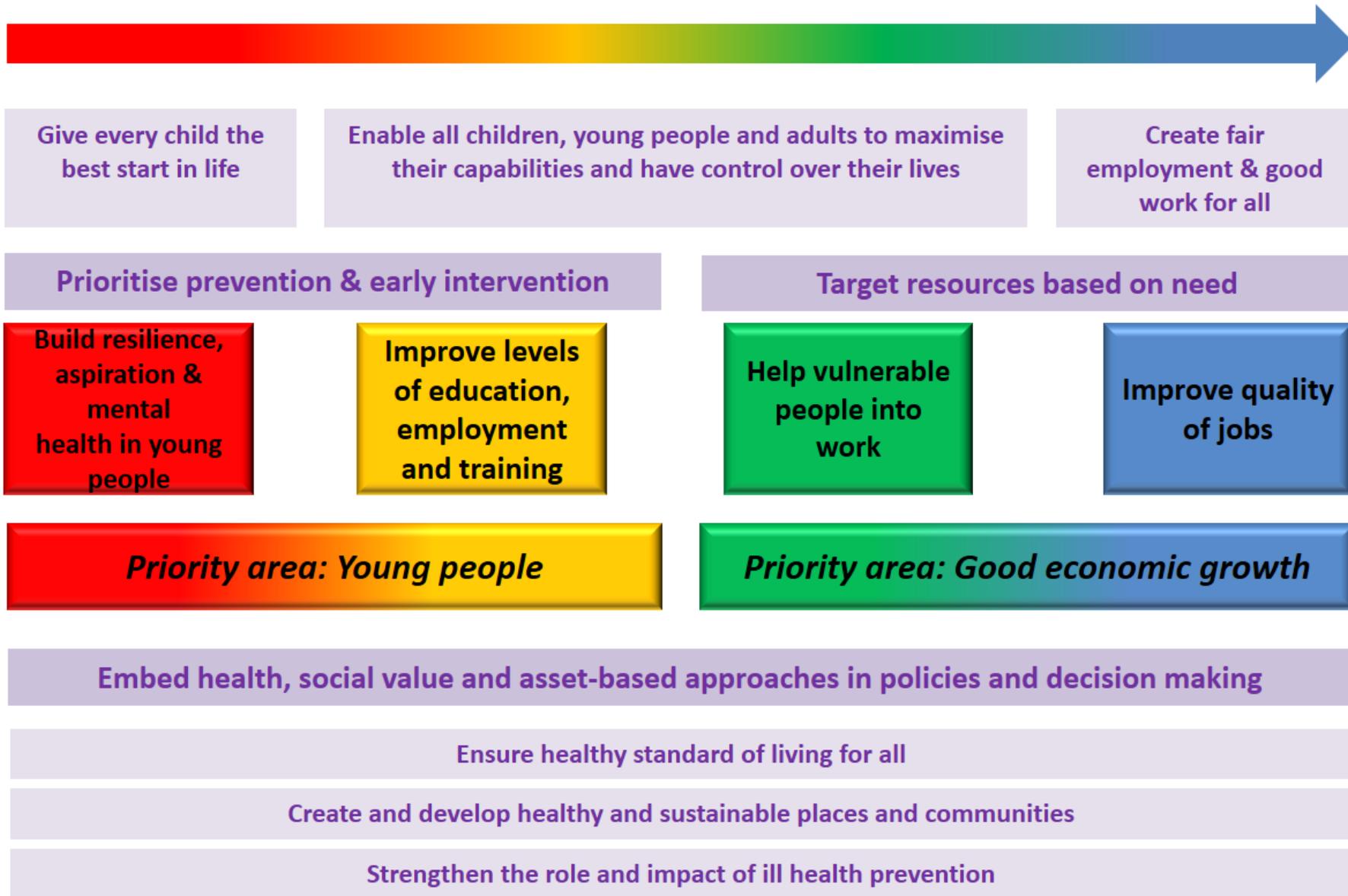


Figure 15: Embedding Marmot policy objectives into economic growth (PHE, 2016)^{62,99}

Many local authorities have taken forward the recommendations and approaches outlined in the 2010 Marmot Review. A survey by the King's Fund conducted in 2011 found that over 75 percent of local authorities had incorporated the approach directly into their health and wellbeing strategies. However, this was in the face of widespread reductions in public spending and intervention in almost all areas, with the poorest areas being the most affected.¹⁰⁰

Coventry's Marmot City programme is a powerful example of where Marmot policy objectives have been adopted in developing the city and its economy. Evaluation of the programme suggested that the programme helped to mitigate some of the effects of austerity, and that the Marmot City branding facilitated partnership working and embedded consideration of the impacts that Council policies and investments have on health inequalities across the organisation.¹⁰¹

The Coventry approach demonstrates the value of cross-sector collaboration and whole-system working, and can be adapted and scaled up to tackle persisting health inequalities at a regional level.

2.2 Inclusive growth within an inclusive economy

Regeneration and economic growth within the region bring a number of opportunities to act on the wider determinants of health. The WMCA defines inclusive growth as “a more deliberate and socially purposeful model of economic growth – measured not only by how fast or aggressive it is; but also by how well it is shared across the whole population and place.”

Economic growth has potential to improve population health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities through improving access to employment, raising income, increasing community safety, improving housing quality and affordability, raising aspirations and improving educational outcomes, providing a high quality local environment and green space, enhancing social relationships and connectedness, and increasing opportunities for participation. A recent report by the Health Foundation found that the COVID-19 pandemic had demonstrated that people's health and wealth cannot be viewed independently and that economic development policies which look beyond narrow financial outcomes as a measure of success can be instrumental in creating more prosperous societies.¹⁰²

In practice, however, people living in deprived communities often see little benefit from economic growth and feel excluded from it. Inclusive growth principles recognise that prosperity is measured not just by Gross Domestic product (GDP) and Gross Value Added (GVA), but by the health and wellbeing of the population and the extent to which everyone benefits from the growth. This means leveraging current and future policy and investment opportunities in a way that leaves no-one behind, and considering what is important and meaningful to citizens.

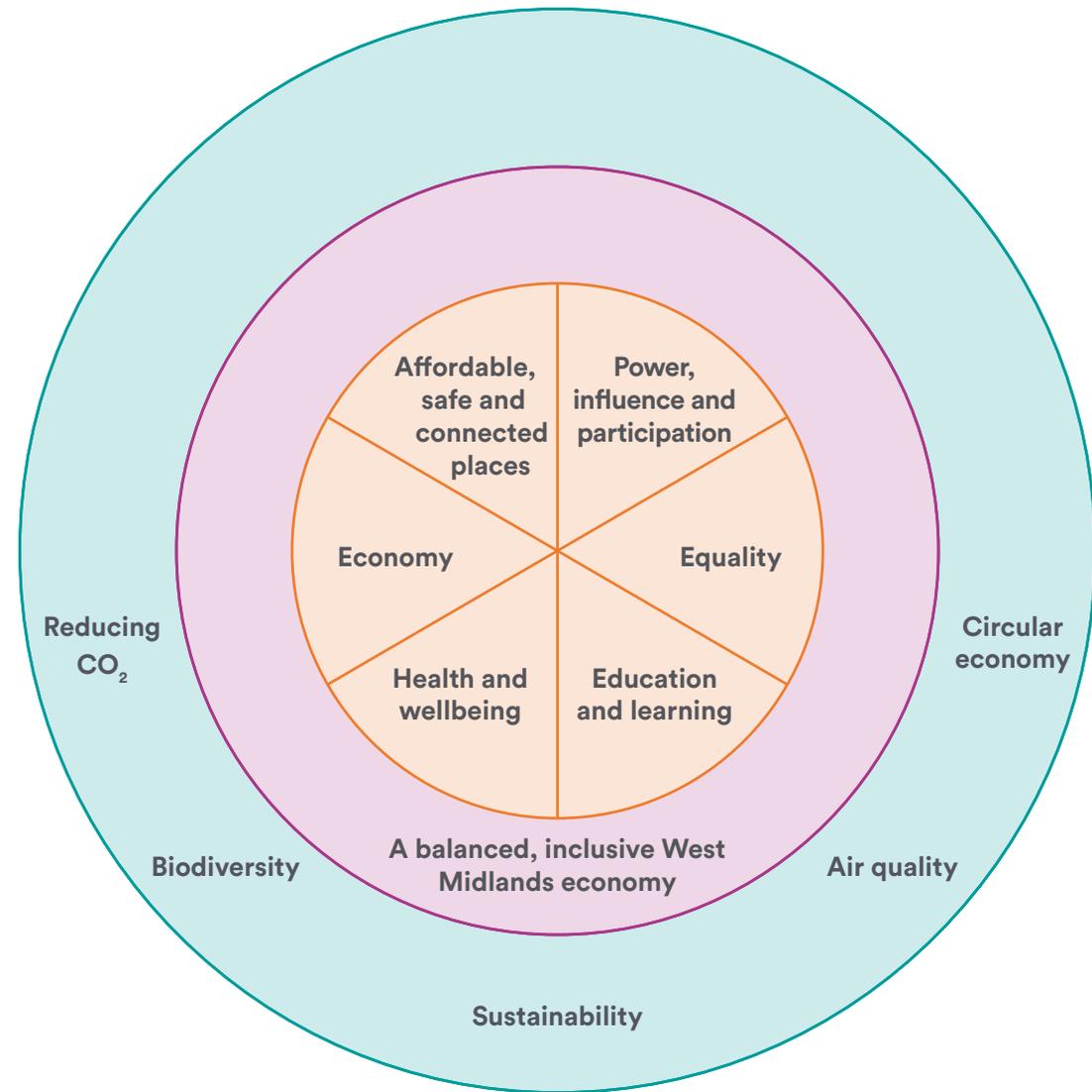
It is important to consider inclusive growth within its broader context of an inclusive economy, and to actively seek to reduce existing inequalities across the life course even in areas with little or no current growth activity or where new investment may be limited. An inclusive economy also recognises that not everyone will have or be able to work towards optimal health, but should still be supported to maximise their potential and quality of life. A healthy and resilient population can also be a foundation of creating and maintaining growth, contributing to a virtuous cycle.

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Sustainability is a key element of inclusive growth. A balanced, inclusive West Midlands economy (i.e. a fairer, greener and healthier region) is one that balances a thriving economy that meets the needs of all citizens with minimising the environmental impacts of growth, and improving air quality, biodiversity and green space. The #WM2041 strategy¹⁰³ sets out WMCA Board ambitions to reach zero carbon 21 years into its 80 year carbon budget, and to address the climate crisis in a way that is fair, inclusive, and promotes economic prosperity within the region.

Figure 16: A Framework for Inclusive Growth

Population Intelligence Hub and Inclusive Growth Unit – based on Kate Raworth, Doughnut Economics (2017)

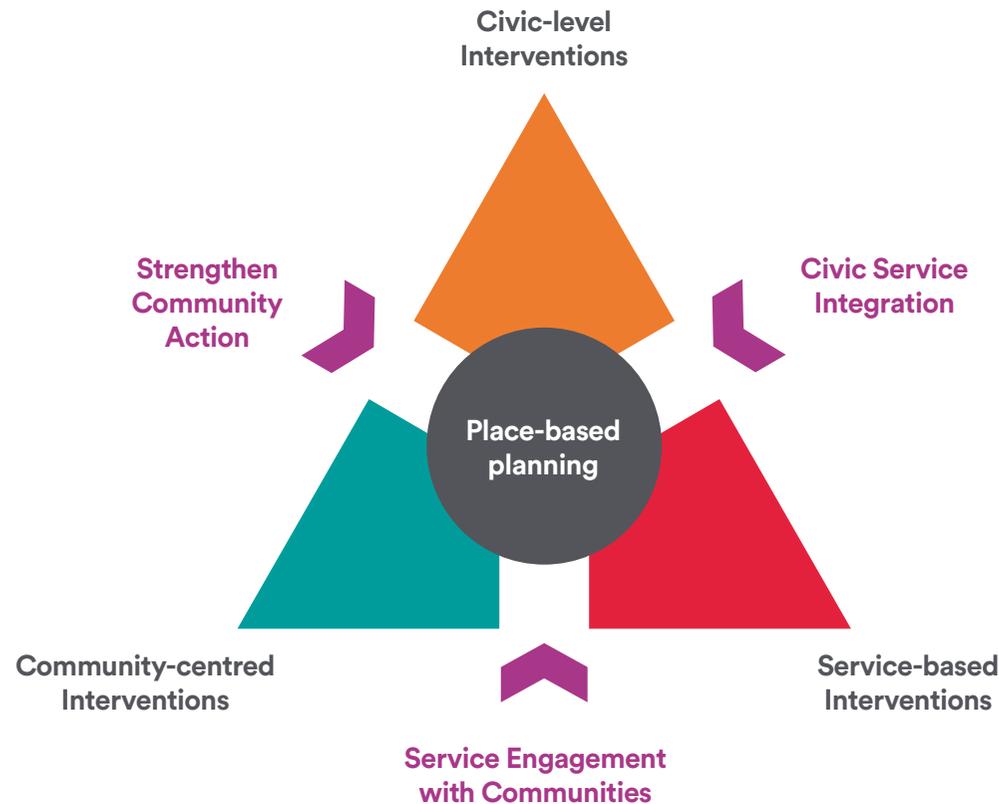


2.3 Place-based approaches and community-centred public health

Areas of high deprivation are often characterised by more transient populations where people move on once they start to do better, so health outcomes appear to show no improvement over time. Focusing on improving places and systems rather than targeting individual behaviour change helps to create environments where people want to live and work, and bring about sustainable positive change.

Place-based working enables the development of system-wide, population level interventions through focusing on engagement between civic organisations, services and communities.¹⁰⁴ This is known as the ‘Population Intervention Triangle’ (Figure 15). At the civic level, adopting a ‘health in all policies’ (HiAP) approach can help to embed health improvement and the reduction of health inequalities across policy areas acting on the wider determinants of health.

Figure 17: Components of the Population Intervention Triangle





2.3.1 Anchor institutions

As part of this approach, working with ‘anchor institutions’ such as the local authorities and NHS Trusts can help to embed innovation and good practice locally. Anchor institutions are defined as large, typically non-profit organisations whose long-term sustainability is tied to the wellbeing of the populations they serve. Anchors have ‘sticky capital’, i.e. their connection to the local population means they are unlikely to move, and have considerable influence on community health and wellbeing.¹⁰⁵ Anchor institutions provide opportunities to look inward in relation to systemic inequalities and discrimination in our own organisations, for example in addressing pay and leadership gaps, and promoting healthy and inclusive working practices.

2.4 Local application and developing opportunities for action

Our interim report and call for evidence identified a range of stakeholder activities in responding to COVID-19, many of which are drawing on these approaches and principles. A summary of these activities is provided below, building on the opportunities for action set out in the interim report and Box 5. Selected case studies provide examples of these activities, highlighting the role of faith, community and voluntary sectors in engaging with local residents, and the importance of partnership working and use of population health intelligence to improve ways of working across systems.

Box 5: Opportunities for action on health inequalities in developing the regional approach to responding to and recovering from COVID-19

- 1 New **public focus** on **health inequalities** and public health, including the recently launched national strategy for tackling obesity
 - 2 Increased **public awareness** of **infection control**
 - 3 Promoting **physical activity** as an opportunity to be outdoors, socialise, get around safely and improve wellbeing, in line with regional and national strategies.
 - 4 New ways of working that maximise use of **technology**, enabling more flexibility and improving work-life balance as well as reducing environmental impact – working to ensure equal access to these opportunities and reduce digital exclusion
 - 5 **Changes** to local **delivery models**
 - 6 Role of **communities**, for example in driving a **collaborative** approach to **population health management**
 - 7 Workstreams to ensure that **BAME** inequalities are considered in all aspects of **response** and **recovery**
 - 8 Drawing down resources to help address **structural inequalities**, for example through a formal submission to the comprehensive spending review
 - 9 Understanding **lessons learnt** from the first wave from a healthcare perspective
 - 10 **Pooling** and sharing of **intelligence** and engagement **resources** and analysis as a regional health systems network
- Longer term opportunities:
- 11 Developing a **Health in all Policies** approach to embed consideration of physical and mental health across all WMCA policy areas
 - 12 Using the **Thrive** model to improve workforce health and wellbeing, and to address inequalities in education, skills and employment across the region in line with inclusive growth objectives
 - 13 Maximising the potential of the 2022 **Commonwealth Games** to drive down inequalities and deliver a lasting legacy that undermines inequalities, especially in communities hit hardest by COVID-19
 - 14 Supporting **regional collaboration** to tackling health inequalities, especially for groups such as the homeless and migrant populations
 - 15 Working with communities, and local and national partners, to improve the recording and routine analysis of **demographic data** so that we are actively monitoring inequalities and demonstrating progress across the region (e.g. in relation to death certificates recording of details such as faith and ethnicity)
 - 16 Supporting **local governments** in their ambitions to protect and improve the lives of local citizens and work with them to ensure adequate funding for the public health function that has been so important in responding to the current crisis
 - 17 **Devolution** presents a significant opportunity to co-ordinate action across the system in local recovery to improve the wider determinants of health, working in partnership with stakeholders across localities and sectors

2.4.1 Crisis response

The acute response to the pandemic has, understandably, been the focus of activity across organisations in the region, particularly to ensure that the most vulnerable citizens are supported. However, this has not happened independently of longer-term change to address health inequalities. In many cases, the emergency response has provided the foundations to establish new ways of working and strengthen relationships with communities and partners.

Case Study: Birmingham City Council - Food parcels for clinically shielded & vulnerable people

During lockdown, 7,395 clinically vulnerable people across Birmingham were receiving weekly food parcels, with around half of these provided by Birmingham City Council. A Food Hub was established at Wholesale Markets, where supplies were sourced, stored, packed and distributed via National Express Accessible Transport.

Although initial deliveries were standard food parcels, the council also catered for limited dietary requirements in response to population needs, including diabetic, gluten-intolerance, nut allergy, halal and vegetarian.

The council's Emergency Community Response Hub also ensured that people who were not shielding but still experienced difficulty accessing food supplies were also able to receive emergency food supplies. Those included people over 70, those self-isolating due to illness, pregnant women, and people receiving support through adult social care. The Hub also signposted and connected vulnerable citizens without assistance from family or friends to help and support. Citizens with existing support networks (e.g. family and friends) were asked to continue to use this so that the council could focus on those most in need.

Case study: Birmingham City Council – Supporting rough sleepers and responding to homelessness during the pandemic

A number of challenges and barriers were identified for Birmingham's homeless population, including:

- No beds available in the acute wards for mental health (one specific example found that an ambulance was called but the person was later released with no support)
- The helpline provided did not give the support needed
- The mental health support had been positive when accessed via the health exchange, but if people already had a diagnosed / treated for mental health problem then it was sometimes more difficult to get the support needed from their registered provider
- Many individuals have problematic substance misuse issues
- Drop-in centres closed during lockdown – a Housing Options offer was established at Washington Court which has now moved to Sifa Fireside
- Pre-COVID-19, rough sleeping went down to single figures at height of lockdown; however, numbers have since started to rise again (in the 30-40 age range)

An operation to get rough sleepers inside during the pandemic was largely successful – beds were initially secured with Holiday Inn and accommodation was then found for the majority of people (e.g. some people were moved into BCC flats, supported housing and emergency housing).

It was clear that a change of approach was needed regarding the new housing options offer, as the majority of people were referred into non-commissioned exempt-supported accommodation. Given the number involved, this represents a significant dependency on this sector and should be approached with caution. The Council is working to strengthen its control of standards and a support team is being commissioned to follow up on each person referred.

2.4.2 Community engagement

Across the West Midlands region there has been substantial engagement with communities in local areas, by local authorities, services and the voluntary & community sector to understand how they have been impacted by the pandemic and the support they need. This is not just in relation to COVID-19, but with long-standing health and wider issues that have placed some communities at greater risk of the virus itself and the economic impacts. This is an area where it is particularly important to build on the work that has been done to reinforce relationships and develop networks over the longer term.

Case study: Outbreak Management Plan, Lye

At the outset of the Covid-19 outbreak, it was recognised that migrant communities could be especially vulnerable to the impacts of the virus, particularly over the lockdown period. Within Dudley Borough, Lye has a relatively large Roma population, and so partners acted quickly to consider the challenges for the community and plan a response.

Representatives from community safety, neighbourhood policing, primary care, access and prevention, family support, the local church and Public Health met in March to consider the particular vulnerabilities of the community and the assets that could be called upon to address these. Key concerns included language barriers to understanding health protection messages and access to the resources needed for people to support themselves and their families during lockdown.

An action plan was developed which included:

- Establishing routes for the distribution of food and essential supplies, including a foodbank based within the church and door-step deliveries
- Translation and dissemination of key public health messages through a range of avenues, from word of mouth, recorded messaging on community Facebook pages and leafleting

- Facilitating application processes for benefit claims
- Connecting members of the community to housing support
- Re-establishing elements of the Lye Community Project support to the Roma community in a Covid-safe form

All partners supported implementation of the plan, with Roma community members assisting food distribution efforts. Public Health's Roma Community Development Worker was key. Using her unique relationship with the community and language skills, she provided a trusted source of information and support and facilitated access to services.

The community have been hugely appreciative of the assistance provided. Their feedback suggests that people were enabled to come through the crisis well, that they have felt valued, and could rely on services for the help they needed.

Case study: Legacy WM - wellbeing promotion, physical activity & nutrition for Bangladeshi women¹⁰⁶

Legacy West Midlands is a registered charity that has its roots in celebrating the heritage of post-war migrant communities in Birmingham, highlighting their relationship to the industrial, architectural, and cultural heritage of the city. The charity is based at the community heritage site of Soho House in Handsworth, and delivers projects in the northwest inner-city wards of the city.

A research project on food journeys in the Bangladeshi community revealed that the health of first-generation migrants was better than that of their children and grandchildren; funding was subsequently allocated by National Lottery to focus on the health of the local community through a project called Family Fit, which focused on health improvement from the whole family. Women were particularly engaged and keen to participate in health services.

