

**West Midlands Combined Authority – Decisions taken by the WMCA Board on Friday 12 January 2024**

<b>Agenda Item No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1.	Apologies for Absence	Lee Barron (Midlands TUC), Councillor Cathy Bayton (Overview & Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Kerrie Carmichael (Sandwell), Councillor Shaun Davies (Telford & Wrekin) and Councillor Ian Davison (Warwick).
2.	Chair's Remarks	The Chair reported that a formal application had been received from Warwick District Council seeking to become non-constituent members of the WMCA.
3.	Minutes - 17 November 2023	Agreed as a correct record.
4.	Forward Plan	A plan of items to be reported to future meetings of the board was noted.
5.	Regional Activity & Delivery Update	A presentation on recent activity and delivery by the WMCA was noted.
6.	WMCA Draft Budget 2024/25	<p>(1) The draft 2024/25 WMCA consolidated revenue budget was approved for consultation. This included:</p> <p>(a) The budget requirement for transport delivery in 2024/25 of £198.3m comprising three elements:</p> <p>(i) £122.9m to be funded from the existing transport levy mechanism.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(ii) £70.4m of grant funding.</li> <li>(iii) Use of windfall gains from treasury management of £5.0m.</li> <li>(b) The budget requirement for portfolio delivery in 2024/25 of £262.0m comprising of six elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) £142m Adult Education (including level 3) spending to be funded from adult education budget funding devolved by the Department for Education.</li> <li>(ii) £104.4m to be funded from devolution deal grants.</li> <li>(iii) £2.3m to be funded from other income, notably investment income.</li> <li>(iv) £4.6m to be funded from constituent authority fees (fees to remain at the same level as 2023/24).</li> <li>(v) £400,000 to be funded from non-constituent authority and observer fees (fees to remain at the same level as 2023/24).</li> <li>(vi) Use of £8.3m business rates retention income.</li> </ul> </li> <li>(2) The Mayoral Office budget for 2024/25 of £7.0m, of which £900,000 was to be funded from additional Mayoral Capacity Funding and election costs of £6.1m were to be funded from earmarked reserves, was approved for consultation and scrutiny.</li> <li>(3) It was noted that there would be no mayoral precept during 2024/25.</li> </ul>

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		<p>(4) The Mayor’s budget to be reviewed by the board and set out in a report to the Mayor whether it was approved in its current form, including any recommendations, before 8 February 2024.</p> <p>(5) The draft 2024/25 capital programme of £719.8m was approved for consultation.</p> <p>(6) The planned spend on the investment programme over the period was noted.</p> <p>(7) The WMCA’s ongoing commitment to work with the Mayor and constituent authority leaders to discuss a sustainable funding solution for transport, which would meet the scale of ambition for the network, was noted.</p> <p>(8) The matters identified by Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee/Transport Delivery Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee that arose out of the Mayoral Q&amp;A on 14 December 2023 were noted.</p>
7.	Financial Monitoring Report 2023/24	<p>(1) The financial position as at 30 November 2023 was noted.</p> <p>(2) The latest forecast for 2023/24 was noted.</p> <p>(3) The new grant awards to the WMCA, and the arrangements for these grants, were noted.</p> <p>(4) The intention to enter into contracts with local authorities for year-three activity following the Department for Levelling Up, Housing &amp; Communities relaxing the carry forward requirements which applied to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund was</p>

