

West midlands combined authority

Review of the annual plan 2019 - 2020



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Executive Summary



In 2019/20 the WMCA delivered transport services and improvements, built key infrastructure, supported the most vulnerable in our communities, and grew our regional economy. There were some serious challenges – the uncertainty during Brexit negotiations created economic instability, and the final month of the financial year saw the beginnings of COVID-19's impact. Yet overall, this was a year in which the WMCA delivered against the commitments in our Annual Plan and continued working with partners to generate real improvements in the lives of people in the West Midlands. Key highlights of our year include:

Transport

- Completed 2km of new Metro track and opened an extended line to the Library of Birmingham.
- Delivered the Regional Transport Coordination Centre to keep the region moving by managing disruption across road, rail, tram, and train.
- Extended the half-price travel offer to all young people aged 16-18, on bus, rail and Metro, enabling an extra 100,000 young people to benefit.
- Secured £24.2 million to deliver new cross city bus routes, as part of a programme which could benefit up to 70 million passenger per year.
- Expanded the biggest Swift smartcard system outside of London, with new products and contactless payments available on all bus operators, with customers now making over 50 million journeys per year.
- Supported NHS workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, using our Ring and Ride service to shuttle frontline staff between hospitals and our free Park and Ride sites.

Housing & Land

- Deployed £41 million of Land Fund investment in just 5 months unlocking 2,269 new homes on brownfield sites.
- Established a groundbreaking regional approach to defining housing affordability, ensuring that our funding is used to secure housing that reflects local incomes and local needs.
- Launched our regional Design Charter, providing an extra tool to secure good urban design and high-quality development.
- Enabled a 15.8% increase in new homes in 2018/19, reaching a total of 16,938 and exceeding the target trajectory in the Combined Authority's Housing Deal to deliver 215,000 new homes by 2031.

Productivity & Skills

- Secured 1000 work experience opportunities for young unemployed people in partnership with Movement to Work.
- Delivered the £5m Construction Gateway retraining programme, shaped by our industry-led Construction Skills Taskforce.
- Secured further funding to enable bespoke construction training, including on-site training hubs in Perry Barr, Wednesbury, Wolverhampton and Coventry, to upskill the existing workforce and support new entrants to the sector.
- Established a new approach to encourage businesses to transfer unused levy to support apprenticeships at small and medium-sized businesses, securing £7m and supporting over three hundred apprenticeships and over a hundred SMEs.

Economy & Innovation

- Published the UK's first Local Industrial Strategy, identifying four major new market opportunities and shaping strategies to support these areas.
- Launched Create Central, a private sector led partnership to drive investment, growth and jobs in the screen industry.
- Delivered the first 6 months of the Creative Scale Up pilot, with cohorts and workshops throughout the region.
- Developed the first phase of the West Midlands Innovation Programme, securing £3m funding and appointing initial specialists in the low carbon and creative sectors as part of the virtual innovation team.
- Launched the West Midlands Regional Economic Development Institute (WM-REDI), harnessing academic strengths in the region to provide best in class intelligence and analysis.

Environment & Energy, HS2

- Integrated the Energy Capital Partnership into the WMCA and secured £500k of direct future funding and £9 million investment to design smarter local energy infrastructure across the region, through the Prospering from the Energy Revolution funding stream of Innovate UK.
- Commissioned a study from the Tyndall Centre to set the target date for net zero carbon emissions for the West Midlands Combined Authority area.
- Produced #WM2041, a green paper for consultation, outlining the actions that will need to be taken in order to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2041.

Public Service Reform & Social Economy

- Launched the final report from the Social Economy Taskforce and began developing a business plan to double the size of the social economy in 10 years.
- Developed a new regional, collaborative and scaled up approach to reducing violence, vulnerability and exploitation through the Violence Reduction Unit.
- Housed 172 people through our Housing First Pilot and launched an ambitious programme of work to support homeless veterans.

Culture & Digital

- Established the Cultural Leadership Board, with initial workstreams on the role of culture in the WMCA's policies and priorities, building financial resilience in the cultural sector, and improving diversity in cultural leadership.
- Accelerated the rollout of 5G, enabling access for over 20 towns and cities
- Launched the UK's first 5G accelerator in Birmingham, with hubs in Coventry and Wolverhampton set to follow, providing a private, cutting edge 5G network for organisations to experiment with, and deliver, tangible 5G products and services.

Wellbeing

- Continued delivering Thrive West Midlands, supporting 500 individuals into work.
- Registered over 400 businesses on the Thrive at Work programme, supporting improved wellbeing for up to 235,000 employees.
- Established a collaborative leadership programme for the region which is helping to shape the wellbeing and sport legacy for the Commonwealth Games.
- Focused on delivering a Population Intelligence Hub which is creating the key priorities for the Wellbeing Board and shaping future activity.

Inclusive Communities

- Created the Inclusive Communities portfolio, cementing our commitment to supporting and enabling growth that is inclusive.
- Established a Young Combined Authority, bringing together a diverse board of young people, aged 16 – 25, from across the West Midlands.
- Worked with business to promote inclusion, including the creation of a toolkit and marking one year of the Inclusive Leadership Pledge.

Enabling Delivery

- Made funding approvals of £140.8 million from the WMCA Investment Programme, bringing the total cumulative funding approvals to £775.0 million as at 31 March 2020.
- Continued to embed Social Value into procurement exercises, securing over £2,500,000 of social value commitment within contracts awarded, with over £2,000,000 social value commitments delivered to date.
- Supported the organisation in becoming an accredited Living Wage Employer.
- Featured in the 2019/20 Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers list and the National Centre for Diversity Grand Awards Top 100 Index 2002.

Portfolio Delivery and Progress: Transport



Portfolio Lead Member:

Councillor Ian Ward, Leader, Birmingham City Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Laura Shoaf, Managing Director, TfWM

Overall aim:

To develop a fully integrated transport network that meets the economic and environment needs of the region

Focus of delivery in 2019/20

- Improving the customer experience
- A common approach to cycling and walking
- Ensuring Safety and Security on the network
- Help improve Air Quality
- Support bus as the backbone of the West Midlands public transport network
- Deliver the best rail services
- Continue to invest in Metro
- Invest and develop our Key Route Network
- Develop the future West Midlands Transport Strategy

Progress summary**Rail**

- Kept the West Midlands moving during recent rail strikes through the Regional Transport Co-ordination Centre, with joint staff from TfWM, West Midlands Trains, National Express and Local Authorities.
- Through WMRE, launched the West Midlands Grand Rail Collaboration (GRC) to tackle train service performance, simplify fare structures, improve the quality of trains and stations, share busy track capacity, and deliver timetables to improve reliability.
- Expanded capacity – the first of 36 new, higher capacity electric trains for the Cross-City line are under construction at Derby and the first of 26 new diesel trains for regional services are on test for entry into service in 2020.

Infrastructure

- Delivered a package of measures as part of the £321.5m Transforming Cities Fund, including the Wednesbury Brierley Hill Metro extension, Birchley Island improvements, a new Interchange for Dudley, bus priority measures, and a region-wide cycling programme.

Bus and Sprint

- Secured a £28.5 million investment package with partners to deliver an enhanced bus network, covering prioritised cross city bus routes across Birmingham and the Black Country.
- Continued the roll out of 140 new zero emission buses, retrofitted 515 buses to improve air quality, upgraded and rebranded 1,000 existing shelters and adding over 120 new ones.
- Published and secured approval for revised plans to deliver the A34 Sprint scheme - considering the key concerns raised by local residents and business along the 14.5km route.

Metro

- Opened the extension of the West Midlands Metro to serve new stops at Birmingham Town Hall and Library. Progressed with delivering the Edgbaston Metro extension.
- Managed the closure of Broad Street and the Five Ways Underpass, to enable the Edgbaston metro extension.
- Increased patronage on the West Midlands Metro by 11.3% and completed the rebranding of the tram fleet.

Accessibility

- Ensured that the transition to a new provider for the Ring and Ride service was simple and easy for customers.
- Extended the pilot half fare concession schemes for all 16 to 18-year-olds in the metropolitan area who are at school or college, in work, on a training course, or an apprenticeship.
- Implemented a Woman’s Concessionary Fares scheme aimed at supporting those women worst affected by changes to State Pension Age.
- Reduced crime by 3% on bus, train, and metro through the Safer Travel Partnership. Also progressed the delivery of Bus related Byelaws - addressing various types of anti-social behaviour. The Partnership is currently seeking full approval from Government.