Having the flexibility to go to out to wherever our community are makes it as easy as possible for people to participate in activities, and particularly removes some of the barriers for women – for example, work in schools with mothers after they drop their children off in the mornings. The charity undertakes non-clinical health MOTs and runs various programmes including Zumba, Yoga and Food Nutrition, working at a number of local sites including Aspire & Succeed, Saathi House, Lozells Recreation Centre and Birmingham Asian Resource Centre.

Legacy WM's Zumba sessions for women include a significant number from the Bangladeshi community, with some sessions sometimes having up to 40 participants.

“These women only sessions show the truly multi-cultural aspect of our work, with women entering the sessions wearing their hijab and niqab, and warming up to Ed Sheeran!”

Case study: Mosques and the Muslim Community in Dudley Borough

Engagement with Mosques and the Muslim community in Dudley Borough has been an important strand within the Covid-19 response. The closure and subsequent reopening of places of worship has presented significant challenges across faith communities and many worshippers fall within one or more vulnerable groups.

Proactive contact was made with Mosques at an early stage in the pandemic, with a view to opening channels of communication to share information and respond to any concerns or needs for support. In some parts of the Borough, relationships were already established, in others, this was an opportunity to make a connection.

Public Health's engagement with and support to Mosques has included the following:

- Providing resources and information for Mosque leaders to share with their community

- Remaining in touch with Mosque representatives to ensure any concerns or queries can be raised and addressed
- Responding to requests for specific information, including translation and design of materials
- A virtual meeting for Mosques with Health Protection to provide an opportunity to explore safe reopening
- Joint-working with Brierley Hill Mosque, which has acted as a central contact for several Mosques in the area, disseminating information
- A Mosque representative is part of the Test and Trace Sub-group membership for voluntary, community and faith settings

Overall, representatives from the Mosques have been appreciative of the information and resources shared and the opportunity to liaise with Public Health for support during the Covid-19 pandemic. The connections established have ensured that potential problems can be voiced and that the latest guidance is applied.

2.4.3 Data and intelligence

Improving data and intelligence, particularly around the recording of ethnicity in health and care settings, has emerged as a key priority for longer-term system improvement to address health inequalities, both regionally and nationally. However, activity in this area has also focused on using population health intelligence to understand the relationship between existing inequalities and the impacts of COVID-19, and to address issues with access to services and research. For example:

- **Report on Impact of COVID-19 on Inequalities - Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council** – The report brings together the existing national evidence and analyses the probable impact on different groups. The Council is in the process of developing a targeted Health Inequalities Strategy.
- **West Midlands Language and communication service needs assessment - Health Protection Team, PHE West Midlands** – Report included a descriptive study that aimed to provide a picture of the language and communication need within the health protection response in PHE WM, and the commissioning processes used by other PHE Health Protection teams for language and communications services.
- **West Midlands Air Quality Improvement Programme (WMAir)** - Research supporting the improvement of air quality, and associated health, environmental and economic benefits, across the West Midlands, with rapid analysis of the impacts of COVID-19 related emergency public health measures (March – May 2020) upon nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM) levels in Birmingham City.

- Key findings:
 - Reductions in NO₂ concentrations associated with COVID-19 were of greatest magnitude for those living at the inner city and near-roadside locations, including areas of high deprivation.
 - Changes were less marked in the north-east of the city; the location of more affluent (upper income quintile) LSOA areas. Further (ongoing) research is required to better characterise these impacts upon different ethnic groups, including linkage to health outcome measures.

2.4.4 Workforce wellbeing

It is recognised that workforce wellbeing is integral to reducing health inequalities, particularly in anchor institutions. While this is partly about ensuring that staff in health and other public services are equipped to manage the challenges in their roles due to changes in priorities, scope and context, there is also an opportunity in terms of representation and improving the experiences of staff from diverse backgrounds.

- As part of their wider approach to reset and recovery, Sandwell MBC have a **Staff Impact Working Group** led by the Interim Director of Human Resources that has drawn on existing networks, HR data and staff engagement activities to capture experiences, views and thoughts from the workforce. Key messages from the group are that although staff have coped well with adapting quickly to a new working style and maintaining service delivery in adverse circumstances, it is recognised that this style of working has not suited everybody equally for a variety of reasons. The findings from this work will be used to define the new operating model and embed this within the organisation, balancing staff needs with the organisation's needs through continued regular communication and improvement of communication mechanisms in light of remote working - particularly with the frontline and those without remote access.
- **Birmingham & Solihull CCG** are developing updated ways of working with staff and communities, which includes establishing a Health Inequalities Task Group, which has set out priorities for action in the next 1-2 years. This includes using the role as an 'anchor institution' to promote economic prosperity and to support staff.

2.4.5 Innovation and system change

As well as an increased focus on health inequalities, the pandemic has provided opportunities to explore new ways of working and to collaborate across systems to develop interventions and approaches to addressing health inequalities – both within and across organisations.

- **Black Country and West Birmingham CCG Wider Determinants Programme Advisory Group** is undertaking a programme of work including a report looking at the system's response to COVID-19 and lessons learnt; Phase 1 programme looking at wider determinants of health; and Phase 2 programme focusing on designing, appraising, implementing and evaluating interventions.
- **West Bromwich African Caribbean Resource Centre** redesigned its services to support the community during first wave and flagged a lack of funding to increase their offer, especially for second wave. They are working with the local CCG to hold online workshops (report to be published) and make recommendations for CCGs to carry out Equality Impact Assessments.

Case study: Emergency Active Travel Funding to Transport for West Midlands

As part of the Department for Transport's allocation of its Emergency Active Travel Funding to Transport for West Midlands, the WMCA invested Active Black Country* to deliver an 8 week social prescribing of walking and cycling programme in collaboration with its 4 Primary Care Networks (PCNs).

The programme focused on testing the effectiveness of different methods in getting health care professionals to signpost people to walking and cycling and based on 3 stages.

- **Recruitment:** Each PCN identified a group of 10 patients who they felt would most benefit from getting them to walk and cycle. This included people with hypertension and from migrant communities and those who practices identified as pre-diabetic, 67% of participants across the 4 PCNs were from BAME communities and predominately male.
- **Advice and Guidance:** A consultation with the patients and provision of an e-resource providing details on local walking and cycling opportunities and the benefits of taking part.
- **Activation funding:** a £50 personal budget for half of the patients involved in the programme to see if this provided greater incentives to get walking and cycling e.g. footwear, bikes and travel passes.

The 8-week programme is coming to an end and has evidenced that 70% of patients taking part reported an improvement in physical health, 67% improvement in mental health and 93% stated they planned to continue being active.

The programme also identified the importance of companionship in encouraging people to be active and the importance of health care and physical activity sectors working better together. There are many lessons learnt including greater collaboration with PCNs and an opportunity to secure additional funding longer term.

Michael Salmon, Head of Insight, Health and Wellbeing for Active Black Country said:

“Active Black Country is working hard to ensure that all health care professionals, along with dedicated social prescribers, have the knowledge and resources required to signpost patients and clients to community solutions where appropriate. The resource that we have developed is a great way to encourage patients in primary care to access the wonderful parks and open spaces already available within their local community for the benefit of their health and wellbeing.”

*Active Black Country is one of the national network of Sport England funded Active Partnerships and is the strategic lead for sport and physical activity across the Black Country

Case study: St Margaret's Unity Hubb¹⁰⁷

This is a church supported project that uses church premises, but has been set up as a non-faith trust. Running out of a beautiful church building whilst meeting the needs of the very diverse local community, working specifically with women, was something Unity Hubb was excelling at before lockdown. They have managed to rethink their activities. They started by delivering seeds, plants and compost to local families; in the first week to 43 families and then for some weeks to 15-20 families.

They transferred many of their activities onto Zoom. For example, they have delivered:

- A cook together eat together event
- Family crafting sessions where they delivered craft packs and an artist helped them over Zoom to be creative
- Chai and chats

Rashta Butt, the Development Worker has also carried out one to one chats on the doorstep to a few of the most isolated of their participants. They have promoted the church's food bank, but also built on the goodwill in the community and collected for the Feed Birmingham campaign with a box outside the church.

Recognising how much the women were loving planting and also how many of the older generation had grown up in agricultural communities and had skills to pass on Rashta set about persuading the local allotment team and the existing plot holders that they could take over a plot. Thus, the "Diverse Garden" started in lockdown. The plot has been divided into ten so each participant can manage a small area, but take pleasure in what they can achieve. Other planting and crafting activities take place on a Tuesday. The next plot has been handed over, which is testimony to the project's success.

Even on a rainy Tuesday in October, 14 women turned up; three with children to plant, chat and do other activities. That is real indication of what has been created; a diverse community with connection and purpose.

Case study: Redeemer Church, Northfield - Supporting the Local Community¹⁰⁸

This church has adapted its offer to meet a wide variety of local needs. This has included food shops, food parcels, connecting people to the local food bank, pharmacy runs, gas and electric vouchers, referral, and one off events such as an alternative Halloween party for children with activity and snack packs and supporting the Northfield VE Day on your Porch initiative. They have made regular welfare calls and stayed in touch with their usual participants to check what they may be needing, even doing some of these at a distance in the front garden. They have made a point of celebrating events such as delivering a birthday cake or holding a mini birthday party.

They have used available funding to buy a few participants' tablets and have worked with them to get wifi access and to be able to join activities. Their approach has also not just been delivering services, but creating connected communities. One example is of two men who had previously met at a Redeemer Church event. They connected them up; co-ordinated one to do the other's shopping, and covered volunteer expenses.

Through lockdown, they ran a virtual coffee morning each week, which some people attended every week. Since then they have managed to restart their Place of Welcome, working within the social distancing restrictions. They are working on a community craft project: embroidered bunting for the centre they use to remember this year! They have also organised some get togethers of over 50's picnic lunches (5 guests and one from the church team) in their garden.

Since lockdown lifted, they have been holding a mobile coffee morning which has enabled them to find and connect with more isolated and vulnerable people on the estate. It has also meant they have been able to effectively signpost and partner with local organisations, referring people on for help with social care, foodbank, gardening and more. They go out with a car, individually wrapped pastries and coffee and tea and knock on every door of a chosen street. They serve people a drink and have a chat on the doorway, in a socially distanced way. They also have activity packs for children to distribute to under 5s. In addition, in the first three weeks they made two referrals to Adult Social Care, three to a local project, Futureproof, bought a bed for an elderly man, an oven for an older woman.

Finally, they are running an all generation's outdoor fitness group and a running group to ensure there is a safe way for local residents to get fit and healthy.

In addition to providing support to people on their local estate they feel they have ended up connecting more deeply with the area and working alongside council organisations in a way they would not have done otherwise.

Case study: St Germain's Church, Edgbaston¹⁰⁹ – Food distribution project

St Germain's Covid-19 Community Response Team was established in April 2020 to meet the growing needs of the local community. Initially they delivered food to those in need. They have also provided a cooked meals service as they found many households in need did not have facilities or were unable to cook food. A volunteer cook can produce halal food and culturally appropriate meals and there is always a vegetarian option.

Once lockdown lifted they encouraged those in need to come to the church to collect food and are open three days a week. They give out 60-80 food bags each week, feeding around 160 people.

They have not found the demand going away and even by October half term were cooking 180 meals each session so 360 each week, feeding around 160 households each week. They work closely with four hotels and a couple of hostels in the immediate vicinity which are current home for people who are homeless, have been subject to domestic abuse and are asylum seekers. As with other vulnerable households they delivered food to many of these families in lockdown and latterly encouraged them to come into the church.

They recruited over 30 volunteers of all faiths and none. People come to the front door asking for help and they are encouraged to become volunteers too. In October 2020 six of the volunteers had been recruited in this way. They also have support from members of the local community and many faith groups. They have regular donations, for example, from a Sikh gurdwara, a group of Muslim

women who collect and deliver tins of food and church groups which organise street collections for them.

The approach they take is broader than just food. They help connect their families to other services too. One example is the asylum seeking family of nine, soon to be ten. One of the volunteers who can speak Arabic has helped secure a school place, has ensured the hostel moved them from a small single room to two rooms, made a referral to the babybank for the forthcoming baby and introduced them to Migrant Help.

They have collected resources, for example, winter coats and shoes and to pass on to people. If they find that people need a particular thing they do a shout out to the community and can usually source what they need.

In the summer they opened for an additional day in the summer for families to come in. they provided different activity packs every week to take away. They were able to spend more time with people and tailor support to their needs.

Finally, they have an emotional wellbeing service which is non-Christian counselling and also referral to other services such as drug and substance recovery. This service operates three days a week.

As well as providing support to hundreds of people they suggest it has exposed is a level of need that people did not know about previously.

Section 2 summary

There is a two-way relationship between health and wealth on both an individual and population level. Inclusive growth and its role in reducing health inequalities needs to be considered in its broader context of an inclusive economy and wider determinants of health. Radical prevention means taking action as a whole system to tackle the underlying causes of poor health and health inequalities and shifting to more person and community-centred approaches to health and wellbeing, in line with inclusive growth principles.

Tackling health inequalities at a regional level means understanding how to lever current and future policy and investment opportunities in a way that benefits everyone, and actively seeks to reduce existing inequalities across the life course. However, the relationship between civic organisations, services and communities at the local and regional levels is crucial to understanding the unique populations, needs and assets in each area, and where working as a regional collective might enable us to amplify and add value to local approaches.

Despite the obvious challenges, the coronavirus pandemic has also highlighted ways to work differently and opportunities for positive change across the whole system – particularly in relation to engaging with communities and learning from the excellent work of the voluntary and community sector in understanding what is important to our citizens and the challenges they face. The final part of this report considers these opportunities in the context of the key issues underpinning disparities in COVID-19 outcomes and wider inequalities in health and wellbeing, identifying commitments to action by local and regional stakeholders and recommendations for national government that would act as a catalyst for this change.

Section 3

Commitments to action and recommendations

Public Health England has produced two significant reports on the impact of COVID-19 on particular communities. Its first report confirmed that COVID-19 has replicated and, in some cases, increased existing health inequalities. And in its report on BAME communities, it identified a number of reasons why death rates have been significantly higher amongst Black and Asian ethnic groups. Both reports emphasised the role of prevention through improving the wider determinants of health, and more equitable access to health and wider services.

This is in line with the issues highlighted by WM Citizens' Panel, which identified accessing healthcare and improving physical health as key components of community recovery. Alongside concerns about how to keep safe from coronavirus, panellists were particularly concerned that the healthcare system could get back on track to diagnose and treat people. They also identified the importance of preventative issues – promoting healthy living to reduce demand on services and tackling the deeper causes of poor health.

This final section of the report is framed around 4 big challenges that arise from this analysis.

- We must begin with the urgent task of **improving outcomes for BAME communities**. Targeted and immediate action to tackle structural racism is an urgent and immediate priority.
- But lasting change will only happen when we take a systemic approach to **tackling the wider determinants of health** and dealing with the structural inequalities we find in our economy, housing market, education, justice and transport systems.
- Similarly, we must tackle inequalities in the health and care system and **widen access to health and care services**. This requires a fundamental rebalancing of funding and focus on primary and preventative care.
- These challenges, in turn, will create the conditions in which **people-powered health** can flourish and healthy lifestyles can become the norm.

The 4 challenges are set out in the diagram below.



In the final section of this report, we take each of these challenges in turn and address two responses:

- Commitments to action – these are the activities that key stakeholders in the region are already undertaking, or are planning to undertake, that are seeking to address the challenges that have been identified – these are divided into commitment on the part of the WMCA and commitments made by other stakeholders.
- Recommendations to government – these are changes required of central government in order to unlock change in the region.



1. Improving outcomes for BAME communities

This report has shown clear evidence that the coronavirus pandemic has both exposed and exacerbated longstanding inequalities affecting black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups. The risks of catching COVID-19 and dying from it have been shown to be higher for BAME groups than in White ethnic groups. There are several inter-related factors that might contribute to this disparity. Individuals from BAME groups may be more likely to suffer from other chronic conditions; they are more likely to work in occupations with higher risk to COVID-19 exposure and more likely to use public transport to travel to their places of work; and the risks of transmission and morbidity can be exacerbated by the housing challenges faced by some members of BAME groups. Pervading all of this, BAME communities experience systemic discrimination and racism on a daily basis which directly affects physical and mental health and has been shown to affect access to health services.

A whole-system approach to responding to and recovering from COVID-19 must address these issues head on. All public institutions need to monitor and evaluate the extent to which systemic discrimination affects their services and working practices. BAME groups must be better represented in their workplaces and NHS and other health and care bodies should commit to relevant race equality standards.

WMCA Commitments

- The WMCA's independent Leadership Commission will make advancing opportunity and mobility within the health and care sector a key priority in its new implementation plan and work with partners on action to achieve this.
- WMCA will develop a targeted Thrive mental health programme co-designed with BAME employers and employees.
- WMCA will carry out rigorous equalities impact assessments of all of its directorates and wider agencies.
- WMCA will hold Mayor's WM BAME roundtable meetings every 6 months to monitor steps that been taken by WMCA and wider regional partners in relation to the Health of the Region commitments to action.

Partner Commitments

- The new multi-agency Midlands System Transformation Recovery (STaR) Board will carry out an evaluation of regional NHS programmes through a Black Lives Matter and post-COVID lens.
- PHE West Midlands will develop a BAME and Disparities workplan to ensure improving health outcomes for BAME communities is a cross cutting consideration across priorities of health and wellbeing programmes; and undertake analysis to determine the extent of inequalities and impacts of COVID-19 on black and minority ethnic communities.

- Black Country and West Birmingham CCG Equality & Diversity leads group across the BCWB STP to ensure a consistent and unbiased approach in supporting BAME colleagues and delivering BRAP training for all STP board members. The Health Inequalities and Prevention Board will also improve our ethnicity data collection and use of ethnicity data and work to understand and address inequalities between different ethnicity groups
- Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust is committed to making progress on the Workforce Race Equality Standards (WRES) and are currently on track to meet the 2028 target for leadership diversity.
- Birmingham and Solihull STP will:
 - Routinely produce data to support restoration and recovery broken down by sub-analyses of socio-economic factors, including ethnicity and levels of deprivation
 - Deliver various initiatives to support people with diabetes, including a marketing plan being developed with our BAME diabetes patient champions and provider Weight Watchers (WW), to be delivered in communities and in different languages
 - Implement the NHSEI perinatal mental health support for BAME women
 - Recruit a STP Inequalities Lead, STP Workforce and Inclusion Director and STP Workforce and Inclusion Convenor to support delivery
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council will work to adopt the PHE Heat Tool as part of a health in all policies/integrated Equity assessments across Council
- Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust will launch a health and wellbeing strategy for staff, supported by their BAME inclusion network, which provides a 12 month calendar of culturally appropriate health and wellbeing initiatives to support staff from a physical and mental wellbeing perspective.
- Aston University is developing 'Inclusive Aston' which includes working towards a Race Equality Charter award
- West Midlands Police are working to look more like the people they serve and have set a target of recruiting 1,000 BAME officers over the next three years.
- The Walsall Together Partnership is committed to the Workforce Race Equality Standard and seek to hear BAME views through engagement and through Walsall for All and Healthwatch partners
- Healthwatch WM will conduct targeted work to gather views and experiences of patients and the public, especially from underrepresented groups.

2. Tackling the wider determinants of health

In order that we might be more resilient to future pandemics, we need to make sure we create a society in which everybody can lead a healthy lifestyle. This means looking not just at the causes of ill health, but the causes of the causes: getting a good start in life, educational attainment, our jobs and incomes, our homes and where we live, our friendships and sense of purpose and belonging. These wider determinants of health have been shown to be the main drivers of health inequalities which in turn have led to some communities being more badly affected by COVID-19 than others.

In responding to and recovering from the pandemic, the health and wider system must put a strong focus on these root causes. Perhaps one of the most important initiatives though that will help to achieve this is through a Health in All Policies (HIAP) approach. HIAP encourages every public agency to consider the health implications of every decision it takes to find opportunities to promote wellbeing, avoid causing harm, and reduce inequality between groups. Another initiative to encourage this systemic approach would be to become a Marmot city region to galvanise our shared commitment to preventative health and wellbeing and build a more collaborative system for achieving it.

WMCA Commitments

- WMCA will work with partners to become a Marmot City-Region and develop a 3-year action plan for change.
- WMCA will incorporate a Health In All policies (HIAP) approach into its Inclusive Growth Framework.
- WMCA will continue to pay the Real Living Wage and ensure its contractors do so too.
- WMCA will target underrepresented groups for training programmes to support access to jobs, particularly where groups are under-represented in the workforce – for example, our work with Black CodHers helps black women gain digital skills and careers.
- WMCA will capture health outcomes in our zero-carbon initiatives.
- WMCA will work closely with public health colleagues on planning applications to embed public health expertise within our Housing and Land team.

Partner Commitments

- The new multi-agency Midlands System Transformation Recovery (STaR) Board, working with PHE WM, will establish a Health Inequalities Working Group which will:
 - support Integrated Care Systems to plan and be held accountable for addressing health inequalities within the populations they serve;
 - provide standards, guidance and tools to ensure health inequalities are considered in the design and evaluation of new NHS services.

- NHS Confederation has called for both local authority and NHS commissioners to work with wider system partners to integrate and embed employment support alongside clinical services to improve access, integration and visibility of employment support.
- Birmingham and Solihull STP are implementing a system leadership programme for 500 leaders who will receive bespoke learning on meeting the needs of vulnerable citizens and tackling key inequalities. It will also support vulnerable people through shielding, particularly in the context of a local 'lockdown', with additional support delivered through our partner organisations.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will continue to work with partners to identify additional opportunities for intervention and prevention in reducing the harm caused by drugs, gangs and violence. For example, the New Chance programme provides a whole system approach to keep low level female offenders out of the criminal justice system.
- The directors of public health share the ambition to reduce health inequalities and address the wider determinants of health. In particular, they are committed to working with partners and the WMCA to address these disparities through inclusive growth, leadership and coordination.
- Black Country and West Birmingham CCG Health Inequalities and Prevention Board has a Wider Determinants sub-group which steers the Wider Determinants of Healthy Life Expectancy (WHoLE) programme. Phase 1 of the programme has just completed and Phase 2 will design, appraise, implement and evaluate interventions.

