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**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Friday 12 April 2019 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Peter Hughes (Chair)	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Cathy Bayton	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Tariq Khan	Coventry City Council
Councillor Angus Lees	Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton Councils
Councillor Ian Shires (Vice-Chair)	Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton Councils
Councillor Joe Tildesley	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Lisa Trickett (Vice-Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Sarah Windrum	Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership

In Attendance

Councillor Daniel Barker	Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton Councils
Councillor Tony Johnson	Cannock, Tamworth Councils
Councillor Kath Hartley	Chair of Transport Delivery Committee
Parveen Rai	Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership
Ian Parry	Centre for Public Scrutiny
Councillor Lisa Smart	Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Sean Russell	Implementation Director Mental Health, Wellbeing and Radical Prevention
Councillor Izzi Seccombe	Chair of Health & Wellbeing Board

Item Title No.

56. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dean Carroll (Shropshire Non-Constituent authorities), Councillor Stuart Davis (joint Coventry/Solihull representative), Councillor Peter Fowler (Birmingham City Council), Councillor Josh Jones (Birmingham City Council), Councillor Stephen Simkins (City of Wolverhampton Council) and Councillor Vera Waters (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council).

57. Inquorate Meeting

In accordance with the WMCA's constitution, the meeting was inquorate. The recommendations contained within the minutes would be submitted to the WMCA Board on 24 May 2019 for formal approval and adoption.

58. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2019

The Chair raised the following points:

- The 2019/20 budget included additional resources for scrutiny and the Monitoring Officer informed the committee that work was being undertaken on the recruitment process and that he would keep both the Chair and committee updated in due course.
- It was agreed at the WMCA Board on 22 March 2019 that the proposed transfer of West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner function would not now continue.
- The Interim Director of Finance and Monitoring Officer were to ensure that Overview & Scrutiny Committee was included in the 2020/21 budget process in a timely manner.
- A response had been received from the Managing Director of Transport for West Midlands in relation to the conclusions/recommendations of the Bilston Road Task & Finish Group.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25 February 2019 were confirmed as a correct record.

59. Health & Wellbeing - Progress Update

The committee received an update from Councillor Izzi Secombe, Portfolio Lead for Health & Wellbeing, and the Director of Implementation. The update included work to implement the recommendations of the Mental Health Commission, funding and resources obtained, and the 2018/19 health & wellbeing priorities. The activity focus for the health & wellbeing portfolio area included employment and skills, housing first, criminal justice, developing the wider care agenda and community capacity building.

The Director of Implementation highlighted the links between the commitment of key organisations from across the West Midlands to improving the mental health and wellbeing of people with the region and the need to adopt those principles to deliver a good approach for the region's cities and localities.

Councillor Ian Shires highlighted the need to ensure that the limited resources against this portfolio area were targeted towards the areas of need, as well as cascading the work being undertaken by the WMCA to local authorities to be able to influence and engage with them. Councillor Cathy Bayton suggested that a similar process was mirrored by WMCA that was used in Dudley, where health & wellbeing was embedded into every decision making process. Sarah Windrum requested that work be undertaken with the Federation of Small Businesses and the region's Chambers of Commerce to ensure the work programme was more business friendly. Councillor Peter Hughes requested that an update was provided to committee on the Housing First Programme.

Councillor Peter Hughes thanked both the Portfolio Lead and Director of Implementation for attending and presenting an update, and felt that good work had been made in this area.

It was recommended to the WMCA Board that:

- (1) The comments of the committee be noted.

[NB: Councillor Cathy Bayton declared a personal interest in this item.]

60. Scrutiny Working Group Review - Adult Education Budget

The committee considered a report on the conclusions of the Adult Education Budget scrutiny review. The review was led by Councillor Lisa Trickett, Chair of the Productivity & Skills and Inclusive Growth Working Group, and Councillor Joe Tildesley. Various meetings were held with Overview & Scrutiny Committee members from each of the seven constituent local authorities, joined by their Cabinet Member for Education & Skills.

The scrutiny review presented the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

Through the commissioning process, WMCA should ensure that:

- (a) all providers in receipt of Adult Education Budget funding demonstrate an understanding of the communities that they were delivering to;
- (b) all providers in receipt of Adult Education Budget funding demonstrate a commitment to collaborate with other providers and the local authority to deliver the best service for communities;
- (c) the potential for duplication of activity was limited;
- (d) there was a reduction in the number of providers operating in the region; and
- (e) providers funded through Adult Education Budget funding should demonstrate links with local communities and local employers wherever possible.