Cycling and Walking

- Managed the Better Streets Community Fund totalling £2 million to help communities across the West Midlands improve their streets for cycling and walking and completed the second Managing Short Trips initiative for cycling infrastructure in the Black Country.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Begin co-development of the Future Mobility Zone with partners	Detailed project procurement activity and mobilisation is underway. Mobility Credits programme launched in Coventry on 21st February 2020.
Launch phase 1 of the Vision for Bus delivery plan including air quality targets for buses, a bus infrastructure investment plan, and Bus Vision Delivery Plan	WMCA Board approved Vision for Bus delivery options on 28th June. Enhanced Partnership (EP) development for Sprint has commenced with Legal notice issued on 14th July. TDC approved the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and associated Enhanced Partnership Scheme (subject to the outcome of the Operator Objection Period) for public consultation on 16th March 2020. The Outline Business Case for Bus Delivery Options began in January 2020.
Deliver further enhancements to the National Concessionary Travel Scheme	The Women’s Concessionary Travel Scheme was launched on 7th July 2019. TfWM has supported 9,000 women most affected by the state pension act changes.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
<p>Improve bus stations and interchanges at Walsall and Coventry, and develop plans for the new Dudley bus and Metro interchange</p>	<p>Walsall St Pauls Refurb – This project is now completed successfully. Follow up customer satisfaction surveys will be completed to understand the impact.</p> <p>Coventry Pool Meadow - work continues with Coventry City Council to establish budget and scope to enhance Pool Meadow Bus Station ahead of City of Culture 2021 - these works will take place between April and December 2020.</p> <p>Dudley Interchange Project - Consultant appointed for RIBA Stage 3 design, with outline plans and documents being progressed to support a Design & Build Contract. Procurement and Contracting Strategy has been developed. A funding application to the BCLEP is awaiting a formal funding decision. CPO process has commenced by DMBC, with S16 notices issued to affected landowners. Ground Investigation works commenced in early March 2020.</p>
<p>Continue Delivery of the Edgbaston / Five Ways Metro extension</p>	<p>Construction programme underway - with Five Ways tunnels closures commencing from June 2019. Further Broad Street closures occurred from 2nd September 2019 – to facilitate further construction activity. The project remains on schedule to open by December 2021.</p>
<p>Enhancing Swift – delivered through a new fares and payment strategy</p>	<p>A new Fares and Payment Strategy has been developed, supporting the roll out of Swift on Rail, Apps and Swift Account Based Ticketing with Best Value Capping.</p>
<p>Continue delivery of the Wolverhampton City Centre Metro extension</p>	<p>Works completed and awaiting completion of the new railway station buildings.</p>
<p>Deliver a WM Metro asset management system and asset renewal programme</p>	<p>A series of projects are being progressed by TfWM to support the network expansion programme (Wednesbury Depot Additional Stabling and Maintenance Facilities, Tram Preparation & Stabling Facility – Eagle Lane, Line 1 Traction Power and OLE Upgrade).</p>
<p>Deliver a series of park and ride expansions including Longbridge</p>	<p>TfWM has opened a new 196 space park and ride site on Metro Line One at Bradley Lane in Walsall. Construction is well underway at Longbridge's new 629 strategic multi-storey park and ride facility and will be completed in 2020. We will also continue development for future park and ride expansions.</p>
<p>Publish a Commonwealth Games (CWG) Transport Plan for engagement September to December 2019</p>	<p>The Strategic Transport Plan for Birmingham 2022 was approved for public engagement by WMCA Board in September 2019. A series of engagement events took place across the region to gather feedback to inform the next steps. WMCA Board approval is planned during 2020. The Commonwealth Games Bill, currently at the Committee Stages in Parliament, is planned to help to deliver the Plan.</p>
<p>Complete with partners a procurement strategy and delivery plan for transport operations for the CWG</p>	<p>Scope, Budget and Resource all agreed for the Delivery of the CWG Transport Programme. A formal partnership (funding agreement) has been in place since Jan 2020 to enable the further development of procurement strategies for the programme and operations planning being established cross partner. Bus Procurement commenced Dec 2019. 1st phase of recruitment is nearly complete which will enable resources for multiple deliverables planned for 2020 to complete to programme.</p>

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Order up to 25 3rd Generation Trams to operate on the extended Metro network	Ordered 21 new 3rd Generation Urbos Trams to operate on the extended Metro network, as well as retrofitting of batteries to the existing trams for the Centenary Square and Wolverhampton Metro extensions.
Commence work on the Birmingham Eastside and Wednesbury Brierley Hill Metro extensions	The BEE Transport and Works Act Order received Secretary of State approval and the Final Business Case was approved by WMCA Board on 14th February 2020. HMT/DfT funding approvals were received via Budget on 11th March 2020. WBHE construction works have been commenced by Midland Metro Alliance.
Open a new travel centre and customer information point at New Street Station	This project is on hold following further strategic considerations from Network Rail particularly around the customer experience throughout New Street. TfWM & Network Rail are reviewing options.
Conclude a park and ride development framework and implementation plan	Two work programmes are in development; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P&R Development Workstream • P&R Charging and Booking Workstream Both workstreams reported in early October 2019 with initial findings. Work will continue to be refined over the next year.
Secure business case and planning approvals for schemes within the West Midlands Rail Programme including New Stations Packages	Redevelopment of Commonwealth Games station gateways at Perry Barr and University has reached the approval in principle design stage with construction work due to commence during 2020/21. Approval in principle design stage has also been reached for the proposed new stations at Willenhall, Darlaston, Moseley, Kings Heath and Hazelwell, with Planning Consent also now secured for the latter two stations. Final Business Case approvals are scheduled for Spring/Summer 2020. Additional funding of £25m secured from DfT in July 2019 for these stations.
Deliver Snow Hill Third Access	Planning permission has been granted for scheme. Scheme progress has halted and is being designed into the wider development opportunity around Snow Hill gateway scheme, working with Birmingham City Council and Network Rail.
Deliver the first phase of the Regional Transport Coordination Centre (RTCC)	Phase 1 construction of the RTCC was completed in December 2019. The RTCC is now in operation, with multi-agency working in place. Coordinated action plans have been put in place during the recent rail strikes and COVID-19 pandemic. The RTCC was formally opened by the Secretary of State in January 2020. A refresh of the West Midlands Network website was delivered in December 2019 to provide live and planned disruption information to the public
Identify a first iteration of the CWG routes that will improve journey time reliability for the CWG and everyday users	Completed in June 2019.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Commence passenger services on the Centenary Square Metro extension	Extension completed and services open to passengers from early December 2020, ahead of schedule.
Commence the Sprint-Bus Rapid Transit delivery programme for new routes and agree the operating model	A34 and A45 Full Business Case were approved by WMCA Board on 14th February 2020. DfT approval for A45 Sprint was received on 11th March 2020. Contractor has been appointed and an operating model agreement is now in place.
Set up the Strategic Road Safety Partnership and produce the delivery plan	<p>TfWM has secured a secondee from West Midlands Fire Service to support the delivery of the wider initiatives associated with the strategy including a delivery plan.</p> <p>Each local authority has identified a lead to sit on the Strategic Group for Road Safety, a monitoring framework is currently being agreed with the Authorities.</p>



Light, Connectivity, and Safety take the ticket

Young Combined Authority member, Asad Kalang from Walsall was grateful for new LED lights, CCTV, and WiFi as a regular user of St Paul's Bus Station, as "coming back from school every day it was a scary and daunting experience, especially during the winter months. Now thanks to the investment it is a lot more safe with the LED lighting and updated CCTV. It is a much more welcoming place."

These improvements were part of a £680,000 refurbishment of the Station that sees eight million passengers a year.



Travel Provided to Key Workers During Crisis

Rachel O'Connor, assistant chief executive for Birmingham and Solihull sustainability and transformation partnership expressed the opinions of many key workers when she said “Our thanks to TfWM and WMCA for ensuring this temporary public transport network meets the needs of our workforce and for a great collaboration between our agencies to make this happen.” The team rose to the challenge of COVID-19 by repurposing unused Ring and Ride buses to safely transport NHS and key workers between car parks and Metro stops to major hospitals. With workers swapping public transport for cars in order to try and avoid the virus, the minibuses offer a cheaper and more sustainable way for key staff to get to work.



Housing and Land



Portfolio Lead Member:

Councillor Mike Bird, Leader of Walsall Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Gareth Bradford, Director of Housing and Regeneration

Overall aim:

To enable the delivery of 215,000 new homes by 2031, significantly increasing the proportion of affordable housing and driving new quality and design benchmarks.

Focus of delivery in 2019/20

- Setting a strategic investment and delivery strategy for housing and land
- Delivering a pipeline of land for development and investment, unlocking and accelerating delivery on challenging brownfield sites
- Increasing the supply of the right homes in the right places for region
- Transforming the quality of development
- Brokering new funding and investment for development, infrastructure and land
- Accelerating place-making and regeneration in town centres and beyond

Progress summary**Housing**

- Delivered 16,938 total net additional dwellings in 2018/19. This is a 15.8% increase on the previous yearly total (14,628) and exceeds the target trajectory included as part of the WMCA's Housing Deal to deliver 215,000 new homes by 2031.
- Unlocked over 2,200 new homes via the WMCA Land Fund programme since July 2019.
- Fast-tracked numerous schemes in weeks rather than months or years, through working in partnership and applying our appraisal regime (e.g. Pipe Hall in Bilston; Dobbs Street in Wolverhampton; Caparro in Walsall)
- Channeled WMCA investment through our Single Commissioning Framework to ensure enhanced design quality, higher levels of affordability, and the centrality of inclusive growth.

Affordability and Design

- Approved a new regional approach to housing affordability In January 2020, ensuring that our SCF funding is used to secure housing products that reflect local incomes and local needs.
- Launched our regional Design Charter, developed in close collaboration with Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, providing an extra tool for local planning authorities to secure good urban design and high-quality development. Stratford District Council has already adopted the 12 principles as planning policy.
- Innovated on the way we build through 'Advanced Manufacturing in Construction' (AMC).

Places

- Worked with local councils and partners to repurpose and reinvigorate town centres, and maximise the growth potential of transport hubs and corridors, building upon our local understanding and the region's expertise in brownfield regeneration.
- Brought forward brownfield sites for development, many of which have been dormant for decades, through our regional pipeline of housing and commercial sites, including opportunities in town centres and along key transport corridors.
- Driven development and secured investment into five town centres in the region, through our Town Centre Programme and Regional Taskforce.
- Maximised the use and potential of public land through the One Public Estate Programme.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Publication of a regional spatial investment and delivery plan (SIDP)	The SIDP has been published and is now being refreshed to ensure it reflects the significant progress made in housing delivery, and the major opportunities in the region.
Development of five Town centre delivery and investment packages	The Town Centre DIPS are to be agreed in spring 2020, providing a clear and coherent single statement of ambition, vision and aspirations for each of the 5 town centres and highlighting key investor and development opportunities.
Launch a Regional Design Charter	The Design Charter was launched in January 2020, providing a framework for new development to add social, economic and environmental value and supporting WMCA to prioritise quality, innovation and inclusive growth.
Publish a summary version of the Single Commissioning Framework for housing and land investments	The SCF document was launched on 17th September at the Forum for Growth Conference, setting out WMCA's funding criteria and key priorities on affordable homes, brownfield regeneration and inclusive investment in our region.
Work with local councils to ensure local plans across the region are reviewed and/ or updated (as necessary) to enable the delivery of 215,000 homes by 2031	Progress with Local Plans is under ongoing review and is reported regularly to HM Government as part of the Housing Deal, to provide assurance on the region's housing delivery.

New homes set to increase thanks to new partnership

Lovell's Regional Managing Director, Stuart Penn, said: "Lovell Partnerships are delighted to be the first house builder to enter into a pioneering partnership with the WMCA to unlock housing development on stalled brownfield land. By combining our industry expertise and local knowledge, with a willingness to think innovatively, we will unlock significant areas of brownfield land for much needed housing development. Our shared commitment is to deliver high quality multi tenure communities at 'scale and pace' whilst ensuring we leave a lasting legacy everywhere we work." The partnership between the WMCA and Lovell is set to provide over 4,000 new homes in the region, including on multiple brownfield sites in the Black Country.



Productivity and Skills



Portfolio Lead Member:

Councillor George Duggins,
Leader of Coventry City Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Julie Nugent, Director of Productivity and Skills

Overall aim:

To see more people move into employment and higher skilled jobs so that all communities benefit from the region's economic growth and businesses can access the skills that they need to grow.

Focus of delivery in 2019/20

- Prepare our young people for future life and work
- Create regional networks of specialist technical education and training
- Accelerate the take up of good quality apprenticeships across the region
- Support inclusive growth by giving more people the skills to get and sustain good jobs and careers
- Deliver the Connecting Communities Employment Support Pilot to help more people in to work
- Support an agile skills ecosystem

Progress summary**Youth Employment**

- Worked with the region's FE colleges to develop new tailored courses.
- Extended the DWP Progression Work Coaches pilot into the Black Country.
- Partnered with Movement to Work to secure c.1000 work experience opportunities for young unemployed people.
- Developed partnerships to extend the Mayor's Mentors programme

Specialist Training

- Secured further funding to enable bespoke construction training, including on-site training hubs in Perry Barr, Wednesbury, Wolverhampton and Coventry, to upskill the existing workforce and support new entrants to the sector.
- Delivered the £5m Construction Gateway retraining programme, with all funding now committed, shaped by our industry-led Construction Skills Taskforce.
- Launched funds to support more training in digital and automotive sectors in collaboration with industry and education partners.
- Commenced delivery on our Digital Skills Retraining Programme, providing innovative, demand-led programmes based on employer need.

Apprenticeships

- Established a new approach to encourage businesses to transfer unused levy to support apprenticeships at small and medium-sized businesses, securing £7.01m and supported over three hundred apprenticeships and well over a hundred SMEs.

Inclusive Growth

- Tested new approaches to collaboration around training in local communities, using AEB delivery to support better connections between providers, local authorities and new job opportunities for local residents.
- Commissioned new provision through our devolved Adult Education Budget, including a c£20m investment in helping unemployed people into jobs and supporting those in work to progress.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	2019/20 target	Progress / Position (as of March 2020)	
Mayor's Mentors – No of people being mentored	3,000 ¹	7,500	The Mayor's Mentors partnership network has expanded to include 8 partners – all of whom deliver a range of mentoring support to young people. The first Mayor's Mentors celebration event took place on 24th October.
No of people trained through construction retraining fund	745 ²	845	Engagement with residents for construction retraining continues to hit targets, and the conversion into jobs currently stands at over 42%. Programmes are taking place across the West Midlands, with training in plant, formwork and civil engineering as well as construction operative training. In addition, the roll-out of on-site delivery, attached to major projects, is raising awareness of opportunities in construction, with local residents.
No of people into construction jobs following WMCA training	373 ³	267	
Apprenticeship Levy funding committed to levy pool	£10m ⁴	£7.01m	There is good progress towards the overall 5 year target (£40m), and the WMCA programme currently accounts for over 15% of all transfers that have happened nationally. Current multi-year commitments are to be in excess of £16.6m. (£11.5m 19/21) 317 apprentices have been supported to date in 142 SMEs. ⁵
No of young people engaged through Progression Coaches	600 ⁶	1000	The progression coach model is continuing to provide positive outcomes for young people engaged in the pilot and in particular those with complex needs. The success of the pilot has led to a further extension of activity in to 2020
People engaged and supported through Connecting Communities ^[2]	2,000 ⁷	2,013	The Connecting Communities employment support pilot is now in its second year of delivery. The pilot was slower to start than expected, as providers took time to establish and embed delivery in communities. Actions are in place to improve performance and ensure that local people are actively engaged.

¹ Disaggregated target by James – this is a FY target against overall 10,000

² Academic Year Target

³ Academic Year target

⁴ Cumulative target

⁵ Small & Medium Size Enterprises

⁶ Financial Year Annual Target

⁷ Financial Year Annual Target

Apprenticeship Fund offers new opportunities to all

Richard Morrow, Director of Central Mailing Services, says that his apprentice Luke is “a brilliant asset. Having joined us fresh from college, he has a great skill set, is passionate in the job and brings a new outlook. ... Everyone benefits – we are gaining from Luke’s knowledge and he is getting experience and a qualification working with us.” Richard was able to access the funds to hire an apprentice through the Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund, supported by the Federation of Small Businesses and ladder Apprenticeship Foundation. The Fund is allowing SME’s to take on apprentices where they might not previously have been able to, as well as creating opportunities for employees and young people alike, revitalising companies and training people in the skills they need for a successful career.



Economy & Innovation



Portfolio Lead Member:

Councillor Ian Brookfield,
Leader of City of Wolverhampton Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Julia Goldsworthy, Director of Strategy and Economy

Overall aim:

To create the conditions to support inclusive economic growth that helps sustain the economic renaissance of the region and make the West Midlands the best place to grow up, live and work.

Focus of delivery in 2019/20

- Secure publication of the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy.
- Identify key strategic priority projects and programmes with LEPs to support Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) delivery.
- Develop new LIS delivery infrastructure to support pursuits of the 4 Major New Market Opportunities.
- Review and influence funding frameworks to support LIS delivery (including consultation on post Local Growth and Shared Prosperity funds).
- Support the regional preparations for Brexit, through deployment of pooled Brexit Contingency funding, support to the Birmingham Brexit Commission and the WMCA Brexit Economic Contingency Group.
- Equip the WMCA with the tools to deliver programmes with impact (economic intelligence, annual State of The Region economic profile, Office for Data Analytics, policy research and evaluation).

Progress summary**Local Industrial Strategy**

- Launched the UK's first Local industrial strategy and developed initial sector delivery plans. Agreed initial dashboard summaries with the Strategic Economic Development Board.
- Developed the four Major New Market Opportunities in the Local Industrial Strategy:
 - **Future of Mobility** – shaped Future Transport Zones, globally leading 'real world' digitally enabled testbeds for the next generation of Electric and Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) and Connected Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs).
 - **Data-driven health and life sciences** – developed the WM Med Tech Commission and announced Birmingham Life Science Park as one of the Government's 'Life Science Opportunity Zones'.
 - **Modern Services** - championed our globally relevant cluster of business and professional services, offering 'full service' provision at scale unprecedented in any other UK city region.
 - **Creative content, techniques and technologies** – progressed work to convene a group across all the 12 sectors and 5 foundations of productivity to identify where creativity can deliver added value to each of the emerging plans
- Delivered the first year of the Creative Scale Up Programme, which has already helped secure an £80,000 contract win for a client, enabled 60% of participating businesses to increase their price, and developed partnerships with Malta and Norway in screen and digital.

Business Growth

- Designed a cross-sector business support programme and a transitional funding programme with Local Enterprise Partnerships to feed into discussions with Government on future funding.
- Supported regional preparations for Brexit, through deployment of pooled contingency funding, support to the Birmingham Brexit Commission and the WMCA Brexit Economic Contingency Group.
- Agreed Investment Programme proposals to support the first phase of Innovation Programme development and delivery with almost £3m of funding. This has included development of a virtual innovation team, with initial specialist posts on the low carbon and creative sectors.

Resilience

- Worked with partners to monitor potential impacts and opportunities for the region's economy from leaving the EU through the Brexit Economic Contingency Group.
- Commissioned research on trade: mapping the current trade relationships of the region, the potential threats from Brexit and the opportunities of the transition which will feed into the transition phase negotiations.
- Developed proposals for a regional architecture to provide strengthened business support and a regional response to economic shocks.
- Responded to the initial impact of the Covid-19 economic shock through strong analysis and intelligence and links with government to ensure emergency support reaches businesses quickly.

**International Investment
(West Midlands Growth Company)**

- Secured 35 investment projects creating 1,561 jobs.
- Published the Regional Tourism Strategy and established the Regional Board for Tourism.
- Secured £21.3m of Government funding to deliver the Commonwealth Games Tourism, Trade & Investment Programme.
- Established the West Midlands India Partnership, creating a profile for the West Midlands in India as the preferred destination for investment, trade, education and civic links.
- Led on the #HS2AllTheWay and #GetHS2Done campaigns to secure the future of HS2.

Data and Evidence

- Launched West Midlands REDI, harnessing academic strengths in the region to provide best in class intelligence and analysis.
- Provided weekly economic monitoring reports related to the Covid-19 outbreak to inform the Economic Impact Group.
- Produced the State of the Region report, aligned to the UN's Sustainable Development goals.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Launch Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)	LIS launched in May 2019 jointly with government – the first in the country to be published.
Identify key strategic projects and programmes for LIS delivery	Priority projects and programmes identified and are feeding into Spending Review discussions with government, in line with major market opportunities, foundations of productivity, and sector action plans.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Establish new LIS delivery infrastructure	LIS implementation group (LEP, WMGC and CA officers) in place, supporting existing portfolio governance. Delivery plans and initial progress dashboard approved at the November Strategic Economic Development Board. Some delivery already underway through existing resource, though extended funding uncertainty is constraining the ability to make longer term plans. The next step is to agree pipeline and funding requirement for Spending Review 2020 and SPF decisions.
Develop proposals for West Midlands Innovation Programme	Investment Programme proposals agreed and resource of £2.96m secured in January 2020 to support the first phase of Innovation Programme development and delivery. This has included development of a virtual innovation team, with initial specialist posts on the low carbon and creative sectors.
Inform development of funding framework resource to support shared strategic economic objectives	Single Assurance Framework in development. Future funding discussions linked to the Shared Prosperity Fund delayed to the next Comprehensive Spending Review.
Deploy Brexit Contingency Pooled fund	Funding pool held up as best practice nationally. The funds have supported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Region wide Brexit Health Check · Additional support for growth hubs · Automotive supply chain research · Local authority key suppliers research · Recruitment of shared Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers to support businesses with new systems.
Develop programme of economic intelligence reporting	Annual State of the Region Report (SOTR) published June 2019. Statistical release briefing programme in place, aligned to SOTR priority indicators.
Deliver Creative scale up pilot	Creative Scale up pilot launched in November 2019 with cohorts across the 3 LEP Geographies. Business and Investor workshops commenced in December 2019 and March 2020 respectively.

New links between West Midlands and India raise the region's profile

Dr Jason Wouhra, one of the founders of East End Foods and the new Chair of the West Midlands India Partnership, is excited to “raise awareness of the West Midlands and its success stories in India.” Dr Wouhra’s company has sites in Smethwick, Aston, Birmingham and West Bromwich, and he was looking forward to new opportunities for trade, influence, tourism, and market insight. The Partnership opens new links between India and the West Midlands, capitalising on the country’s status as the second highest creator of Foreign Direct Investment jobs in the region. Dr Wouhra is keen to utilise everything that the region has to offer, including Coventry City of Culture 2021 and the Commonwealth Games in 2022.



Environment & Energy, HS2



Portfolio Lead Member:

Councillor Ian Courts,
Leader of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Julia Goldsworthy, Director of Strategy & Economy
Laura Shoaf, Managing Director of TfWM/Ed Cox,
Director of Public Service Reform

Overall aim:

To make a significant positive impact on our environment and deliver clean growth that improves the quality of life for everyone in the region.

Focus of delivery in 2019/20**Environment**

- Support the development of a regional carbon reduction target.
- Develop a low emission strategy and action plan – working with local authorities, TfWM and partners.
- Build and deliver on priorities within UK's first clean growth Local Industrial Strategy.
- Focus on greenspaces and waterways – by developing a natural environment infrastructure investment plan.

Energy

- Ensure the energy infrastructure of the region supports a competitive industrial base, clean growth and social inclusion.
- Institutionalise Energy Capital within the CA as the delivery body for the Regional Energy Strategy.
- Support further development of implementation of a new Regional Energy Strategy by Energy Capital.

HS2

- Work with partners to continue advocating for HS2 as a fundamental building block on which the region's economic growth, transport and sustainable/inclusive/green growth strategies are based.
- Work with partners and the HS2 Growth Delivery Board to ensure the scheme is delivered in conjunction with wider strategic regeneration schemes.
- Challenge and support partners and stakeholders to ensure the region mitigates against adverse impacts of the building of the scheme and ensure the overall delivery of the growth strategy benefits the whole region.

Progress Summary**Environment**

- Declared a climate emergency in response to calls from Youth Strike 4 Climate.
- Worked with the Tyndall Centre to establish 2041 as the date by which we could reach net zero emissions, with two interim targets of 36% reduction by 2022 and 67% reduction by 2027 against a 2018 baseline.
- Produced a climate 'green paper' to understand the actions that we think will be necessary to reach net zero carbon emissions.
- Completed a consultation on our draft plan with 830 responses from both the public, business and the third sector and started work on a revised plan.
- Established a 'virtual forest' platform to join tree planting activity up in a strategic way and monitor progress.
- Established a Low Carbon Officers Working Group across Local Authorities in the West Midlands.

Energy

- Supported three Energy Innovation Zones in the West Midlands, in partnership with LEPs, to address specific energy issues and enable us to overcome barriers to affordable energy infrastructure provision.
- Leveraged £150K additional funding from BEIS to define Energy Innovation Zones to ensure ongoing support to these areas.
- Established a permanent Energy Capital team within the WMCA, including a director and an energy infrastructure lead, focusing on Fuel Poverty and Ultra Low Emission Vehicles.
- Secured over £500k worth of direct additional funding to support the delivery of the Regional Energy Strategy, through three Innovate UK funded projects to enable the region to ‘Prosper from the Energy Revolution’ (totalling around £9million worth of investment into smart energy systems in the region).

- Developed the evidence base to inform an Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles strategy for the region, working closely with TfWM.
- Designed a cross departmental, person centric, West Midlands Fuel Poverty programme with the West Midlands Fuel Poverty Task Force for which we are seeking investment. This programme will support vulnerable people living in the West Midlands and ensure a strong local supply chain survives to deliver energy efficiency measures and retrofit properties across the region.