- The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust will commit to working with partners including the Local Authority and Dudley College to explore how they can ensure more employment opportunities for local people, in particular those who have found it hard to get employment in the past
- WM Violence Reduction Unit keep a continued focus on reducing inequalities through the place-based pilots, and through a new inequalities 'champion' who will work closely with theme leads, the data analytics team and the commissioning lead to embed efforts to reduce health inequalities systematically across the VRU.
- WMCA Homelessness Taskforce will develop a Commitment to Collaborate toolkit to prevent and relieve homelessness, which will provide a framework to tackle the systemic inter-related issues which drive homelessness and work closely with health colleagues to provide access to health related interventions for those with poorest access.
- University Hospitals Birmingham will work with CLES and Pioneer Housing on a project to retrain hospitality workers to work within UHB hospitals.
- The Black Country Consortium will work with developers on the incorporation of the Black Country Garden City principles into future housing pipeline.
- Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust are committed to deploying a minimum of 2% of its future annual budget with local suppliers and to paying all staff at or above the 'living wage'.
- The Walsall Together partnership will ensure that Housing, the Community and Voluntary sector is represented on the Partnership alongside health and other statutory partners and that its plans are informed by evidence of the holistic needs of the population.



3. Widening access to health and care

The responses to our call for evidence have brought into sharp focus the inequalities in healthcare provision caused by disparities in access to good quality healthcare, especially for poorly managed conditions in vulnerable groups. Lockdown has made things considerably worse as the NHS seeks to deal with a significant backlog of non-COVID related morbidity and it is likely that the effect of this will widen existing health inequalities and lead to avoidable cancer death as a result of diagnostic delays. Across the UK it was estimated that by August 2.1 million people have missed out on screening, while 290,000 people with suspected symptoms have not been referred for hospital tests . And this is just cancer. Other concerns include access to mental health services (see next section); the future of care homes and domiciliary care; and the implications of moving towards a system that relies more heavily on ‘telehealth’.

‘Recovery’ presents the opportunity for a radical rethink of the ways in which people access health and care services. Primary care services could be much better integrated within local neighbourhoods with clinics, pharmacies, housing officers, voluntary and community groups working together as we have seen in the crisis – particularly focusing on those who most need support and access. We need to exploit the opportunities created by the switch to virtual consultations and ramp up digital screening services but in doing so place a big focus on supporting those who don’t have digital devices or good connectivity or the confidence and skills to make the most of telehealth services. And we need a new vision for adult social care, addressing the crisis facing the care home sector and finding new ways to support people to live at home with connections to their wider community.

WMCA Commitments

- WMCA will train and support healthcare professionals to refer disabled citizens to physical activity as part of its IncludeMe initiative.
- WMCA will amplify its Thrive into Work programme to a further 450 people living with poor mental and physical health. It will focus on those out of work and those at risk of leaving employment due to their health condition.
- WMCA will continue to support the utilisation of transport hubs as digital screening centres and for 'pop up' heart / CV checks, breast screening, sexual health etc.

Partner Commitments

- The new multi-agency Midlands System Transformation Recovery (STaR) Board will ensure that the differential experience of access and delivery of services is an intrinsic part of service design and evaluation.
- PHE West Midlands have carried out a WM-wide needs assessment and literature review to inform regional and local commissioning of language and interpreting services in the West Midlands and informed commissioning of an interpreting service for the Health Protection function in the West Midlands.

- University Hospitals Birmingham will use digital transformation to reduce health inequalities by enabling people to access health care and information in a more accessible and a timely way and ensure its staff are advocates for digital inclusion including creating community diagnostic hubs in local neighbourhoods.
- Black Country and West Birmingham CCG will develop an Academy to provide population health management capacity to the system. It is developing a number of population health management projects that will widen access to health and care including early diagnosis of cancer in vulnerable groups.
- Birmingham and Solihull STP will develop population health management within Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and ensure its primary care estate is under one digital domain by March 2021 promoting digitally enabled care for staff to work together in virtual multi-disciplinary teams.
- The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust will commit to working with colleagues in Dudley to explore how to collectively make a difference to cancer outcomes, with a particular focus on parts of the Borough where outcomes are poorer. This will include ensuring screening services provided by the Trust are delivered in a way which encourages uptake from more vulnerable people and how cancer services are culturally sensitive and more person centred.
- Aston University would like to develop a Health Hub at Aston that would be open to the local community.
- University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire and Coventry University want to develop a community diagnostics centre in the city centre that would improve access to such facilities to the local community.
- Healthwatch WM will provide advice and information about access to services and support for making informed choices.
- Walsall Together Partnership will understand the inequitable take up of health and care services and working through the Partnership and wider community networks to address the causes.



4. People-powered health

The coronavirus crisis has reminded us all of the importance of our own physical and mental wellbeing. Not only have we seen the clear relationship between having pre-existing health conditions and the risks of dying from the virus, lockdown has reminded many people of the benefits of daily exercise and how an appreciation of nature can be so good for our mental health. This apparent silver lining is something we should not lose. How we all look after our physical and mental wellbeing must be central to community recovery.

People-powered health is an approach to wellbeing that puts people and prevention first. This could be as simple as encouraging people to walk or cycle more through safer streets and active travel schemes. It involves initiatives to tackle childhood obesity, build public awareness about healthy eating and tackle food poverty in poorer neighbourhoods. As we look forward to the Commonwealth Games it means making sure there is a clear legacy around sport in the community and physical activity. But it also involves putting people at the heart of decision-making and the co-design of our health and care services.

WMCA Commitments

- WMCA will continue to develop its Include Me WM programme to engage disabled people and people with long term health conditions to be physically active.
- WMCA is committed to increase cycling from 3% to 5% of mode share by 2023 through the delivery of the WM Cycling Charter and extending cycling and walking routes.
- WMCA will work with other Commonwealth Games Delivery Partners to develop a long lasting physical activity and wellbeing legacy for the region.
- WMCA will endorse a Making Every Contact Count approach amongst its employees and encourage and influence other anchor institutions / businesses / employers to support people-powered health in their workplaces
- WMCA will standardise inclusion of social value in our single commissioning framework MoU's to include Wellbeing and work together to maximise and measure outputs in the communities that we work in.
- WMCA's Young Combined Authority Board will continue to encourage and challenge the West Midlands Combined Authority and its partners to listen to the voices of citizens when shaping policies which will affect their lives.

Partner Commitments

- PHE West Midlands are working with national colleagues and NHS Midlands advocating for community centred and asset based approaches, providing resources, tools and products to enable 'people-powered health' including support and leadership for the Regional Social Prescribing Network, promoting the role of the NHS as an anchor institution, maximising opportunities through volunteering (including PHE staff role modelling this) and landing social marketing campaigns.
- Black Country & West Birmingham CCG PCNs will have recruited 63 social prescribing link workers, 38 care coordinators and 12 Health and Wellbeing Coaches by March 2021 and plan to recruit more than 200 posts by March 2024. These new roles focus on people-empowered health. The learnings from the Personalised Care Demonstrator site are being embedded in our workstreams. 9 PCNs are joining the Dartmouth PCN development programme in 2020/21.
- Birmingham and Solihull STP will support behaviour change for staff and community leaders through various wellbeing initiatives including a targeted campaign on flu vaccination with a focus on the most vulnerable and those disproportionately affected by COVID-19.
- Black Country Consortium is supporting the 'Tribe Project' - a social prescribing campaign, supporting prevention and increase community resilience; and supporting a whole system approach to reducing childhood obesity from early years through to secondary schools.
- Aston University are working in partnership with Aston Villa Foundation to go into local schools to deliver workshops about eye health, conduct eye screening and eye tests for those that need it, and working with children and parents on childhood eating habits.
- Coventry University will create a number of fully funded PhD studentship opportunities which focus on themes related to COVID-19 and the post-pandemic future.
- Healthwatch WM will promote and support involvement in commissioning of health services and provision of care services.
- The Walsall for All Board will raise public awareness about the support available to improve mental and physical wellbeing through the Walsall Together partnership.
- Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) have re-established police cadets to support young people and reduce inequalities. In addition, the PCC and West Midlands Police are rolling out units in our most diverse and challenging areas, focusing on young people who need the most support.

Recommendations to Government

1. Improving outcomes for BAME communities

- Government should produce a clear and comprehensive action plan setting out how it will work with local and regional partners to take action on race disparities and associated risk factors.
- Government should commission further data, research and analytical work at the local and regional level to understand the geographical and place dimensions of race disparities in health.

2. Tackling the wider determinants of health

- The NHS should make local action on tackling health inequalities the focus of the NHS 'Phase 4 Letter' on Covid19.
- Government should make health and well-being outcomes a key driver of economic development and levelling-up policies including industrial strategy and local industrial strategies; the UK Shared Prosperity Fund; Towns Fund; and future devolution deals.
- Government should double the proportion of health and social care spending focused on prevention and public health from 5 to 10 percent over time.

3. Widening access to health and care

- Government should ensure that Local Authorities have sufficient powers to improve public health and reduce health inequalities, with Mayoral Combined Authorities providing support where they can add value (Devo WP Submission).
- Government should support the WMCA's proposal to establish digital screening hubs in high footfall transport locations.
- Government should do all it can to close the gap in primary care provision between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods in terms of funding per patient and serving GPs.
- Government should look to widen its plans and increase its investment to tackle digital poverty with a particular focus on those who do not access health and care services online.

4. People-powered health

- Government should invest in the WMCA's Radical Health Prevention Fund to drive forward innovation, social prescribing and other initiatives to tackle health inequalities in the region.
- Government should pilot the Kruger report's Community Right to Serve provisions for health and social care in the West Midlands.¹¹⁰

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Appendix 1

Call for Evidence Submissions

Name of evidence	Name of organisation	Abstract
Ethnicity and risk of death in patients hospitalised for	University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust	<p>Quantitative study exploring whether ethnic groups more at risk of worse outcomes from COVID-19 infection, including death?</p> <p>Conclusions: There were more admissions from South Asian patients to our hospital than would be expected based on our local population. These patients were admitted with a worse severity of COVID19 related respiratory compromise without a significant delay in presentation and experience a higher level of mortality even when differences in age, sex, deprivation and key comorbidities were taken into account.</p> <p>South Asian ethnicity may form another 'at risk' population from COVID-19 and further studies are needed to identify any treatable factors to improve outcomes as well as to refine our understanding and communication around non-modifiable risk factors</p>
West Midlands Inquiry into COVID-19 Fatalities in BAME communities	Labour Party – West Midlands	<p>West Midlands Inquiry into COVID-19 Fatalities in BAME communities report included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gathering testimony ● statistics ● recommendations
Cabinet report - reset and recovery	Children's Services Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council	<p>Evidence explored the Covid Impact Assessment on the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● community impact ● economy impact ● staff impact

Comments from CCG on updated ways of working with staff and communities	Birmingham & Solihull CCG	<p>Comments from CCG on updated ways of working with staff and communities included for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a Health Inequalities Task Group, which has set out priorities for action in the next 1-2 years. This includes using our roles as ‘anchor institutions’ to create economic prosperity and to support our staff.
CCG Health Impact Assessment	Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council, NHS CCGs	<p>The aim of the HIA was to identify key factors that may affect the population’s health and wellbeing as a direct result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Key findings included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An integrated recovery is needed as health and wellbeing has been deeply impacted on. The implication is that recovery cannot just be contained to one sector and has to be connected across all four to have the biggest chance of success. The double impact: harm from COVID-19 has been unequally distributed across the wider impacts from the pandemic and lockdown will fall more heavily on communities most directly affected by the disease itself. This analysis shows the potential harm for more deprived areas of Coventry and Warwickshire
West Midlands Language and communication service needs assessment report	Health Protection Team - PHE West Midlands	<p>Report included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive study that aimed to provide a picture of the language and communication need within the health protection response in PHE WM. Commissioning processes used by other PHE Health Protection teams for language and communications services
Report on the experiences of families who have a child with a disability or additional need	Parents Opening Doors Charity	<p>Report on the experiences of families who have a child with a disability or additional need included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> survey of members of the group- parent carers forum for disabled children. emotional health and mental health was a big factor furlough was a worry cancelled appointments parents feel abandoned Some didn’t get shielding letter and local authorities slow to react. Recommended to ensure CCG commissioning changes are communicated effectively

Update on the research BVSC is undertaking	BVSC	<p>Update on the research BVSC is undertaking included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WMCA Social Economy Rapid Evidence Review – being delivered in partnership with University of Wolverhampton and University of Coventry, to draw out key innovations from the social economy during Covid19 ● NNS Impact Assessment – Over-arching impact assessment of the NNS structure, commissioned by Birmingham City Council. ● Birmingham City University – Research into the response from the sector to Covid19 and what this means for BCU as an anchor organisation, focussing particularly on emergence of Mutual Aid Groups – ● Violence Reduction Unit Evaluation – Ongoing piece being delivered in partnership with UOB, UOW and Community Researchers; early evaluation has reflected on the impact of Covid19.
Key points from report on Local Authority Responses to people with no recourse to public funds during the pandemic	University of Wolverhampton	<p>Key points from report on Local Authority Responses to people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) during the pandemic included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There was a lack of information available for people with NRPF ● Numbers of service users with NRPF who had COVID-19 symptoms were relatively small, but those who did have symptoms were particularly likely to die or become seriously ill ● People with NRPF struggled to access food, shelter and subsistence support during the pandemic
Impact upon people who have experienced rape or other sexual abuse	Coventry Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre	<p>Impact upon people who have experienced rape or other sexual abuse included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● more isolated / locked in with perpetrator ● heightened anxiety ● lack of access to first responders who refer at risk people to service ● challenges with online / telephone service ● waiting time for service significantly increased ● exacerbated existing inequalities faced by clients e.g. lack of access to financial services ● short term funding from COVID specific funds is ineffective for increasing staffing levels ● control measures limiting service capacity

Comments on the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on BAME communities	Sikh Doctors Association	Comments on the causes of disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on BAME communities included: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Deprivation and poverty 2 Discrimination and systemic racism 3 Cultural variations in disease prevention and understanding 4 Over exposure to high Covid areas, such as front-line work in the NHS, care homes, cleaners in the hospitality sector.
Comments setting out the programme being undertaken by the Group	Black Country and West Birmingham CCGs Wider Determinants Programme Advisory Group	Comments setting out the programme being undertaken by the Group included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System report to be published looking at the system's response to COVID-19 and lessons learnt. • Phase 1 programme looking at wider determinants of health • Phase 2 programme focusing on designing, appraising, implementing and evaluating interventions.
Report on Impact of COVID-19 on Inequalities	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	The report brings together the existing national evidence and analyses the probable impact on different groups. The Council is in the process of developing a targeted Health Inequalities Strategy
Blog on the contribution to new ways of approaching inter-faith and business support through community organising as a result of the pandemic	Citizens UK Birmingham	Blog included findings on concerns felt by BAME communities including hate crime, disproportionate impact on their communities and faith and income
Report on Regional Health Impacts of Covid-19	Transport for West Midlands	The report focused on the Regional Health Impacts of Covid-19, and the role of public transport and active travel in this, especially concerning continued access to health care and TfWM role in keeping the region staying active and healthy. Evidence also included the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public opinion survey results • WMCA Board report on the Review of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP) to support a Greener, Fairer, Healthier Recovery • Equality impact Assessment on the transport needs of vulnerable groups during the pandemic

<p>Parliamentary evidence on the disproportionate impact of COVID 19, and the UK government response, on ethnic minorities and women in the UK</p>	<p>Department of Sociology and Policy, Aston University</p>	<p>Key findings from evidence included the following:</p> <p>Ethnic minority people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scarcity and unreliability of PPE sources for frontline staff/key workers disproportionately puts people from ethnic minority backgrounds at higher risk of infection <p>Women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● lack of access to contraception means and abortion ● maternity services - some of them are/ were not available <p>Care during labour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● partners are not allowed to be present during labour to support, especially when baby needs care, or woman need help communicating in English <p>Women asylum seekers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● can't use remote services due to limited English language. No interpreters available ● reduced access to charity services
<p>Blog on health inequalities</p>	<p>Legacy West Midlands</p>	<p>Comments from the charity included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The impact of Covid 19 has had a devastating impact in Lozellls and the neighbouring areas. ● There has been a limited response from public sector agencies but Birmingham Director of Public Health has held zoom meetings with members of the Bangladeshi Community

The role of faith communities	Nishkam Civic Association	<p>Comments from Nishkam Civic Association included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● essential role of communities, particularly faith, in COVID response and this must not be forgotten ● need to develop policy setting / community engagement process for decisions making ● we cannot expect communities to self-finance and leave them to their own devices <p>Taraki COVID Report – Executive Summary and full report (Mental Health / Wellbeing) can be accessed here: https://tinyurl.com/yykk6x6j</p> <p>COVID 19 – Response and support initiatives by Nishkam Organisations can be accessed here: https://www.taraki.co.uk/covid19-research</p> <p>Following evidence provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Covid Crisis Reflections - Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh OBE KSG, Chairman Nishkam Civic Association ● How Covid-19 has impacted the Sikh Community – Sikh network ● Sikh Network Covid19 Survey Report ● Taraki COVID Report – Executive Summary and full report (Mental Health / Wellbeing) ● Birmingham Council of Faiths role during COVID-19 and its impact ● case studies on how Faith Communities Stepped up in the Pandemic ● Birmingham Scouts and Guides activities ● COVID 19 – Response and support initiatives by Nishkam Organisations ● Examples of Muslim and Christian organisations in Birmingham (x 7)
Key activities from the Council	Coventry Council	<p>Key activities from the Council included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call to Action to address health inequalities has been agreed by the Coventry Health and Wellbeing Board ● Reset and Recovery approach, which includes specific external programmes on Regeneration and The Economy; Tackling Inequalities; and Communities and New Social Enterprises. The aim is for health inequalities to be embedded into all of these pillars, using One Coventry values (working together and involving the right people)

Reports on COVID-19 activity impact	Birmingham City Council	<p>Evidence included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of activity to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on BAME communities • Combined presentation: (1) scale of the food offer for shielded and vulnerable people in Birmingham (April 2020) and (2) insight from TAWS (May 2020) • An overview of the impact of COVID-19 across the life course • Neighbourhood Development Support Unit commissioned report – “Birmingham’s Collaborative Neighbourhoods” by Locality • Executive Business Report – an update on BCC’s response to COVID-19
Range of evidence provided, including responses to the call for evidence questions, case studies, report and infographic	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	<p>Evidence included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • case studies on engagement exercises with the BAME and other communities • Health & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee report on the council’s and partners response to Covid • infographic of the support the council has provided to residents and businesses
Comments on the impact of COVID-19 and activities of CCG	West Bromwich African Caribbean Resource Centre	<p>Comments on the impact of COVID-19 and activities of CCG included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online workshops held by CCG with report to be published • recommended for CCGs to carry out Equality Impact Assessments • The charity redesigned its services to support the community during first wave and flagged lack of funding to increase offer especially for second wave.
Research supporting the improvement of air quality, and associated health, environmental and economic benefits, across the West Midlands	The West Midlands Air Quality Improvement Programme	<p>Research on rapid analysis of the impacts of COVID-19 related emergency public health measures (March – May 2020) upon nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM) levels in Birmingham City.</p> <p>Key Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reductions in NO₂ concentrations associated with COVID-19 were of greatest magnitude for those living at the inner city and near-roadside locations, including areas of high deprivation. • Changes were less marked in the north-east of the city; the location of more affluent (upper income quintile) LSOA areas. Further (ongoing) research is required to better characterise these impacts upon different ethnic groups, including linkage to health outcome measures.
Comments on key activities during COVID-19	Birmingham Mind	<p>Key activities during COVID-19 included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with BAME communities and finding increased anxiety, mistrust and language barriers • Community Development Worker Service re-engaged with communities and supporting remotely and have been working with CCG to deliver key messages to communities

Appendix 2

Thematic analysis of qualitative evidence submitted to RHIC Call for Evidence, Sept 2020

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In addition to reports and quantitative data from formal engagement exercises or research, a number of local partners and stakeholders submitted qualitative responses to the call for evidence. These included civic, academic and voluntary & community sector organisations,¹¹ reflecting insights from community engagement as part of their regular practice.

A thematic analysis was carried out to identify key themes relating to experiences of COVID-19 and its impact on communities, and the challenges, barriers and support needs identified in improving accessibility. This is summarised in Table A.

Table A: Thematic analysis of qualitative evidence submitted

Experiences of COVID-19 and impact on communities

Theme 1: Exacerbation of existing inequalities

Exacerbation of existing health and social inequalities was a consistent theme, with responses identifying impacts relating to people (i.e. protected and marginalised groups), and places (i.e. wider determinants of health).

1.1 Impact on protected and marginalised groups

BAME communities, women, asylum seekers and rough sleepers (including those with substance use issues) were highlighted as key groups affected by both long-standing inequalities and COVID-19. Impacts cited included those on mental health and wellbeing (e.g. through anxiety and bereavement due to COVID-19) and not just the physical consequences of infection. This sub-theme intersects across other thematic areas, with these groups identified as being disproportionately affected by the health and economic impacts of control measures. Underlying health conditions were also cited as a factor in existing and exacerbated inequalities.

1.2 Wider determinants of health

This sub-theme is divided into impacts of wider determinants on individuals and communities, and impacts on environments and places. The former highlights the two-way relationship between COVID-19 and health inequalities: while the disproportionate effects on people living in deprived areas and the increased risk of transmission in certain sectors are recognised, impacts on wider determinants are also cited as consequences of the pandemic (e.g. increasing homelessness). However, a number of positive environmental impacts were also identified, namely improved air quality, reduced carbon emissions and reduced noise. A reduction in road traffic accidents was also noted.

Table A: Thematic analysis of qualitative evidence submitted continued

Theme 2: Impacts of control measures

This theme relates specifically to the impact of measures taken to control the spread of COVID-19 rather than the effects of the virus itself. These are split broadly into impacts on health and wellbeing, and those on the economy – however, the two are closely linked and intersect with the exacerbation of existing inequalities.