Recommendation 2

- (a) WMCA to develop a method of tracking learner destinations in relation to Adult Education Budget funding in order to demonstrate the impact of devolution, and that this methodology should include the voice of the learner; and
- (b) WMCA to set clear, measurable targets to demonstrate the impact of Adult Education Budget funding.

Recommendation 3

- (a) Adult Education Budget funding should be deployed as part of a pathway into employment, with its role in relation to other funding streams and programmes clearly identified.
- (b) Further work be undertaken to identify measures to be put in place that demonstrated how the Adult Education Budget was used to support pathways into employment and further learning.

Recommendation 4

- (a) WMCA should increase the amount of provision delivered in priority skills sectors, as identified within the Regional Skills Plans; and
- (b) WMCA should ensure that all Adult Education Budget-funded employability courses added value to an individual's journey into employment.

Recommendation 5

WMCA to work with local authorities to understand the potential role of the Adult Education Budget in supporting learners with additional needs and in shaping provision to respond to this.

Recommendation 6

WMCA to consider how the distribution of Adult Education Budget funding could be adjusted over time to better align with patterns of need across the region.

Recommendation 7

- (a) WMCA to consider how the Adult Education Budget could be used to address these barriers, particularly through the innovation strand of its commissioning approach; and
- (b) WMCA to explore how other sources of funding (e.g. travel subsidies) could be connected with Adult Education Budget funded provision to support learners to access courses.

Recommendation 8

Adult Education Budget-funded 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' provision to develop a contextual element, so that residents were supported to develop the vocabulary required to enter employment in priority skills areas.

It was recommended to the WMCA Board that:

- (1) The recommendations of the Adult Education Budget scrutiny review be approved for considered by the Skills Advisory Board.

- (2) That all participants in the review be given an opportunity to comment and feed in any additional thoughts prior to consideration by the Skills Advisory Board, subject to agreement of the Chair.

61. Black Country Place Based Fund - Briefing

The committee received a presentation on the Black Country Place Based Pilot from the Physical Activity Policy & Delivery Lead. It was noted that the Black Country Consortium had received £150,000 to develop an in-depth understanding within the Black Country of barriers and challenges to take part in physical activity, and that a collaborative approach would be taken alongside local authorities to use this insight to inform delivery.

62. Constitution and Governance Review Progress and Update on PCC and Fire Governance Proposals

The committee received an update from the Head of Governance on the progress made in the review of the constitution and review of governance within the WMCA. A position statement on the stage reached in regards to proposals for the transfer of Police & Crime Commissioner and Fire Authority governance following the WMCA Board on 22 March 2019 was also provided.

It was recommended to the WMCA Board that:

- (1) The information contained in the report and the position regarding Police & Crime Commissioner and fire governance proposals be noted.

63. Draft Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018/19

The committee considered a tabled draft of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018/19.

Councillor Cathy Bayton highlighted that the Annual Report needed to reflect the need for adequate resourcing to allow scrutiny to function effectively, and suggested that local authorities should also take in to account diversity considerations when determining their representative on the committee. Sarah Windrum requested that the role of the LEP representation on committee be clearly defined. Councillor Joe Tildesley suggested that meetings of this committee in the forthcoming year be held around the constituent authorities and not at the same location.

Members were to provide the Scrutiny Officer with another suggested comments or feedback, and it was agreed that final sign-off would be sought from the Chair and Vice-Chairs, with a view of being presented at WMCA Board on 28 June 2019.

64. Review of 2018/19 Scrutiny Review Work - Working Groups, Scrutiny Champions, Task & Finish Groups

The committee considered a report on the developments and progress in relation to the work of the five working groups, the Scrutiny Champions and the task & finish groups.

It was noted that the progression of the 'Leaders Like You' task & finish group would commence in the new municipal year.

It was recommended to the WMCA Board that:

- (1) The progress made during 2018/19 in respect of the working groups, task & finish groups and Scrutiny Champions be noted.

65. Forward Plans

The committee considered and noted the items to be considered by the following committees / boards:

- WMCA Board
- Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee
- Environment Board
- Investment Board
- Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Public Service Reform Board
- Transport Delivery Committee

The committee requested timescales to be provided regarding the implementation of the Housing & Land Delivery Board and Health & Wellbeing Board forward plans.

It was also requested at future meetings an update on the Adult Education Budget 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' review and the constitution was provided to committee.

It was recommended to the WMCA Board that:

- (1) Items on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee forward plan be noted.

66. Date of Next Meeting

To be advised following the WMCA Board AGM on 28 June 2019.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm.