



## Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** Monday 30 October 2023

**Time:** 1.00 pm **Public meeting** Yes

**Venue:** Room 116, 16 Summer Lane, Birmingham, B19 3SD

### Membership

Councillor John McNicholas (Chair)	Coventry City Council
Councillor Pervez Akhtar	Coventry City Council
Councillor Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Aqeela Choudhry	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Zaker Choudhry	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Amo Hussain	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Timothy Huxtable	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Carol Hyatt	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Narinder Kaur Kooner OBE	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Mary Locke	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Emma Marshall	Worcestershire Non-Constituent Local Authorities
Councillor Martin McCarthy	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Barbara McGarrity	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Steve Melia	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Saddak Miah	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Josh O'Nyons	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Gurmeet Singh Sohal	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor David Stanley	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Alan Taylor	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Antony Tucker	Coventry City Council
Councillor Ian Ward	Birmingham City Council

Quorum for this meeting shall be 14 members.

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

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

# AGENDA

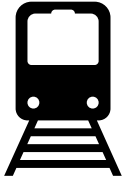
No.	Item	Presenting	Pages
<b>Items of Public Business</b>			
1.	Apologies for Absence	Chair	None
2.	Declarations of Interest Members are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable prejudicial interests they have in any item being discussed during the course of the meeting. In addition, the receipt of any gift or hospitality should be declared where the value of it was thought to have exceeded £25 (gifts) or £40 (hospitality).	Chair	None
3.	Chair's Remarks (if any) (Including Regional Activity Update presented to the WMCA Board on 13 October)	Chair	1 - 10
4.	Minutes - 4 September 2023 (including action log)	Chair	11 - 18
5.	Rail Ticket Office Closures	Tom Painter	19 - 38
6.	Member Engagement Group Progress Reports	Chair	39 - 48
7.	Work Programme (a) Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme (b) WMCA Board Forward Plan	Lyndsey Roberts	49 - 56
8.	Exclusion of the Public and Press [In accordance with s100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business as it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as specified in paragraph 3 of the Act.]	Chair	None
<b>Items of Private Business</b>			
9.	West Midlands Rail Fares Reform Update	Peter Sargant / Paula Higgins	57 - 76
<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>			
10.	Monday 11 December 2023 at 1.00pm	Chair	None

# Regional Activity Update

Laura Shoaf  
WMCA Board  
13 October 2023

# Regional highlights

# 1 Regional highlights



Significant transport investment on the back of HS2 decisions

- Midlands Rail Hub (£1.75bn)
- Additional £100m in CRSTS1 programme to deal with ongoing metro and Arden Cross cost pressures
- £700m in CRSTS2
- £250m transport revenue support for existing transport network sustainability
- £100m for smart ticketing

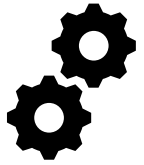
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Bus service improvements

- Coventry all-electric bus city – 130 new double-decker buses
- Four new cross-city bus routes across Birmingham

## 2 Regional highlights continued



- **Bespoke Skills Training** – Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) as City of Wolverhampton College



- **Innovation Accelerator** – Universities in WM have landed their share of a £50m award for cutting edge manufacturing projects



- **Building homes for the future** - 25 new sustainable homes in Kingshurst



- **Saving ancient woodland** – latest Community Green Grant awarded to Friends of Pitts Wood in Quinton to restore water and wildlife habitats

# Regional trends:

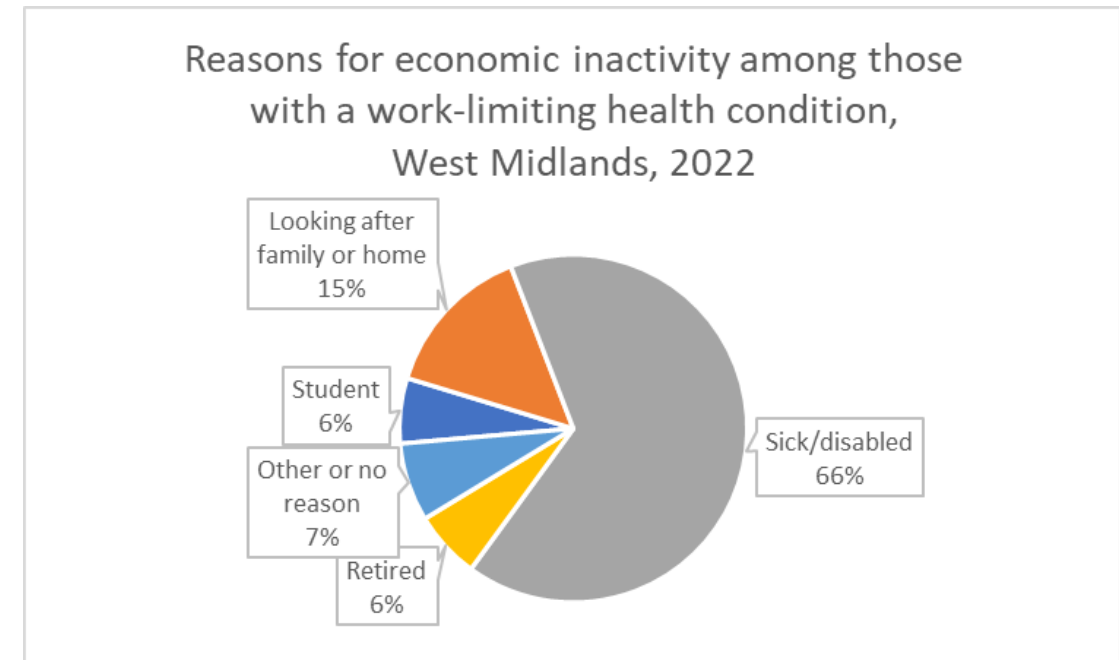
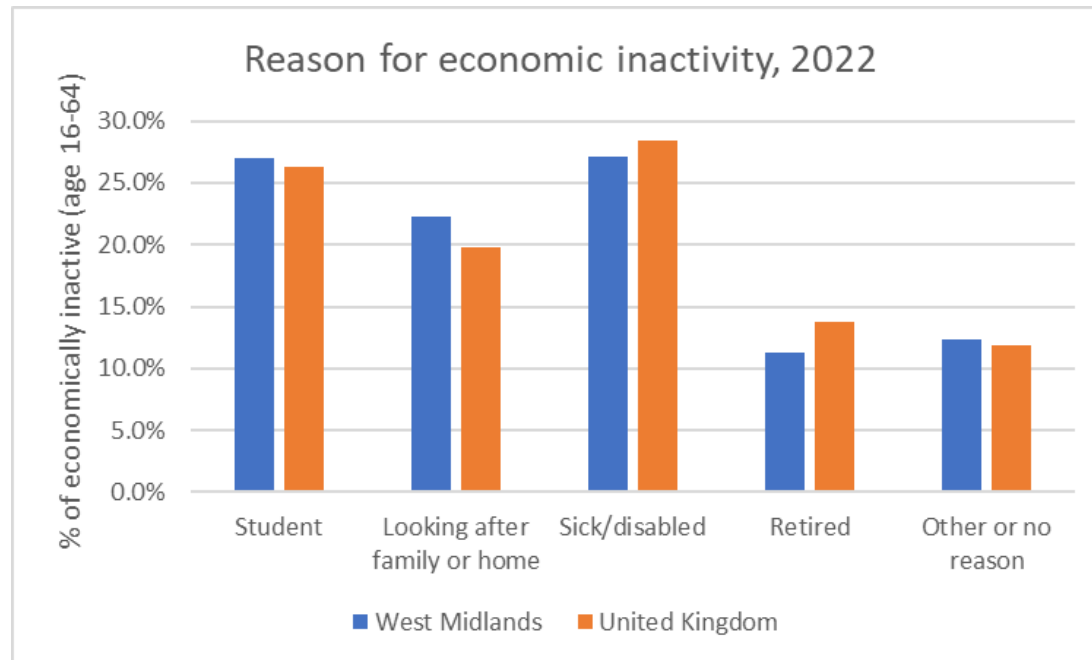
from the Regional Economic Symposium

