

EQUALITY SCHEME

2017-2019



WEST MIDLANDS
COMBINED AUTHORITY

ABOUT THE WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY (WMCA)

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is a new governance structure for the region. It has been created so that the region's local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) can work together to move powers and fiscal responsibilities from Westminster to the West Midlands. Members of the WMCA are working collaboratively to improve transport, economic development, regeneration, skills and to deliver public sector reform, in an effort to close the productivity gap and grow the economy. The WMCA will focus on the delivery of services that improve the quality of life for the people and the businesses of the region. This includes their health and well-being, nurturing the capability and untapped assets in local communities and supporting the ageing population.

From a transport perspective, the WMCA's delivery arm is Transport for West Midlands (TfWM). It is responsible for transport infrastructure and public transport services in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area. TfWM's remit is to develop an integrated network encompassing the region's road, rail, bus and tram system. TfWM sets the long-term strategy for the West Midlands' public transport system, contributing to regional economic growth through the development of a public transport system which includes a rapid transit network and Midland Metro. In partnership with bus operators, train operators and Midland Metro, TfWM is delivering major transport schemes and improvements. TfWM does not operate bus, train or tram services, but does own and run bus stations, provides bus shelters, subsidises socially necessary transport services and funds socially necessary services such as Ring and Ride. It funds free travel for older and disabled people and half-price travel for under 16s. TfWM also promotes sustainable travel options including cycling and safe walking routes.

The WMCA will deliver a number of its priorities through the Productivity, Land and Mental Health Commissions and through the Public Sector reform programme, which aims at improving the life chances of West Midlands residents and has an initial focus on people with complex needs, employment and skills, health and well-being and criminal justice.

The Productivity and Skills Commission will establish the true extent of the productivity and skills challenge in the West Midlands, make recommendations and ensure appropriate implementation plans are developed. Ultimately, the WMCA aims to broaden young people's aspirations and secure work readiness and upskill the unemployed, low skilled and individuals with complex needs.

The Mental Health Commission will assess the scale of poor mental health and wellbeing across the region and will make recommendations on how public services should be transformed and on how resources could be redirected to measures that keep people mentally well and enable recovery. Drawing on the evidence received the Commission has also developed a series of actions on a number of key areas, such as employment and housing, criminal justice and

The role of the West Midlands Land Commission is to take a fresh look at matters affecting the West Midlands' land supply. It will consider what measures could be initiated and undertaken to ensure an improved supply of developable land which supports the growth ambitions of business, the housing needs of residents, and the future diversification of the local economy.

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to present the West Midland Combined Authority's (WMCA) Equality scheme.

The scheme describes our vision and policy on equality, diversity and inclusion from 2017-2019. It has been produced following engagement with colleagues and interest groups in the West Midlands region and it builds on the knowledge that we have gathered over the past few years.

We believe that promoting the principles and practices of diversity and equality is essential for us as an organisation and we are committed to driving improvements by embedding the values of equality in everything we do and the way we deliver our services.

This Equality scheme comprises two key objectives around service delivery and employment and sets out a clear framework for our detailed programme of work ensuring that equalities and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do.

The scheme will help improve our services and policies and make sure that the different needs of people in the region are understood and met. Ultimately, our aim is to reduce inequality in the things that matter to the region's communities and to make a real difference to people's lives helping to increase equality of opportunity in the region.

Martin Reeves

Chief Executive
West Midlands Combined Authority

INTRODUCING THE SCHEME

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality in both our policies and how we deliver our services. In line with our overall vision organisational objectives it is essential we provide opportunities to achieve equal outcomes through our policies, strategies and the services we provide.

This scheme outlines our equalities vision and explains what steps we will take to meet our statutory duties to promote equality for all groups in society. It describes how we will tackle unlawful discrimination, promote equality and encourage good relations between people in all aspects of our day-to-day business and draws out key commitments and future plans for equality and diversity.

This scheme is a guide to our work to promote equal opportunities, oppose discrimination and recognise the benefits of a diverse community. It has provided us with the opportunity to highlight the successes we have had, review our current work to see where we are focusing our efforts and to assess the challenges ahead. We have engaged with many users, ensuring we have a scheme that places equality at the heart of the organisation.

In a climate when local authorities must make increasingly complex decisions, we must be clear on the implications of our actions and our decisions, especially on the most vulnerable in our society and ensure that we do not put an unfair and disproportionate burden upon them. We also need to make sure our policies and actions enhance and support fairness, inclusion and equality.

This document presents our priorities and objectives for 2017-19 and is supported by an equalities action plan. We are keen to achieve our equality objectives in the next few years, monitoring, reviewing and updating our performance annually across all business areas. The scheme will primarily focus on the delivery of transport related objectives, but as the Combined Authority grows the scheme will be amended to reflect equality related aspirations on other areas such as mental health and public sector reform.

EQUALITY AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY

The Equality Act 2010 is the law that protects against discrimination and helps achieve equal opportunities in the workplace and in service provision.

The Act brought together and replaced previous equality legislation, such as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. It simplified and updated the law and strengthened it in important ways. Most of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010; some provisions were introduced later.

The Act protects people from discrimination on the grounds covered by the previous equality laws. These grounds are now called 'protected characteristics'. They are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

The Act also promotes equality of opportunity to prevent discrimination arising in the first place.

