



**Useful Information
Mayoral Q&A Session on the Delivery and Impact of the WMCA's Policies
9 October 2019**

The Mayoral Q&A sessions provide a useful forum for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to question and challenge the Mayor on the delivery and impact of the WMCA's policies.

WMCA's Policies

1. Inclusive economic growth, transport, housing and skills are key areas for the WMCA along with the environment, digital transformation and wellbeing.
2. Further information on these policies can be found within the WMCA's Annual Plan 2019/20 that can be accessed here: [WMCA's Annual Business Plan 2019-20](#)

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

3. As discussed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 2 September, the Mayoral Q&A session will be structured around the committee's three core themes (accountability, connectivity and investment) and questions should be focussed on the key challenges for the WMCA, drawing on those set out in the Annual Plan 2019/20, State of the Region report and the Strategic Risk Register.
4. The committee's three core themes and the key challenges for the WMCA are as follows:

Three Core Themes

5.
 - **Accountability**
The committee will wish to see that high standards of governance underpin how the WMCA makes its decisions. This scrutiny area seeks to ensure that those governance structures are fit for purpose, effective, encourage transparent decision making and have adapted to new responsibilities for the WMCA. Wider public engagement will also be looked at to ensure that the WMCA is open to views of marginalised communities as well as those of experts. An appropriate understanding of the relative areas of responsibility of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee is relevant to this theme.
 - **Connectivity**
How the WMCA's services provide improved connectivity which benefits all areas across the region to ensure Inclusive growth targets are met. This covers not just traditional transport issues but new and emerging types of connectivity and the environment/energy and HS2 initiatives. This scrutiny area will challenge the strength of these connections, as well as how the WMCA is addressing the digital divide within the region and making sure new technologies are delivered in a timely and inclusive way.
 - **Investment**
Inclusive growth is at the heart of what the WMCA seeks to do, and the WMCA is responsible for, or has influence over, significant funding streams. Its value as an organisation relies on the effective targeting of this funding. This scrutiny area will seek to establish whether the ambitions and policies of the WMCA are realistic to the levels
- 7.

of funding it has, whether funding streams are being effectively targeted, and whether communities can feel the benefit of the WMCA's involvement.

WMCA's Five Key Challenges

8.
 - **Brexit uncertainty**
The outcome and impacts on businesses and economy are not yet fully known.
9.
 - **Productivity**
Headline productivity is moving in the right direction, but still lags behind the rest of the UK.
10.
 - **Youth Unemployment**
Youth unemployment rates continue to be a challenge for the region.
11.
 - **Healthy life expectancy**
Healthy life expectancy is lower than the national average (for both males and females).
12.
 - **Inclusive Growth**
The need to continue a focus on inclusive growth and ensure that people across the region can access, shape or feel the full benefits of sustained economic growth.

Questions to the Mayor

13. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee made the decision that there will be no requirement for questions to be submitted in advance, but the committee has identified some specific lines of enquiry which arise in connection with the three core themes as identified above. The Chair has asked the committee to consider these lines of enquiry when undertaking the scrutiny activities.
 - Is the contribution to overall WMCA strategic priorities clear?
 - Is it clear how this will impact on the targets for Inclusive growth?
 - Is the project funded sufficiently to achieve its objectives?
 - What difference will the project make to people within the West Midlands and when will they feel the benefit?
 - Are impacts and outputs measurable and are they being monitored?
 - Are other WMCA policies such as social value in procurement being implemented?
 - Has an Equalities Impact Assessment been carried out for new policy areas?
 - Is the role and expectation of partners understood?
 - Governance structure - who makes the decisions and how are these made?
14. The Chair has asked the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider the WMCA's challenges together with its three core themes to help shape its questions.