# Regional trends: labour and health

Work-limiting health conditions have driven the increase in economic inactivity since the pandemic

...BUT withdrawal from the labour market is multi-faceted – one third is *not* due to sickness/disability!

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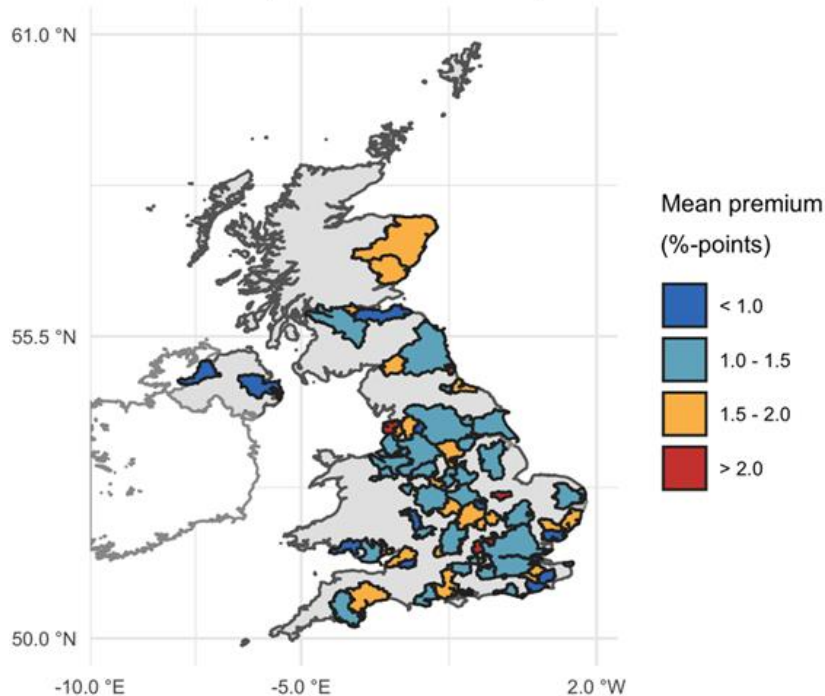
# Regional trends: investment risk

Risk premium of commercial property transactions **BEFORE** the Global Financial Crisis of 2007-2008

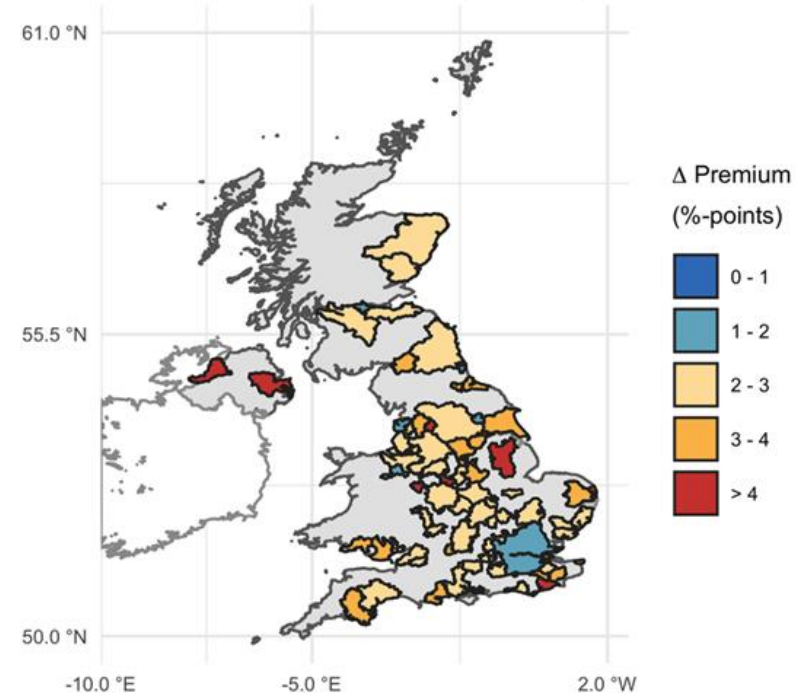
...and **AFTER** the Global Financial Crisis – showing an increase in premium everywhere outside of Greater London.