HS2

- Played a lead role nationally in continuing support for the delivery of the HS2 project, through the Mayor and members of the TfWM HS2 team.
- Addressed key regional challenges to delivering the wider economic growth of HS2 through the HS2 Growth Delivery Board.
- Ensured that operational issues that impact on individual projects and schemes are addressed with partners through the HS2 Operational Board.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

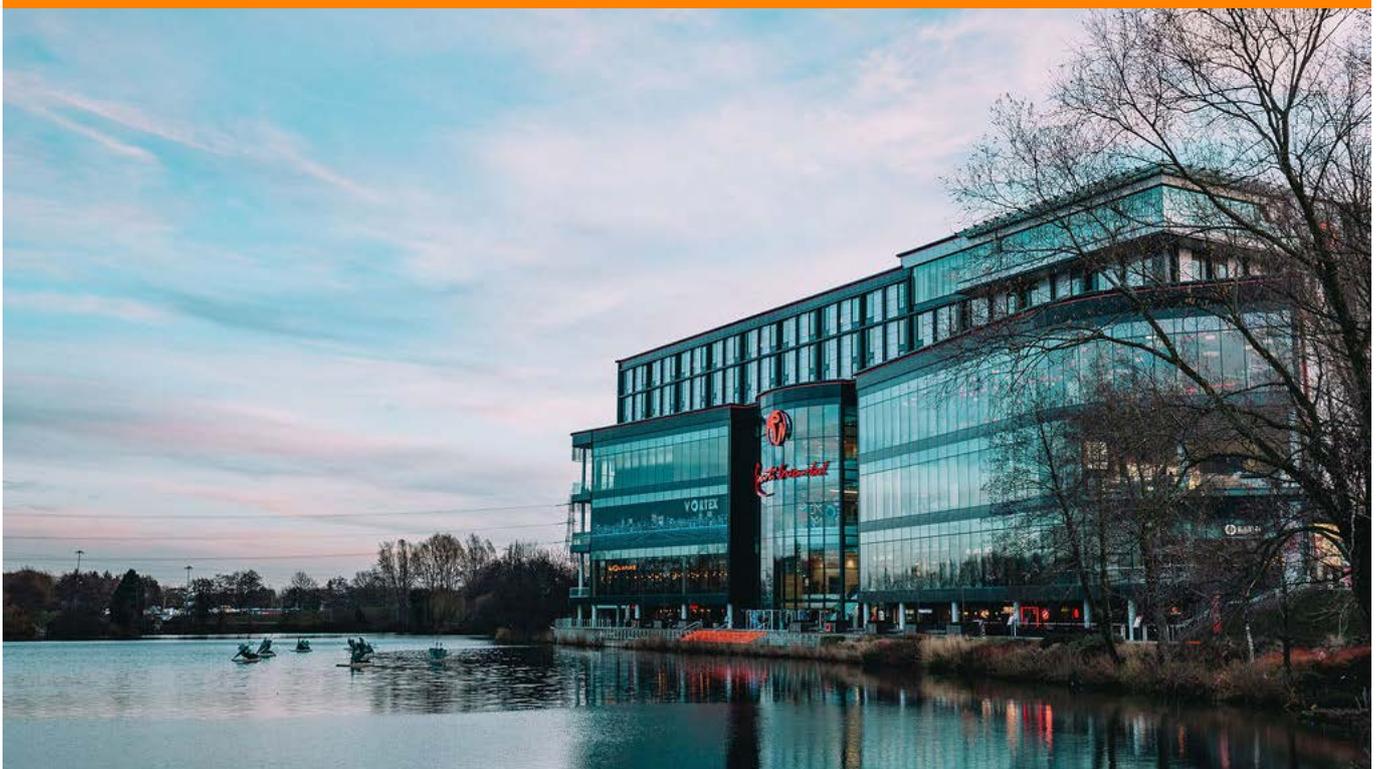
Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Publish a WMCA environment action plan (including carbon reduction targets and a pipeline of potential investments to support clean growth) and internal environmental improvement plan	We have set a target for net zero carbon emissions, working with the Tyndall Centre, of 2041 for the WMCA area. Following this, a climate action plan (#WM2041) has been developed to identify the ways by which we will reach this target. This has been through a consultation process during the first part of 2020.
Regional review of air quality, Action Plan and Delivery Unit launched – including regional approach to electric vehicle charging	Action plan drafted, WMCA regional co-ordination role delivered through co-ordination of funding bids for cleaner buses, development of a regional ultra low emission vehicle strategy and related new West Midlands Low Emission Bus Delivery Plan. This is alongside support for local authorities plans to reduce NO2 and local measures such as Healthy Streets and promotion of sustainable transport use.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Launch of Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Delivery Programme – including key local site for funding and ‘greening’ existing and planned TfWM and partners infrastructure	The first stage of the Natural Capital Investment Plan has been completed and a draft report has been prepared.
Set out new green business growth targets as part of the Local Industrial Strategy implementation	Local Industrial Strategy priorities under development.
Clean growth challenge	The Clean Growth Challenge is an action that appears in the WM2041 plan and has been identified as an early win that we could get up and running quickly.
Progress discussions with central government about Energy and Power devolution	Positive meetings and discussions have been had with civil servants, following a regional visit by the BEIS Permanent Secretary. BEIS officials attended the March 2020 Energy Capital Board and outlined ways to progress WMCA proposals.

Young People welcome plans for a greener future for the region

Lily Eaves, a member of the Young Combined Authority who lives in Coventry, explained that she “was incredibly impressed to see the Combined Authority’s plans for the region and hope we can use them to work together to make a big difference both now and in the future.” With energy and the environment becoming an increasingly pressing and important issue for many of the region’s citizens, the WMCA’s report, #WM2041, on how to reach next zero carbon emissions is ambitious and practical. #WM2041 includes actions like planting a tree for every resident of the West Midlands and retrofitting all rented properties to make them more energy efficient.



Public Service Reform & Social Economy



Portfolio Lead Member:

Yvonne Davies, Leader of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Ed Cox, Director of Public Service Reform

Overall aim:

To deliver on the promise of more inclusive growth, with the confidence to more deliberately shape investment, infrastructure and services around social as well as economic goals.

- To deliver inclusive growth: a model of economic growth which addresses the social and environmental issues and aspirations held by the West Midlands.
- To help build the resilience and capability of our citizens – through innovative public services and deep public service collaboration that uses the potential of devolution to shape investment, infrastructure and services before an issue becomes a crisis and helps to get better outcomes from service investment.

Focus of delivery in 2019/20

- Inclusive Growth – providing the tools and capability to create a more deliberate and socially purposeful model of economic growth.
- To support public service and whole-system collaboration across the West Midlands that delivers better outcomes for citizens, supports more inclusive development and inclusive infrastructure, and helps to close the region's fiscal gap over the long term.
- Inclusive Growth Unit - continue to deliver several programmes of work including an inclusive growth investment toolkit, an inclusive growth framework, and population health intelligence function.
- Working with the Homelessness Taskforce to develop its objectives in support of statutory authorities – including the £9.6m Housing First pilot across the region.

- Continuing a joint programme of work in partnership with the PCC which focuses on vulnerable young people within the justice system, which we will be using to develop a platform for better regional collaboration to support violence prevention.
- Collaboration to Support Radical Prevention including substantial work supporting evolving partnership arrangements with police and fire service partners, and building shared Public Service Reform commitments around prevention, addressing vulnerability and supporting greater place-based collaboration.

Progress Summary**Inclusive Growth**

- Created supporting structures and tools to enable any policymaker or decision-maker to do '*inclusive growth in practice*', including the Inclusive Growth Unit, Inclusive Growth definition, Inclusive Growth Framework, the Population Health Intelligence Hub, Inclusive Growth Decision-Making Toolkit, and Inclusive Growth tests.
- Worked with local authority partners to apply the Inclusive Growth architecture to local and regional investments and strategies, focussing on the East Birmingham / North Solihull Corridor and the #WM2041 climate emergency strategy in the first instance.
- Supported WMCA through the process of becoming an accredited Real Living Wage employer, and supported Birmingham in its ambitions to achieve Living Wage City status.
- Worked with Barrow Cadbury Trust and selected VCSE organisations to build a citizen involvement element to the inclusive growth work in investment corridors.
- Launched the final report from the independent, VCSE sector-led Social Economy Taskforce, and now developing a business plan which will deliver the goal of doubling the size of the social economy in 10 years.

Homelessness

- Continued to deliver the regional Housing First pilot which has enabled over 170 vulnerable homeless people to move into accommodation with wrap-around support across our boroughs.
- Secured an additional £100,000 of Cold Weather Funding, which supplements the grants already made to local authority partners, and a further £500,000 of Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding.
- Launched a report on the nature of the homelessness challenges for veterans, which has been warmly welcomed by regional partners and Armed Forces organisations.