2.1 Health and wellbeing impacts

Health and wellbeing impacts cover direct and indirect impacts on mental health and wellbeing, as well as psychological and social impacts. These included isolation and loneliness through lockdown and shielding; anxiety, frustration and bereavement; uncertainty around employment or immigration status; and the impact of loss of income. Disproportionate impacts on BAME communities and asylum seekers/refugees were again emphasised, e.g. women asylum seekers reported an exacerbation in loneliness.

2.2. Economic impacts

This subtheme concerns the impact on the economy and employment sectors as well as on individuals and families. Small businesses and the faith sector were highlighted as bearing major impacts of loss of income – particularly small businesses that did not operate online and were therefore unaware of or unable to access Government funding, or where employment type was not covered by the furlough scheme.

Table A: Thematic analysis of qualitative evidence submitted continued

Theme 3: Culture and behaviour

While this theme overlaps with other thematic areas, it was clearly a theme in its own right, with two distinct sub-themes: the general shifts in culture and behaviour that have occurred as a result of the pandemic and control measures (linking with Theme 2), and where specific cultural characteristics have interacted with these measures to impact disproportionately on certain groups (linking with Theme 1).

3.1 Shifts in culture and behaviour

This subtheme was predominantly concerned with changes in transport use and physical activity – specifically, decreases in transport use and increases in walking and cycling, which relates to the environmental impacts noted in 2

3.2 Relationship between culture and COVID-19 impacts

This sub-theme included increased risks presented by culture-specific behaviours (e.g. increased risk of transmission due to cohabitation with elders; traditional Bangladeshi diet increasing risks of obesity) and the impacts on way of life (e.g. enforced restrictions on places of worship that are central to way of life, such as Sikh Gurdwaras. However, an increased appreciation of the role of faith and faith communities was also noted, suggesting that culture may play a protective role in maintaining wellbeing during the crisis (see 2.1).

Table A: Thematic analysis of qualitative evidence submitted continued

Theme 4: Safety

This is again a theme that overlaps across a number of areas, but was prominent enough to be a theme in itself. The theme is divided into concerns relating to the risk of infection, and those relating to unintended consequences of lockdown (see Theme 3).

4.1 Fear of infection

Direct concerns about infection risk focused mainly on a lack of confidence in social distancing measures, either because it was felt other people were not respecting these measures, or because circumstances and/or environments made it difficult to follow guidance, e.g. using public transport, attending school, or using narrow high streets). Women asylum seekers reported feeling unsafe in their accommodation as other residents were not respecting self-isolation and social distance rules.

4.2 Unintended consequences of lockdown

Concerns around indirect impacts on safety included victims of domestic violence being isolated with their abusers, and reduced access to services (see Theme 5).

Table A: Thematic analysis of qualitative evidence submitted continued

Challenges, barriers and needs

Theme 5: Access to services

Access to services was a prominent theme in responses relating to community challenges, barriers and needs during the pandemic, with the disproportionate impacts on BAME and marginalised groups evident in both subthemes: the availability and distribution of health and care resources, and experiences of these services.

5.1 Availability and distribution of resources

This sub-theme picked up issues around accessing specific services and/or resources, and wider issues around recovery funding. Reduced capacity and contact was noted both generally (e.g. lack of access to first responders and GP appointments; increased waiting times) and in relation to issues affecting specific groups (e.g. women's reproductive health & care including lack of access to contraception, abortion & maternity care). Scarcity and unreliability of PPE sources for frontline staff/key workers was a key concern in relation to increasing risk among BAME workers (see Theme 1). A lack of funding and staffing overall was highlighted, as well as inequitable distribution of these resources: white-led organisations and a lack of trust established in local communities were cited as reasons why residents from BAME communities were not benefitting from available funding in some areas.

5.2 Experiences of care

Overall, this sub-theme reflects poorer experiences of care for people from BAME groups and women, linking to the disproportionate impacts on these groups outlined in Theme 1.1. Language barriers and challenges with using online or telephone services were cited as a key issue, particularly for women asylum seekers who were unable to use remote services with no interpreters available. Women who were alone while giving birth were cited as particularly vulnerable, particularly where their babies required special care or they had interpretation needs.

Table A: Thematic analysis of qualitative evidence submitted continued

Theme 6. Stigma and trust

In addition to the practical barriers identified in 5.1, which related predominantly to service provision not being appropriate to community needs, there were also factors which made people unwilling to seek help. Stigma around help-seeking was identified as being a particular issue in refugee and migrant communities; there was also a lack of trust in services and the government, with misinformation and a lack of clarity cited as an issue.

Table A: Thematic analysis of qualitative evidence submitted continued

Theme 7: Information

This theme relates to information provided to individuals and communities during the pandemic, and information gathered by health and other public services.

7.1 Communication and messaging

Uncertainty and inadequate communication was a key concern among service users and communities, both generally around risk (e.g. why BAME communities are more affected) and specifically within services (see 5.3). This sub-theme is strongly linked to lack of trust (Theme 6).

7.2 Lack of data and visibility

The lack of data on ethnicity and faith was highlighted as a general concern. However, even where data are available, the categories are broad and some communities are consistently 'invisible' (e.g. the Sikh community).



West Midlands
Combined Authority



Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee

Tuesday 8 September 2020 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

David Lane (Chair)	
Councillor Ram Lakha OBE (Vice-Chair)	Coventry City Council
Councillor Ahmad Bostan	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Alan Butt	City of Wolverhampton Council
Sean Farnell	Coventry & Warwickshire LEP
Councillor Michael Gough	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Christine Martin	Staffordshire Non-Constituent Authorities
Councillor Alexander Phillips	Shropshire Council
Councillor June Tandy	Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Councillor David Thain	Worcestershire Non-Constituent Local Authorities
Councillor Gurmeet Singh Sohal	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

In Attendance

Pete Bond	Transport for West Midlands
Deborah Cadman	West Midlands Combined Authority
Louise Cowen	West Midlands Combined Authority
Peter Farrow	City of Wolverhampton Council
Ben Gittings	West Midlands Combined Authority
Julia Goldsworthy	West Midlands Combined Authority
Victoria Harman	West Midlands Combined Authority
Linda Horne	West Midlands Combined Authority
Sandra Kalyan	City of Wolverhampton Council
Tim Martin	West Midlands Combined Authority
Carl Pearson	West Midlands Combined Authority
Hardial Phull	West Midlands Combined Authority
Gurmit Sangha	West Midlands Combined Authority
Rachel Teoh	West Midlands Combined Authority

Item Title

No.

15. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fred Grindrod (Birmingham City Council) and Councillor Alan Taylor (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council).

16. Minutes - 14 July 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

17. Chair's Remarks

Future Meetings

The Chair proposed that for the foreseeable future, meetings of the committee should continue to be held online rather than automatically return to in-person meetings. These new arrangements had appeared to enable a more engaged committee and to help with attendance. Other members of the committee supported these comments.

The Chair welcomed the Chief Executive, Deborah Cadman and thanked her for committing the time to brief ARAC and take questions.

18. Matters Arising

(a) Whistleblowing

The Monitoring Officer advised the committee of investigations being undertaken by the Internal Audit team in relation to whistleblowing allegations. It was noted that the Chair was being kept informed outside of the meetings and was content with the actions to date and the information currently being provided.

19. Forward Plan

The committee considered the plan of items to be reported to future meetings.

Resolved:

- (1) The items of business to be reported to future meetings be noted.

20. Review of Governance Procedures and Risk Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Chief Executive provided the committee with an overview of the WMCA's corporate governance procedures whilst considering the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic had brought about unprecedented challenges to the continuance of normal activities and following the 'lockdown' it was impossible to maintain the normal public meeting arrangements for WMCA boards and committees. The Chief Executive set out the decision-making processes carried out under delegated powers and the key mechanisms put into place to ensure key decisions were taken in a way that had either formal or informal approval of board members.

Councillor Alexander Philips questioned as to what the response of staff was regarding working from home, and if there were any opportunities from the new ways of working following COVID-19. Councillor Alan Butt asked how the Combined Authority were ensuring the wellbeing of staff who are working from home and lone working and what support was being offered. The Chief Executive stated that she had seen staff respond well to working from home and was proud and pleased with their resilience during these challenges. Significant communication activities continue to take place to ensure staff are engaged and supported.

The Director of Strategy provided an overview of the region's response to encourage economic recovery and the part that the WMCA was playing in being a key participant in the regional local resilience forum. Other activities included the re-purposing of Ring & Ride services to provide shuttle services from key transport hubs to NHS facilities. Councillor Ram Lakha was pleased and encouraged to hear the activities undertaken but queried the financial position of the organisation. The Director of Finance confirmed the financial position of the WMCA, and it was noted that the work undertaken to rein in spending had enabled an improved forecast budget deficit for the year of £2.0m. A further detailed financial update would be provided to the committee in due course. Councillor Ahmad Boston understood the risks associated to COVID-19 and sought assurance that the WMCA had the capacity and capabilities to address the increased demand for skills development in the region. The Chief Executive confirmed that work had been competed on skills provision and consideration for supporting youth employment whilst addressing structural inequalities.

The Chair requested that a further update on the Combined Authorities response to COVID-19 and the effects of the Combined Authorities normal priorities and strategic objectives be provided at its next meeting.

Resolved:

(1) The contents of the report be noted.

21. Data Protection & Data Processing

The committee received a report from the Data Protection Officer providing an annual assessment of compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2019. The report also included information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on data protection and the shift to working remotely.

Councillor Ram Lakha queried as to whether there had been any data protection issues / incidents during the pandemic while staff had been working from home. The Data Protection Officer informed the committee that incidents that had occurred related to phishing emails or were cyber related, although the defence systems in place continue to be considered strong and effective in maintaining the Combined Authorities systems. Other incidents related to human error mistakes. He also reported that various communication campaigns to remind, advise and reinforce protocols had been shared with staff.

The Chair requested that a review of the way data security was handled considering whatever new ways of working that are likely to become the norm be reported back to committee in Spring.

Resolved:

(1) The reporting of data protection assurance and compliance with data protection legislation be noted.

(2) A further update to be provided to the committee in Spring 2021.

22. Health and Safety Annual Update

The committee received a report from the Director of Integrated Network Services (in his role as the Combined Authorities Health and Safety lead executive) on the principal activities relating to the promotion and management of health and safety and outcomes during the past two years, outlining the strategic direction for occupational health and safety within the wide-ranging remit of the WMCA for the next three year period.

Councillor Ahmad Boston queried as to whether any assessment had been completed to address any potential liabilities or risks related to the transport services provided by the WMCA and Transport for West Midlands. He sought assurance that there was capacity to adequately address the health and safety challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Director of Integrated Network Services reported that various guidance to changing regulations and legislation had been provided to ensure appropriate implementation was carried out in a timely manner, and he therefore felt the organisation was adequately resourced and able to be proactive in identifying and dealing with health and safety risks. The WMCA had also offered its support to transport operators to provide a review of safety management systems. In addition, various risk assessment processes were in place and all liabilities were being considered.

The Chair expressed his satisfaction in the progress of health and safety arrangements within the Combined Authority but suggested that a separate workstream on the risks of lone working be more explicitly clear. He also requested that an annual update be provided to committee.

Resolved:

- (1) The annual update on Health and Safety contained within the report be noted.
- (2) An annual update be provided to committee.

23. WMCA Assurance Overview September 2020

The committee received a report from the Corporate Assurance Manager updating it on the progress made in the development of the assurance toolkit. Elements of the toolkit had been subject to live testing and reporting since October 2019. The report outlined the business case assessment and health check tools used on projects in recent months, along with the evidence and conclusions of the reviews conducted.

The Chair sought assurance from the Chief Executive that the WMCA was giving priority to recommendations arising from assurance reporting. He also suggested that the Assurance Team look to the committee to seek support if recommendations were not satisfactorily or speedily addressed. The Chief Executive confirmed that herself and the Senior Leadership Team received regular updates on the Single Assurance Framework and supported the Chair's comments.

Resolved:

- (1) The progress made by the Programme Assurance team in developing and testing the updated Assurance Toolkit in parallel with ongoing assurance processes and transition to the Single Assurance Framework be noted.
- (2) The committee receive regular updates from the Assurance Team at future meetings in a similar fashion to Internal Audit.

24. Treasury Management Strategy

Following changes to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy's code of practice, the committee now had delegated responsibility for the implementation and regular monitoring of the WMCA's Treasury Management strategy. The committee received a presentation from the Head of Financial Planning on the Treasury Management strategy, which included key areas of focus for consideration by the committee.

Councillor Ram Lakha sought assurance the WMCA had financial resilience, ensuring that a Section 114 notice would not be issued that indicated the authority was financially unsustainable. The Director of Finance confirmed that she was comfortable with the current financial position of the WMCA but recognised that consideration needed to be given to the identified funding gap for the forthcoming year.

The Chair asked that the Director of Finance return with a proposal on how the committee could receive independent advice on the Treasury Management Strategy in order to fulfil their duties properly.

Resolved:

- (1) The Treasury Management Strategy provided for background information be noted.
- (2) The Director of Finance will propose to the ARAC chair before the next meeting how independent advice will be provided for ARAC on the Combined Authorities Treasury Management Strategy.

25. Internal Audit Update Quarter 2

The committee received a report from the Head of Audit updating it on the work completed by Internal Audit so far this financial year. Since the last meeting, one audit had been finalised and had been issued with a substantial opinion. It was noted that the committee would have sight of two other audit at its next meeting as these had not yet been finalised.

The committee sought assurance from the Head of Audit that there continued to be appropriate resourcing in place to manage the workflow on audits being undertaken. It was noted that both officers of the WMCA and the Internal Audit team met and discussed steps forward to ensure all audits were completed within agreed timescales, with the WMCA offering support in improving the process for recommendation for follow-up audits. The Head of Audit was confident that both resources and processes were in place to ensure audits were completed within agreed timescales.

The Chair requested that future annual plans included timescales and commitment dates as to when audits would be completed and seen by the committee to provide assurance that sufficient resourcing was in place and that there was a means by which the committee could evidence that this was the case.

Resolved:

(1) The contents of the latest Internal Audit report be noted.

26. Date of the Next Meeting

Monday 26 October 2020 at 10.00am

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm.



**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

Public Service Reform Board

Thursday 10 September 2020 at 2.00 pm

Minutes

Present

Councillor Maria Crompton (Chair)	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Louise Miles	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Karen Grinsell	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Brigid Jones	Birmingham City Council
Laura Caulfield	Higher Education
Tom McNeil	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Lina Martino	Public Health England

In Attendance

Jean Templeton	Homelessness Taskforce
Ed Cox	West Midlands Combined Authority
Carl Craney	West Midlands Combined Authority
Annie Kehoe	West Midlands Combined Authority
Claire Dhami	West Midlands Combined Authority
Anna Humphreys	West Midlands Combined Authority
Tanya Patel	West Midlands Combined Authority
Claire Spencer	West Midlands Combined Authority

Item Title No.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Jenny Wood (ADAS), Henrietta Brealey and Paul Faulkner (Birmingham Chamber of Commerce), Paul Jennings (Birmingham and Solihull CCG), Councillor Ian Brookfield (City of Wolverhampton Council), Catherine Morgan (HE representative), Jayne Kemp (NHS), Nick Page (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council), Sue Ibbotson (Public Health England), Councillor Izzie Seccombe (Warwickshire County Council) and Vanessa Jardine (West Midlands Police).

2. Nomination of substitutes

Rachel O'Connor had been nominated as a substitute for Paul Jennings (Birmingham and Solihull CCG), (Councillor Louise Miles had been nominated as a substitute for Councillor Ian Brookfield (City of Wolverhampton Council) and Lina Martins had been nominated as a substitute for Sue Ibbotson (Public Health England).

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interests were made relative to items under consideration at the meeting.

4. Chair's Remarks (if any)

The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to this, her first meeting as Chair of the Public Services Reform Board. She advised that it was also the first meeting of the Board to be attended by Ed Cox, WMCA Director of Inclusive Growth and Public Service Reform. She reported that due to time pressures, it would only be possible to consider one report at this meeting and invited the Board to determine which report should be selected. Ed Cox suggested that the report on 'Emerging PSR Directorate Strategy' would be useful in providing context to the Board and that if time allowed, the item on 'Recovery Coordination Group Community Recovery Priorities' could also be considered.

The Chair and Ed Cox also gave a brief resume of their respective roles and careers.

5. Minutes of the last meeting

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6. Matters Arising

With reference to Minute No. 18, Ed Cox updated the Board on progress with the Design Charter and advised that meetings continued to be held with the Design Collective with detailed guidance and case studies being presented to the Housing and Land Delivery Board. He explained how the Design Charter would link to other WMCA workstreams with an operating manual being compiled and an on-line portal being created.

Councillor Brigid Jones expressed reservations on the relationship between the Design Charter and local authorities own individual planning policies. Ed Cox reported that this issue had been discussed at the Design Collective and it had been acknowledged that the sovereignty of local authorities was a key issue with no intention or pursuing a Design Panel to arbitrate between the two.

7. Presentation: Emerging PSR Directorate Strategy

The Board received a PowerPoint presentation from Ed Cox on the 'Emerging PSR Directorate Strategy' which outlined the Directorate's role as part of the WMCA and on the work undertaken to date.

Tom McNeill referred to the constraints on carbon reduction and advised on the steps being taken by West Midlands Police to take social value and carbon reduction together and that Consultants were to be appointed shortly to assist with this work. He suggested that an opportunity existed for the respective Teams at the WMCA and WMP to collaborate on this workstream. He also advised that the initiative on Health Prevention was supported and was mirrored in the Devolution submission made to Government.

Councillor Brigid Jones sought to distinguish between 'hard' and 'soft' governance and the roles and responsibilities of: i) The WMCA; ii) Local authorities working in collaboration with the WMCA; and iii) Local Authorities acting alone. She commented that much of the work would fall to individual local authorities but that there would be opportunities to align and co-ordinate work with other partners. Rachel O'Connor suggested that there was a need to work through which footprints were most appropriate and to evaluate what improvements could be made.

Ed Cox welcomed the support offered to date and the commitment to joint working. He outlined the '4th delivery programme for PSR Reform' and commented on the negative views expressed in relation to what had been achieved from the Devolution Deals. He advised that this was unfair inasmuch as specific measurable targets had either not been set or funding commitments had not been offered. He assured the Board that, in fact, considerable progress had been made on the PSR agenda. He reported on the challenges going forward and on the need to build trust and develop a shared vision.

Councillor Brigid Jones commented that building trust and achieving consensus would only be possible if the local authorities and public sector organisations all bought in to the principles under consideration. Councillor Karen Grinsell advised that in the STP trust had been built but that this did not happen quickly. She queried whether the challenges were understood at all levels of the various organisations. Ed Cox acknowledged the challenges faced and assured the Board that while discussions were held with the upper levels of organisations, that his Team did engage at different levels.

Laura Caulfield suggested that an opportunity existed to learn from the experience on the work undertaken on social economy and the Covid-19 recovery as this had led to trust being developed at various levels of partner organisations. The Chair welcomed this suggestion and commented that examples of good practice could be considered at future meetings.

Resolved:

1. That the presentation be received and noted;
2. That arrangements be made for a special meeting to consider this matter and the outstanding Agenda items.

8. Recovery Coordination Group Community Recovery Priorities

Resolved:

That consideration of this matter be deferred.

9. Presentation: Inclusive Growth in practice and next steps

Resolved:

That consideration of this matter be deferred.

10. Update on the Homelessness Taskforce

Resolved:

That consideration of this matter be deferred.

11. Update on Punishing Abuse Research

Resolved:

That consideration of this matter be deferred.

The meeting ended at 2.54 pm.



West Midlands
Combined Authority

Transport Delivery Committee

Monday 14 September 2020 at 1.00pm

Minutes

Present

Councillor Kath Hartley (Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Tim Huxtable (Vice-Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Richard Worrall (Vice-Chair)	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Pervez Akhtar	Coventry City Council
Councillor Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Adrian Andrew	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Mary Locke	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Celia Hibbert	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Diana Holl-Allen	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Chaman Lal	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Roger Lawrence	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Ted Richards	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

In Attendance

Councillor Cathy Bayton	Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee
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36. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Les Jones (Dudley), Councillor Alan Taylor (Dudley) and Councillor David Welsh (Coventry).

37. Chair's Remarks

The Chair updated the committee on a number of developments since the last meeting, including the 21st anniversary of the commencement of Midland Metro services, the work being undertaken by Transport for West Midlands to support pupils and parents in the return to school, progress being made with the Longbridge Park & Ride car park and Pool Meadow bus station projects, the trial of free wifi at Walsall bus station, and news that Travel de Courcey had recently gone into administration which had led to its school services being taken over by other operators.

38. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

39. Action Tracker

The actions taken on matters determined at previous meetings of the committee were noted. The Chair indicated that she would like the briefing note on the award of the new security contract to be submitted also to the Bus Alliance and to passenger champions. Councillor Robert Alden requested an update to the next meeting of the committee on the rail schemes within the capital programme. Councillor Tim Huxtable noted concerns that the stakeholder engagement relating to rail schemes may not be comprehensive. The Managing Director, Transport for West Midlands, undertook to liaise with Councillor Tim Huxtable on this issue outside of the meeting to ensure any concerns were addressed.

40. Financial Monitoring Report

The committee considered a report from the Director of Finance setting out the financial position of the transport delivery revenue and capital budgets as at 31 July 2020.

The favourable variance in the transport revenue budget was primarily driven by lower patronage volumes across the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme and child concessions, along with savings realised during the set up of the Regional Transport Co-ordination Centre. These savings were somewhat offset by the impact of COVID-19 driving lower digital advertising revenue and the implementation of the departure charge holiday until June 2020.

Councillor Ted Richards noted that the report indicated the annual budget was £276.3m, but this had been reported as £268.8m at the meeting of the committee on 20 July. The Financial Controller undertook to clarify this matter and update the committee accordingly. Councillor Cathy Bayton noted the reduction in Metro fares revenue in recent months. The Managing Director, Transport for West Midlands, reported that the Government had provided financial support until 24 October to help with this reduction in fare receipts. It would then be necessary to negotiate further support, and this had been highlighted within the WMCA's Comprehensive Spending Review consultation response to Government.