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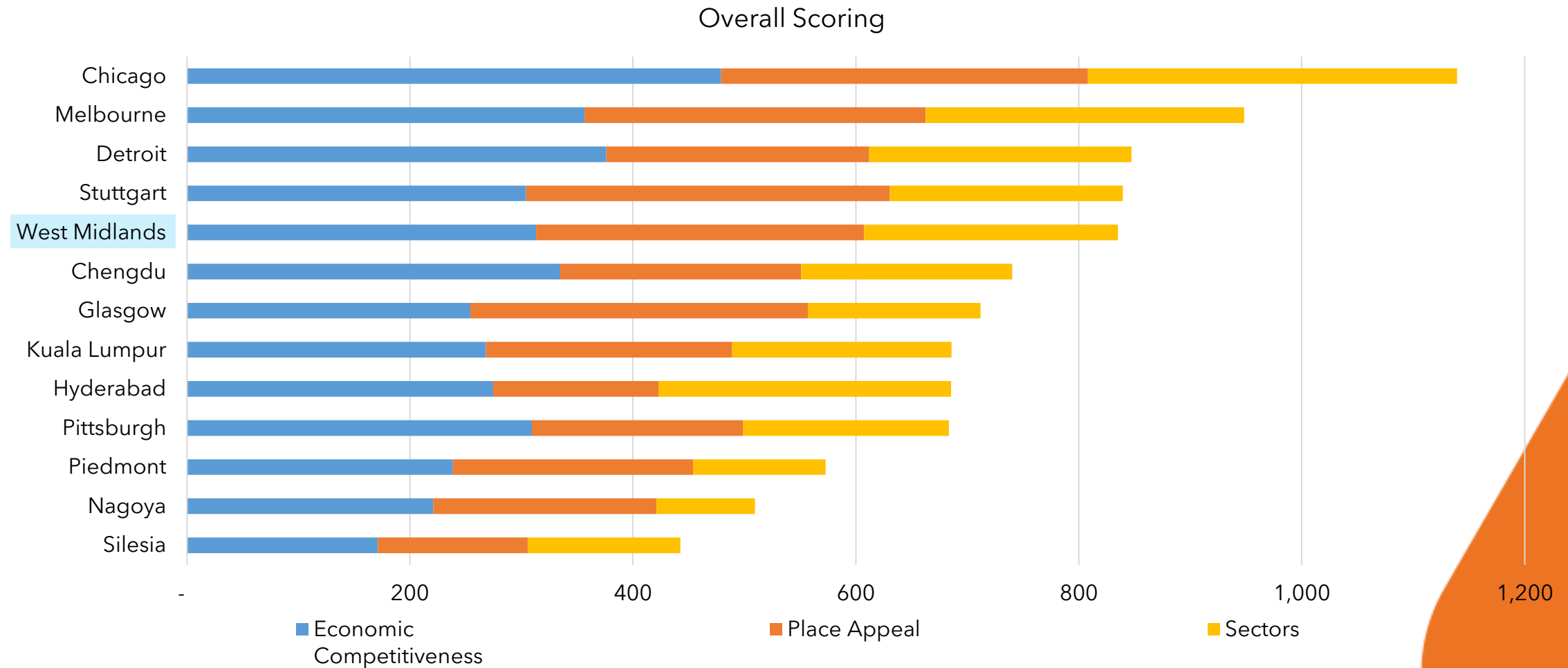
A. Pre-crisis risk premia across UK metropolitan areas



B. Post-crisis change in UK metropolitan risk premia



# Regional trends: international comparisons (1)



# Regional trends: international comparisons (2)

## Northern America



## Europe



## Australia



Commonalities in successful places:

- 1) **Comprehensive strategies** for the promotion of the local economy – rather than piecemeal and ad hoc approaches
- 2) Strategies that **were built upon a region or a city's existing strengths** rather than building 'cathedrals in the desert'
- 3) Significant, stable and **long-term funding**
- 4) Multilevel governance – **NOT central-government led**
- 5) Complementarity between **place-based and economic strategies**
- 6) Collaboration from **a variety of actors** in the design and implementation of those strategies





**West Midlands  
Combined Authority**

## **Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**Monday 4 September 2023 at 1.00 pm**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present**

Councillor John McNicholas (Chair)  
Councillor Mary Locke (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Pervez Akhtar  
Councillor Robert Alden  
Councillor Jennifer Hemmingway  
Councillor Amo Hussain  
Councillor Timothy Huxtable  
Councillor Carol Hyatt  
Councillor Emma Marshall

Councillor Martin McCarthy  
Councillor Saddak Miah  
Councillor Josh O'Nyons  
Councillor Gurmeet Singh Sohal  
Councillor David Stanley  
Councillor Antony Tucker  
Councillor Ian Ward

Coventry City Council  
Birmingham City Council  
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Birmingham City Council  
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council  
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council  
Birmingham City Council  
City of Wolverhampton Council  
Worcestershire Non-Constituent Local Authorities  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council  
Birmingham City Council  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council  
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council  
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Coventry City Council  
Birmingham City Council

#### **In Attendance**

Carl Beet

Pete Bond  
Dan Essex  
Adam Harrison

Anne Shaw  
Sandeep Shingadia  
Lyndsey Roberts  
Kate Taylor

Head of Strategy and Intelligence - TfWM  
Director of Integrated Transport Services Governance & Scrutiny Manager  
Principal Policy and Strategy Officer - TfWM  
Transport for the West Midlands  
Transport for the West Midlands  
Statutory Scrutiny Officer  
Head of Finance Business Partnering and Strategic Planning

**Item No.**

**Title**

**14. Appointment of Vice-Chair**

Resolved:

Councillor Mary Locke be appointed Vice-Chair of the Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee for 2023/24. The Chair explained that this now meant that a new Scrutiny Champion was required for the Passenger First Member Engagement Group. Councillor Carol Hyatt was appointed to this position.

**15. Minutes - 3 July 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

**16. Financial Monitoring Report**

The committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub covering the revenue budget, capital programme and the financial position as of the end of July 2023. It was noted that the TfWM Revenue Budget report showed a favourable variance of £2.0m; the TfWM Capital Programme report showed a favourable variance of £12.5m for WMCA delivered schemes and a favourable variance of £6.5m for externally delivered schemes.

In response to a question from Councillor Carol Hyatt, Kate Taylor confirmed that the finance performance was typical of TfWM finances due to a number of project and programme complexities. Councillor Robert Alden queried whether delays to the TfWM project would affect the delivery of infrastructure projects. He also asked whether the committee could call in external bodies that were delivering projects. Anne Shaw responded that there were currently no concerns with specific contracts and confirmed that external bodies could be held to account by the committee.

In response to Councillor Pervez Akhtar, Pete Bond undertook to submit a report on bus funding to the next meeting of the Finance MEG. It was intended to submit full Capital Monitoring reports to meetings of this committee later in the year.

Resolved:

- (1) The position as at the end of July 2023 against the TfWM Revenue Budget, which showed a favourable variance of £2.0m, be noted.
- (2) The TfWM Capital Programme position as at 31 July 2023 which showed a favourable variance of £12.5m for WMCA delivered schemes and a favourable variance of £6.5m for externally delivered schemes, be noted.

