



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
Coventry City Council
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 Title

No.

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 replied to say 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 be submitted 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 asked about the replacement of environmentally unfriendly buses and if 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 passengers 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 Chair presented the MEG progress report. He stated that the MEGs provided a forum for members to gain a deeper understanding of matters that could not be covered in detail during committee meetings. He reported on the activity of MEG Champions, relaying that he would be meeting with them monthly and they would be attending agenda briefings.

As a result of a comment from Councillor Mary Locke, it was agreed by the committee that in the next municipal year, no member engagement groups would 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.