Resolved:

- (1) It be noted that the year to date net revenue expenditure to the end of July 2020 showed a favourable variance of £0.093m compared to budget.
- (2) It be noted that total capital expenditure to the end of July 2020 for the overall transport programme was £45.4m, which was £22.6m below the budget of £68.0m. The annual forecast had been reduced to £255.6m, which was £20.7m below the annual budget of £276.3m.

41. Capital Programme Delivery Monitoring Report

The committee considered a report from the Managing Director, Transport for West Midlands, on progress on the approved Transport for West Midlands-led 2020/21 capital programme and projects.

The report provided detailed monitoring of the capital programme, including deliverables and target completion dates. During July/August, elements of the capital programme had been completed relating to Perry Barr, Bradley Lane Park & Ride and University station. There had been variations to the baseline programme in respect of the network-wide cycling programme, digital panel rollout and network-wide Park & Ride lighting enhancements.

In respect of updates on the delivery of the Commonwealth Games Transport Plan, the Director of Development & Delivery, Transport for West Midlands, indicated that he would ensure regular updates were submitted to this committee, as well as making use of a pre-committee briefing sessions to keep members updated.

Resolved:

- (1) The achievements since the July meeting of the Transport Delivery Committee be noted.
- (2) The progress of deliverables and outturn of the 2020/21 capital programme be noted.
- (3) Variations from the baseline programme be noted.

42. Transport Network and COVID-19

The committee considered a briefing note from the COVID-19 Transport Recovery Cell setting out recent actions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications for public transport across the region.

The briefing note provided details on the latest Government guidance, developments on the bus, rail, tram and road networks, as well as developments within the wider public realm and active travel initiatives. The briefing note also set out the work planned to support pupils' return to school in September.

Councillor Chaman Lal enquired as to the support being provided to smaller bus operators. The Head of Bus, Transport for West Midlands, reported that the Bus Service Operators Grant was being paid at pre-pandemic levels and the Department for Transport was also making COVID-19 support payments to operators. Concessionary travel reimbursements were also being paid at pre-pandemic levels.

The Director of Network Resilience undertook to update the briefing note further with the most recent developments and to circulate this to members of the committee.

Resolved:

The report be noted.

43. Bus Alliance Update

The committee considered a report from the Director of Integrated Transport Network Services, Transport for West Midlands, on matters relating to the governance, operation, delivery and performance of the West Midlands Bus Alliance.

At its meeting in February, the Bus Alliance approved the 'Bolder Bus Alliance' aspirations and associated governance structure and had asked for further development and confirmation of the deliverables and commitments under each aspiration, noting that the Alliance needed to be stronger to ensure that bus travel was safe, available and accessible to help in the economic and wider recovery of the region. The report also set out the work being undertaken by each thematic sub-group reporting to the Bus Alliance.

Resolved:

- (1) The content of the report and current status of the West Midlands Bus Alliance be noted.
- (2) The report be submitted to the WMCA Board for information.

44. Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme Update

The committee considered a report from the Director of Integrated Transport Network Services, Transport for West Midlands, on the development of the Enhanced Partnership Plan being developed for the West Midlands and the associated scheme covering the A34 (north) and A45/Lode Lane corridors.

An Enhanced Partnership was a formal agreement between a local transport authority, local highway authorities and local bus operators to work together to improve local bus services. The public consultation on these proposals were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and necessitated a change to the consultation strategy to limit any physical interaction with members of the public whilst ensuring the widest coverage and accessibility. The consultation period ran through to 13 September. A full report on the outcome of the formal public consultation would be submitted to the next meeting of the committee along with any subsequent changes to the enhanced partnership plan or scheme. Subject to approval, this report would also seek formal sign-off of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme for the West Midlands.

Resolved:

- (1) The update on the development of the Enhanced Partnership and the proposed next steps be noted.
- (2) The progress with the formal (public) consultation, as authorised by the committee at its meeting in March 2020, be noted.

45. eScooters

The committee considered a report of the Managing Director, Transport for West Midlands, on the activity undertaken during July and August on the eScooter trial throughout the West Midlands region.

In a wider initiative to promote walking and cycling as part of a green and healthy recovery from COVID-19, the Secretary of State for Transport announced the acceleration of eScooter trials around the country. The West Midlands, led by Birmingham City Council, developed a regionally co-ordinated programme that incorporated trial zones within each constituent authority. Additionally, areas within Warwickshire formed a key part of the programme, connecting Coventry to Kenilworth, plus offering opportunities within Leamington Spa and Warwick.

The report set out details of the procurement process that led to the contract being awarded to Voi, along with local authority activities and obligations.

The committee was informed that a number of measures were being looked at to eliminate anti-social use of the eScooters, including the possibility of number plates to help with identification and pressure pads to prevent multiple passengers riding at the same time. In response to a question from Councillor Chaman Lal, it was confirmed that Voi had public liability insurance to cover accidents that occurred during public use.

Resolved:

- (1) The progress in planning the eScooter trial be noted.
- (2) The intended rollout plans and next steps for the programme be noted.

46. Questions

The committee considered a report of the Managing Director, Transport for West Midlands, on a question submitted by Councillor Richard Worrall and the response from the Director of Rail. The question related to whether the Rail Delivery Group, who organised the national railcard scheme, would compensate railcard holders for pandemic-related loss of discounted rail travel opportunities by extending the validity of the expiry dates by the amount of time that had been lost as a result of restrictions on travel.

The Director of Rail had responded:

Transport for the West Midlands has contacted the Department for Transport and has been informed that there has not been much change in the position since the question was originally raised. Department for Transport officials have been engaging with colleagues at the Rail Delivery Group to explore what options may be possible regarding a potential redress offer to railcard holders.

Transport for West Midlands has been informed by the Department for Transport that they are close to reaching a decision on the preferred option, although they haven't been able to share any details at this stage. The Department for Transport advised that they are expecting an announcement to be made this month, and that this will likely come from the Rail Delivery Group.

The Managing Director, Transport West Midlands, confirmed that West Midlands Rail Executive had lobbied on this issue to support the concerns of Councillor Richard Worrall.

Resolved:

The question submitted by Councillor Richard Worrall and the response from the Director of Rail be noted

47. Forward Plan

A plan of items to be reported to future meetings of the committee was noted.

48. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 9 November 2020 at 1.00pm

The meeting ended at 2.55pm.



**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

Investment Board

Monday 21 September 2020 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Bob Sleight (Chair)
Nick Abell

Paul Brown

Councillor Tristan Chatfield
Councillor Steve Clark
Councillor Karen Grinsell
Councillor Matt Jennings
Councillor Jim O'Boyle
Councillor Stephen Simkins
Sue Summers
Gary Taylor

Portfolio Lead for Finance & Investments
Coventry & Warwickshire Local
Enterprise Partnership
Black Country Local Enterprise
Partnership
Birmingham City Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Stratford on Avon District Council
Coventry City Council
City of Wolverhampton Council
West Midlands Development Capital
Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local
Enterprise Partnership

In Attendance

Sarah Middleton

Richard Lawrence
Adam Hunt
Richard Moon
Paula Deas

Gareth Bradford
Carl Craney
Ian Martin
Danny Wood
Tanya Patel
Nick Oakley
Roger Mendonca
Neil Rami

Black Country Local Enterprise
Partnership
City of Wolverhampton Council
Coventry City Council
Coventry City Council
Coventry and Warwickshire Local
Enterprise Partnership
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Development Capital
West Midlands Growth Company
West Midlands Growth Company

- | Item No. | Title |
|-----------------|---|
| 55. | <p>Chair's Opening Remarks</p> <p>The Chair thanked Members and Officers for joining this virtual meeting of the Investment Board. He asked that any Member wishing to speak on any item should use the appropriate icon on the tool bar or indicate their wish in the 'chat' box which would be monitored throughout the meeting. Following the consideration of each item contained within the respective report or those made during consideration of the item would assume to be supported unless members made it clear that they dissented.</p> |
| 56. | <p>Apologies for Absence (if any)</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Mike Bird (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council) and Councillor Tony Jefferson (Non-Constituent Authorities).</p> <p>Apologies for absence had also been received from Andy Williams (Coventry City Council), Julia Goldsworthy and Tim Martin (West Midlands Combined Authority) and Matthew Hammond (West Midlands Growth Company).</p> |
| 57. | <p>Notification of Substitutes (if any)</p> <p>Councillor Matt Jennings had been nominated as the Substitute Member to act on behalf of Councillor Tony Jefferson at the meeting.</p> |
| 58. | <p>Declarations of Interests (if any)</p> <p>No declarations of interest were made in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.</p> |
| 59. | <p>Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>The Chair referred to Minute No. 50 (UKC Interchange – Arden Cross Multi-Storey Car Park Desktop Appraisal – Outline Business Case (OBC)) and advised that this matter had been considered and approved by the WMCA Board at its meeting held on 18 September 2020.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 August 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p> |
| 60. | <p>Investment Programme Update and Dashboard</p> <p>Ian Martin presented a report on the status of the Investment Programme to assist the Board in setting out the context for any investment decisions to be made by the Board.</p> <p>He reported that approved funding from the WMCA investment Programme for programmes totalled £768.7 million (as at 31 August 2020) compared to £770.4 million as at 31 July 2020) with funding drawn down / incurred against these projects as at 31 July 2020 totalling £206.7 million. This was consistent with the expectations as at 8 November 2019 when the WMCA board had agreed to hold approvals at the current affordable limit of £801 million. Since the last report the following business cases had been approved:</p> |

- UK Central HS2 interchange – Automated People Mover (APM) Route Realignment (FBC): £5.75 million; and
- UK Central HS2 Interchange – Hub Movement and Connectivity: £2.28 million.

He updated the Board on the present position with the five-yearly gateway review which formed part of the Devolution Deal agreement made in 2016 inasmuch as the 2020/21 was the fifth and final financial year of the first gateway review period and that SQW, commissioned by the MHCLG, to review a selection of projects in the Investment Programme and would issue a recommendation in November 2020. A draft report would be available on 9 October 2020 and a verbal report on the contents would be made to the next meeting of this Board (19 October 2020). The contents of the draft report could only be challenged on the grounds of accuracy, but a complimentary report would be prepared and issued by the WMCA for consideration by the WMCA Board.

The Chair explained that due to the timelines for the circulation of the Agenda and supporting papers and in order to comply with the statutory timelines, it would only be possible for a verbal report to be given to the next meeting of this Board. Similarly, due to the timescales it would be necessary for him to prepare, in consultation with the Directors of Finance and Investment and Commercial Activities and a small number of members of this Board, the complimentary response to the SQW draft report. This course of action received the support of the Board subject to the draft report being circulated prior to the formulation of the complimentary response and its submission.

Ian Martin referred to the Investment Programme Dashboard and advised that this now contained 59 projects some of which were capable of division into separate sub-projects. He referred to the Coventry City Centre South scheme which was the subject of a presentation later in the meeting and the A46 Stoneleigh Junction (A46 Link Road Phase 1) and updated the Board on the present position with that scheme.

Resolved:

1. That the status of the Investment Programme delivery as detailed in the report be noted;
2. That the progress of the Devolution Deal five-year gateway review be noted;
3. That the Investment Programme funding status be noted;
4. That the Chair, in consultation with appropriate Officers and selected Members be authorised to prepare a complimentary response to the SQW draft report subject to the circulation of the draft report to the Board prior to the formulation of the response and its circulation.

61. WMCA Collective Investment Fund (CIF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Dashboard (public iteration) as at 1 September 2020. Nick Oakley drew to the attention of the Board that a total of £37,150,000 had been repaid to date. The Chair commented that the Fund was creating jobs and delivering residential accommodation.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

62. WMCA Brownfield Land and Property Investment Fund (BLPDF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Brownfield Land and Property Dashboard (public iteration) as at 1 September 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

63. WMCA Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) Dashboard (public iteration) as at 1 September 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

64. Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

65. Funding request for Inward Investment, Capital Attraction and Tourism Activity

Neil Rami and Roger Mendonca presented a report seeking a two-year extension to the funding arrangement agreed previously in respect of a business attraction, visitor attraction and capital attraction programme to be delivered by the West Midlands Growth Company and responded to various questions and suggestions made by the Board.

Resolved:

1. That the current two-year investment in the West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) be extended for a further two years (April 2021 – March 2023) to supplement the sum received from the revenue budget;
2. That it be reconfirmed that the Assurance Framework was not applicable to this investment;
3. That a report be submitted in six months detailing specific targets in respect of the type of jobs to be created and the geography at which they were to be targeted in;
4. That further consideration be given to the future membership of the Board of the WMGC in order to ensure appropriate representation from Local Enterprise Partnerships and the private sector.

66. Coventry City Centre South

The Board received a PowerPoint presentation from Adam Hunt and Richard Moon in respect of the current position with the Coventry City Centre South scheme. It was explained that the revised scheme would require the Development Agreement, Grant Agreement and the delivery arrangements outlined previously to be amended and that this matter would be the subject of a report to a future meeting. Adam Hunt and Richard Moon responded to questions from the Board.

Resolved;

That the presentation be received and noted and that a further report on the scheme be submitted to a future meeting.

67. WMCA Collective Investment Fund (CIF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Dashboard (private iteration) as at 1 September 2020.

Nick Oakley reported on the achievements of the Collective Investment Fund (CIF) and the Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) during the period August 2016 to 1 August 2020 in terms of outputs and deliverables was as follows:

- Brownfield acres regenerated 108.93
- Commercial floorspace 1,844,048 sq. ft.
- Housing Units 903
- Jobs created 4055
- Business Rates £6,202,972
- Initial Private Sector Leverage £108,524,000
- Total Approved Funding £127,095,000
- Gross Interest Returned to WMCA £3,545,928
- Nil Provisions & Bad Debts
- 30 projects approved/11 projects fully repaid.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard and the additional information be received and noted.

68. WMCA Brownfield Land and Property Investment Fund (BLPDF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Brownfield Land and Property Development Fund (BLPDF) Dashboard (private iteration) as at 1 September 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

69. WMCA Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) Dashboard (private iteration) as at 1 September 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

70. Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF)

The Board considered the Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF) Dashboard as at 1 September 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

The meeting ended at 11.09am.



West Midlands
Combined Authority

Environment & Energy Board

Thursday 15 October 2020 at 10.00am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Ian Courts (Chair)
Councillor Oliver Butler
Councillor Maria Crompton
Councillor Ian Kettle
Marc Lidderth
Councillor Andy Mackiewicz
Councillor Waseem Zaffar

Portfolio Lead for Environment, Energy & HS2
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Environment Agency
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Birmingham City Council

In Attendance

Alan Bowley
Alex Chapman
Jim Coleman
Ross Cook
Ed Cox
Barry Evans
Robin Daniels
Maria Dunn
Councillor Peter Fowler
David Harris
Jackie Homan
Nicola Jones
Jo Miskin
Kathryn Moore
Eve Peverley
Richard Rees
Callum Ringer
Aqeel Rizvi
Sabbir Sidat
Coral Tilling
Jodie Townsend
Bret Willers

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
New Economics Foundation
WSP
City of Wolverhampton Council
West Midlands Combined Authority
WSP
Redpill Group
Birmingham City Council
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Transport for West Midlands
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Combined Authority
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Birmingham City University
WSP
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Combined Authority
WSP
City of Wolverhampton Council
West Midlands Combined Authority
Coventry City Council

19. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Barbara McGarrity (Wolverhampton), Councillor Jim O'Boyle (Coventry) and Matthew Rhodes (Energy Capital).

20. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

21. WM2041: Five Year Plans

The board considered a report from the Director of Public Service Reform on an overview of the first Five Year Plan that was currently being produced to outline the priority activity for 2021-26 to set the region on course to deliver on the net zero carbon ambitions for the West Midlands by 2041. The board also received a presentation from Barny Evans on the principles underpinning the WM2041 programme, the aims of the Five Year Plan and the key priority areas for delivery.

Councillor Waseem Zaffar welcomed the report but stressed the importance of working in partnership with constituent authorities and making best use of expertise where it was available. The Head of Environment supported these comments and undertook to meet with Councillor Waseem Zaffar and the Chair to discuss further how the WMCA could work more closely with local authority partners and other key stakeholders.

The Chair stressed the importance of ensuring messaging was communicated effectively to maintain public support for initiatives. The Head of Environment confirmed that there was a regional communications group overseeing the messaging linked to this work.

Resolved:

- (1) The preferred approach to engagement as the Five Year Plan project progressed be noted.
- (2) The appropriate engagement with key local authority contacts be noted.

22. WM2041: Natural Capital Projects and Programmes

The board considered a report from the Director of Public Service Reform on three proposals designed to help improve public access to natural capital resources, which were recognised as having an important role in physical and emotional wellbeing, as well as mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. These proposals related to a study on access to green space undertaken by the New Economics Foundation, the West Midlands National Park and the Virtual Forest.

The board received presentations from Alex Chapman on the work that had been undertaken to study the access to green space within the region, from Kathryn Moore on the proposals for a urban national park across the West Midlands, and from Callum Ringer the online platform that was logging all of the new trees that were being planted across the region.

In respect of the study into green space accessibility, Councillor Andy Mackiewicz noted the degree of biodiversity that existed within 'rough' open space and cautioned against automatically seeking to over-manage these spaces. The Chair welcomed the initiative and requested that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the board with a list of actions to take this initiative forward.

In respect of the West Midlands National Park, Councillor Waseem Zaffar welcomed the proposals and indicated that it would be something Birmingham City Council would be keen to engage with. He was particularly keen to explore how the region's 'blue' and 'green' open spaces could be better linked together. Councillor Maria Crompton noted that each local authority was undertaking environmental projects within its own area, and that this project could help map those and look to build on the work already being done locally. The Chair requested a further update to a future meeting of the board that suggested how these proposals could be progressed.

In respect of the Virtual Forest, the Chair stressed the importance of ensuring that every new tree was logged. He also encouraged engagement with landowners, who were often significant planters of trees.

Resolved:

- (1) The draft access to green space report produced by New Economics Foundation be noted.
- (2) The search for funding for community green grants and their implementation be supported.
- (3) Engagement be undertaken with local authorities on the proposed West Midlands National Park.
- (4) Links to key programmes of activity/ influential stakeholders that should be engaged with the West Midlands National Park programme be provided.
- (5) The Virtual Forest website be promoted and members of the board engage with the project.
- (6) Members engage colleagues within their organisations to retrospectively add any tree planting to the total from January 2020.
- (7) Tree planting plans for the 2020/21 season be shared so they could be supported through the Virtual Forest platform.
- (8) A target for tree planting up until the end of 2021 be identified for each local authority.

23. Single Assurance Framework - Impact on Thematic Board Terms of Reference and Role

The board considered a report from the Director of Public Service Reform, the Director of Strategy and the Head of Governance & Monitoring Officer on how the new Single Assurance Framework would ensure the WMCA would use public money responsibly, both openly and transparently, and achieve best value for money.

The Single Assurance Framework required each thematic board, including the Environment & Energy Board, to undertake a set of core roles to ensure that they were applying the appropriate oversight, support and portfolio development roles required to support the key principles and application of the framework. In addition, the Single Assurance Framework project had been tasked with developing proposals for a consistent role, purpose and approach to each thematic board to help drive effective, clear and accountable decision-making, ensure appropriate political oversight and support for Portfolio Leads and to support the intent to deliver a 'golden thread' from strategic objective through initiation, development, delivery and evaluation within the WMCA. An updated terms of reference for this board were therefore proposed that took account of this work.

Resolved:

- (1) The Single Assurance Framework requirements for thematic boards be noted.
- (2) The proposed portfolio improvements for the Environment & Energy Board be noted.
- (3) The amended terms of reference for the Environment & Energy Board be endorsed.

24. WM2041: Programme Update

The board considered a report from the Director of Public Service Reform on an overview of the WM2041 programme, approved by the WMCA Board on 5 June 2020, to help the region achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2041. The projects that comprised this programme were at different stages of maturity, although ultimately there would need to be delivery across all of them to achieve the system changes required to address climate change.

The report outlined the progress that the WMCA was making across these priority areas that included mobility (including active travel and electric mobility), the circular economy, energy transition, the built environment (both new build and retrofit) and natural capital. The delivery of the WM2041 programme relied on working closely with the local authorities and their climate change action plans. The WMCA was working with the officers supporting climate change and carbon reduction in each of the constituent local authorities, through a Low Carbon Officers Group, to maximise the potential for collaboration and shared learning around the work being undertaken.

Resolved:

- (1) The WM2041 programme update be noted.
- (2) Areas of particular interest where there could be potential for specific collaboration with other work and stakeholders be noted.
- (3) The scope of work, which would form the work programme for the Environment & Energy Board, be agreed.

- (4) Members of the board remain engaged and informed on specific areas as the programme develops, outside of any board meetings.

25. Forward Plan

The board noted items of business that would be considered at its future meetings.

The meeting ended at 12.00pm.

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**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

Wellbeing Board

Friday 16 October 2020 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Chair)	WMCA Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Paulette Hamilton (Vice-Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Nicolas Barlow	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor John Beaumont	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Councillor Les Caborn	Warwickshire County Council
Councillor Stephen Craddock	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Karen Grinsell	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Wayne Brown	West Midlands Fire Service
Rebecca Farmer	NHSE
Peter Ingham	STP
Paul Maubach	STP Systems Leader NHS
Guy Daly	Universities (Coventry)
Sean Russell	Director of Implementation for Mental Health, Wellbeing & Radical Prevention
Lina Martino	Public Health England

In Attendance

Mubasshir Ajaz	West Midlands Combined Authority
Ed Cox	West Midlands Combined Authority
Simon Hall	West Midlands Combined Authority
Jodie Townsend	West Midlands Combined Authority

Item Title No.

13. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Caan, Councillor Jaspal, Andy Hardy, Paul Jennings and Alison Tonge.

14. Nomination of Substitutes

The following substitutes had been received:

Peter Ingham for Paul Jennings and Rebecca Farmer for Alison Tonge.

15. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed the new Head of Wellbeing and Prevention, Mubasshir Ajaz, to his first meeting of the Wellbeing Board.