**17. CRSTS Re-base Proposal**

The committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands on the CRSTS re-baseline exercise that was being undertaken across the programme.

Councillor Martin McCarthy enquired about the replacement of environmentally unfriendly buses and asked whether funds would be allocated for them. Pete Bond reported that the retrofit project had been paused to be reviewed to ensure that the retrofit had the desired impact.

Councillor Carol Hyatt asked if the deferred project costs would be deducted from any future funding. Carl Beet confirmed that the total cost of deferred project was totalled at £160 million which was about 14% of the current programme. He stated that future budgeting expected to be double the current CRSTS funds.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

#### **18. Deeper Devolution Deal – Scrutiny Implications**

The committee considered a report of the Director of Law & Governance on the scrutiny implications of the deeper devolution deal. The report covered background, progress and actions that would be undertaken going forward. This included the development and implementation of a scrutiny protocol by which the committee would be assessed.

In response to a question from Councillor Carol Hyatt, Dan Essex gave an overview of what would be expected of the committee including reporting for inclusion into the annual scrutiny report and promoting public awareness.

Resolved:

- (1) The announcement of the Government's Deeper Devolution Deal with the WMCA, along with its expected ratification by constituent authorities during September and by the WMCA Board at its meeting on 13 October, be noted.
- (2) The publication of the English Devolution Accountability Framework and the forthcoming scrutiny protocol, setting out the Government's expectations for local accountability within institutions exercising devolved powers be welcomed.
- (3) It be agreed that a further report be submitted to the committee when it meets on 30 October setting out in more detail the content of the scrutiny protocol and how the WMCA intends to apply it to its overview and scrutiny function.

#### **19. Deeper Devolution (Transport) - Implementation Plan**

The committee considered a report of the Executive Director for Transport for West Midlands on an overview of the Deeper Devolution Deal between the WMCA and the Government and on its Transport Implementation Plan. The report covered the background of the deal and transport commitment as well as the implementation plan itself.

Councillor Mary Locke stressed that the passenger should be included in any implications considered. Councillor Emma Marshall agreed and suggested that a 'a one size fits all' approach would not be appropriate as different sized cities, towns and villages would all have different requirements.

In response to Councillor Tim Huxtable, Carl Beet confirmed that transport corridors were being assessed to try and establish the best mode of transport for each corridor. Anne Shaw also confirmed that work was being conducted with local authorities to establish this and the revised CRSTS programme would be shared imminently.

Councillor Pervez Akhtar noted the importance of ensuring that the programme of works were funded. The Chair requested that this matter be explored further and requested six monthly reports on the Implementation Plan.

Resolved:

- (1) The Deeper Devolution Deal agreement between the WMCA and Government, and its implications for the future transport system, be noted.
- (2) Six-monthly progress reports on the Transport Implementation Plan be submitted to future meetings of the committee.

## **20. Member Engagement Groups - Progress Report**

The committee considered a report from the Member Engagement Groups (MEGs) on the progress made since the last meeting. The MEGs provided a forum for members to gain a deeper understanding of matters that could not be covered in detail during committee meetings.

With regards to the timetable of meetings, it was agreed that in the next municipal year, future meetings would not be held during the school holidays.

In response to Councillor Carol Hyatt, it was agreed that members of the committee would be invited to attend all future meetings of the MEGs if they wished to do so.

Resolved:

The MEG progress report be noted.

## **21. Work Programme**

The committee considered a report of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer on the items of business to be considered at future meetings. A Q&A session would be held in October with the Portfolio Lead for Transport on transport policy and delivery related matters.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.



**22. Any Other Business**

Councillor Pervez Akhtar proposed that the committee received an update on the WMRE Rail Ticket Offices Closure Consultation. This was agreed to be presented at the next committee in October.

**23. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 30 October 2023 at 1.00pm

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm.

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## Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 30 October 2023 – Action Log

Creation Date	Report	Task Description	Owner	Due Date	Closure Date	Open/On-Hold/Closed
03-Jul-23	Appointment of Scrutiny Champions and Member Engagement Groups	Develop and deliver a training programme for members of the Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee	James Hughes/Lyndsey Roberts	Ongoing	N/A	Open
04-Sep-23	Financial Monitoring Report	Pete Bond to report to the next meeting of the Finance MEG on the latest position regarding bus funding.	Pete Bond	30-Oct-23		Open
04-Sep-23	Deeper Devolution Deal (Transport) - Implementation Plan	Six monthly report to be received on the Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation Plan	Adam Harrison / Janna Simpson	Ongoing	N/A	Open

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## Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date</b>	30 October 2023
<b>Report title</b>	Rail Ticket Office Closures
<b>Accountable Chief Executive</b>	Laura Shoaf, West Midlands Combined Authority email: laura.shoaf@wmca.org.uk
<b>Accountable Employee</b>	Tom Painter, Tom Painter Head of Rail Experience and Contract Management email: tom.painter@wmre.org.uk

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

#### The Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Note and comment on the update on rail ticket office closures.

#### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide a report on the current status of the Rail Ticket Office closure proposals made by the rail industry.

#### 2 Background

- 2.1 On 5 July 2023, 13 DfT contracted train companies each launched a consultation on proposed changes to the way that tickets are sold at railway stations (the 14th DfT contracted company – CrossCountry – did not consult as they do not operate any railway stations).
- 2.2 The proposals differed from company to company, but the emphasis was the same - to move staff out of traditional booking offices and into the public areas of stations.
- 2.3 The proposals made by West Midlands Trains (WMT), Chiltern Railways and Avanti West Coast were relevant to the WMCA area. The Avanti and Chiltern proposals were very similar, with staff proposed to be redeployed from behind the ticket office glass onto public areas of the station. By comparison, WMT's proposals were more expansive. They proposed closing all traditional booking offices and replacing them with 10 Customer Information Centres (five of which would be within the WMCA area). From these

Information Centres, WMT proposed that mobile teams of multi-skilled staff would be deployed to locations on their line of route in response to insight and demand.

- 2.4 The consultations were conducted in accordance with the process laid out in the rail industry's Ticketing and Settlement Agreement (TSA). TfWM (through the wider regional response submitted by the West Midlands Rail Executive) responded to the consultation. In short, this determined that whilst a need to modernise the way railway stations are managed and staffed was recognised, TfWM/WMRE could not support the proposed closures due to insufficient information around how passenger needs would be met.