Justice System

- Formed the Violence Reduction Unit – a collaborative place based, public health approach to preventing and reducing violence.
- Developed a regionally agreed definition and strategy for preventing and reducing violence and vulnerability, an interactive strategic needs assessment, a community asset-based mapping and capacity building exercise led by the VCSE sector, and a further 17 programmes targeted across the spectrum to prevent and reduce violence.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Launch of Inclusive Growth Decision-Making Toolkit and Civil Society Engagement Report	<p>Worked with Inclusive Growth Unit partners MetroDynamics, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Centre for Progressive Policy to publish the Inclusive Growth Decision-Making Toolkit. This has since been iterated in partnership with PHE West Midlands and the regional ADPH Network. The Decision-Making Toolkit and the wider Inclusive Growth architecture is being tested in the East Birmingham - North Solihull Inclusive Growth Corridor.</p> <p>The Civil Society engagement work – which aimed to capture the sector’s expectations of inclusive growth – was led by Localise West Midlands and presented to WMCA Board in 2019. This helped to inform the development of the Inclusive Growth architecture, and is informing both the Social Economy business plan and the approach to citizen engagement.</p>
Adoption of Inclusive Growth toolkit and approach within at least three pilot initiatives within the region	Inclusive Growth Unit team now working with partners in Wolverhampton to Walsall corridor; East Birmingham North Solihull corridor and commencing work with Wednesbury/Brierley Hill corridor.
Launch of regional violence prevention unit (with WMCA supporting partners), strategic reform of regional support for vulnerability and publication of criminal justice reform and vulnerability evidence base	The WMCA led the development and initiation of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) which was launched in October 2019 and reflects a public health approach to reducing violence, vulnerability and exploitation. It is a collaborative approach which delivers a substantive program of activity as well as system change with a comprehensive evaluation ongoing. The VRU is led by the PCC with the WMCA a strategic partner on the executive group and regional Board.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Commence veteran's mental health and homelessness work programmes	Recruitment of lead officer completed. This work has been divided into three phases, scoping (now complete), forming better pathways and sharing best practice. In February 2020 we held an event on Designing out Veterans Homelessness and will take forward actions in the next 6 months of the project.
Completed Year 1 delivery of Housing First	Programme is ongoing and reported through the Housing First Board and homelessness taskforce members advisory group. At the time of writing 172 people experiencing homelessness had been housed.
Launch of the Social Economy Taskforce Report	<p>Report approved by WMCA board in July, with six recommendations that would ensure that the West Midlands could double the size of its social economy by 2030.</p> <p>The recommendations were launched to the sector in January 2020. The ten-year business plan will be sector-led and created in partnership with other institutions that are keen to do this well, notably Black Country LEP, which is leading its own work in this space. The tender for this business plan is being amended to reflect the current context for the social economy.</p>
Creation of a number of public service use cases through the 5G and Digital public services programme	First use case for WM5G was the '5G connected ambulance' – a world first tested at UHB and covered by CNN, BBC and other media outlets. In September 2019, we hosted a series of exciting 5G demonstrations in partnership with Birmingham City University and Ericsson. Guests witnessed superimposed images through 5G-enabled augmented reality, a 360° visualisation of proposed developments within an existing cityscape, cloud-enabled robots, a 5G-enabled homecare assistance system and a day-to-day life virtual reality experience – again covered by regional and national media outlets.

Prevention is always better

Jean Templeton, CEO of St Basil's charity for young homeless people and independent Chair of the West Midlands Homelessness Taskforce said: "Homelessness creates misery for the people involved, their families and local communities. The taskforce has brought together people from different sectors, who have shown a tremendous amount of goodwill and generosity with their time, ideas and contributions. We now have an opportunity to design homelessness prevention into the WMCA's work programmes as these take shape." Plans to tackle the various causes of homelessness have been given the go ahead, with preventative measures being included in all new and emerging WMCA work.



Culture & Digital



Portfolio Lead Member:

Councillor Patrick Harley, Leader of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Julia Goldsworthy, Director of Strategy and Economy

Overall aim:

To provide a focus on the opportunity that digital transformation provides for our economy, public services and wider society, and also reflect the intent to develop a more strategic approach to culture across the region.

Focus of delivery in 2019/20

This newly configured portfolio focuses on increasing the social and economic benefits from cultural activities and digital transformation in the region, including for our public services and wider society. It also reflects the intent to develop a more strategic approach to culture across the region. Activity includes:

- West Midlands 5G (WM5G): The 5G programme includes early test-beds focused on health and public service applications, mobility and advanced manufacturing and citizen connectivity.
- Digital Growth & PSR: continue to develop our capacity to support digital public services across the region, supporting local authorities and public service partners to realise benefits of new digital service models, and build readiness to take advantage of 5G.
- Develop a Strategic Approach to Culture: Including a new Cultural Leadership Board promoting wider leadership and involvement in our region's diverse range of culture.
- Supporting the Commonwealth Games and Coventry City of Culture - Working with partners to maximise the impact of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and 2021 Coventry City of Culture as major opportunities for local firms and communities, a showcase of the region to investors and visitors, and a lasting legacy for people living in the West Midlands.

Progress Summary**Culture**

- The West Midlands Combined Authority Cultural Leadership Board had its inaugural meeting in February 2020, gathering 21 of the region's cultural practitioners into one strategic Board. The goal of the Board is to provide an industry voice to inform Cultural Policy in the CA.
- The Board currently has three working groups: Maximising the cultural impact of existing WMCA programmes, developing new funding opportunities and enabling resilience in the cultural sector, and supporting diverse leadership and participation in culture. Other working groups will be established as necessary.
- The Government has offered the WMCA £21.3m for a Commonwealth Games Trade, Tourism, and Investment Programme which will help maximise the impact of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games as a major opportunity for local firms and communities. It is expected that the investment will help secure £210m of increased GVA, capitalise on the 5G pilot, and provide additional infrastructure for the region like the new Sandwell Aquatics Centre.

Digital

- Worked with mobile network operators and local authorities to accelerate the rollout of 5G, enabling over 20 towns and cities to access 5G.
- Worked with Local Authorities to identify and map suitable assets and infrastructure they own that could be made available for digital infrastructure.
- Launched the UK's first 5G accelerator in Birmingham, with hubs in Coventry and Wolverhampton set to follow. The accelerators will provide a private, cutting edge 5G network that is not yet commercially available for organisations to experiment with 5G to test and deliver tangible 5G products and services - driving opportunities at scale across the whole of the West Midlands.
- Rolled out WM5G's mobility programme with three areas of focus: a sensor trial to help reduce road congestion and pollution; a series of short-term innovation and experimentation trials including a 5G enabled vehicle to detect kerbside availability in real-time and 5G enabled live HD CCTV from inside a Tram; and a mobility competition with up to £2.5 million for projects that improve road and rail operational efficiency, provide better-connected transport or improve passenger experience.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Launch of WM5G delivery programme – including ‘quick wins’ establishing 5G connectivity within regional centres.	In June, the 5G Connected Ambulance health trial. This was followed by a 5G Demonstrator Event in September to showcase possible uses of 5G. Mobility trials and competitions began in Spring, and the Application Accelerator launched in March.
Develop and deliver WMCA Digital Strategy to support public service collaboration and leverage 5G	Digital Strategy delayed, in order to focus on delivery of ‘quick win’ WM5G projects and establishment of 5G across the region.
Establish new Cultural Leadership Board.	The Board first met in February 2020, gathering cultural practitioners from around the WMCA geography. Three working groups have been established, and they will, alongside the main Board, prepare goals for the first year. The Board is also planning a launch event to take place late Summer 2020 following a digital launch in Spring.
Support the impact of the Commonwealth Games 2022	The 2020 Budget secured £21.3m to develop a Trade, Tourism, and Investment Programme surrounding the Commonwealth Games to encourage further investment and economic benefits for the region, alongside enabling infrastructure developments to be utilized by the communities in which they sit after the games.

Training offered to budding screen creatives

Neil Duncanson, CEO of North One, whose Birmingham base produces top shows like The Gadget Show, said: “It’s great for Create Central to partner with the WMCA to develop these bootcamps, so the indie TV sector can get the right talent into our businesses to meet our immediate needs. Create Central members are really supportive of an industry-led approach, so that further education colleges can provide as real-to-work training as possible. We are looking forward to hosting the first work placements in the next few months.” Create Central, the industry led body for the region’s TV, film, and games industries have partnered with the WMCA and Solihull College and University Centre to deliver skills training and real-to-life experience in top TV companies.



Wellbeing



Portfolio Lead Member:

Cllr Izzi Secombe,
Leader Warwickshire County Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Ed Cox, Director of Public Service Reform

Overall aim:

To create a region in which positive, proactive and preventative approaches to citizen wellbeing are normalised, giving our young and diverse population a better chance to thrive in life and work.

