



WMCA Board

Date:	15 September 2023
Report Title:	Economic Growth Board - Updated Terms of Reference
Portfolio Lead Area:	Economy & Innovation
Accountable Chief Executive:	Laura Shoaf, West Midlands Combined Authority email: laura.shoaf@wmca.org.uk
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Report has been considered by:	Economic Growth Board

Recommendations for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Ratify the changes to the Terms of Reference for Economic Growth Board contained in Appendix 1.

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for WMCA Board to ratify and agree the revised Terms of Reference for the Economic Growth Board following its consideration of the report on the 12 July 2023.

2 Background

- 2.1 Economic Growth Board (EGB) was created in 2021 ([November 2021 WMCA Board](#)) following a comprehensive review of the region's economic governance. This included a focus on streamlining economic governance and policymaking and establishing a more democratically accountable decision-making body.

Reasons for Change

- 2.2 During 2022/23, there have been a number of changes that affected business representation within the region and within the WMCA's decision-making structures. These are:

- The Integration of some LEP functions following LEP closures.
- The creation of the Business Insights Forum;
- The creation of the Regional Business Council;
- The integration of business support into the WMCA and local authority structures (from the Growth Hubs);
- The agreeing of the Deeper Devolution Deal;
- The creation of wider support structures for EGB and the Plan for Growth implementation (cluster groups).

Membership, Quorum and Voting

2.3 There are a number of changes that are proposed to the Economic Growth Board.

Membership

2.4 There are no changes currently proposed to the membership of EGB, although EGB retains the ability to vary its membership by adding additional members without reference to WMCA Board.

2.5 However, to recognize the changes brought about by the integration of some LEP functions, it was agreed that the LEP Board nominees would be asked whether they were willing to remain as business representatives. Both former chairs of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (BCLEP) and Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (C&WLEP) have agreed and return to EGB. As a result of this, the terms of reference have been amended to:

‘Business Representatives from across the region’

2.6 The adoption of a new business recruitment policy being developed by Governance will create a new open and transparent means of recruiting business representatives to all WMCA Boards and working groups.

Quorum

2.7 EGB is one of just three decision making boards at the WMCA, and for most of 2022 it has met and not been quorate. This has meant that decisions that could have been made at EGB have to go to WMCA Board for ratification.

2.7 In order to address this, it is recommended that the quoracy level (not voting) is reduced from “*five Constituent members of the WMCA*” to “*four voting members of EGB*”.

2.8 This means that quoracy for the meeting is drawn from the eight (8) voting members of EGB. These are:

- Mayor (x1)
- Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation (x1)
- Nominees from the other Constituent Authorities (x6)

Voting

2.9 There is no change to the voting members of EGB. There are currently 19 members of the board (which EGB can increase), but voting within EGB is limited to the following voting members:

- Mayor (x1)
- Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation (x1)
- Nominees from the other Constituent Authorities (x6)

Oversight of Private Sector-Led Advisory Groups

2.10 EGB will continue to have a role in overseeing and receiving reports from a range of private sector-led regional advisory boards and will retain an interest in, and support those other groups that impact upon, the region's economy. These include:

- i) Innovation Board,
- ii) Energy Capital Board
- iii) Create Central,
- iv) Plan for Growth Cluster Leadership Groups;
- v) Social Economy Advisory Board
- vi) Tourism & Visitor Economy Advisory Board;
- vii) West Midlands Growth Company.

3 Financial Implications

3.1 Whilst the EGB has decision making powers (when quorate), it will not have any authority to approve WMCA incurring financial liabilities. To clarify, such decisions to incur cost will remain with the WMCA Board and Investment Board only.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 Economic Growth Board is established as a decision-making board under the WMCA's constitution with newly adopted terms of reference.

5. Equalities Implications

5.1 There are no immediate negative equalities implications arising from this report.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

6.1 The changes to EGB will continue to enable Inclusive Economic Growth to be at the heart of WMCA decision making.

7. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

7.1 The report refers to the former three LEP area which incorporate links with all constituent and non-constituent authorities.

