



WMCA Board

Friday 17 January 2020 at 11.00 am

Minutes

Constituent Members

Andy Street (Chair)

Councillor Bob Sleight (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Wasim Ali

Councillor Mike Bird

Councillor Ian Brookfield

Councillor Ian Courts

Councillor George Duggins

Councillor Patrick Harley

Councillor Brigid Jones

Councillor Ian Ward

Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

City of Wolverhampton Council

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Coventry City Council

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Birmingham City Council

Birmingham City Council

Non-Constituent Members

Councillor Matthew Dormer

Councillor David Humphreys

Councillor Julie Jackson

Councillor Tony Jefferson

Ninder Johal

Councillor Tony Johnson

Councillor Alexander Phillips

Councillor Izzi Seccombe

Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince

Redditch Borough Council

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Black Country Local Enterprise

Partnership

Cannock Chase District Council

Shropshire Council

Warwickshire County Council

Rugby Borough Council

Co-Opted Member

Lee Barron

Midlands Trades Union Congress

Observer Members

Councillor Greg Brackenridge

David Jamieson

West Midlands Fire Authority

West Midlands Police & Crime

Commissioner

In Attendance

Councillor Cathy Bayton

Councillor Peter Fowler

Councillor Kath Hartley

Kashmire Hawker

David Lane

Avtar Purewal

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Transport Delivery Committee

Young Combined Authority

Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee

Young Combined Authority

Item Title
No.

70. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor George Adamson (Cannock Chase), Jonathan Browning (Coventry & Warwickshire LEP), Councillor Shaun Davies (Telford & Wrekin), Councillor Yvonne Davies (Sandwell), Councillor David Hitchiner (Herefordshire), Councillor Sebastian Lowe (Rugby), Councillor Peter Nutting (Shropshire), Tim Pile (Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP) and Stewart Towe (Black Country LEP).

71. Minutes - 8 November 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

72. Forward Plan

A forward plan of items to be considered at future meetings of the board was noted.

73. Chair's Remarks

(a) David Stevens, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

The Chair congratulated David Stevens on his recent appointment as Chief Executive of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

(b) Jacqueline Homan, Head of Environment

The Chair welcomed Jacqueline Homan, recently appointed as the WMCA's Head of Environment, to her first meeting.

74. Scrutiny Review into the Effectiveness of Transport Delivery Committee in Overseeing the Delivery of WMCA Transport Policies

The board considered a report setting out the findings of a scrutiny review undertaken to determine the effectiveness of Transport Delivery Committee in ensuring that the transport policies of the WMCA positively contributed towards the delivery of its wider corporate objectives.

Councillor Cathy Bayton reported that the scrutiny review had gathered written and verbal evidence from a number of key stakeholders, including the Portfolio Lead for Transport, Chair of Transport Delivery Committee and the Managing Director of Transport for West Midlands. It proposed a number of recommendations to strengthen the co-ordination of transport policy between the WMCA and its constituent authorities, improving transport scrutiny arrangements and strengthening Transport Delivery Committee.

Councillor Ian Ward thanked Councillor Cathy Bayton for the way in which the scrutiny review was carried out and the opportunity she provided for him to input into the evidence it considered.

Resolved:

The report be noted, and the Portfolio Lead for Transport provide a formal written response to the proposals contained within the report.

75. Financial Monitoring 2019/20

The board considered a report from the Director of Finance providing an update on WMCA finances as at the end of November 2019.

The report provided a summary of revenue and capital spend against the approved budget, and a summary of the Investment Programme along with current commitments. The year to date position at the end of November 2019 showed a £1.544m favourable variance from budget and a full-year favourable variance of £2.256m. This included of a favourable variance of £1.972m in transport expenditure against the budget, primarily as a result of lower patronage volumes and changes in the timetable of capital requirements.

Resolved:

- (1) The financial position as at the end of November 2019 be noted.
- (2) It be noted that on 8 November 2019, regulations came into force retrospectively merging the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority Pension Fund with the West Midlands Pension Fund, effective 1 April 2019.
- (3) The statement of assets and liabilities of the West Midlands Pension Fund and the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority Pension Fund as at the date of transfer, set out in within the report, be noted.

76. WMCA Draft Budget 2020/21

The board considered a report from the Director of Finance presenting a draft budget for consideration so as to enable a period of consultation with stakeholders to begin. The report represented the first part of the formal process to determine the WMCA's budget, levy and precept levels for 2020/21. It would form the basis for the budget proposals to be considered by the WMCA Board on 14 February.

Councillor Lisa Trickett reported that Overview & Scrutiny Committee had considered the draft budget and its comments had been included within the report, including the need for improved performance monitoring, the longer-term sustainability of using reserves to fund revenue expenditure, and the need to develop a wider assessment of the return on capital invested to include CO₂ reduction and social inclusion considerations. Councillor Bob Sleigh thanked the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for its contribution to the development of the draft budget.