### **3. Update**

- 3.2 The consultation period for the station booking offices proposals closed on 1 September, having been extended by five weeks from the original deadline of 26 July. Approximately 718,000 responses were received by independent passenger watchdogs Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch, which is a record for a rail industry consultation (and potentially for any public policy consultation).
- 3.3 Following the debate at the last WMRE Board, WMRE/TfWM submitted its responses in July. A subsequent press release on the subject garnered considerable local and national attention.
- 3.4 Transport Focus and London TravelWatch have been given an extension to the time available to them to analyse the consultation responses. Their conclusions are now expected by 31 October. During this time they will also engage with the train operators. Transport Focus and London TravelWatch will publish the response to each train operator's proposals online, with an overview of the number of responses received, and the main issues raised in the consultation.
- 3.5 If either of the two watchdogs object, the affected train operator can amend its proposals to address the concerns raised, withdraw its proposals, or refer its proposals to the Secretary of State for a final decision. In the latter scenario, the Department for Transport has published the guidance that it will use to make any such determination. This can be found here [Secretary of State for Transport's Ticketing and Settlement Agreement ticket office guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/Secretary_of_State_for_Transport's_Ticketing_and_Settlement_Agreement_ticket_office_guidance_-_GOV.UK_(www.gov.uk).pdf) and in summary says that the Secretary of State will consider:
- How any changes represent an improvement on current arrangements in terms of quality of service and/or cost effectiveness;
  - How members of the public will continue to enjoy widespread and easy access to the purchase of rail products; and
  - How any changes help deliver the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, including:
    - Modernising customer service at stations.
    - Staff providing a more personal service, which can be crucial for those who need additional support at stations and those who cannot or do not want to use contactless or mobile tickets.
- 3.6 It is unclear from the guidance how long the Secretary of State will need to make any determination.

#### **4. Strategic Aims and Objectives**

4.1 Not applicable.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 As WMCA, TfWM or WMRE do not operate any of the stations, or employ any of the staff affected by this change, there are no financial implications for WMCA as a consequence of this report, save from at Bromsgrove station, where there could be very minor implications. Although outside of the WMCA geographical area, WMCA own the station in a joint venture with Worcestershire County Council. Station staffing is provided by West Midlands Trains (WMT) under contract to WMCA. Consequently, any changes to the way that the station is staffed could impact on the management fee paid to WMT by WMCA.

#### **6. Legal Implications**

6.1 There are no immediate legal implications for WMCA flowing from the contents of this report. It is noted that nationally there are a number of ongoing legal challenges to the process under which the consultations have been held. WMCA are not a party to any of these cases.

#### **7. Single Assurance Framework Implications**

7.1 None.

#### **8. Equalities Implications**

8.1 As part of the consultation process, the 13 train companies were required to undertake station by station Equality Impact Assessments. These were publicly available during the eight week process. However, in its consultation response, TfWM/WMRE made representations that this information was of insufficient quantity and granularity to accurately determine how passengers with mobility issues and other impairments would be catered for under the proposed changes.

8.2 As part of their analysis of both the proposals and the consultation responses, independent bodies Transport Focus and London TravelWatch are taking action to establish the quantity and granularity of information required for them to reach a view as to whether the proposals can be endorsed. TfWM/WMRE (and local transport authorities in general) have no role in this stage of the consultation process.

#### **9. Inclusive Growth Implications**

9.1 Rail services are a key element of delivering the 'Connected Communities' fundamental of the Inclusive Growth Framework – both for those citizens in receipt of existing services, and for those who will have access via new 'enhancements', links and stations in the future.

9.2 The ongoing role of West Midlands Rail Executive in the oversight of the running of local rail services falls under the Power, Influence and Participation fundamental of the Inclusive Growth Framework, as it is notionally more democratic and locally accountable than other local rail operators. It will be important to use committees such as TDOSC to ensure that the vision for local leadership of rail services is adhered to, particularly given

the national pressures on the rail industry to change the way it delivers services to customers, including at stations.

**10. Geographical Area of Report's Implications**

10.1 This report covers the impacts of these proposals on the TfWM area, but it should be noted that these proposals are being put forward by 13 DfT contracted rail companies and so are national in scope.

**11. Other Schedule of Papers**

11.1 Not applicable.



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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date</b>	30 October 2023
<b>Report title</b>	Member Engagement Groups - Progress Report
<b>Accountable Chief Executive</b>	Laura Shoaf, West Midlands Combined Authority email: laura.shoaf@wmca.org.uk
<b>Accountable Employee</b>	Pete Bond, Director of Integrated Transport Services email: pete.bond@tfwm.org.uk
<b>Scrutiny Champions</b>	Air Quality, Congestion & Environmental Impact - Councillor Ian Ward Finance & Performance - Councillor Pervez Akhtar Passenger First - Councillor Carol Hyatt Passenger & Road Safety - Councillor David Stanley Rail, Metro & Sprint - Councillor Tim Huxtable Sustainability & Active Travel - Councillor Martin McCarthy

### Background

1. At its meeting on 9 June, the WMCA Board agreed revised transport governance arrangements for the forthcoming year. These new arrangements included the amalgamation of the former Transport Delivery Committee and Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee into a new Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Part of these arrangements include six Member Engagement Groups, which provide members with an opportunity to meet and discuss in more detail transport-related issues that are grouped around broad thematic areas.
2. Although the Member Engagement Groups are not decision making, they provide a forum for members to develop a deeper understanding of those matters that would not otherwise be able to be discussed in such detail at committee meetings.

## **Member Engagement Groups Meeting Updates**

3. An update from Member Engagement Groups that have met since the last meeting of the committee is set out below:
4. **Rail, Metro & Sprint** - 9 October (Councillor Tim Huxtable)

The Rail Metro & Sprint MEG met on Monday 9 October.

- **Highlights & Performance**

The MEG received a detailed update on the impacts of the Government's recent decision to cancel Phase 2a, 2b (west) and 2b (east) of HS2. These impacts included the decision to dispose of land already purchased for Phase 2a and the removal of any safeguards, which would make it extremely difficult to ever reinstate this part of the project.

The MEG were advised that the announcement meant that it would reduce the prospect of being able to deliver much of the recently published West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy. The MEG also noted that many other local authority and Strategic Transport Board plans were predicated on the released capacity provided by HS2, and that these plans would now have to be reconsidered.

A discussion took place on the suite of potential alternative schemes announcement by the Government under the banner of 'Network North'. The MEG heard that these included the Midlands Rail Hub, which was stated to be delivered "in full". The MEG noted that this and other schemes within Network North would still be subject to business case and planning (where necessary), meaning that they were not yet guaranteed.