8. Other implications

8.1 None.

APPENDIX 1

Economic Growth Board - Terms of Reference Revised July 2023	
Purpose:	<p>To provide strong, democratically accountable leadership to the strategic oversight of the region’s approach to driving green and inclusive economic growth.</p> <p>To exercise the delegated authority provided to it by the WMCA Board on matters of inclusive economic growth.</p> <p>To have responsibility for overseeing the performance and evaluation of the region’s economic strategy, monitoring and managing processes as required.</p>
Accountable to:	WMCA Board
Accountable for, and receiving reports from:	<p>Energy Capital Board Create Central Plan for Growth Cluster leadership Groups Social Economy Advisory Board Tourism & Visitor Economy Advisory Board West Midlands Growth Company</p>
Membership:	<p><i>Voting Members:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor (x1) • Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation (x1) • Nominees from the other Constituent Authorities (x6) <p><i>Non-Voting Members:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from Non-Constituent Authorities (x1) • Portfolio Lead for Finance (x1) • Business Representatives from across the region (x3) • Representative of Midlands TUC (x1) • Representative of West Midlands Chambers of Commerce (x1) • Chair of West Midlands Growth Company (x1) • Chair of West Midlands Innovation Board (x1) • Representative of Higher Education sector (x1) <p>Each representative will be able to send a substitute to the meeting if required.</p> <p>EGB may recommend adding to (or varying) the membership of the board in order to better fulfil its functions in driving green and inclusive economic growth or to reflect organisational changes in the region or nationally.</p>

	Voting rights would remain unaffected, unless the EGB made a separate recommendation to change these.
Chair	Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation In the absence of the Chair, the board shall elect from amongst its voting members an Acting Chair until such time as the Chair becomes available again.
Vice Chair	Portfolio Lead for Finance
Voting	Only the voting members of the board will be entitled to vote at meetings. The Chair does not exercise a casting vote. Any matters that are to be decided by the board are to be decided by consensus of the board where possible. Where consensus is not possible, the following provisions shall apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each voting member of the board is to have one vote and no member, including the Chair, is to have a casting vote. - Any matter put to a vote will be decided on a show of hands. A decision will require a two-thirds majority of voting members present and voting.
Quorum	No business shall be transacted unless representatives of four voting members are present at a meeting.
Frequency	The board shall meet a minimum of four times a year, or more frequently as required.
Servicing	The board will be serviced by the WMCA's Governance Services team.
Functions	To exercise decision-making powers on behalf of the WMCA in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing powers as set out in sections 99 and 102A of the Local Transport Act 2008 in order to promote economic growth. Such powers can be exercised in conjunction with general powers granted to the WMCA by virtue of section 113A of the Local Democracy Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). • Development of a regional approach to inclusive and green economic growth policies and plans, including the development and delivery of regional economic strategies, policies and plans, to be agreed with the WMCA Board where appropriate.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of a West Midlands Jobs Plan, ensuring local communities are linked to new jobs and opportunities. • Regional support to businesses, including the implementation of a new business support programme. • Regional innovation strategy and supporting programmes. • Ensure that economic strategy, and interventions flowing from it, are underpinned by a robust evidence base (including that derived from key sectors and places) which is reviewed and updated on a regular basis. • Ensure that businesses are encouraged and supported to transition to net zero. • To consider and advise upon major policy change within the portfolio. • Provide leadership in developing an approach to future devolution of powers from the Government to the region on matters of economic growth • Receive updates on the investment programme as it relates to the economic portfolio and also from other boards which support the economic agenda, for example Employment & Skills, Environment, Inclusion, as appropriate. • To have oversight of the impact made by the West Midlands Growth Company. • Report progress to the WMCA Board. <p>Support the Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing advice and support to WMCA activity. • Helping engage with wider stakeholder networks and activity. • Identify and scale up existing good practice within the WMCA area. • Identify and secure resources to deliver new opportunities.
Review	Annually in June.