



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date	15 June 2020
Report title	Scrutiny Review: 'Effectiveness of Transport Delivery Committee in Overseeing the Delivery of WMCA Transport Policies' - Progress Update on Recommendations
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Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Note the work programme taking forward the recommendations arising out of the Transport Governance Review.

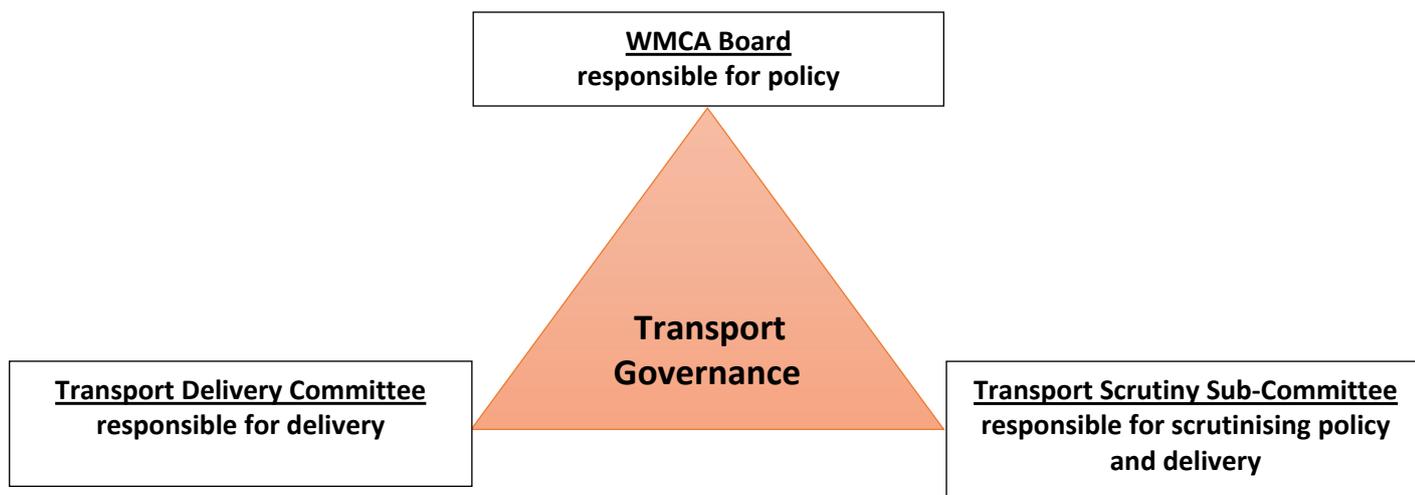
1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of how the recommendations arising out of the transport governance scrutiny review, that have now been agreed by WMCA Board, will be taken forward.

2. Background

- 2.1 Following its establishment in 2016, the WMCA established a number of thematic boards that provide political leadership and oversight of the authority. Transport Delivery Committee, which previously existed within Centro and the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority governance structures, became part of the WMCA with responsibility for overseeing the delivery of those transport policies agreed by the WMCA Board.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 2 September 2019, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee identified transport as a key area of focus and agreed to undertake a scrutiny review that looked at the effectiveness of Transport Delivery Committee in overseeing the delivery and impact of the transport policies three years on from the establishment of the WMCA.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 22 October, the committee agreed the key objectives for the review, being to:
 - (a) Understand the current role of Transport Delivery Committee in overseeing and monitoring the delivery and impact of the WMCA's transport policies, and its effectiveness in undertaking this role.
 - (b) Determine whether the effectiveness of Transport Delivery Committee could be enhanced by changes in the governance arrangements of the committee.
 - (c) Recommend an effective transport governance structure (including transport scrutiny arrangements) that will positively contribute towards the delivery of transport policies and the delivery of the wider ambitions of the WMCA, as determined by the Annual Business Plan.
- 2.4 The review group was chaired by Councillor Cathy Bayton, Vice-Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and also comprised Councillor Ahmad Boston and Councillor Angus Lees. The review was undertaken during November 2019 and was supported by William Britton (Transport Strategy Researcher), Dan Essex (Governance Services Manager) and Lyndsey Roberts (Scrutiny Officer).
- 2.5 At its meeting on 17 January 2020, the WMCA Board considered the findings of the scrutiny review and subsequently approved the recommendations made in the scrutiny review's final report.

