

West Midlands Combined Authority – Decisions taken by the WMCA Board on Friday 15 March 2024

| Agenda Item No | Item | Decision |
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| 1. | Apologies for Absence | Apologies for absence were received from Lee Barron (Midlands TUC), Councillor Greg Brackenridge (West Midlands Fire Authority), Councillor John Cotton (Birmingham), Councillor Shaun Davies (Telford & Wrekin), Councillor Ian Davison (Warwick), Councillor Abdul Khan (Coventry) and Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Warwickshire). |
| 2. | Chair's Remarks | The Chair noted that this was the last meeting before Clare Hatton stepped down as Interim Director for Employment, Skills, Health & Communities and left the WMCA. He thanked her for her work and commitment to improving skills across the region. He also noted that Deborah Cadman was to shortly step down as Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council and thanked her for the positive engagement with the WMCA and the leadership of the council in recent years. |
| 3. | Minutes - 9 February 2024 | Agreed as a correct record. |
| 4. | Forward Plan | The plan of items to be reported to future meetings of the board was noted. |
| 5. | Regional Activity & Delivery Update | The presentation was noted. |
| 6. | Request by Warwick District Council to become a Non- | (1) Warwick District Council was designated as a Nominating Body entitled to nominate a member to be appointed to the WMCA Board. |

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| | Constituent Authority of WMCA | <p>(2) It was agreed to grant the member nominated by Warwick District Council and appointed to the WMCA Board the same voting rights as the non-constituent authorities, as set out in the constitution of the WMCA.</p> <p>(3) The Director of Law & Governance was authorised to make the necessary amendments to the constitution to record the status of Warwick District Council as a nominating body and the voting rights of its members.</p> |
| 7. | Financial Monitoring Report 2023/24 | <p>(1) The financial position as at 31 January 2024 was noted.</p> <p>(2) The latest forecast for 2023/24 was noted.</p> <p>(3) The proposed allocations of the anticipated revenue surplus for 2023/24 was approved.</p> <p>(4) The Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer were authorised to put in place all necessary arrangements to give effect to the agreed recommendations, to include entry into the any funding agreements with third parties and expenditure of the amounts described.</p> <p>(5) The confirmation of the Adults Skills Funding budget (previously referred to as the Adult Education Budget) for the 2024/25 academic year and the Skills Bootcamp funding for the 2024/25 financial year was noted.</p> <p>(6) The acceptance of £14.5m of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Capital Fund, £20m Trailblazer Devolution Deal capital funding and £3m grant award</p> |

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| | | <p>from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities to supplement the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund was approved, and authority was delegated to the Section 151 Officer and the relevant Executive Directors to enter into any contracts required to enable delivery of the programme in compliance with the grant conditions.</p> <p>(7) Authority was delegated to the Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub (Section 151 Officer) to accept any funds awarded during the pre-election period and up to the WMCA Board meeting on 14 June 2024, subject to satisfactory terms and conditions and all funds going through the Single Assurance Framework.</p> <p>(8) The arrangements concerning the UK Shared Prosperity Fund year 3 payment profile and actions being taken to ensure the West Midlands allocation was maximised was noted.</p> <p>(9) The ability to increase the commitment cap on the WMCA commercial and residential loan funds by (up to) an additional £40m (to £250m) was delegated to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Finance, subject to the West Midlands Finance Directors consenting to the change.</p> <p>(10) The Local Authority Capacity requirements associated with the WMCA Levelling Up Zones and the WMCA proposal were noted.</p> <p>(11) The annual allocations endorsed by the WMCA Board on 18 March 2022 for 2024/25 in respect of Highways Maintenance and Local Network Improvement Plan, within the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, were confirmed.</p> <p>(12) The additional funding awarded to the region for Highways Maintenance works,</p> |

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| | | <p>as part of the Government’s Network North plan was noted, and the proposed 2024/25 allocation of this funding was endorsed.</p> <p>(13) Note the Treasury and Prudential indicators for the period ending 31 December 2023.</p> |
| 8. | West Midlands Investment Zone | This item was withdrawn. |
| 9. | Devolution Update | <p>(1) The Memorandum of Understanding for the single settlement was ratified.</p> <p>(2) The announcement at Budget on 6 March of additional details of the single settlement was noted.</p> <p>(3) The letter received from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities in response to the WMCA’s application for additional devolution commitments through ‘Level 4’ of the English devolution framework was noted.</p> |
| 10. | Commissioning and Procurement of WMCA Skills Provision | <p>(1) The proposed commissioning and procurement approach for skills programmes to support ongoing delivery of adult education and skills training in meeting local and regional priorities was agreed:</p> <p>(i) Grant awards to further education colleges, universities and local authorities.</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) Procurement through competitive tendering using the WMCA Dynamic Purchasing System. (iii) In consultation with local authorities, direct grant award of up to £100,000 to community and voluntary organisations to tackle specific resident or geographical needs where the market has failed to address. <p>(2) Authority to carry out commissioning of skills funding, including any procurement activity as required, was delegated to the Interim Executive Director of Employment, Skills, Health & Communities, in consultation with the Section 151 Monitoring Officer and in discussion with the Portfolio Lead for Skills & Productivity.</p> |
| 11. | West Midlands Cycle Hire Scheme Update | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The additional funding requirement of £2.1m to take the scheme through to the end of the existing contract in October 2025 was approved. (2) The conclusion of options appraisal of the existing scheme and interim measures taken to improve performance of the scheme and mitigate the challenges reported in Autumn 2023 were endorsed. (3) The original objectives of the scheme and the level to which these were being met through the existing scheme, as set out WMCA Board report 24 July 2020, were noted. (4) The link between the existing West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme and the developing Local Travel Points that would include further cycle hire schemes along with improved safety and security measures was noted. |

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| 12. | West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan Phase 3 Funding 2024 / 2025 - Spending Approval | <p>(1) The proposed allocation of the additional £16.6m of Bus Service Improvement Plan funding was agreed, noting that this was additional funding to the £87.8m previously approved by the WMCA Board on 10 June 2022.</p> <p>(2) The submission of the Project Adjustment Request sent to the Department for Transport on 29 February 2024, defining the areas of spend for the West Midlands Phase 3 Bus Service Improvement Plan funding, pending this approval, was noted.</p> <p>(3) The responsibility for approving any changes to the final revenue funding allocation for the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan was delegated to the Executive Director for Transport for West Midlands, in consultation with the Mayor and the Portfolio Lead for Transport.</p> <p>(4) The Section 151 Officer was approved to accept the additional Bus Service Improvement Plan funding, subject to the terms and conditions of the funding being acceptable to the Section 151 Officer.</p> <p>(5) Responsibility for approving further revisions to the Bus Service Improvement Plan and making the Enhanced Partnership was delegated to the Executive Director for Transport for West Midlands, the Section 151 Officer and the Director of Law & Governance, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Transport, and subject to completing the statutory process.</p> |

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| 13. | Investment Board - 12 February 2024 | The minutes were noted. |
| 14. | Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 26 February 2024 | The minutes were noted. |
| 15. | Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 4 March 2024 | The minutes were noted. |
| 16. | Young Combined Authority Update - March 2024 | The report was noted. |
| 17. | Exclusion of the Public and Press | The public and press were excluded for the remainder of the meeting. |
| 18. | The Very Light Rail Innovation Centre and Black Country Innovative Manufacturing Organisation - Options for Future Delivery | The agenda item was restricted and therefore the content of the decisions are also restricted, however, the decisions recommended in the report were taken. |
| 19. | Date of Next Meeting | Friday 14 June 2024 at 11.00am. |