Focus of delivery in 2019/20

- Thrive West Midlands: Ongoing delivery of the successful West Midlands Thrive programme, which continues to grow and support a culture of support and awareness for mental health issues across the region.
- Childhood Obesity: Development and delivery of a childhood obesity strategy for the West Midlands, designed in partnership with local authorities and Public Health England.
- West Midlands on the Move: continue to roll out our West Midlands on the Move strategy which promotes physical activity and wellbeing - including the expansion of 'Good Gym West Midlands', a work programme on disability and sport.
- 'Radical Prevention' Fund: Development and delivery of an innovative new funding mechanism (developed in partnership with central government, PHE, NHS and local government partners) which brings together our regional ambitions around digital and prevention.
- Population Health Intelligence: Working closely with Public Health England to continue to host a population intelligence hub within the Inclusive Growth Unit.
- Supporting place-based health and care: Continue to support our regional health and care partnerships, with a place on the West Midlands STP executive, and through the development of our population hub and preventative activities.

Progress Summary**Mental Health**

- Delivered the Thrive into Work IPS Trial, with 3682 individuals randomised into the trial across Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Birmingham and Dudley (out of 6,492 referrals).
- Supported 500 participants into employment as of February 2020, a total of 27% of those receiving employment support.
- Developed the IPS Academy, bringing together a strategic model and vision that supports people with a Mental Health, disability or Long-Term Conditions into work, supports people in danger of falling out of work, and supports businesses to create healthier work places for their employees.
- Registered over 400 businesses onto the Thrive at Work Awards programme, positively impacting nearly 235,000 employees.
- Secured funding from Midlands Engine to expand Thrive in the East and West Midlands until Mar 2022, with the ambition to recruit nearly 1700 businesses onto the programme.
- Trained 46,000 individuals in Mental Health First Aid across the region.
- Launched Every Mind Matters in October 2019 and amplified across the region with an ambition to reach 1 million people across the Midlands Engine by June 2022.

Physical Activity and Health

- Convened over 30 organisations on a collaborative engagement programme led by the Leadership Centre at the University of Birmingham, focusing on developing the common priorities and conditions to shift the dial in the number of people who are active (joint funded by the WMCA and Sport England).
- Funding a £500k programme of prioritized collaborative projects to reduce inequalities and address barriers and create the conditions for physical health, including the Black Country Placed Based Fund.
- Supporting improved access to sport for Disabled individuals, signed 31 organisations up to the 'Include me' pledge.
- Recruited a consultant in Public Health and a public health analyst in late August 2019.

- Commenced work to align the existing PHE analyst team, Population intelligence Hub and Population Health Management programme.
- Developed a wellbeing dashboard to drive future decision making, in line with tools and analyses developed to measure and benchmark the impact of inclusive growth policies.

Veterans work stream

- Developing the Veterans Task Force, which will soon migrate into a Civilian and Military Partnership Board aligning both sectors and broader partners to focus on improving Health and Work outcomes in the region for the Armed forces community.
- Gained accreditation as a bronze recipient within the Armed Forces Covenant.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Launch of prevention funding mechanism in partnership with PHE and local partners	Prevention fund launched within the Government's prevention green paper – work now being undertaken to secure central government funding towards the Comprehensive Spending Review in Summer 2020
Completed Year 2 delivery of Thrive into Work IPS Trial	Trial recruitment period at an end, now working towards achievement of Job Outcomes by October 2020.
Doubling of business (to c200) and employee engagement through Thrive at Work programme	Thrive at work now has 404 businesses engaged and has a total reach of 235,000 employees across the region. First awards event planned later this year.
Commence Veterans mental health work programmes	IPS worker for Veterans recruited. Task Force established and is now moving towards a Stronger Civilian and Military Partnership. WMCA accredited as a bronze recipient within the Armed Forces Covenant.
Launch of WM Childhood Obesity Action Plan, including specific early deliverables	A healthy weight strategy was presented to the Wellbeing Board on 24th October 2019 and is being revised in line with the Health Inequality approach for the region.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Roll out of Good Gym across the whole West Midlands constituent geography	As well as Birmingham, Good Gym now active in Coventry, Solihull, Warwick with 215 runners delivering 126 group community deeds & 15 older people supported.
Roll out the Mental Health Literacy and Mental Health First aid programmes across the whole West Midlands	Every Mind Matters campaign restarted in 2019 with ministerial launch and is being amplified across the Midlands Engine through the Mental Health and Productivity Pilot. MHFA training continuing and now has reached 46,000 people



Teenager takes top Mental health award

Sophia Badhan, aged 18, from Sutton Coldfield, who was named the West Midlands Thrive Mental Health Superstar for 2020 for sharing her story of her battle with anorexia, shared that “winning this award means everything to me. If I could have seen myself here four years ago, I wouldn’t have believed it.” She was one of 13 winners at the Thrive awards, which celebrate the people, teams or organisations who have made a significant contribution to improving mental health in their area.

More than 200 people – most of whom have professional or personal experience of mental health issues – celebrated the achievements of all the nominees at the Thrive awards ceremony for their amazing work in supporting and promoting good mental health among citizens of the West Midlands.



Inclusive Communities



Portfolio Lead Member:

Councillor Brigid Jones,
Deputy Leader, Birmingham City Council

Lead WMCA Director:

Deborah Cadman, Lead WMCA Officer,
Chief Executive of the WMCA

Overall aim:

To enable and support growth that is measured not only by how fast or aggressive it is, but also by the social and environmental outcomes it realises for people in our most vulnerable and marginalised communities.

Focus of delivery in 2019/20

This was a new portfolio for 2019/20 and has a strong emphasis on challenging, enabling and supporting other portfolios to embed inclusivity, equalities and diversity into their policy and delivery.

The portfolio will also drive the delivery of recommendations set by WMCA's Leadership Commission, including:

- Establish a diverse Young Combined Authority (YCA) to influence and constructively challenge WMCA policy, better connecting the organisation to the communities it serves and building future political leadership capability in the West Midlands.
- Inclusive Leadership Pledge – encouraging leaders and employers across the region to commit to realising greater inclusivity within their organisations; promoting the business case for diversity, enabling positive action and celebrating success.
- Supporting and enabling HR best practice across sectors.

Progress Summary**Young Combined Authority (YCA)**

- Recruited a diverse board of 33 young people (aged 16 to 25) from across the West Midlands to the YCA, launching in September 2019.
- Supported YCA to develop a draft 'manifesto' of their asks and expectations of the region – informed by early discussions with stakeholders and youth councils.
- Enabled YCA members to contribute to WMCA Board discussions and provided development opportunities such as speaking at the launch of #WM2041, joining WM5G Board meetings and working with WMCA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Working with business

- Launched an awareness campaign and online toolkit of advice for the Inclusive Leadership Pledge campaign. The Pledge celebrated its anniversary in February 2020 with around 250 organisations and senior leaders committed to make change.
- Developed a new phase of activity with business, building on a roundtable event held in January 2020 in collaboration with University of Birmingham's WE LEAD Centre, which will see senior leaders co-design interventions to promote inclusion in the West Midlands.

Supporting and enabling the organisation to deliver inclusive growth

This portfolio has encouraged the WMCA and its portfolios to capitalise on opportunities to embed inclusive growth into policy and delivery. Notable examples from across the organisation include:

- Clear commitment to inclusive growth within the region's Local Industrial Strategy (May 2019 and ongoing implementation).
- Implementation of the Single Commissioning Framework (April 2019) and launch of a Design Charter (January 2020) to set out key principles for developers to meet, such as their contribution to local employment, affordable housing and enhanced quality.
- Delivery of a Women's Concessionary Fares scheme (July 2019) that has supported 9,000 women affected by changes to the State Pension Age.
- Ongoing work across transport and skills to ensure local communities can connect to and benefit from the delivery and legacy of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022.
- Gained Living Wage Employer accreditation for the WMCA (March 2020), by working with the Living Wage Foundation to create a timeline for the roll out of Real Living Wage across all of the WMCA's third party contracts.

Progress against delivery milestones and indicators:

Key Performance Measure/Indicator	Progress / Position
Develop our toolkit for Inclusive Leadership	Delivered during the summer and presented at the Mayor's Business Advisory Group in September 2019. The toolkit offers basic signposting to advice and guidance around becoming an inclusive workplace.
Establishment of the Young Combined Authority	Recruited during the summer and launched in September 2019. The YCA has met regularly since with the support of WMCA officers and our delivery partner Beatfreeks, and YCA representatives have spoken at WMCA Board in their capacity as an observer organisation.
Convene a cross-sector HR roundtable event	Delivered in January 2020, meeting the reviewed target set out in the half year update. The initiative has been co-designed with WE-LEAD (University of Birmingham). Focus shifted from the original proposal to host a best practice forum for HR professionals towards a more action-orientated approach of convening business leaders.
Increase number of organisations signing up to the Inclusive Leadership Pledge	Delivered – with 250 pledges made by the project's one-year milestone of February 2020. Increased uptake has been supported by the launch of an awareness campaign, online toolkit and a pledge which senior leaders (as well as organisations) can sign.
Review of WMCA contribution to Inclusive Leadership	WMCA has begun its internal review of the approach for delivering the Young Combined Authority. This will consider the YCA's interface with WMCA decision-making, engagement with youth councils and member development.