The MEG debated a paper on Rail Fares and Ticketing reform that was due to be taken to this committee elsewhere on the agenda. The MEG requested more detail on the customer and stakeholder communications plan that would accompany any introduction of the simplified fares structure detailed in the paper.

The MEG noted the good news that the Metro extension to Wolverhampton station opened to passengers on 17 September. Elsewhere on the Metro network, the MEG heard that funding has been identified, subject to value for money checks, to deliver second phase as far as Merry Hill. Works continued to progress along the route.

On the Eastside Metro extension, the MEG were advised that track and highway changes were now installed in section 1 on Lower Bull Street. Governance processes were being completed to start works on section 2 through to the Clayton Hotel.

- **Challenges & Risks**

WMCA are continuing to work on resolving the financial shortfall to deliver the Metro to Brierley Hill.

The MEG noted that passenger bodies Transport Focus and London TravelWatch had until 31 October to complete their analysis of the railway station retail reform proposals that were consulted on over the summer.

## Recommendations

- (1) The MEG agreed to devote much of the November meeting to a detailed analysis of Midlands Rail hub following the announcement that it would be delivered 'in full' as part of Network North.
- (2) The MEG is planning various site visits, which will be spread both modally and geographically.
- (3) The MEG intends to invite the community lead from Network Rail to its December meeting to understand more about what the rail industry is doing in this space.

The next meeting of the Rail, Metro & Sprint MEG will be held on 19 November.

### 5. **Passenger & Road Safety** - 9 October (Councillor David Stanley)

The Passenger & Road Safety MEG met on Monday 9 October.

- **Highlights & Performance**

- Passenger Safety:

- Year to date crime across the public transport network decreased 38.6% compared to 2022/23 figures.

- Against Last month West Midlands force crime has decreased by 0.1%.

- Bus crime decreased during the past month with 295 crimes (23.4%).

- Train crime increased last month with 241 crimes.

- Metro crime increased with 11 crimes last month.

- Anti-Social Behaviour, the number of incidents reported an increase from 221 to 226 (2.26%).

- There were 16.4 million passenger journeys were made by bus in that time period and approx. 4.46 million train passenger journeys, and 698,400 tram passengers.

- Road Safety:

- The Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 was approved by WMCA Board on 15 September. This adopts Vision Zero (eliminating road death and serious injury on our network) and implements a systematic and collaborative approach that guides Regional Road Safety Partnership activity.

- The stretched casualty reduction target is a 50% reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured by 2030.

- The number of fatalities has reduced from 59 during the 2015-2017 baseline period to 51 in 2022, although when comparing 2019 to 2022 (pre and post COVID19) the number of fatalities has started to increase again.

Despite this, when undertaking a proportionate analysis of fatalities per million miles travelled in the region, 2022 data shows a year-on-year decline in fatalities.

The recent Passenger and Road Safety travel survey shows that enforcement of speed limits is the most important issue for respondents. Also, 55% of respondents agreed with the statement '*Road safety is good in my area*' – (Somewhat Agree 24%, 23% Agree and 8% Strongly Agree).

- **Challenges & Risks**

There were no noted challenges and risks this meeting.

### **Recommendations**

(1) The Terms of Reference of the Group were approved.

The next meeting of the Passenger & Road Safety MEG will be held on 14 November.

## 6. **Air Quality, Congestion & Environmental Impact** - 26 September (Councillor Ian Ward)

The Air Quality, Congestion & Environmental Impact MEG met on Tuesday 26 September.

- **Highlights & Performance**

The MEG considered a report reviewing current West Midlands local authority approaches and priorities for improving air quality.

This noted the current shift in emphasis to tackling PM2.5's, rather than the recent focus on Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). This is often based on reducing domestic burning of wood and coal through awareness raising of the air quality issues, and advice-led enforcement of smoke control area restrictions. Use of supplementary planning guidance to minimise emissions from new developments is also highlighted.

Much work to tackle NO<sub>2</sub> is still underway, based on transport improvements to promote public transport, cycling and walking; the installation of electric vehicle charging points; environmental improvements to the bus fleet and traffic management at junctions, including improved traffic signals.

The MEG also received a presentation from the WMCA Environment Team on the draft Regional Air Quality Framework Implementation Plan.

This sets out priorities for regional work over the next two years. The MEG was supportive of the work but noted that the national UK air quality targets have predominantly been established to accommodate the challenges faced by London in reaching them. The MEG therefore stressed the need for WMCA to consider more stretching targets than the national UK targets. These stretching targets should reflect the air quality challenges in the West Midlands and the health interests of the people of the region.



- **Challenges & Risks**

The Group highlighted the importance of maintaining air quality as a high policy priority, even where legal levels for pollutants had now been met. This recognises that World Health Organisation targets for Nitrogen Dioxide and fine particles (PM2.5) are more ambitious than national UK targets.

### **Recommendations**

- (1) That Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommends to the WMCA that it considers adopting, as part of development of the Regional Air Quality Framework, stretch targets which are more ambitious in terms of timescales and pollutant concentration targets than the UK Government air quality targets, and which are closer to World Health Organisation (WHO) targets for NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>

The next meeting of the Air Quality, Congestion & Environmental Impact MEG will be held 28 November.

## **7. Finance & Performance – 3 October (Councillor Pervez Akhtar)**

The Finance & Performance MEG met on Tuesday 3 October.

- **Highlights & Performance**

This meeting focussed on 2 key items:

- An update on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) in relation to transport
- An update on bus funding.

Members were taken through a presentation that set out the process for updating the MTFP and key touchpoints with WMCA Board to report the position, the financial context for financial planning and detail on the transport element. Members were reminded of the position reported to September WMCA Board showing a transport funding gap of £28m for 2024/25 rising to £70m by the end of the MTFP 5 year period. Options to address this gap were discussed at the Mayor & Portfolio Leads Liaison meeting and would be reported for agreement at a future WMCA Board. Members were reminded that c.43% of transport spend delivers statutory obligations. Further detail was provided to members on activities delivered for the transport spend. Finally the key risk within transport revenue finance was identified as being the ongoing risk around bus funding and stability of the commercial network.

Jon Hayes had joined the meeting to give an update on bus funding from an operational perspective. There was an update on the current patronage levels and a description of the process that had been undertaken to determine the funding package that has been put in place to ensure network stability to Dec 2024. £40m of BSIP funding has been reprofiled alongside BSOG+ funding from DfT and WMCA earmarked reserves. The funding package is currently undergoing the subsidy control assessment process under the Subsidy Control Act that has replaced previous state aid regulations.

