

## Economic Growth Board

<b>Date</b>	22 September 2023
<b>Report title</b>	Major Events Fund Update
<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	Economy & Innovation
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<b>Accountable Employee</b>	Pip Abercromby, Director of Finance & Commercial, West Midlands Growth Company
<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Major Events Advisory Group Executive Board

### Recommendations for action or decision:

#### The Economic Growth Board is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the following documents which were considered and agreed by the Major Events Advisory Group:
  - (a) the governance for the Major Events Fund (Appendix 1);
  - (b) the Guiding Principles for evaluation (Appendix 1);
  - (c) the process timeline and process flow (Appendix 2);
  - (d) the application form (Appendix 1) which has been issued to all eligible authorities, the Scoring Mechanism and Criteria (Appendix 3)
- (2) Note that it will receive a prioritised list of projects for consideration and approval at its November meeting.

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. This paper provides an update on the progress of the Major Events Fund since the Economic Growth Board (EGB) met on Wednesday 12th July 2023. It includes an update on the first meeting of the West Midlands Major Events Advisory Group and seeks various approvals from EGB.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. At its meeting on Friday 17th March 2023, the WMCA Board agreed (inter alia) to allocate £6m from the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund to enable the hosting and staging of major sporting, business and cultural events that will deliver regional economic impact. These events will require competitive bids to be developed and won, and financial and operational commitments from Local Authorities (LAs) to host. The March report also set out the role the WMGC which is to provide the secretariat function for the Major Events Fund programme.
- 2.2. At its July meeting, the EGB agreed to the establishment of the West Midlands Major Events Advisory Group (WM MEAG) to oversee the process and make recommendations to the EGB for approval. It was agreed that the WM MEAG would include Councillor and Officer representation from each Local Authority, as well as representation from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Department of Culture, Media and Sport and VisitBritain.

## **3. Activity Update**

- 3.1. WMGC prepared a Programme Business Case for the Fund which has been taken through the WMCA's Single Assurance Framework. It was approved by the Investment Board on 24th July 2023.
- 3.2. In parallel, owing to the urgent nature of the opportunity, on 19th July 2023 WMCA approved the allocation of £3m from the Major Events Fund to secure Sport Accord in the region in 2024. The win was announced on 29th August following signing of the contracts between SportAccord and Birmingham City Council (BCC) and has received significant coverage and support. Details of WMGC role in supporting BCC with delivery of this event have been discussed and a paper shared to provide detail on the approach to planning, pre-event engagement and anticipated opportunities for broad regional impact.
- 3.3. The first meeting of the MEAG was subsequently held on Friday 4th August 2023. Membership of the Group is attached at Appendix 4. Cllr Adrian Andrew, Deputy Leader at Walsall MBC was elected as Chair. Full consideration was given to the items that EGB is being asked to formally approve, specifically:
  - Governance Structure (appendix 1)
  - Guiding Principles for Evaluation (appendix 1)

- Revised Process Timeline and Process Flow (appendix 2) – concerns were raised regarding the tight deadline for the submission of applications. The deadline was originally set for 1st September, with a view to a MEAG meeting taking place on 6th September to shortlist events. The deadline has subsequently been extended to 22nd September and the recommended shortlist will be presented to the November EGB for approval rather than September.
- Application Form (appendix 1) Scoring Mechanism and Criteria (appendix 3) - the application form was agreed and issued to the seven constituent authorities plus all non-constituent members in the week commencing 7 August 2023. Follow up meetings have been held with all LAs on request to ensure the process is clear and address any queries.

The application form features fields to be completed where the responses are a combination of Yes/No, numerical data (that falls within a set of ranges) and a small number of qualitative responses. The scoring mechanism has been pre-defined based upon industry best practice and major event expectation for the Yes/No and numerical responses, and based upon our agreed principles for evaluation, desired outcomes and values for the region for the qualitative questions. This generates a clear percentage score for sport, business and cultural events that will identify those events that meet industry and regional benchmarks.

#### **4. Next Steps**

- 4.1. The deadline for the receipt of applications from LAs to the Major Events Fund by WMGC is 22nd September 2023.
- 4.2. The MEAG will now meet shortly afterwards, at a date to be agreed with the Chair (week commencing 7th or 16th October), to review the ranked shortlist of applications received against the agreed scoring mechanism and provide recommendations to be put to EGB.
- 4.3. The shortlist will be recommended to the EGB for approval on 16th November, and from then each event approved will then follow the WMCA's Delegated Sign Off (DSO) process.
- 4.4. Funding Agreements will be drawn up with each relevant Local Authority for any allocations of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Funding of which Major Events may be part and will be itemised in the schedule of funding as part of this agreement.
- 4.5. It is currently anticipated that the Fund will be fully allocated through the above process based upon discussions with all eligible stakeholders. If this is not the case then a second round may be undertaken. If this is the case, then the Advisory Group will pivot to become a Programme Board with further meetings to be scheduled for evaluation purposes (bid vs impact) across 2023/2024/2025.

## **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1. Formal recommendations of the Major Events Advisory Group will be reviewed by the relevant Executive Director and, if endorsed, those recommendations will be put forward for a formal decision to EGB or WMCA Board (whichever is most appropriate).

## **6. Finance Implications**

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications from this report, however there will be in future when the West Midlands Major Events Advisory Group propose major events to be funded from the £6m Major Events Fund.
- 6.2. The governance outlined in the Programme Business Case states that all financial decisions go through WMCA Executive Board.

## **7. Equalities Implications**

- 7.1. There are no immediate equalities implications arising from this report.

## **8. Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 8.1. There are no immediate equalities implications arising from this report.

## **9. Geographical Area of Report's Implications**

- 9.1. There are no immediate equalities implications arising from this report.

## **10. Other implications**

- 10.1. None.

## **11. Schedule of appendices**

- Appendix 1: WM MEAG – Supporting Document (WM MEAG terms of reference, governance structure and process, proposed project plan timeline, guiding principles evaluation, content scoring mechanism/criteria)
- Appendix 2: Revised Process Timeline and Process Flow
- Appendix 3: WM Major Events Fund Application Form Guidance Notes
- Appendix 4: WM MEAG members and advisors/observers