Making leadership inclusivity everyone's business

Prof. Kiran Trehan, who led the research for the Leadership Commission as Director of WE LEAD (University of Birmingham) and has recently been appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor at York University, said: “the importance of leadership inclusivity and our commitment to diversity has never been more important than now. As we grapple with the challenges ahead, our actions in tackling the leadership diversity gap have illuminated our passion, commitment and collective strength to make a difference when it matters most. Leaders from across the West Midlands have demonstrated that, by working together, we have made leadership inclusivity everyone's business. We are launching phase two to further embed the recommendations from the Leadership Commission post Covid-19 to ensure we have inclusive and sustainable businesses and communities.”



Enabling Delivery: Our budget, resources and investments



Investment Programme

In 2019/20 the WMCA made funding approvals of £140.8 million from the WMCA Investment Programme, bringing the total cumulative funding approvals to £775 million as at 31 March 2020. The approvals were made in 2019/20 as projects progressed from initial feasibility and design stages towards delivery stages.

Particularly significant approvals within 2019/20 include:

- A452 Over-Trace Roundabout Full Business Case – The final business case for the design and construction of an enhanced, signalised four-lane roundabout to carry the A452 over the new HS2 railway track was approved. The roundabout is a key point of access to the HS2 Interchange site, and is integral to ensuring the regions maximises the benefits of HS2.
- UK City of Culture 2021 Regeneration Full Business Case - A comprehensive package of infrastructure and urban realm improvements throughout Coventry city centre was approved to capitalise on the economic and social benefits derived from the Coventry City of Culture 2021 programme.
- Sprint Bus A45 to Airport & Solihull and A34 Walsall to Birmingham Full Business Cases – Integral to the HS2 Connectivity package and the Commonwealth Games hosted in Birmingham in 2022.
- Rail Walsall to Willenhall and Camp Hill Enhancements Outline Business Cases – Projects geared around improving local transport links and opportunities for residents.
- WM5G Limited Outline Business Case – A project to support pioneering work to drive innovation and ensure the region is able to capitalise on the benefits of fifth generation technology.

As of 29 February 2020, total Investment Programme project expenditure of £352 million was incurred, £138 million of which was funded by the WMCA Investment Programme.

Construction is well under way for the Metro programme. The 2019/20 year saw the opening of the Centenary Square Extension. Construction work is also ongoing on various Brownfield land reclamation and remediation schemes throughout the Black Country.

Corporate Assurance and Business Continuity

We have progressed with our review of the assurance process, with feedback collected on the former process and proposals agreed by the Senior Leadership Team. Proposals are now completing their way through the Governance process of the CA.

The aim of the revised process will be to provide smoother and more efficient decision-making with an emphasis on Directorates being responsible for assuring the early stages of projects. The Framework will provide a clearer route to decision-making with robust challenge and assurance before final funding decisions are made. As a result of the establishment of the Strategic Hub, Corporate Assurance will be moving from Governance Services to join the PMO team in the Strategic Hub.

Procurement

The WMCA continue to embed Social Value into procurement exercises. Since the implementation of the Social Value Policy in 2017, we have secured over £2,500,000 of social value commitment within contracts awarded, with over £2,000,000 social value commitments delivered to date. Highlights delivered back to the local community include: 48 local people employed, 4,951hrs of career support sessions £65,302 local supply chain spend, £16,727 supporting the community, and 6 weeks of apprenticeships.

This year the team have also supported the wider organisation in becoming an accredited Living Wage Employer. Real Living Wage questions now form part of our tender process and demonstrate our commitment to paying a fair wage throughout the supply chain.

We have made internal improvements across the team to promote efficiencies, including the development of paperless processes and the creations of user guides and manuals.

Overview and Scrutiny

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to play an active role in the governance of the Combined Authority. The committee meets every other month and considers issues that arise out of the work of the Combined Authority Board and other committees, hearing evidence from Officers of the CA and Portfolio lead Members. The committee also undertake specific targeted studies resulting in reports and recommendations. This year they have carried out in depth work on Transport Governance and the CA's Governance. These recommendations are fed through to the CA Board where the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny can address the meetings. The Committee have also held three Mayor's Question Time events, on Policy Development, the Budget proposals and Connectivity. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor attend these events to answer questions put by the committee. A particular feature of this year has been the involvement of members of the Young Combined Authority in all the activities of the committee which has brought the voice of young people to the table. A fuller annual report from the Committee will be presented to a forthcoming Board meeting.

Constitution

The principle activity this year on the Constitution has been around the assurance framework and the resulting changes that will flow from that. Proposals were accepted to change the way Programme Board is undertaken and since the recent Covid19 outbreak it is proposed that Programme Board will also act as the Recovery Group to start planning for and working on recovery across the region. The proposals from Scrutiny regarding Transport governance are also being worked on for implementation. The unprecedented nature of the current public health situation has led to the postponement of the mayoral elections and the suspension of the need for an AGM for the Authority. As such, appointments will continue for another year and the governance team are working on ensuring that continuity can be maintained. Regulations have now provided that meeting of public authorities may take place through remote attendance. Our arrangements to allow this to happen are still being improved however we have made a confident start to facilitating remote attendance and ensuring that decisions that must be made by elected members can take place.

Employee Inclusion, Wellbeing, and Development

The WMCA featured on the 2019/20 Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers list (33rd in the list) and at number 24 in the National Centre for Diversity Grand Awards Top 100 Index 2002. We are a disability confident employer and are currently working towards attaining disability leader's recognition through a range of internal initiatives. Our 'Building our Future Workforce' strategy is designed to provide under-represented groups with a range of skills and opportunities. Since the scheme was launched the proportion of employees who are apprenticeships has increased to 6.2%, exceeding best practice benchmarks. The WMCA is also now a Living Wage accredited employer.

We are working towards Thrive at Work accreditation and have implemented a number of wellbeing initiatives, such as mental Health First Aider schemes, procuring an effective Employee Assistance Programme and incorporating wellbeing within our management development programmes.

We agreed a Coaching and Mentoring strategy, further strengthening our Learning and Development strategy agreed in 18/19. We have launched an approach to Management development that continues to grow and is aligned to core activities such as equalities, well-being and policy. An established 'BiteSize' learning programme is in place to support learning and organisational updates. We launched a new Learning Management System (LMS) - one space to co-ordinate all organisational learning and development activity.

Finance

We have focussed on a year of business process improvement leading up to the introduction of our refreshed finance system. The monitoring of our key transactional performance indicators has enabled us to work to improve business processes inside Finance and with colleagues throughout the business. The proof of the improvement has been in our rapid response to dramatically reducing payment terms with suppliers during the COVID crisis to support businesses.

Investment and Commercial Activities

The Investment and Commercial Activities Directorate was formed in 2019/2020 and its Director was appointed. The team is being assembled with 3 of the 4 positions filled, including support. The Directorate supports the Investment Programme and other Commercial Activities of the WMCA to consider creative funding solutions and advise on methods to achieve best value for money.

In 2019/20 the team advised on existing and new investments that now total £775m. Creative structuring of investments saw the first completely recoverable allocation being made with an £18m loan to facilitate the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre delivering a total leveraged investment of £126m.

The team also work with colleagues and the wholly owned West Midlands Development Capital on a loan book which has approvals for £89m.

Alongside other Directorates and Local Authority colleagues, we are working towards other innovative solutions. These include supporting the West Midlands strategy for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure through commercial advice and the production of a recoverable investment model. Such initiatives remain subject to central Government support.

Communications

A Strategic Communications Plan has been developed, aligned to our business plan objectives, ensuring a consistent approach to communications across all portfolios and teams. In delivering the plan we have:

- Continued to grow our digital channels and online presence - the WMCA website is being redeveloped and a new 'In My Area' section has been launched in conjunction with Local Authorities.
- Re-branded the West Midlands Network website and rebuilt in conjunction with TfWM colleagues.
- Developed a number of significant campaigns including Brexit preparedness, the Metro extension and most recently COVID-19 and delivered a number consultation exercises.
- Delivered significant events and projects including a tram naming for TfWM; Empowering English Cities - media launch for the Mayor's Office; Create Central – a media launch for Strategy; Mayors Mentors – a conference for Productivity and Skills and Conservative & Labour Party conferences.
- Developed a new Internal Communications and Engagement Strategy that ensures our internal and external audiences are equally informed and that our staff continue to be advocates of all that we do.
- Launched a new Public Affairs function taking on two new members of staff. The team has written our first engagement policy, supported SLT in their engagement with senior stakeholders in the region, introduced the WMCA to all new and returning MPs following the election and co-ordinated engagement on the Budget.
- Introduced a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy enabling us to manage our relationships more effectively.
- Continued to evolve our brand proposition and regularly track overall awareness, alongside perceptions of WMCA effectiveness.





West Midlands
Combined Authority