- **Challenges & Risks**

The continued challenging landscape around transport finances and the need for a sustainable funding solution was noted as well as the requirement for all local authorities and MCAs to set a balanced budget for 2024/25 by the end of February 2024 as a statutory requirement.

- **Recommendations**

- (1) It was agreed that bus delivery options would be part of the future workplan for the MEG and Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee as a whole.
- (2) It was noted that the process for 2024/25 budget scrutiny between Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committee was due to be discussed between the Chairs and S151 Officer at a later date.

The next meeting of the Finance & Performance MEG will be held Tuesday 28 November.

8. **Passenger First** - 4 October (Councillor Carol Hyatt)

The Passenger First MEG met on Wednesday 4 October.

- **Highlights & Performance**

The group met on 4 October 2023 and received an update on the WMCA/TfWM Communications team, which has seen some reorganisation of roles. Aimee Dyer the Strategic communication manager gave an overview of the different aspects of communication.

Jon Hayes gave a verbal report to explain some key changes to take place with regards to operator funding and services. Operating within clear financial constraints, the results of operators making choices about which services they are prepared to run and TfWM evaluating which services can be and should be supported have recently been circulated to all councillors. Of interest is that we now have 96% of pre-Covid levels of bus use running on 89% of the network. This means that the buses that are running are by and large fuller and more viable as a result, although this had resulted in an increased cost of operation. There has been a shift in how buses are used with an increase in weekend use. Funding is in place to support a relatively stable bus network until December 2024. Beyond that point funding is to be decided.

The MEG were made aware of a petition which has been received for 6 months free travel for students. Whilst this was not supported as a result of assumptions made about the potential for uptake of existing initiatives, it was asked that this uptake be monitored and that information brought back to the meeting at a later date for review.

Jon Hayes presented a slide deck on the Ring and Ride service, about which concerns have been made by the Chair and the Passenger Satisfaction Steering Group. A re-evaluation of the service provision is to take place which will include retendering of the existing service. The Strategic Committee is also to review the Ring and Ride Service and this group will be kept up to date with progress.

The meeting then progressed to an external meeting which allowed a local councillor to present a second petition about the removal of a section of bus route during weekdays. Whilst the constraints of the timetable, passenger numbers and finances allow little movement at the moment, a commitment to evaluate current passenger experience in transferring from one bus to another to complete their journey and the quality of the existing Diamond provision from the perspective of passengers was gained. The feedback from the councillor can also be considered when the existing provision is next considered.

- **Challenges & Risks**

Concern was raised that communication could be improved, an example given that communication about the Local Transport Plan had not reached Wolverhampton council quickly, it was promised that information about works at the new Dudley Bus station would reach Dudley Council and councillors to share with residents in a timelier manner.

Regarding Ring and Ride the MEG asked if it was worth a lessons learnt, given that the Strategic Committee is to look at the Ring and Ride service and an evaluation is to take place which will involve retendering the service. The results of merging the two provisions in Coventry have still not been reported back. Would this be unnecessary duplication?

### **Recommendations**

- (1) It be recommended that councillors and the resources of individual councils are made full use of when information needs to reach as many passengers as possible.

The next meeting of the Passenger First MEG will be held on Wednesday 15 November.

## 9. **Sustainability & Active Travel** -Tuesday 3 October (Councillor Martin McCarthy)

The Sustainability & Active Travel MEG met on 3 October.

- **Highlights & Performance**

The MEG received a presentation from Eliot Wilde, Zero Emission Bus Programme Manager, on the progress of TfWM's Zero Emission Bus Delivery Plan (ZEB).

The presentation highlighted the alignment of the ZEB delivery plan with fleet modernisation. The MEG considered that this needed more detailed development and delivery planning to support further progress towards improving air quality and achieving net zero emissions objectives.

It was noted that Hydrogen fuel cell busses have the potential to cover long endurance routes that Battery Electric busses struggle to cover without interim recharges.

The MEG discussed the subject of ZEB ownership considering the range of funding options around us.

The MEG learnt of the proposals to convert Walsall Bus Depot to zero emission operations for buses.

- **Challenges & Risks**

There remains around 100 pre Euro 6 diesel buses in service, representing about 5% of the overall fleet, that are yet to be retrofitted with emission reduction technology for harmful pollutants. Whilst WMCA has the funding, the retrofitting of these buses remains on hold pending a review by the DfT/ DEFRA into the efficacy of this technology. Separate funding exists for 6 of these to receive a repower solution to convert them from a diesel to a zero emission battery electric vehicle. These vehicles would be subject to range restrictions which would be lower than a new electric bus. Options around the use of this funding are being considered as this has not been taken up by any existing operator yet.

In discussion of TfWM's ZEBRA project which will deliver 100 hydrogen fuel cell electric buses (FCEBs), members have requested more information is on hydrogen supply and cost concerns.

### **Recommendations**

- (1) Members were interested in how Tyseley power park was performing and as a result the potential for a visit to Tyseley or Perry Barr Depot was identified.

The next meeting of the Sustainability & Active Travel MEG will be held on Tuesday 21 November.

## **10. Strategic Aims and Objectives**

A robust and effective overview & scrutiny function impacts on all of the WMCA's corporate aims.

## **11. Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising out of this report.

## **12. Legal Implications**

Overview & Scrutiny is a statutory function of the WMCA and the activity highlighted within this report contributes towards meeting this responsibility.

## **13. Single Assurance Framework Implications**

There are no direct implications for the single assurance framework arising out of this report.

## **14. Equalities Implications**

There are no direct equalities implications arising out of this report.

15. **Inclusive Growth Implications**

There are no direct inclusive growth implications arising out of this report.

16. **Geographical Area of Report's Implications**

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee comprises members from across the constituent and non constituent authorities participating within the WMCA.

17. **Other Implications**

There are no other direct implications arising out of this report.