Lee Barron welcomed proposals to become an accredited Real Living Wage employer and considered that it was an important step to take in helping to encourage other organisations across the region to make a similar commitment.

Resolved:

- (1) The consolidated revenue budget monitoring position as at 30 November 2019 be noted.
- (2) The draft West Midlands Combined Authority consolidated revenue budget be approved for consultation. This included:
 - (a) the budget requirement for transport delivery 2020/21 comprising three elements:
 - (i) £114.7m a year to be funded from the existing transport levy mechanism;
 - (ii) £1.4m to be funded from grant awarded by the Commonwealth Games Organising Committee; and
 - (iii) a transfer from earmarked reserves of £3.65m.
 - (b) the West Midlands Combined Authority Delivery budget requirement for 2020/21 of £142.0m comprising of six elements:
 - (i) £125.8m Adult Education spending to be funded from Adult Education Budget funding devolved by the Department for Education;
 - (ii) £8.3m to be funded from other devolution deal grants;
 - (iii) £4.6m to be funded from Constituent Authority fees (fees to remain at the same level as 2019/20);
 - (iv) £0.4m to be funded from Non-Constituent Authority and observer fees (fees to remain at the same level as 2019/20);
 - (v) £2.2m to be funded from other income; and
 - (vi) a transfer from reserves of £0.8m.
- (3) The Mayoral Office budget for 2020/21 of £0.8m, to be funded from additional confirmed Mayoral capacity funding of £0.8m, be approved for consultation and scrutiny.
- (4) It be noted that the Mayor had indicated that there would be no mayoral precept during the remainder of his current term of office.
- (5) An application to the Living Wage Foundation to become an accredited Real Living Wage employer be approved in principle.

- (6) The West Midlands Combined Authority's indicative five-year Medium-Term Financial Plan be noted.
- (7) The draft Transport Capital Programme be approved for consultation.
- (8) The planned spend on the Investment Programme over the three-year period be noted.
- (9) It be approved that surplus cash balances generated from the Collective Investment Fund and Residential Investment Fund were to be used to support the West Midlands Combined Authority Delivery budget, thus minimising Constituent and Non-Constituent Authority contributions.
- (10) The matters identified by Overview and Scrutiny Committee that arose out of the Mayoral Q&A on 18 December 2019 be noted.

77. Local Industrial Strategy Implementation Update

The board considered a report from the Director of Strategy setting out the new opportunities identified within the Local Industrial Strategy, and the approach being taken to implementation in the context of the latest economic data, regional priorities for inclusive growth, environment and energy, and priorities for future Government funding.

The West Midlands Industrial Strategy was published in May 2019 and set out the WMCA's intent to continue recent growth and success, whilst tackling the issues of economic inclusion that remained embedded within the economy and communities.

Ninder Johal stressed the importance of partnership working between the public and private sectors to better co-ordinate funding bids. He added that the Strategic Economic Development Board was currently looking at current inward investment trends and their regional implications. Good progress was being made in moving forward on the four major market opportunities identified within the Local Industrial Strategy, including future of mobility, creative content, techniques and technologies, data driven health and life sciences, and modern services.

Resolved:

- (1) The progress to date on delivery against the Local Industrial Strategy and overall economic growth goals, including activity to ensure the economy was more inclusive and resilient to shocks, and that zero carbon priorities were embedded in all activity to deliver economic growth, be noted.
- (2) The more detailed approach being taken to implementing and managing delivery, including actions being taken to ensure delivery reflected the latest mid-year economic data and informed the future funding asks of Government, be agreed.
- (3) The next steps, outlined within the report, be agreed.

78. #WM2041: Our Actions to Meet the Climate Challenge

The board considered a report from the Head of Environment setting out within a 'green paper' proposals to identify a range of short, medium- and longer-term actions that would be needed to help the region transition to net-zero levels of CO₂ emissions by 2041.

The 'green paper' had been based on five underlying principles:

- We need to make the journey to 2041 without leaving anyone behind.
- We need to boost our resilience to 'locked in' climate breakdown.
- We need to reconcile our past with our future.
- We need to build more places, and more connectivity between places.
- We need to reduce demand for energy and resources without impacting on shared prosperity.

Councillor Ian Courts welcomed the report and the sense it gave as to the scope of the actions that would need to be undertaken to reduce CO₂ emissions within the region. He stressed that the green paper was a call to action, and he welcomed the public's full engagement in this. A six-week engagement period would now commence, and a further report would then be considered by the WMCA Board on 5 June to agree a revised action plan.

