

Cllr Lisa Trickett  
Birmingham City Council  
Council House  
Victoria Square  
Birmingham  
B1 1BB

30 October 2019

Dear Cllr Trickett

Thank you for hosting me at the Mayor's Question Time on Wednesday 9 October at the Combined Authority. I'm writing to you as there were three issues I said I would provide a written answer for. I have consulted relevant officials at the Combined Authority on each of these and the information I have received is set out below.

### **1. Concessionary Travel for Disabled Persons on West Midlands' Metro**

West Midlands' Metro participate in Transport for West Midlands' concessionary travel scheme for disabled persons. This scheme is also available on buses and trains and currently has over 36,000 pass holders who have met the criteria of at least one of the seven categories of disability as defined in the Transport Act 2000. These concessionary pass holders can travel on the tram for free from 0930 until end of service on Monday to Friday; and all day at weekends and on Bank Holidays. Application forms are available at Travel Information Centres or online at [networkwestmidlands.com](http://networkwestmidlands.com). This is offered as a local enhancement to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme.

### **2. Funding available to non-constituent members of the WMCA and how to apply**

The following housing and land funds are eligible to all non-constituent and constituent authorities. These are also set out in the Single Commissioning Framework (SCF) that was endorsed by Housing and Land Board, Investment Board and CA Board in April 2019. The SCF funds are:

- £50m of Brownfield Property Fund [Grant]
- £140m Commercial Investment Fund [Loan]
- Up to £100m Housing Deal Land Fund [Grant]
- £70m Residential Investment Fund [Loan]

The funds collectively available mean WMCA can offer grant, loan, debt, equity and guarantees, and most crucially and increasingly, a blend of funding to unlock and accelerate residential and commercial development schemes where there is market failure.

At the most recent Investment Board (October 2019) there were 4 schemes approved from SCF funds of which two were in non-constituent authorities

The process for accessing these funds is now clear, transparent and consistent via the SCF Gateway Process. A simple guide has been published to facilitate this.

### **3. Support available to young people with disabilities beyond the age of 25**

As pointed out in the meeting, young people with disabilities are fully funded, through the ESFA, until the age of 25, where they have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). Schools and colleges receive additional support of up to £6000 on top of the national base rate of £4000 from the ESFA. Local Authorities provide funding for young people who require additional support funding greater than £6000. Local Authorities receive funding as part of their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and they agree the funding for each individual with the school or college.

Young people aged over 19 with a disability, but without an EHCP, are supported through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) and additional support funding is used to meet needs. This funding can only be used for support associated with learning, not every day difficulties. All learners aged over 25 with or without an EHCP are funded in this way.

WMCA is currently working closely with our Local Authority partners to look at how we best deploy AEB, alongside other LA services, to support individuals and deliver better transition to employment options. There is the potential to better align funding and services, although this is an area that is constantly reported as under-funded. Similarly, any additional AEB directed to high need learners would require a reduction for other groups.

This is a difficult and complex issue but we are developing proposals which will go to our Skills Board in 2020.

Do please get in touch should you require any additional information and I look forward to the next Mayor's Question Time on 3 December.

Yours sincerely



**Andy Street**  
**Mayor of the West Midlands**