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## TRANSPORT DELIVERY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME: DECEMBER 2023 – FEBRUARY 2024

Title of Report	Reason	Date of Meeting	Purpose	Lead Officer	Confidential
<b>Members Workshop:</b> WMCA Proposed Draft Budget 2024/25		1 December			
English Devolution Accountability Framework – Scrutiny Protocol	To consider the Governments Scrutiny Protocol, implications and proposed changes	11 December	Consider	Dan Essex Sophie Waddington	No
Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Local Transport Plan	To consider and comment on the draft area strategy and implementation plan(s)	11 December	Consider	David Harris	No
Bus Delivery Options	To consider and comment on the latest position regarding bus delivery options including the franchising assessment	11 December	Comment	Pete Bond	No
Ring and Ride Operating Model	To review and comment on the work undertaken in relation to the Ring and Ride new operating model	11 December	Review	Steve Hayes	No
Safer Travel Plan Update	To consider and comment on the key elements of the plan which is due to be published March 2024.	11 December	Consider and Comment	Kerry Blakeman	No



Title of Report	Reason	Date of Meeting	Purpose	Lead Officer	Confidential
Member Engagement Groups - Progress	To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group	11 December	Consider	Janna Simpson	No
Financial Monitoring Report	To consider the latest financial position	11 December	Consider	Kate Taylor	No
<b>Mayor's Question Time: Proposed Draft Budget 2024/2025</b>		14 December			
Member Engagement Groups - Progress	To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group	22 January	Consider	Janna Simpson	No
Financial Monitoring Report	To consider the latest financial position	22 January	Consider	Kate Taylor	No
Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation Plan update	Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation Plan Progress Report	26 February	Consider	Adam Harrison	No
Member Engagement Groups -Progress	To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group	26 February	Consider	Janna Simpson	No





# West Midlands Combined Authority

## Forward Plan

## Forthcoming key decisions

Title of key decision:	Decision to be taken by and date:	Open or Exempt:	Portfolio Lead	Employee to contact:
<b>Regional Activity &amp; Delivery Update</b> To provide an update on recent activity of the WMCA.	WMCA Board 13 October 2023	Open	Andy Street Mayor	Laura Shoaf Chief Executive of the West Midlands Combined Authority
<b>Deeper Devolution Deal</b> To formally ratify the 'trailblazer' deeper devolution deal between the WMCA and HM Government.	WMCA Board 13 October 2023	Open	Councillor Sharon Thompson Levelling Up Portfolio Lead	Ed Cox Executive Director of Strategy, Integration & Net Zero
<b>New Stations Package 1 Project Update</b> To provide an update on the impact on the West Midlands Rail Programme (New Stations Package 1 Project), following Buckingham Group Contracting Ltd being placed into administration.	WMCA Board 13 October 2023	Open	Councillor Mike Bird Transport Portfolio Lead	Liz Baker Strategic Sponsor
<b>Regional Activity &amp; Delivery Update</b> To provide an update on recent activity of the WMCA.	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Andy Street Mayor	Laura Shoaf Chief Executive of the West Midlands Combined Authority
<b>WMCA Financial Monitoring Report - November 2023</b> to provide an update on the latest financial position	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Councillor Bob Sleight Finance Portfolio Lead	Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant

<p><b>Single Settlement</b> To provide an update on the latest developments regarding the single settlement arrangements.</p>	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Councillor Bob Sleigh Finance Portfolio Lead	Jonathan Gibson Head of Policy & Public Affairs
<p><b>Investment Zone and Levelling Up Zone Governance</b> To consider governance arrangements supporting the region's Investment Zone and Levelling Up Zone proposals.</p>	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Councillor Stephen Simkins Economy & Innovation Portfolio Lead	Jonathan Gibson Head of Policy & Public Affairs
<p><b>Air Quality Framework</b> To approve the draft framework that reviews all of the measures possible to accelerate improvements to regional air quality, following public consultation and consideration by the Environment &amp; Energy Board.</p>	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Councillor John Cotton Environment, Energy & HS2 Portfolio Lead	Jacqueline Homan Head of Environment
<p><b>WMCA Homelessness Taskforce: Update and Key Priorities</b> The purpose of this paper is to update and engage WMCA Board members on the current work programme and priorities of the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce.</p>	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Councillor Kerrie Carmichael Inclusive Communities Portfolio Lead	Neelam Sunder Senior Programme Manager - Homelessness
<p><b>West Midlands Police &amp; Crime Commissioner Governance</b> To consider an update on the latest situation regarding governance arrangements relating to the Police &amp; Crime Commissioner.</p>	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Andy Street Mayor	Claire Dhami Head of Systems Change and Inclusion
<p><b>HS2 / 'Network North' Update and Implications</b> To consider further details on the economic implications of HS2 not going to Manchester, the package of proposed alternative transport projects and funding governance arrangements.</p>	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Councillor Mike Bird Transport Portfolio Lead	Anne Shaw Executive Director of Transport for West Midlands
<p><b>Birmingham Eastside Extension</b> position paper on scheme and next steps</p>	WMCA Board 17 November 2023	Open	Councillor Mike Bird Transport Portfolio Lead	Marilyn Grazette

<p><b>New Stations Package 1 Update</b> Paper to update the Board on the impacts of the novation to a new contractor for the Package 1 New Stations contract.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 17 November 2023</p>	<p>Fully exempt</p>	<p>Councillor Mike Bird Transport Portfolio Lead</p>	<p>Liz Baker Strategic Sponsor</p>
<p><b>State of the Region</b> State of the Region for the West Midlands in 2024</p>	<p>WMCA Board 12 January 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Andy Street Mayor</p>	<p>Si Chun Lam Head of Research, Intelligence and Inclusive Growth</p>
<p><b>Health of the Region</b> To consider an update report reviewing the health of the region.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 12 January 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Councillor George Duggins Skills &amp; Productivity Portfolio Lead</p>	<p>Clare Hatton Director of Employment, Skills, Health &amp; Communities</p>
<p><b>Bus Franchising Update</b> To provide a further update on work to support the consideration of any future bus franchising decision.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 12 January 2024</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Councillor Mike Bird Transport Portfolio Lead</p>	<p>Pete Bond Director of Integrated Transport Services</p>
<p><b>Skills Funding</b> To consider the latest position regarding skills funding.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 15 March 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Councillor George Duggins Skills &amp; Productivity Portfolio Lead</p>	<p>Clare Hatton Director of Employment, Skills, Health &amp; Communities</p>
<p><b>WMCA's Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee and Transport Delivery Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee - Progress Update</b> To provide a quarterly summary of the activity of work of the WMCA's overview and scrutiny function, as required by the Deeper Devolution Deal.</p>	<p>WMCA Board 15 March 2024</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Andy Street Mayor</p>	<p>Lyndsey Roberts Scrutiny Officer</p>

## The Forward Plan

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

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

### What is a key decision?

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

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

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

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

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

Councillors or members of the public wishing to:

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

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

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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