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		<p>noted.</p> <p>(5) It was noted that under the delegation provided by the WMCA Board on 17 November 2023, the Section 151 Officer recently approved the acceptance of the £100m funding for brownfield regeneration, secured as part of the Trailblazer Devolution Deal.</p> <p>(6) The additional funding awarded to the region for highways maintenance works, as part of the Government’s Network North plan, was noted and the proposed allocation of this funding was endorsed.</p> <p>(7) The treasury and prudential indicators for the period ended 30 November 2023 were noted.</p>
8.	European Athletics Championships 2026	<p>(1) Support for the continued delivery of the European Athletics Championships 2026 through the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund contribution as agreed by WMCA Board on 17 March 2023 and in light of the subsequent changes to the full business case agreed by the Investment Board on 18 June 2023 was agreed.</p> <p>(2) The request from Birmingham City Council to repurpose £3m allocated for the Grassroots Sports Programme towards the European Athletics Championships’ direct delivery costs was agreed, and the associated impact on community benefit was noted.</p> <p>(3) Support for the re-profiling of £4.5m expenditure from 2023/24 into 2024/25 was agreed, subject to Government approval, noting that all funds were still required</p>

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		<p>to be spent by 31 March 2025 in line with the terms and conditions set out in the funding agreement between the Department for Digital, Culture, Media &amp; Sport and the WMCA.</p> <p>(4) An additional £600,000 of Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund funding generated from underspend within the Sandwell Aquatic programme was agreed to be used towards the projected £2.2m shortfall in the current European Athletics Championships direct delivery budget, noting that this was not in line with the prior directions of the WMCA Board or the process for allocation of underspends agreed by the WMCA Board on 17 March 2023 and so was outside of officer delegations.</p> <p>(5) It was noted that the proposed joint venture for delivery of the European Athletics Championships would be between Birmingham City Council and UK Athletics with no formal legal role for the WMCA, which included no financial underwrite commitment, recognising however, as a condition, the strong involvement and support of the WMCA and all of its members.</p> <p>(6) Final sign-off of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund funding agreement between Birmingham City Council and the WMCA was delegated to the Executive Director of Strategy, Economy &amp; Net Zero, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer, and any such agreement would reflect the grant conditions imposed on the WMCA by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media &amp; Sport, together with any additional conditions deemed necessary to safeguard the WMCA's position.</p> <p>(7) The Executive Director of Finance &amp; Business Hub was requested to explore whether it was possible to bolster the Inclusive Communities Fund by £3m to replace the Grassroots Sports Programme element of the European Athletics</p>

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		Championships funding packages agreed by the WMCA Board on 17 March 2023.
<b>9.</b>	Amendments to the WMCA Constitution to incorporate Police & Crime Commissioner Functions	The report was noted.
<b>10.</b>	West Midlands Digital Roadmap 2024 - 27	<p>(1) The progress made on digital matters in the region since 2021 was noted and the activity highlighted in the updated Digital Roadmap 2024 - 27 was endorsed.</p> <p>(2) The aims and objectives of the Digital Roadmap would continue to be championed in order to encourage public, private and voluntary sector alignment and investment in its five broad missions.</p> <p>(3) The concerns around the withdrawal of Project Gigabit Lot 35 for Birmingham and the Black Country were noted, and</p> <p>(a) the WMCA’s request for further information from the Government to clarify this decision and to expedite the identification and evaluation of interim solutions, whilst re-examining the opportunity for the West Midlands to receive targeted funding from Project Gigabit, was supported, and</p> <p>(b) confirmation of the Government’s support for Lot 11 covering parts of Coventry and Solihull was to be sought.</p>
<b>11.</b>	Investment Board - 13 November	The minutes were noted.

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	2023	
<b>12.</b>	Economic Growth Board - 16 November 2023	The minutes were noted.
<b>13.</b>	Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee - 4 December 2023	The minutes were noted.
<b>14.</b>	Investment Board - 11 December 2023	The minutes were noted.
<b>15.</b>	Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 11 December 2023	The minutes were noted.
<b>16.</b>	Wellbeing Board - 12 December 2023	The minutes were noted.
<b>17.</b>	Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committees - 14 December 2023	The minutes were noted.
<b>18.</b>	Environment & Energy Board - 21 December 2023	The minutes were noted.

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<b>19.</b>	Young Combined Authority Update - January 2024	The report was noted.
<b>20.</b>	Date of Next Meeting	Friday 9 February 2024 at 11.00am.