Mubasshir Ajaz outlined his background prior to joining the WMCA and reported that he wanted to focus on tackling health inequalities in the region. Mubasshir Ajaz also acknowledged the work undertaken by Sean Russell to date which was echoed by the Chair who conveyed her thanks and appreciation to Sean Russell on behalf of the board.

16. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2020 were agreed as a true record.

17. Single Assurance Framework - Impact on thematic board terms of reference

Jodie Townsend, Governance Consultant, presented a report on the Single Assurance Framework that was agreed by the WMCA Board on 24 July 2020.

The report set out the purpose of the Single Assurance Framework, the proposed core roles and implications for thematic boards and portfolio improvements.

Jodie Townsend reported that standardised terms of reference had been developed for thematic boards to support core roles and to ensure a consistent approach is delivered across the WMCA for each portfolio area.

The approach set out in the report was endorsed and it was agreed that the current non-voting members of the board should continue to be members as the organisations they represented all played a key role in delivering/supporting the health and wellbeing agenda in the region.

Resolved:

1. That the Single Assurance Framework requirements for thematic boards be noted;
2. That the proposed portfolio improvements for the Wellbeing Board be noted and
3. That the amended terms of reference for the board as set out in Appendix A of the report be endorsed.

18. Regional Health Impacts of Covid-19 Discussion Paper

The Director of Inclusive Growth and Public Service Reform, Ed Cox and Lina Martino, PHE/WMCA Consultant in Public Health, presented a discussion paper along with a slide presentation that set out the emerging findings from the impact of Covid-19 from the Regional Health Impact of Covid-19 (RHIC) Task and Finish Group. This included the underlying health inequalities in the region, key West Midlands insights, opportunities for change and the framework for commitments to action to unlock change for the region.

The Director of Inclusive Growth and Public Service Reform conveyed his thanks to colleagues and stakeholders who had supplied evidence to the task and finish group and asked for any comments on the commitments to action to be provided by the 21 October deadline. He advised that the WMCA would work with partners on agreeing the recommendations to Government.

It was noted that the findings, conclusions and recommendations from RHIC would form the basis of the Health of the Region report (set out in the report) that would be submitted to the WMCA Board in November prior to the recommendations being submitted to Government.

The Director of Inclusive Growth and Public Service Reform reported that he would send a letter to all to reinforce the commitments made by various partners in the region.

The Chair reported that it was important communities had confidence that change would happen in the region and acknowledged the dependency between health and wealth and the need to provide residents of the West Midlands with the best possible jobs, housing and skills.

Resolved:

1. That the outline of the Health of the Region Report as set out be noted;
2. That the WMCA gain Commitments to Action from local and regional partners be supported and
3. That the potential recommendations to Government as discussed be taken forward.

19. Preparedness

Rebecca Farmer, NHSE, outlined the steps being taken by the NHS to prepare for the second wave of Covid-19.

In relation to an enquiry from the Vice- Chair, Councillor Hamilton regarding the Nightingale Hospital in the region and how often an assessment is made as to whether the facility should be utilised, Rebecca Farmer reported that an assessment is made on a weekly basis however, this would be reviewed more frequently if there was a surge in Covid cases.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

20. Thrive Update

The Director of Implementation for Mental Health, Wellbeing and Radical Prevention, Sean Russell provided an update on the various Thrive programmes.

It was noted that 540 people had successfully found jobs from the Thrive into Work programme and over 400 businesses have joined the Thrive at Work programme at foundation level.

Sean Russell reported that 40,000 people had now been trained in mental health first and that the Thrive programmes would take on board the learning from the Covid-19 RHIC Task and Finish Group with regards to mental health.

Sean Russell advised that the Thrive Awards that are usually held during January, might be held virtually next year and further details would follow in due course.

The Chair congratulated Sean Russell and the team for their work on mental health.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

21. Physical Activity Strategy & Physical Activity Commissioner Proposal

The board considered a report of the Physical Activity Strategy Strategic Lead, Simon Hall that outlined the proposed future direction of the WMCA's West Midlands on the Move Strategic Framework and set out 'Halting the Gap', Physical Activity Implementation Plan 2020/21 for approval.

The report set out the background to the Physical Activity Implementation Plan which included the impact of lockdown and the Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

Simon Hall outlined the report and 2 physical activity funding asks, notably a Physical Activity Fund; to focus on the co-design of community activities and to support the Commonwealth Games physical activity legacy and, social and walking prescribing and cycling region ; a pilot that would look at the impact of different incentives to encourage more BAME and vulnerable communities to take walking and cycling to improve their physical and mental health.

The board endorsed the report.

Resolved: That the 'Halting the Gap', Physical Activity Implementation Plan 2020/21 as set out in the report be approved.

22. Forward Plan

The Director of Inclusive Growth and Public Service Reform, Ed Cox reported that updates on Covid-19 RHIC and Thrive would be presented to the next meeting.

23. Date of Next Meeting - 22 January 2021

The meeting ended at 11.53 am.



West Midlands Combined Authority

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Friday 16 October 2020 at 11.30 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Lisa Trickett (Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Cathy Bayton (Vice-Chair)	Association of Black Country Authorities
Councillor Ahmad Bostan	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Paul Brown	Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership
Councillor Chris Cade	Warwickshire Non-Constituent Local Authorities
Councillor Mike Chalk	Worcestershire Non-Constituent Local Authorities
Councillor Peter Fowler	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Robert Grinsell	Joint Coventry/Solihull Representative
Councillor Angus Lees	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Lucy Seymour-Smith	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Association of Black Country Authorities
Councillor Kate Wild	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

In Attendance

Michael-Akolade Ayodeji	Young Combined Authority
Councillor Philip Bateman	Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Deborah Cadman	West Midlands Combined Authority
Councillor Liz Clements	Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Paul Clarke	West Midlands Combined Authority
Louise Cowen	West Midlands Combined Authority
Dan Essex	West Midlands Combined Authority
Tim Martin	West Midlands Combined Authority
Aisha Masood	Young Combined Authority
Lyndsey Roberts	West Midlands Combined Authority
Councillor Jackie Taylor	Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Andy Street	Mayor of the West Midlands

Item No.

71. Welcome & Introductions

The Chair welcomed the Mayor, members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, members of the Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee and representatives from the Young Combined Authority to the first mayoral question time of 2020/21 that was focussing on WMCA policy-related matters. She also reported that Councillor Richard Brown had recently been appointed as Coventry City Council's Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance & Resources and congratulated him on this.

72. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Richard Brown (Coventry), Councillor Dean Carroll (Shropshire authorities) and Mike Lyons (Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP).

73. Declarations of Interests

Councillor Philip Bateman declared a non-prejudicial interest in respect of his membership of the Canal & River Trust Advisory Board and his receipt of a transport workers pension. Councillor Stephen Simkins declared a non-prejudicial interest in membership of the Canal & River Trust Advisory Board. Councillor Jackie Taylor declared a non-prejudicial interest in respect of her membership of the Midlands Connect Partnership Board and the West Midlands Rail Board of Directors.

74. Questions to the Mayor

The Mayor provided an opening statement to members of the committee. He indicated that since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, the most important role for the WMCA had been to ensure that transport services continued to be provided to those where no other transport options were available. He outlined a range a measures taken by Transport for West Midlands in support of this. The Mayor also highlighted other activity of the WMCA during the last six months, including ensuring that adult education providers had continued to be paid, the work of the Recovery Forum and Economic Impact Group in mitigating the impacts being experienced across the region, and the submission to Government of the 'Recharge West Midlands' investment case, which this committee had been given the opportunity to comment on at its meeting on 7 September.

Members in attendance, along with Michael-Akolade Ayodeji and Aisha Masood from the Young Combined Authority, then questioned the Mayor on the delivery and impact of WMCA policies. A range of topics were covered, including matters relating to the WMCA's responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic and community recovery work being undertaken, Government funding allocations to the region arising out of the 'Recharge West Midlands' investment case, further funding asks to support wider recovery work, along with the support required for the different economic sectors and those facing the prospect of imminent unemployment once the Government's furlough scheme ended.

The Chair noted that the Government's furlough scheme was due to end in the coming weeks and there were significant concerns that this would result in a sharp increase in unemployment in the region. She enquired whether this required a more concerted effort to project and support those likely to be impacted, for example by establishing a jobs taskforce, that could offer targeted support where required. The Mayor recognised that it was not possible to protect and retain every job within the West Midlands, but drew attention to the initiatives being undertaken by both the Government and the WMCA to protect as many jobs as possible. These included the WMCA undertaking a co-ordinating role for the Government-funded Kickstart programme which had attracted around 3,000 applications for roles within the West Midlands, and the 'Recharge West Midlands' investment case which had already secured funding for the region that would, amongst other outputs, support the creation of jobs.

Councillor Cathy Bayton expressed concern at the level of engagement that had been undertaken with the voluntary sector in respect of the proposed resilience fund, given the importance of understanding the sector's needs and vulnerabilities. The Mayor indicated that the voluntary sector resilience fund had yet to be signed off by the WMCA Board and therefore there was still the opportunity for its contents to be influenced by appropriate stakeholders.

Councillor Ahmad Bostan stressed the importance of financial support being provided to businesses impacted by an area being placed into the 'tier 2' local COVID alert level. The Mayor shared this view, and indicated that he had written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer urging changes to the support scheme to provide greater assistance to business affected by the move into tier 2.

Councillor Lucy Seymour-Smith noted recent studies that indicated over 70% of women wanting to return to work after maternity leave were struggling to do so. The Mayor shared these concerns, accepting that the pandemic was likely to have a disproportionate impact on women and those from disadvantaged communities. Funding was being targeted to try and address these structural issues, highlighting a recent initiative to encourage more women to seek employment in the digital sector. The WMCA was able to help shape, for example through the allocation of its adult education budget to support level 3 training.

Councillor Stephen Simkins expressed his concern that people required to retrain to seek alternative employment may find themselves without income for up to eight weeks during this retraining period. He urged the Mayor to lobby for the quicker payment of support to help people transition back into employment. The Mayor indicated that he was working with local authorities to help where he could, but stressed the need to still ensure proper process was followed with the use of public money.

Councillor Robert Grinsell questioned the Mayor on the investment benefits for both projects relating to HS2 and UK Central. The Mayor indicated both projects had big economic transformational opportunities for the region with HS2 being the biggest producer of jobs in the region for over the next five years. The Mayor also advised the committee of a summit being held for SME's who would supply HS2 with 818 companies registering their interest. He stated that there needed to be a focus on the big opportunities these projects presented to the region.

Councillor Peter Fowler thanked the Mayor for meeting with representatives of Equity to discuss the challenges being experienced by the region's creative industries. He also commended the Community Recovery Prospectus prepared by the Recovery Co-ordination Group that had identified 30 key community recovery 'asks'. The Mayor confirmed that these were featuring in discussions he was having with the Government and other key Partners to help mitigate the regional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Councillor Stephen Simkins expressed his concern for those individuals going through the retraining process and not having access to any income and enquired whether funds could be passported straight through to local authorities instead of going through bidding processes. He also expressed concern that the Shared Prosperity Fund had not progressed sufficiently to provide clarity once the UK was unable to access EU funding. Regarding the Skills Fund, the Mayor stated that the WMCA did work directly with local authorities by had processes in place in which funding was allocated. The Mayor indicated that there had been no clarity from Government on the introduction of the Shared Prosperity Fund, but would continue to lobby Government on this.

In response to a question from Councillor Jackie Taylor, the Mayor expressed his personal view that more local responsibility for administering the NHS Track & Trace service should be devolved to the regions, and he continued to press this point. In response to Councillor Angus Lees's concerns regarding protecting the economy, ensuring the safety of businesses and members of the public, the Mayor indicated that he felt a good job had been done in terms of providing the region with clear messaging through, amongst other things, his weekly press conferences and the campaigns ran by Transport for West Midlands on the need to wear face coverings.

Councillor Cathy Bayton stressed the importance of good quality residential development and noted with concern instances of development that did not provide positive living arrangements, including community infrastructure necessary to support sustainable living. She urged the Mayor to be more proactive in pushing for higher quality affordable housing. The Mayor indicated that the region was out-performing other parts of the country in delivering housing numbers as well as the proportion that were designated affordable. The Government was currently consulting on planning reform proposals and he intended to make his own submission to this consultation to push for higher standards for new development.

The Chair thanked the Mayor for his attendance and looked forward to welcoming him to the 2021/22 draft budget question time session being held with the committee on 11 December 2020.

Recommended:

The following observations be shared with the Mayor for consideration and reflection:

- Whilst recognising the value of the 'Recharge West Midlands' asks of the Government, does it adequately address the existing embedded and systemic inequalities in the region and the challenges currently being faced by residents across the West Midlands seeking to recover from the economic impacts of the pandemic?
- Does the WMCA have a clear plan to enable it to transition its policy objectives to meet the new and emerging challenges across the region, including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and automation, especially within sectors and communities still impacted by previous transitions?
- Is there sufficient ambition with the devolution discussions with the Government to deliver the WMCA the powers and resources necessary to meet the economic and social challenges of the region, and does the WMCA maximise its other sources of funding to address these challenges?
- Do the outputs of the WMCA meet its stated ambitions, and can better use be made of aligning the region's priorities in order to close the inequality gap that currently exists and, as a consequence deliver lasting inclusive growth?
- Has the WMCA developed sufficient policies that will drive its inclusive growth ambitions and deliver lasting change?

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm.

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**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

Investment Board

Monday 19 October 2020 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Bob Sleight (Chair)
Nick Abell

Councillor Mike Bird
Paul Brown

Councillor Tristan Chatfield
Councillor Steve Clark
Councillor Karen Grinsell
Councillor Tony Jefferson
Councillor Jim O'Boyle
Councillor Stephen Simkins
Sue Summers
Gary Taylor

Portfolio Lead for Finance & Investments
Coventry & Warwickshire Local
Enterprise Partnership
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Black Country Local Enterprise
Partnership
Birmingham City Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Non-Constituent Authorities
Coventry City Council
City of Wolverhampton Council
West Midlands Development Capital
Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local
Enterprise Partnership

In Attendance

Simon Dancer
Lara Smith

Liam Davies
Richard Lawrence
Gareth Bradford
Carl Craney
Ian Martin
Tim Martin
Carl Pearson
Roger Owen
Ed Bradburn
Nick Oakley
Gerald Gannaway
Kieren Turner-Owen

Amion
Black Country Local Enterprise
Partnership
City of Wolverhampton Council
City of Wolverhampton Council
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Development Capital
West Midlands Development Capital
West Midlands Development Capital
West Midlands Development Capital

Item No.

Title

71. Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair thanked Members and Officers for joining this virtual meeting of the Investment Board. He asked that any Member wishing to speak on any item should use the appropriate icon on the tool bar or indicate their wish in the 'chat' box which would be monitored throughout the meeting. Following the consideration of each item contained within the respective report or those made during consideration of the item would assume to be supported unless members made it clear that they dissented.

He advised that Agenda Item No. 6 (SQW draft report headlines) would be considered in the exempt session of the meeting, following the exclusion of the public and press as the matter contained exempt information as defined by Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

72. Apologies for Absence (if any)

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Wasim Ali (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council).

Apologies for absence had also been received from Sarah Middleton (Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership), Paula Deas (Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership), Richard Moon and Andy Williams (Coventry City Council) and Linda Horne (West Midlands Combined Authority).

73. Notification of Substitutes (if any)

No notifications of substitute members had been received.

74. Declarations of Interests (if any)

Nick Abell declared personal interests in Agenda Item Nos 11 (Chase Midlands Estates Ltd. – Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Loan Extension Request) and 13 (CDP Developments Ltd. – Abbots Lane – Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Loan extension Request) as the applicants were known to him and his Company were acting or had acted previously on their behalf).

75. Minutes of last meeting

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

76. Investment Programme Update and Dashboard

Ian Martin presented a report on the status of the Investment Programme to assist the Board in setting out the context for any investment decisions to be made by the Board.

He reported that approved funding from the WMCA investment Programme for programmes totalled £776.7 million (as at 30 September 2020) compared to £768.7 million as at 31 August 2020) with funding drawn down / incurred against these projects as at 31 August 2020 totalling £212.9 million. This was consistent with the expectations as at 8 November 2019 when the WMCA board had agreed to hold approvals at the current affordable limit of £801 million. Since the last report the following business cases had been approved:

- UK Central HS2 Interchange – Arden Cross Multi-Storey Car Park (OBC): £5.42 million;
- Commonwealth Games 2022 – Tourism, Trade and Investment Programme: £2.6 million; and
- Change request regarding the allocation of indirect costs of UK Central Infrastructure Programme Phases 1 & 2. He advised that it should be noted that no further monies had been requested, but small reallocations of costs between projects and changes to completion dates had been approved by Statutory Officers.

Nick Abell expressed surprise at the reference to the Tourism, Trade and Investment Programme was referred as relating to the Commonwealth Games as his understanding, from the last meeting, was that this had related to an extension of funding to the West Midlands Growth Company. Ian Martin explained that the WMCA was the Accountable Body with the West Midlands Growth Company acting as the Delivery Body for TTI which related to activities leveraging the CWG. Nick Abell commented that this was not made clear on the Dashboard and that it appeared that the sum referred directly to expenditure for the Commonwealth Games. Ian Martin undertook to address this issue and would instruct this to be made clear on the Dashboard going forward.

Ian Martin referred to the Investment Programme Dashboard and advised that this now contained 61 projects some of which were capable of division into separate sub-projects. Of the 61 projects, four were currently rated in the 'RED' category, as follows:

- HS2 Hybrid Act Change (HS2 Parallel Designs);
- Strategy, Utilities, Land Value, Car Parking (UKC);
- Coventry City Centre South; and
- A46 Stoneleigh Junction (A46 Link Road Phase 1).

He reported that the first two schemes would be subject to change request to be considered at future meetings, that the Coventry City Centre South scheme had been the subject of a presentation at the last meeting with a change request anticipated and that DfT funding had now be confirmed for the A46 scheme with a change request to be submitted for consideration at a future meeting.

Resolved:

1. That the status of the Investment Programme delivery as detailed in the report be noted;

2. That the progress of the Devolution Deal five-year gateway review be noted;
3. That the Investment Programme funding status be noted;
4. That the role of the West Midlands Growth Company as the Delivery Body for the Tourism, Trade and Investment Programme for the Commonwealth Games be made clear in future reports.

77. WMCA Collective Investment Fund (CIF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Dashboard (public iteration) as at 1 October 2020. Nick Oakley reported that £53 million was waiting to be drawn down from the Collective Investment Fund (CIF) and the Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) with some schemes suffering delays in the grant of planning permission due to the Covid-19 pandemic or through that cause generally. All schemes were being monitored closely.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

78. WMCA Brownfield Land and Property Investment Fund (BLPDF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Brownfield Land and Property Dashboard (public iteration) as at 1 October 2020.

Resolved:

That the dashboard be received and noted.

79. WMCA Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) Dashboard (public iteration) as at 1 October 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

80. Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

81. SQW draft report headlines

Ian Martin reminded the Board of the report to the last meeting on this matter and that due to timings for the circulation of the Agenda and supporting papers and in order to meet statutory deadlines it had not been possible to present a written report on this matter to this meeting. The initial draft report from SQW had been received on 9 October 2020 and that the Officers would prepare a complimentary report to address any concerns raised in the draft report. As agreed at the last meeting of the Board this would be reviewed by the Chair together with Councillor Tristan Chatfield and Nick Abell. Both the draft report and the complimentary report would be presented to the next meeting. The WMCA would only be able to request changes to factual errors in the SQW report, with the complimentary report being a WMCA document.

From an initial consideration, the draft report was positive and commended the role of the Investment Board and the Investment Fund in bringing the region together.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

82. Chase Midlands Estates Ltd. - Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Loan Extension Request

Gerald Gannaway presented a report which sought agreement to a 'holding' extension on an existing development loan. The original project had been speculative but was now fully let and producing income. He outlined the proposed repayment mechanism including the introduction of formal loan covenants to include Loan to Value, interest Cover and cash sweep. He responded to various questions from members of the Board. Councillor Stephen Simkins queried whether agreement to the request would set a precedent and whether a policy should be developed to address similar requests. Ian Martin explained that the loans were treated on their individual merits and on that basis, it would be difficult to develop an appropriate policy.

Resolved:

1. That the request for a 'holding' extension on the development loan term from 31 December 2020 until 31 December 2021 be approved on the terms and conditions detailed in the report;
2. That further consideration be given to the development of an appropriate statement of support concerning extensions to loans where these would stand on their merits but support developers.

- 83. Warmflame, Warstock Road - Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Request**
Ed Bradburn presented a report which sought approval to a CIF loan and on the proposed terms and conditions. He responded to various questions from members of the Board. Nick Abell spoke in support of the proposal but questioned the number of loans which anyone Company could be eligible to apply for. Ian Martin reminded the Board of its policies in relation to Concentration Risk. This was the total value of loans to anyone Company, and that, in this particular case, the application would require the endorsement of the WMCA Board. Given the small increment over the threshold for approval being £10.1 million over trigger of £10 million, Ian Martin suggested that this be dealt with by a record in the minutes which were considered by the WMCA Board.

Resolved:

That the WMCA Board be recommended to approve the CIF loan on the terms and conditions detailed in the report and this be dealt with by means of the minutes to be presented to the WMCA Board for ratification.

- 84. CDP Developments Ltd., Abbots Lane - Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Loan Extension Request**

Nick Oakley presented a report which sought approval for the rollover of an existing CIF loan for a further 24-month period to facilitate planning, on-site remediation and public works infrastructure works and on the proposed terms and conditions for repayment.

Resolved:

That the rollover of the existing CIF loan for a 24-month period be approved on the terms and conditions detailed in the report.

- 85. Stone Yard, Birmingham**

Gareth Bradford introduced this item and gave the Board a broad outline of the Land Fund which had been established under the March 2018 Housing Deal on the back of the 2017 Devolution Deal. The Land Fund was administered under a Framework approved by this Board, the Housing and Land Delivery Board and the WMCA Board in March 2019 (known as the Single Commissioning Framework). The framework had come into effect in April 2019 and the Land Fund requirements were included within it.

Simon Dancer presented a report which sought approval to grant funding to support the development which would bring forward 995 housing units, including 20% affordable provision. Gareth Bradford and Simon Dancer responded to various questions from members of the Board. Points raised included the possibility that the development could act as a catalyst for other developments in the local area including the Enterprise Zone, the contribution of the project to achieving the housing start requirements and intervention rates set by Government for the Land Fund, the original costs of land acquisition, the likely Operator of the build to rent element of the scheme, the use of the funding sought to obtain vacant possession of the site, the possibility of the development being phased, assurances on build out and deliverability of the scheme and clawback of grant in the event of non-delivery.

Gary Taylor advised that he had not had sufficient opportunity to request sight of the appendices to the report which were available on request as agreed previously by this Board but undertook to seek sight of these papers following the meeting and raise any points with Simon Dancer direct.

Councillor Jim O'Boyle suggested that regular reports on progress with this scheme should be submitted to future meetings of the Board. Gareth Bradford advised on the requirements to report on a monthly basis to both Homes England and the Government on Land Fund schemes and Brownfield Land schemes and that he would be happy to make any reports available to this Board alongside the updates to the Housing and Land Delivery Board on the Housing Deal and the Land Fund as part of that. Councillor Mike Bird commented that as the date of commencement for this particular scheme was not until Quarter 2 2021, progress reports should commence after that date.

Resolved:

That subject to the various points detailed in the report:

1. That grant funding as detailed in the report from the WMCA's devolved housing and land funds to support the Stone Yard project in Digbeth, which would bring forward 995 housing units, including 20% affordable provision - against the WMCA's approved regional affordable housing definition, be approved;
2. That it be noted that the funding was fully compliant with the WMCA Single Commissioning Framework approved by this Board, the Housing and Land Delivery Board and the WMCA Board in March 2019 and which had been operational since 1 April 2019.
3. That it be noted also that the scheme had progressed through each SCF Gateway Approval point on the way to this Board;
4. That it be noted that the funding was fully compliant with the requirements set by Central Government for devolved housing and land funds administered by the WMCA;

5. That it be noted that the report had been co-developed with Officers from Birmingham City Council, the Local Planning Authority for the scheme;
6. That regular progress reports be submitted to this Board in respect of this scheme following commencement of works and on other Land Fund and Brownfield Fund schemes.

86. WMCA Collective Investment Fund (CIF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Collective Investment Fund (CIF) Dashboard (private iteration) as at 1 October 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

87. WMCA Brownfield Land and Property Investment Fund (BLPDF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Brownfield Land and Property Development Fund (BLPDF) Dashboard (private iteration) as at 1 October 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

88. WMCA Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) - Dashboard

The Board considered the WMCA Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) Dashboard (private iteration) as at 1 October 2020.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard be received and noted.

89. Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF)

Lara Smith presented the Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF) Dashboard as at 1 October 2020. She reported on the current position with the Music Institute which had partnered with the Arts Council and Black Country Radio and on the Goscote Lane Residential Development Scheme. She advised that a change request was being prepared for submission to a future meeting to extend the funding for LPIF as a whole beyond March 2021.

Resolved:

That the Dashboard and report be received and noted.

The meeting ended at 11.20 am.



West Midlands Combined Authority

Strategic Economic Development Board Meeting

Tuesday 20 October 2020 at 3.00pm

Notes

Members

Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP
Black Country LEP
WMCA Deputy Mayor
Cabinet Portfolio - Economy &
Innovation (City of Wolverhampton)
Dudley MBC
Redditch BC
Sandwell MBC
Solihull MBC
Warwickshire CC

Tim Pile (in the Chair)
Tom Westley
Councillor Bob Sleigh

Councillor Ian Brookfield
Councillor Angus Lees
Councillor Matthew Dormer
Councillor Danny Millard
Councillor Ian Courts
Councillor Peter Butlin

Officers in Attendance

Black Country LEP
Black Country LEP
City of Wolverhampton
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Combined Authority

Sarah Middleton
Prof Delma Dwight
Richard Lawrence
Paula Deas
Katie Trout
David Furnage
Julia Goldsworthy
Fiona Latter
Rebecca Riley
Jonathan Skinner

Screen Industry Board

Chair
Create Central

Ed Shedd (Chair)
Suzie Norton

Major New Market Opportunities – Modern Services

Chair
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP

Tim Kay
Hilary Smith Allen

**Item
No.**

116. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Windrum, Matthew Hammond, Councillors Adrian Andrews, Matthew Duggins, David Humphreys, Isobel Seccombe and Ian Ward.

117. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

118. Notes of the Strategic Economic Plan Board Meeting held 14 September 2020

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting held on the 14 September 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

119. SED Board Tracker Log

Resolved:

That the SED Board Tracker Log be received and noted.

120. Forward Plan

The Chair noted the Forward Plan had been updated to include the reporting through of the Sector plans. He stated that there was a need to incorporate the milestones for refreshing the vision and strategy and asked that officers work these into the Forward Plan for the next meeting.

Resolved:

That the Forward Plan continue to be reviewed and updated to provide for a planned future work programme of the Board.

Economic & Innovation Portfolio

121. West Midland CA Covid Economic Monitoring – WM Redi weekly monitor (9 October 2020) and the updated SED Board Economic Dashboard

Prof Delma Dwight was in attendance to provide an update on the economic monitoring reporting. She referenced the Spatial and Sectoral analysis and advised that the document would be circulated to Board Members.

She highlighted the economic dashboard which continued to show a mixed picture and she advised that:

That the PMI had reduced but remained higher than the national average and that the WM remained in the top 4 areas;

- Claimant Count figures had increased and spatially out of 417 Wards, 45% (188) were above the national average
- Youth Claimants had increased
- Exports – WMCA totaled £27.45BN

She advised that work continued with the intelligence to support the propositions going forward.

Councillor Ian Courts stated that there was devastating material coming out through the data and commented that there remained a need to see what actions and interventions were being undertaken to alleviate the impact. The Chair concurred with the view that actions and interventions should be reported through.

Julia Goldsworthy advised that there was a rich source of information and this was informing the CA intelligence and economic asks, as an approach to Tier 3 status.

The Chair referenced the need for the sectoral analysis when bringing through the deep dives. In regard to the spatial context and the identified high-risk areas to the impact of Covid-19, he stated that there was a need to also consider the move out of the EU. He asked how the work was being undertaken.

Julia Goldsworthy stated that the question was how the CA were drawing together all the information and proposals across the region. She advised that last week Birmingham City Council had put proposals forward and other local authorities were doing so separately. She advised that there were informal discussions to come to a single view and that there was work to consider what other regions were doing, highlighting that she would be meeting with Tony Bray from MHCLG in this context.

The Chair stated that there was a richness of data and specific insights into the corporate business and that this was required in order to form the lobbying requests, with underpinning evidence.

Councillor Ian Courts advised that in the lobbying request there should be focus on the pillars of the WM economy.

Councillor Peter Butlin stated that then data was required in regard to lobbying on the Tiers. In respect of where there had been spikes in Covid-19, he highlighted that these had primarily been where universities were located and commented that he did not feel the data was being used in that way.

Councillor Bob Sleight stated that there needed to be one version of the truth and commented that data was not consistent, in that NHS boundaries did not necessarily match with the CA collated data.

The Chair commented that other forms of data, whilst important, the focus for the SED Board remained providing support for businesses. Julia Goldsworthy added that there was an issue of co-terminosity and how this was navigated, noting there were areas the CA and partners could influence but did not necessarily control, such as the increase in infections. She stated that the focus for the CA remained on factors in their control.

Rebecca Riley advised that every week the City-Redi monitor there was qualitative information provided for business decision making. In regards to geography she advised that they were restricted on what information was available and acknowledged that the super output map did highlight that the spikes were in student areas and that in Birmingham these areas were contained in parts of the City.

The Chair reiterated the need to use the data to take action and advised that the weekly monitor provided a great del information. He asked officers to consider cause and effect to inform when actions should be taken.

Resolved:

(1) That the data submitted and comments thereon be noted; and

(2) That actions be identified to

122. Policy Context and Developments

- **Comprehensive Spending Review**
- **Devolution White Paper**
- **EU Transition period ending**
- **Industrial Strategy Refresh**
- **Get Britain Building Fund**

Julia Goldsworthy advised that the Policy Context was the Spending Review the Industrial Strategy and the Local Recovery and Devolution White paper. She noted that the Spending Review was now anticipated to be one year towards the end of November. She advised that the Economic Recovery Steering Committee met fortnightly and was monitoring and directing relationships with Government and the next steps for each of the 31 projects in the Recharge proposition.

In regard to the End of the Transition period with the EU, there was work being undertaken to:

- Understanding of exposure through sector plans
- Impact of Rules of Origin
- Freeport policy paper
- Influence over new trade policy (Strategic Trade Advisory Group)

- Direct support:
 - Extending export support from the Chambers
 - Partnering with the Cabinet Office on the FieldForce project to ensure the readiness of the UK's highest-value traders with the EU

The implications for the WM was that the economic recovery would flex according to the economic and public health conditions and thus there was a need to make sure the region had the necessary powers and levers to deal with the crisis.

Councillor Angus Lees noted the Treasury spending review being a one year roll over and asked if there was room to increase the funding ask; how would a one-year review affect schools and the NHS; and what was meant by a special multi-year settlement.

Julia Goldsworthy advised that usually the spending review was three years revenue and 4 years capital and advised that it would continue to be more than one year for schools and the NHS but that the implication for others was a one-year settlement. She advised that there remained more scope for capital and thus the CA were pursuing this as matter of urgency.

Councillor Angus Lees stated that if Covid got worse in areas then the Government would need to help out and Julia Goldsworthy confirmed that the CA were in regional negotiations with Government.

Councillor Bob Sleigh noted one-year revenue but stated that capital spending was a concern and asked what flexibility could be encouraged through the CSR. He stated that there was a need to start lobbying on some of the Asks, to include Birmingham International Station.

Julia Goldsworthy advised that the CA were clear on their what the multi-year, capital asks were and the Chair whilst noting that not all the CSR asks could be achieved advised that they wanted to be able to commit to the capital spends.

Katie Trout advised that the Round Table discussions had highlighted the need to build back greener and thus there was a need to present the projects in relation to how they could support these green ambitions.

Resolved:

That the Board receive and note the Policy Context and Developments, taking forward the comments in relation to the capital asks.

123. Future Research Focus

Rebecca Riley advised that she had established a group to look at the issues to inform the future research focus but noted that it was not an exclusive group thus if anyone in the Board's organisations should be involved then to advise her. She stated that the current work was exploring the issues already published in the Recovery paper. They were considering big global changes to include business travel slowing and the shift to home working.

She advised that work on was ongoing on scenario planning and purchase of a Regional Economic Forecasting Model – initial discussions with providers and that they were also looking at the model being made available to partners across the region, through the regional group.

She advised that a sub group had met a number of times in the last 6 months to look at the user requirements for evaluation and monitoring, and how this could align with the Single Assurance Framework. An initial review has started looking at gathering of best practice examples across different policy themes and intervention types, with the aim of collating best practice guidance on the application of the Green Book across all interventions. The group has also identified a need for training both at an introductory level and practitioner level for business case development, which covers the whole project lifecycle through to evaluation. WMREDI/Dream are currently exploring options on this and how it could be rolled out.

In regard to the State of the Region update, there had been 6-month reflections – a number of significant data releases had been put on hold by ONS (i.e. GVA in December), therefore any update would focus on changes under pandemic conditions as and when they happen, through the weekly monitor with a view to reviewing these in the New Year. Key issues to continue to watch included: the impact of furlough and redundancy pressures; impacts of second wave; impact of student recruitment, supply chains and impacts on city centres. In terms of the impact on city centres a piece of work was being carried out led by Adam Hawksbee with Local Authority Chief Execs which the WMREDI partners were feeding into.

Councillor Angus Lees welcomed the update but asked when the activity would be implemented. Rebecca Riley advised that it was currently happening and that there was a shared methodology.

The Chair noted the work and stated that the timeframe should be included in the Forward Plan.

Councillor Ian Courts advised that with the megatrends unfurling such as home working and the evidence come forward, what engagement work did they want to do with the SED Board.

Rebecca Riley in terms of the model this was something that could be updated as it developed. In relation to global and megatrends there was need to look at was already happening and how the pandemic was impacting. She advised that work was continuing with academics i.e. in regard to logistics. She advised that she would share an outline of the workshops.

The Chair advised that the asks of the SED Board should be specific and detail what was required. He stated that as a region the research needed to bring out the competitiveness difference and the core competencies.

Resolved:

- 1) That the feedback on the direction on the research plan be noted;
- 2) That the Board endorse the principle and approach in the plan; and
- 3) That the Board request that the timeline be included in the Forward Plan.

124. Major New Market Opportunities – Modern Services

Tim Kay and Hilary Smyth-Allen were in attendance to provide an update and overview of the Modern Services activity to include clarity of the scope of the sector and its inter-relationships with other sectors; the impact of Covid-19 on priorities and interventions; and the role, focus and future activities of the Modern Services Board.

The Local Industrial Strategy vision was highlighted, which underpinned the work of the Board - The West Midlands aims to build its reputation as a high-value business and professional services location benefiting from a highly diverse and highly skilled local workforce... The West Midlands is driving innovation and demand through a 'full modern services' offer that benefits the wider local economy, including highly paid, highly skilled roles for all communities.

The sector action plan and been revised to a recovery plan looking at the future of services, the gig economy, transformational technologies.

As with other sectors there had been a huge impact of Covid-19 which had led to the following approach:

- Change in priorities from strategic MMO thinking to BPFSS sector focus in short term.
- Not without impact, but areas of priority intervention remain consistent.
- Acceleration of innovation led interventions was a key impact for policy team.
- For phase 1 sector, Modern Services agenda was still very relevant and opportunities remained to build from position of strength

Tim Kay advised that the Modern Services Board Focus in Q3 would be:

- Established and functioning board membership – first meeting scheduled for November.
- Agreeing the scope and sphere of interest/ influence for Modern Services/ prioritisation.

- Understanding the current position & exploration of Modern Services KPIs/ economic impact – baselining, existing data/ measures – First meeting scheduled with WM ODA to understand existing knowledge base.
- Priority in Q4 would be Modern Services Delivery Plan 2021/22

The Chair stated that as the sector represented 25-30% of the region's business then it would affect all businesses and sectors, and asked if the issue of funding was going forward to the first meeting in November.

Councillor Ian Courts advised that when the next report came to the Board that it should include a delivery plan, concentrating on a few opportunities for the sector.

Resolved:

That the Board receive and note the update on the Modern Services Sector Major New Market Opportunities.

125. Creative Sector Plan

David Furnage advised DCMS's definition of creative industries versus the cultural sector you will see an overlap: Film, TV, music, radio, photography, crafts, and perhaps surprisingly, museums, galleries and libraries appear in both. In addition, DCMS has said recently that the term Creative Industries *can* be used as a catch-all term to include culture, and so the LIS definition used for this report does include the elements of culture that drive economic growth and placemaking.

He Highlighted the progress across the following 8 actions

- Action 1: Specialist Business Support
- Action 2: Cluster development and cross
- Action 3: Align education & training + careers provision regional collaboration programmes
- Action 4: Creative sector training and access to work and Identify barriers to progress, which I hope this group can help solve.
- Action 5: Creative innovation Programmes
- Action 6: Creative Sector Building Programme
- Action 7: Leverage Cultural Action Zones to re-animate our places
- Action 8 Restarting & sustaining Cultural activity & placemaking

He advised that DCMS's definition of creative industries versus the cultural sector had overlaps and included - Film, TV, music, radio, photography, crafts, and perhaps surprisingly, museums, galleries and libraries appear in both. In addition, DCMS has said recently that the term Creative Industries *could* be used as a catch-all term to include culture, and so the LIS definition used for this report does include the elements of culture that drive economic growth and placemaking.

The current state of the sector could be divided into three broad groups:

- A small group, mostly games companies, were doing well.

- A large group, including designers, marketing, film makers, animators, software makers and VR/AR had been hit hard but were still trading. They have used furloughing and cost cutting alongside digital tools and remote working to adapt and survive so far.
- The third significant group had been hit very hard to include commercial venue-based organisations which did not normally receive any arts grants, including music venues, theatres, cinemas and associated suppliers.

David Furmage advised that they were seeking support through the SED to the following barriers: -

Barrier 1: A more unified approach to business support across the region could improve outcomes for individual businesses.

Barrier 2: Advocacy to government for more flexible grant programmes that take into account the high use of freelancers in this sector by reducing the mandatory employee head count for eligibility.

Barrier 3: Advocacy to government for further targeted support to the hardest hit creative sub-sectors and their supply chains as lockdown continues.

Barrier 4: GBSLEP has funding for this in its area, but to be really effective we need coordinated action with other LEPs to extend the intervention across the region.

Barrier 5: Continued advocacy is needed nationally on apprenticeship levy rules and flexibility of skills money to cover unfunded costs such as the training provider brokerage element of multi-employer schemes.

Barrier 6: Significant shortage of both revenue and capital monies for cultural recovery. The £1.57bn cultural emergency fund to date has been exclusively to support businesses very close to failure. Further support is needed, as outlined in our CSR submission, to actually invest long term in the sector and its businesses.

Barrier 7: For effective and timely interventions we need an improved level of coordinated action between LEPs and other regional stakeholders.

Barrier 8: Advocate for certainty over new capital resources for LEPs and the WMCA.

Councillor Ian Courts advised that the sector represented 1 in 20 jobs and needed to be given a lot of impetus. In reference to the barriers he advised that there was also technical infrastructure.

Councillor Peter Butlin noted that gaming was doing well but referenced live venues requiring support to include the support staff i.e. lighting and sound engineers etc., who were generally freelancers and their skills could disappear if they did not receive support.

The Chair observed that it was also a sector where younger employees were adversely affected. He asked that when the Create Sector Plan was re-submitted that it include the next level of detail, that is actions and potential outcomes.

Resolved:

That the SED Board

- 1) Note the very variable business situations that different parts of the creative sector are facing as a result of Covid.
- 2) Note the rationale for how the eight creative sector actions have been prioritised within the West Midlands Creative Industries Local Industrial Recovery Plan (WM CI LIRS).
- 3) Endorse the on-going interventions within the WM Creative Sector Recovery Plan.
- 4) Report to the January meeting on what actions the Board can support to help unblock the barriers to delivery that a number of these actions are facing.

126. Create Central

Suzie Norton and Ed Shedd provided an overview of activity in year one and an overview of the evolving governance model of Create Central after one-year.

They advised that the next steps would be to:

- Commission skills/diversity/geography audit.
- Work with WMCA to review governance.
- Agree selection process for Create Central Board and Membership.
- Seek approval from SED in January 2021.

The Chair welcomed the report coming forward to January.

Suzie Norton advised that they were looking at production and inward investment and the impact of Covid-109 on film, tv production and infrastructure i.e. Mercia Studios and work was being done with the WM Growth Company. She advised that they would be coming back to the Board with tangible actions for a pan-regional approach. The Chair welcomed the news on Mercia Studios.

Resolved:

That the SED Board note the update.

127. Creative Scale-Up

Fiona Latter advised that the West Midlands was an ideal location for the initial two-year pilot programme to deliver meaningful results in a relatively short time. In particular, the region had the following assets:

- A large, growing cluster of around 13,000 creative enterprises providing a viable pool for the programme, with some of the largest growth in creative businesses in the country.
- Around 10% of the UK games industry; a substantial advertising, marketing and design sector; the largest jewellery, crafts and designer maker cluster outside London; and the UK's first large scale 5G test bed providing unique opportunities.

She advised that the WM had the local infrastructure required to establish the programme: including local business support architecture with scale up experience; a newly established Digital and Creative Syndicate of Angel investors; a British Business Bank regional lead and established experience of working with the Creative Industries.

She highlighted that there were four cohorts underpinning the work:

Cohorts 1 to 3:

- Within one cohort there are 3 'Cohorts'; a Birmingham, Black Country and Coventry & Warwickshire cohort (3 main LEP areas in the West Midlands)
- Each LEP cohort comprises of 10 businesses max (we can allow 10-12, to allow for dropouts)
- Same sessions repeated by workshop stream providers (online until otherwise)

Cohort 4:

- Cohort 4 has been devised for larger SMEs with a turnover of £500K plus larger teams.

In addition, there were workshop stream, meet the investor event and trade missions scheduled. Ambitions for the future included Sector Specific Cohorts; Increased use of mentoring through new CRM Mentors Matching System; Trade Missions to Argentina, Poland and Pacific North West; Linking up with pipeline programmes including the P Word and Creative Warwickshire; Development of the Digital and Creative Syndicate to increase numbers of businesses receiving investment.

Fiona Latter advised that she would report back to the Board in January.

The Chair asked that she provide some detail of case studies to the January Board and asked what success would look like. Fiona Latter advised that success was moving businesses to the next level, highlighting that some gaming companies had increase by 300-400% over the Covid-19 period. The Chair asked that the next update include an aggregate of the businesses taken to the next level and commented that other areas could benefit from the Scale-up approach.

Resolved:

That the SED Board note the progress of the region's Creative Scale-Up project and endorse its future plans.

128. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved:

That it be noted that the next meeting would be held 19th November 2020.

The meeting closed at 5.00pm

Chair



West Midlands Combined Authority

Housing & Land Delivery Board

Monday 2 November 2020 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Mike Bird (Chair)
Councillor George Adamson
Bill Blincoe
Councillor Peter Butlin
Councillor Ian Courts
Councillor Matthew Dormer
Philip Farrell
Councillor Julie Jackson
Councillor Angus Lees
Sarah Middleton

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Cannock Chase District Council
Coventry and Warwickshire LEP
Warwickshire County Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Redditch Borough Council
Homes England
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Black Country Local Enterprise
Partnership
Birmingham City Council

Councillor Sharon Thompson

In Attendance

Councillor Cathy Bayton

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Item Title No.

16. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Keith Allcock (Sandwell), Marc Liddeth (Environment Agency), Councillor Robert Macey (Shropshire), Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman (Wolverhampton), Councillor David Welsh (Coventry) and Councillor David Wright (Telford & Wrekin).

17. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

18. Single Assurance Framework - Impact on Thematic Boards - Terms of Reference and Role

The board considered a report from the Director Housing & Regeneration, Director of Strategy and Head of Governance & Monitoring Officer on how the new Single Assurance Framework would ensure the WMCA would use public money responsibly, both openly and transparently, and achieve best value for money.

The Single Assurance Framework required each thematic board, including the Housing & Land Delivery Board, to undertake a set of core roles to ensure that they were applying the appropriate oversight, support and portfolio development roles required to support the key principles and application of the framework. In addition, the Single Assurance Framework project had been tasked with developing proposals for a consistent role, purpose and approach to each thematic board to help drive effective, clear and accountable decision-making, ensure appropriate political oversight and support for Portfolio Leads and to support the intent to deliver a 'golden thread' from strategic objective through initiation, development, delivery and evaluation within the WMCA. An updated terms of reference for this board were therefore proposed that took account of this work. The Director of Housing & Regeneration indicated that there would be an additional non-voting member of the board appointed by Network Rail from the next meeting.

Resolved:

- (1) The Single Assurance Framework requirements for thematic boards be noted.
- (2) The proposed portfolio improvements for the Housing & Land Delivery Board be noted.
- (3) The amended terms of reference for the Housing & Land Delivery Board be endorsed.

19. Zero Carbon Homes: Programme Update

The board considered a report from the Director of Housing & Regeneration on the proposed approach to producing a 2025 zero carbon homes standard and routemap, as agreed by this board as key deliverables in its 2020/21 business plan.

At its meeting on 27 April 2020, this board agreed that the WMCA would adopt the UK Green Building Council's definition 'Net Zero Carbon Buildings: A Framework Definition' to define zero carbon development in the region and guide the development of the 2025 zero carbon homes standard. It also commissioned a comprehensive programme of work to meet the 2025 commitment. This involved developing a baseline gap analysis, a Zero Carbon Homes Charter and a Zero Carbon Homes Routemap. The first part of this work, to develop a baseline gap analysis, had now been completed and was included within the report. Based on the findings of this work, a draft version of the Zero Carbon Homes Charter would be developed and brought to the next meeting of the board on 13 January 2021.

Councillor Ian Courts stressed the importance of ensuring the cost implications of this ambition were kept under control in order that the support of the construction industry could be retained. Councillor Peter Butlin supported this comment and indicated that reducing the costs of zero carbon manufacturing would be the key challenge to overcome.

Resolved:

- (1) The proposed approach to delivering the zero carbon homes ambition in the 2041 Climate Change Action Plan, which included establishing the current level of low/zero carbon building in the region, producing an agreed zero carbon homes standard routemap to 2025 and launching a zero carbon homes charter be noted.
- (2) The findings of the baseline gap analysis report and its implications for meeting the 2025 zero carbon homes target be noted.
- (3) It be noted that the Zero Carbon Homes Taskforce had now been established, had met on 6 October and 22 October 2020, and that it would directly support the development of the Zero Carbon Homes Charter and routemap over the coming months.

20. Advanced Manufacturing in Construction Routemap

The board considered a report from the Director of Housing & Regeneration on the work undertaken by the Advanced Manufacturing in Construction Officer Working Group and Expert Advisory Group in producing a routemap for accelerating Advanced Manufacturing in Construction in the region as previously commissioned by this board.

The board had previously agreed to the development of a comprehensive Advanced Manufacturing in Construction routemap and strategy, to ensure that it delivered housing and job numbers, but also social value, inclusive growth and environmental benefits. To ensure that the routemap was accessible to those less familiar with the Advanced Manufacturing in Construction sector, but robust enough to inform credible actions, a two-part structure was proposed that would see both an executive summary and detailed report produced. It was intended to formally launch the routemap in winter 2020/21 with appropriate comms and publicity.

The Chair welcomed the report and indicated that he wished to see a critical mass of manufacturing being developed within the West Midlands that might, to some extent, mitigate against the loss of other skilled manufacturing jobs.

Resolved:

- (1) The contents of part 2 of the Advanced Manufacturing in Construction routemap be noted.
- (2) The proposal to explore options for implementing the Advanced Manufacturing in Construction routemap's recommendations in collaboration with the Advanced Manufacturing in Construction Officer Working Group and Expert Advisory Group be agreed.
- (3) The intention to formally launch the Advanced Manufacturing in Construction routemap in winter 2020/21 be noted.

- (4) The Director of Housing & Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Housing & Land, be given delegated authority to agree the final versions of the Advanced Manufacturing in Construction routemap for publication.

21. Planning Reform: Key Messages

The board considered a report from the Director of Housing & Regeneration on discussions held with local planning authority officials to discuss any regional impacts from the proposed planning reforms, and to identify any consistent messages or points of clarification.

The White Paper 'Planning for the Future' proposed extensive changes to the planning system, covering plan making, development management and development contributions, alongside other related policy proposals. This new system had been devised by an expert panel working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and Treasury officials, and retained local plan making at the heart of the system. The White Paper set out the proposed reforms through three pillars: 'planning for development', 'planning for beautiful and sustainable places' and 'planning for infrastructure and connected places'.

Two workshops were held that identified a number of gaps in the new proposed system, along with a number of unintended consequences. A number of observations were therefore drafted that could have been included within consultation responses to the White Paper.

Councillor Matt Dormer noted that the White Paper proposed the removal of the duty to co-operate, but that this could still happen effectively where planning authorities chose to develop joint local plans with neighbouring councils. Councillor Peter Butlin indicated that he considered the non-delivery of approved planning applications to be a significant problem that needed addressing. He understood that up to a million unbuilt homes had received planning permission, suggesting that planning regulations were not proving to be a hindrance to housing supply. Councillor Ian Courts stressed the importance of properly understanding the economic pressures that influenced developers as this would help improve the supply of housing stock.

Resolved:

- (1) The key issues, messages and points of clarification raised by the Delivery Steering Group to the consultation on the White Paper entitled 'Planning for the Future' which closed on 30 October 2020 be noted.
- (2) It be noted that officials across the region would continue to raise these key messages, issues and points with the Government in different forums, together with the comments made at this meeting.

22. Local Plans: Update on Progress

The board considered a report from the Director of Housing & Regeneration summarising the position on local plans which has been developed with the Local Plans Housing Market Area Group.

The WMCA Housing Deal required the delivery of 215,000 dwellings by 2030/31 in return for up to £350m of investment, including £100m of which would be provided in the form of a Land Fund to accelerate the delivery of new homes. The Housing Deal also required local plans for both constituent and non-constituent local authorities to be progressed in a timely manner and adopted as necessary by 2021 to deliver and accommodate the 215,000 new homes target. To ensure that these targets were met, both local plans and housing land supply were monitored on a regular basis at a regional level.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown had had an impact on some local plans within the region, particularly where public consultation was needed, it was clear that local authorities had been taking positive steps to make ongoing progress. Those plans which had to be paused were now making their way through the system.

The Chair stressed the importance of the West Midlands region being able to deliver the supply of housing stock that it had agreed to within its Housing Deal.

Resolved:

- (1) The contents of the report that this board commissioned on local plan progression, provided in full collaboration with local authorities, be noted.
- (2) The March 2018 Housing Deal commitment that all reasonable steps were taken to progress local plans to adoption, to keep plans up to date and to ensure the region could demonstrate it was planning for delivery of 215,000 homes to 2031, be noted.

23. Exclusion of the Public & Press

Resolved:

That, in accordance with s100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the business or financial affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

24. Affordable Housing Collaborative Delivery Vehicle

The board considered a report from the Director of Housing & Regeneration on the proposals to establish a new Affordable Housing Delivery Vehicle and seeking approval to complete the full business case proposal for a joint venture between the WMCA and six regional housing associations.

In March 2018, the Government's housing deal with the West Midlands agreed that the WMCA would commit to working up a new dedicated partnership proposal to deliver additional affordable homes with the West Midlands Housing Association Partnership. Discussions had been ongoing since between the WMCA, the West Midlands Housing Association Partnership and the National Housing Federation to take forward the proposals for a bespoke affordable housing delivery vehicle that would help secure affordable housing delivery above and beyond those of the housing associations' committed and approved business plans.

The outline business case set out the strategic, commercial, management and financial detail of the proposals. It was now intended to convene a 'shadow board', consisting of representatives from the partners involved, to further develop a full business case for approval. It was expected that the full business case would be submitted for approval during January/February 2021.

The Chair enquired whether other housing associations could join this initiative in the future. The Strategic Delivery Advisor confirmed that this was the case, subject to the WMCA's approval. Councillor Ian Courts enquired whether sufficient sites were available for development under this scheme that had not already been identified for development. The Strategic Delivery Adviser indicated that sites were currently available, and it was expected further sites would come forward over time. The Chair requested that an update report be submitted to a future meeting of this board once it had been up and running for six months.

Resolved:

- (1) The positive progress towards the establishment of a new Affordable Housing Delivery Vehicle by the WMCA with West Midlands Housing Association Partnership, which was agreed in principle by this board in 2019, with a Memorandum of Understanding between the partners agreed by this board in July 2020, be noted.
- (2) It be noted that the next step on the establishment of the vehicle was to complete the outline business case and establish a 'shadow board' to finalise the full business case for board approval in early 2021.

The meeting ended at 10.45 am.



West Midlands Combined Authority

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday 2 November 2020 at 2.00 pm

Minutes

Present

Councillor Lisa Trickett (Chair)
Councillor Cathy Bayton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ahmad Bostan
Councillor Richard Brown
Paul Brown

Councillor Chris Cade

Councillor Mike Chalk

Councillor Peter Fowler
Councillor Robert Grinsell
Councillor Angus Lees
Councillor Stephen Simkins
Councillor Diane Todd
Councillor Kate Wild

Birmingham City Council
Association of Black Country Authorities
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Coventry City Council
Black Country Local Enterprise
Partnership
Warwickshire Non-Constituent Local
Authorities
Worcestershire Non-Constituent Local
Authorities
Birmingham City Council
Joint Coventry/Solihull Representative
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Association of Black Country Authorities
Staffordshire Non-Constituent Authorities
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

In Attendance

Michael-Akolade Ayodeji
Councillor Mike Bird

Gareth Bradford
Deborah Cadman
Louise Cowen
Dan Essex
Julia Goldsworthy
Linda Horne
Tim Martin
Aisha Masood
Lyndsey Roberts
Jonathan Skinner
Stephen Weir
Andy Williams
Martin Yardley

Young Combined Authority
Portfolio Lead for Housing &
Regeneration
West Midlands Combined Authority
Young Combined Authority
West Midlands Combined Authority
West Midlands Combined Authority
Coventry City Council
Coventry City Council
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP

- | Item No. | Title |
|-----------------|--|
| 75. | <p>Inquorate Meeting</p> <p>The committee was inquorate for the majority of the meeting and therefore the decisions taken would be submitted to the WMCA board on 13 November 2020 for formal approval.</p> |
| 76. | <p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dean Carroll (Shropshire Non-Constituent Authorities), Mike Lyons (Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP) and Councillor Lucy Seymour-Smith (Birmingham City Council).</p> |
| 77. | <p>Declarations of Interests</p> <p>Councillor Stephen Simkins declared that he was the City of Wolverhampton Council's Cabinet Member for City Economy.</p> |
| 78. | <p>Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the meetings held on the 7 September 2020 and 16 October 2020 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments in respect of minute no. 74 ('Questions to the Mayor'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Robert Grinsell requested that his comment and the Mayor's response relating to the benefits of HS2 & UK Central be included, Councillor Peter Fowler's comments relating to the Community Recovery Prospectus be included, along with further details on Councillor Stephen Simkins question regarding joblessness, skills and training. |
| 79. | <p>Chair's Remarks</p> <p>(a) Councillor Richard Brown</p> <p>The Chair noted that this would be Councillor Richard Brown's last meeting due to him being appointed Coventry City Council's Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources. The new representative for Coventry City Council would be Councillor Naeem Akhtar.</p> <p>(b) Economic Funding Tracker</p> <p>The Chair noted that the committee had received a copy of the Economic Funding Tracker report being submitted to the WMCA Board on the 13 November and requested that any comments were feedback to her ahead of her meeting with the Director of Strategy.</p> <p>(c) Annual Delivery 2020/21 Mid-Year Update</p> <p>The Chair noted that the committee had received a copy of the Annual Delivery 2020/21 Mid-Year Update report. Upon reviewing the document, Councillor Stephen Simkin and Councillor Peter Fowler requested that future updates included spend broken down across the seven constituent authorities which would help identify a clearer picture of the allocations across the region in term of investment and resources.</p> |

80. Q&A with the WMCA Portfolio Lead for Housing & Regeneration Councillor Mike Bird

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Lead for Housing & Regeneration Councillor Mike Bird, members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and representatives from the Young Combined Authority to the question time that was focussing on housing and regeneration-related matters.

Councillor Mike Bird provided an opening statement to members of the committee. He informed them on the Government's Housing Deal with the WMCA sought to deliver at least 215,000 homes by 2031, with current evidence and assessments being undertaken confirming that the region would be on track to achieve that target. A number of funds had been secured to support brownfield remediation, including a £100m Housing Deal Land Fund, a £50m Brownfield Land & Property Development Fund and an £84m Brownfield Housing Fund, alongside residential and commercial loan funds.

Members in attendance, along with Aisha Masood and Michael-Akolade Ayodeji then questioned the Portfolio Lead for Housing & Regeneration on a range of housing and regeneration related topics. The Chair sought further information on the brownfield land funding, totality and the spend verses the number of housing units delivered to date. She was also keen to understand the context in which the WMCA was operating in terms of supporting the housing needs of the region. Councillor Mike Bird informed the committee that 4,466 housing units on brownfield sites had been developed, but was unable to confirm on what proportion of these were currently occupied. The Director of Housing & Regeneration informed the committee that the funding associated to the Housing Deal Land Fund would be paid in tranches and was issued based on performance. To date, £53m had been received with another payment due shortly. He also noted that the WMCA had set a target requirement of 20% affordable housing.

Further to the Chair's question relating to social housing, Councillor Mike Bird stated that the direct provision of social housing was not within the Housing & Land Delivery Board's remit and that this sat with housing associations and local Housing Authorities. The committee expressed concern that consideration had not been given to developing housing co-operatives in partnership with local authorities. Councillor Stephen Simkins enquired as to whether there was an opportunity to explore joint partnership with local authorities to develop their brownfield lands.

Following the committee's concern on addressing affordable housing and the importance of sufficient levels of social housing availability, the Director of Housing & Regeneration informed the committee that a regional affordable housing definition had been agreed, and work continued with the housing associations to achieve significant affordable housing on development sites within the region.

Councillor Richard Brown queried the future for housing in response to the Government's recent planning White Paper. Councillor Mike Bird informed the committee that the Housing & Land Delivery Board had received a report on the implications arising within the White Paper, which could be shared with the committee.

Recommended:

The Portfolio Lead for Housing & Regeneration be thanked for his participation in this question and answer session with the committee and that the committee consider what further work it would like to do in the important area of housing and regeneration at its meeting on 11 January 2020.

81. Recharge West Midlands - Investment Case to Government - Battery Gigafactory

The committee received a presentation from the Chief Executive of Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Director of Business, Investment & Culture for Coventry City Council on the Gigafactory proposition. The information presented to the committee related to the importance of the automotive industry for the region, what a Gigafactory was, further information on the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre, the opportunities proposed for the region on creating green manufacturing jobs and the role the WMCA would play in this.

The Chair was keen to understand the readiness of the WMCA in terms of re-skilling and re-training, particularly in respect of those individuals who may have lost their jobs during the pandemic. She also sought assurance on the WMCA's efforts to support the Gigafactory bid going forward. The Director of Business, Investment & Culture highlighted that majority of employment would be within the supply chain and discussions had highlighted the support needed to have a mixture of capital and revenue support to enable businesses to become more innovative. He also highlighted that UK Battery Industrialisation Centre were in the process of developing battery manufacturing apprenticeships to help engage and bring in those new skills, but recognised the need to further support businesses in retraining their workforces. The Chief Executive for Coventry & Warwickshire LEP indicated that an electrification taskforce had been created as well as the training and automotive skills taskforce, and that the bid made to Government should not only focus on the building options but should also seek to address the training need.

Councillor Stephen Simkins expressed his concern on how the Gigafactory would have a beneficial impact for the Black Country, with a strategic outlook on how the West Midlands moves into a greener future. He understood the benefits this programme brought to both Coventry and Solihull, but looked for a more strategic approach across the WMCA to address issues such as deprivation, educational attainment and poor health. The Director of Strategy highlighted that key taskforces had been explicitly looking at the cross-regional geography to better understand the supply chain across the whole region to ensure all parts fitted together.

The committee were keen to ensure that the correct skill set for employment in this sector started in the West Midlands with the right training opportunities being provided. In terms of supporting the bid going forward, the committee would be provided with a copy of the script being provided to MPs on the Gigafactory.

Recommendation to the WMCA Board:

- (1) The presentation be noted.
- (2) The comments made by members of the committee on this item be noted.

82. Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee Minutes

The committee consider the minutes of the Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 14 September 2020 and 19 October 2020.

Councillor Peter Fowler sought assurances that concerns around face coverings being correctly worn on public transportation had been raised during the question and answer session with the Portfolio Lead for Transport. Councillor Cathy Bayton confirmed this had been the case. It was also noted that a 'deep dive' look at the concessionary fares schemes would be undertaken.

Recommended to the WMCA Board:

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 September 2020 and 19 October 2020 be approved.

83. Forward Plan

The committee noted a forward plan of items that were to be reported to future meetings of the committee and the WMCA Board.

The committee were also made aware of a budget workshop being held on 27 November from 1.30pm in preparation for the Mayoral question time being held in December 2020.

84. Date of the Next Meeting

Friday 11 December 2020 at 11.00am.

The meeting ended at 4.20 pm.

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Young Combined Authority

Round up of Young Combined Authority (YCA) Board activity, October 2020

Shaping of the Young Combined Authority Board

The YCA Board is now up and running, and keen to have a greater impact. To help make this happen, the Board has established two co-Chairs and 'Lead' roles aligned to WMCA portfolio areas:

Co-Chair : Aisha Masood & Chris Burden

Environment Portfolio : Lily Eves & Ibrahim Sohail

Skills & Digital Portfolio : Gina Patel & Kari Lawler

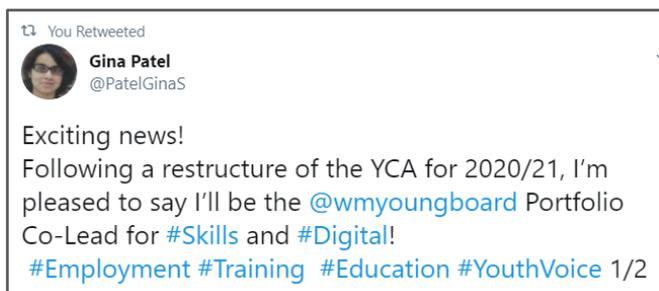
Transport Portfolio : Asad Kalang & Kashmire Hawker

Housing & Regeneration Portfolio : Avtar Purewal & Ayan Aden

Inclusive Communities & Wellbeing : Olivia Agbe, Georgia Wiggin & Daniel Ndaty

Culture & Major Events: Eman Mowatt & Michael Ayodeji

Member without a Portfolio : Grace Lynskey



Initial priorities for the YCA Board

The YCA Board is currently focusing on repurposing the "manifesto" which it drafted in March 2020, to create a post-COVID-19 vision document for the region. The ambition is to bring this to WMCA Board in January 2021 and use it as a springboard for future discussions and collaboration with the region's decision makers.

YCA Co-Leads are also meeting with WMCA directors and policy leads to understand opportunities to engage with and shape WMCA policy development. To date, YCA Board members have been invited to; get involved with shaping the Digital Strategy (Kari Lawler and Gina Patel, Co-Leads for Digital and Skills), participate in Overview and Scrutiny's Transport Sub-Committee (Kashmire Hawker and Asad Kalang, Co-Leads for Transport) and comment on the Regional Health Impact of Covid-19 report (Daniel Ndaty, Olivia Agbe and Georgia Wiggin, Co-Leads for Inclusive Communities and Wellbeing)

Covid-19 and youth engagement

Sean Russell, WMCA Head of Thrive, joined the YCA Board meeting on 16 September 2020 to ask for insight from the YCA Board about why there has been a recent spike in young people (17 – 29) testing positive for Covid-19 in the West Midlands.

The feedback from the group was used to shape the COVID-19 Youth Engagement Survey and YCA Board members have since helped to promote the survey with their networks, aiming to secure as many responses as possible.

The group is keen to find out the results of the survey and to help shape any next steps.

wmyoungboard
@wmyoungboard

CALLING ALL YOUNG PEOPLE!

The West Midlands needs you to share your views and experiences of **#Covid19**, so that organisations like **@WestMids_CA** can help us safely out of the pandemic.

Please take the survey and spread the word:
snapsurveys.wmca.org.uk/snapwebhost/s...

Deadline: Mon 26 Oct

We want to hear from you!

Complete our survey to share your experience of the pandemic - to help us learn how it's affected you, and for a chance to win an Amazon voucher.

#ReThink

Beatfreaks and 9 others

4:01 PM · Oct 20, 2020 · Twitter Web App

20 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 14 Likes

Shaping the YCA Community

During the YCA Board meeting on 30 September 2020, YCA Board members were updated about the current plans to set up a Young Combined Authority “Community” (a wider online engagement panel) – which was outlined in the Inclusive Communities Portfolio Update report endorsed by WMCA Board on 18 September 2020.

YCA Board members provided insightful feedback on how to promote the opportunity and highlighted the importance of encouraging participation from members of local authority youth councils and youth organisations, but also reaching those who do not currently have a platform to speak to decision-makers.

Applications for the YCA Community will open during November 2020.

Midlands UK Forum for Growth event

Ayan Aden, Co-Lead for Housing and Regeneration, and Kari Lawler, Co-Lead for Digital and Skills, joined the ‘Future Leaders: Delivering Good Growth’ panel at the Midlands UK Forum for Growth event.

Stay up to date:

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