Transport Governance Responsibilities within the WMCA



Recommendations – Progress Update

- **Recommendation 1: Strengthen Transport Delivery Committee**

1. *The role of Transport Delivery Committee can be strengthened through a number of targeted changes, including:*
 - *greater clarity over the committee's terms of reference to strengthen the accountability for transport delivery responsibilities;*
 - *a clearer annual workplan aligned to the WMCA's Annual Plan;*
 - *Incorporate the work of the Lead Member Reference Groups into the main work programme of the committee to ensure full member involvement and to provide greater transparency;*
 - *a refreshed role profile for members will further help this.*
2. *Recognising that the committee could strengthen individual member accountability through a review of the size of its membership.*
3. *Formalise quarterly meetings between the Portfolio Lead for Transport and the chair of the committee to discuss matters of shared interest.*

Update: Given the unexpected impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the governance of the WMCA, work to implement these recommendations is only starting to commence. This work will centre around the redrafting of the committee's terms of reference and the role profile of committee members. It will be led by officers from Transport for West Midlands and the Head of Governance, and the Portfolio Lead for Transport and Chair/Vice-Chairs of Transport Delivery Committee will be fully engaged.

Timescale: It is expected that this work will conclude by the end of September 2020.

- **Recommendation 2: Establish a Strategic Transport Board**

The creation of a new Strategic Transport Board would help facilitate the closer engagement between the Portfolio Lead for Transport and cabinet members for transport within constituent authorities that was identified within paragraph 23 of this report. Whilst setting transport policy would remain the responsibility of the WMCA Board, a new Strategic Transport Board would provide a structured forum to discuss regional transport matters and, supported by appropriate senior transport officers from the Strategic Transport Officers Group, embed closer working relationships and provide the mechanism to resolve problems earlier within a transport scheme's delivery.

Update: The first meeting of the Strategic Transport Board was held on 29 May, where the constituent authority cabinet members for transport met with the WMCA's Portfolio Lead for Transport to discuss strategic transport related matters. This meeting is in its embryonic stage, and further work will be undertaken to develop the board during the coming months including producing detailed Terms of Reference. Work is being led by officers from Transport for West Midlands along with the Portfolio Lead for Transport. Feedback from cabinet members who participated in the meeting was encouraging, with an immediate recognition of the value in establishing the board.

Timescale: The inaugural meeting of the Strategic Transport Board was held on 29 May 2020. The next meeting of the board will be held on 10 June 2020.

- **Recommendation 3: Establish a Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

The WMCA needs rigorous scrutiny of its transport policy making and delivery. The creation of a Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee, reporting into the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, will clearly set out where this responsibility sits. Ideally, membership of the sub-committee should be drawn from any member of the transport scrutiny committees within the constituent authorities to improve lines of communication and maximise member expertise. The sub-committee will scrutinise transport policy as determined by the WMCA Board and transport delivery that was the responsibility of Transport Delivery Committee.

Update: Terms of Reference for the Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee will be produced. Discussions will be held with local authorities concerning the membership for the sub-committee. Membership of the sub-committee to be drawn from any member of the transport scrutiny committees within the constituent authorities to improve lines of communication and maximise member expertise. It is envisaged that the chair of the sub-committee would be a member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. We will work in conjunction with Transport for West Midlands officers to produce the terms of reference and the Chair and Vice-Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be engaged in this process.

Timescale: It is expected that the role, purpose and membership of the sub-committee will be determined by the end of September 2020.

- **Recommendation 4: Governance Oversight**

The WMCA continues to evolve, and the governance that underpins public assurance in the organisation must remain alert, and respond appropriately, to this evolution. To ensure that it remains fit for its purpose, it is necessary for the WMCA Board to be prepared to undertake a full review of its governance within each mayoral cycle.

Update: The postponement of the Mayoral election until May 2021 means that the new mayoral cycle will not commence for another year. However, there are a number of workstreams currently underway that are looking at the governance of the WMCA, eg. work to evolve the assurance framework that could have implications for the responsibilities of individual committees/boards. As this work develops, the WMCA Board will consider any recommendations that impact on governance structures. This work is under development and an update will be provided at the meeting.

3. Wider WMCA Implications

3.1 There are no specific wider WMCA implications arising from this report.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. Equalities Implications

6.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

7. Inclusive Growth Implications

7.1 There are no specific inclusive growth implications arising from this report.

8. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

8.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee comprises 12 members appointed by constituent authorities and seven members appointed by non-constituent authorities.

9. Other Implications

None