Avtar Purewal indicated that the Young Combined Authority welcomed the report and stressed the importance of young people within the West Midlands being engaged in this as they would be most affected having to live with the consequences of climate change. The Young Combined Authority had pledged to be fully involved, agreeing that the environment was to be a priority workstream for itself, leading engagement work with young people across the West Midlands, and holding the WMCA to account in delivering on the targets it sets.

Councillor Ian Ward expressed some concern that different target dates for net carbon emission neutrality could result in a confused message in the minds of the public. Councillor Ian Courts acknowledged these concerns, although noted that the Government's target date of 2050 was consistent with the specific objectives of the West Midlands by 2041. Councillor Lisa Trickett suggested that 85% of the measures required to enable the Government's 2050 target date to be met needed to be taken within the next five years, providing the impetus to act now and provide the funding necessary.

Resolved:

- (1) The climate green paper be received and endorsed as an important stage in a programme of collaboration, engagement and policy development to address the climate challenge in the West Midlands.

- (2) The next steps outlined within the report, including the development of an investment pipeline with priority investments as part of the Spending Review/Budget proposition to Government be agreed, and this collaborative task be delegated to the Environment Board, supported by the WMCA executive.

79. West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit

The board considered a report from the Director of Productivity & Skills and the Interim Implementation Lead for the Violence Reduction Unit providing details on how the West Midlands was approaching the challenge of increased violence through the establishment of a Violence Reduction Unit.

Within the West Midlands, gun crime had increased by 33% and instances of knife crime had increased by 85% since 2012. Domestic violence had increased 14% since 2018 and violent crime against the person was up 32% during the last year. The Violence Reduction Unit sought to bring together a number of programmes that were seeking to tackle these issues. The report set out the future role of the Violence Reduction Unit in relation to Community Safety Partnerships and statutory safeguarding arrangements.

David Jamieson stressed the significance of knife crime within the region, and the disproportionate impact it had on younger people. He welcomed the Prime Minister's intention to take a personal interest in this issue, and considered that violence in the community was something that wider society could do something about with the right targeted measures, of which the Violence Reduction Unit had a key role to play. He also thanked Councillor George Duggins for the recent Youth Violence Summit hosted by Coventry City Council. Councillor George Duggins stressed the importance of taking a public health approach to tackling violence, and welcomed the partnership working that had led to the creation of the Violence Reduction Unit.

Resolved:

- (1) The progress to date on the establishment of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit - a collaborative regional approach to addressing violence, vulnerability and exploitation - be noted and welcomed.
- (2) The WMCA commit to actively working with the Violence Reduction Unit on its prevention agenda - including through agreements for each West Midlands authority to work with the Violence Reduction Unit in ways that added value, supported preventative work in local settings (including targeting funding to the right places), and could be held to account through appropriate local forums.

80. Strategic Economic Development Board - 5 September 2019

The board received the minutes of the Strategic Economic Development Board held on 5 September.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2019 be noted.

81. Housing & Land Delivery Board - 4 November 2019

The board received the minutes of the Housing & Land Delivery Board held on 4 November.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2019 be noted.

82. Transport Delivery Committee - 4 November 2019

The board received the minutes of the Transport Delivery Committee held on 4 November.

In respect of minute no. 35(ii) ('Outcome of West Midlands Trains Strike Ballot'), Councillor Kath Hartley reported that members of the committee had received a further briefing indicating that a settlement had now been reached between West Midlands Trains and the National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers which would result in the end of the recent programme of industrial action. Councillor Ian Ward indicated that he, along with the West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner, had recently asked for evidence from the public as to the unacceptable state of local rail services within the region. To date, almost 1,000 responses had been received from passengers, and he invited the Chair to join with him in reviewing the submissions received. The Chair indicated his willingness to participate in this.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2019 be noted.

83. Investment Board - 11 November 2019

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board held on 11 November.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2019 be noted.

84. Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee - 12 November 2019

The board received the minutes of the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee held on 12 November.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 be noted.

85. Young Combined Authority - 13 November and 11 December 2019

The board received a report of the Young Combined Authority meetings held on 13 November and 11 December.

Kashmire Hawker reported on recent YCA activity, including pre-decision engagement with WMCA officers on the developing environmental strategy, participation in the Police & Crime Commissioner's Youth Summit, and an intention to hold a youth hustings event for mayoral candidates ahead on the election on 7 May. He also paid his respects to former councillor Mike Heap, Mayor of Wolverhampton 2014/15, who had recently died.

Resolved:

The report on the meetings held on 13 November and 11 December 2019 be noted.

86. Strategic Economic Development Board - 20 November 2019

The board received the minutes of the Strategic Economic Development Board held on 20 November.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November be noted.

87. Investment Board - 16 December 2019

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board held on 16 December.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2019 be noted.

88. Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 18 December 2019

The board considered the minutes of the inquorate meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 18 December.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 December be approved.

89. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 14 February 2020 at 11.00am

The meeting ended at 12.30 pm.