Some of the key changes brought about by the Equality Act are:

- Extending the equality duty to require the public sector to take into account the needs of all protected groups, not just race, disability and gender - both in employment practices and in service provision;
- Protecting people from discrimination in the recruitment process, making it unlawful for employers to ask applicants questions about disability or health before making a job offer (with very few specified exceptions);
- Protecting people discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic. For example, the act will protect people who are caring for a disabled child. They will be protected by virtue of their association to that person;

- Extra protection for pregnant women and mothers;
- Changing the definition of gender reassignment, by removing the requirement for medical supervision;
- Harmonising the thresholds for the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people;
- People cannot be treated unfavourably because of something connected to a disability, the standard example being that of spelling mistakes because of dyslexia;
- Disabled people can now claim a particular rule or requirement disadvantages people with a certain disability;
- Allowing claims for direct gender pay discrimination where there is no actual comparator and making pay secrecy clauses unenforceable;
- Harmonising provisions allowing voluntary positive action.

The Public Sector Equality Duty came into force in April 2011. It replaced three previous duties on race, disability and gender, bringing them into a single duty, and extended it to cover age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment. Its aim is to embed equality considerations into the day-to-day work of public authorities, so they actively tackle discrimination and inequality and help make society fairer.

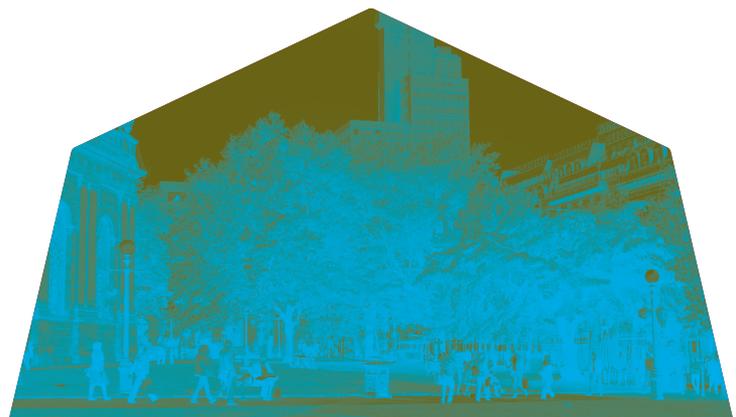
As a public sector organisation, the WMCA needs to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any related prohibited conduct;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a 'relevant protected characteristic' and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

OUR EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY VISION

Our Equality and Diversity Vision is integral to our overall vision of improving the quality of life of everyone who lives and works in the West Midlands and is embedded in our values, strategic aims, policies and day to day activities. We put equality and diversity at the heart of the business. We value the diversity of our customers, staff, suppliers, partners and all the people we work with and are committed to treating everyone fairly and achieving equal outcomes for all. We strive to create a positive working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and provide services and implement strategies that meet the diverse needs of people in the West Midlands. We will:

- Work in a way which promotes equality and diversity and which does not discriminate against any of our staff or service users.
- Take into account and value individual and group differences and implement policies that recognise people's different needs.
- Challenge any instance of inequality and will proactively address the different needs of customers and employees
- Proactively engage and consult with employees and customers to understand the diverse society in which we operate, ensure our policies and services meet key needs and that there is public involvement and influence in decision making, planning, policy and service delivery
- Continue to strive towards a culture that is diverse and inclusive that recognises the benefits and opportunities of having a diverse community of staff.
- Strive to ensure that everyone can access our services, facilities and information
- Ensure equalities and diversity are priorities across all parts of the organisation, including at senior level



Examples of specific equality actions and principles include:

- Identifying specific resources for improving equality
- Improving equality through planning and set targets within departments and service areas
- Having a structured way of involving people in the development of ideas
- Delivering a customer-focused service by recognising the needs of different communities and individuals and actively engaging with the public
- Developing a diverse workforce at all levels of the organisation
- Developing, reviewing and promoting policies and practices that ensure equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in all areas of employment (including recruitment, retention, learning and development, promotion, grievance, disciplinary and retirement)
- Creating a working environment where equality and diversity are valued and act as a key driver for change
- Promoting good relations, understanding and respect between members of staff and raise awareness through a range of media, such as training, induction, one-to-one meetings.
- Ensuring suppliers and contractors adhere to equality principles
- Ensuring that our procurement practices are transparent, objective and non-discriminatory in the selection of our suppliers
- Conducting an equality impact assessment on our priorities, schemes, policies, functions and strategies to ensure that they have a positive impact on disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief
- Embedding equality and diversity priorities within business operations using our EIA process and training and setting performance targets so that we can measure progress against our diversity agenda
- Monitoring progress to inform future planning.

LINKS TO KEY STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND SCHEMES

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN

The West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA) Strategic Economic Plan sets out the vision, objectives, strategy and actions to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the West Midlands, especially those facing multiple disadvantages. It is based on an understanding of what makes the West Midlands different – namely, its location, history of manufacturing excellence, its cultural diversity and its potential to support a diverse population to flourish. The plan sets the context for the WMCA's devolution agreement with government and explains how devolved powers and resources will be used.

The plan will ensure the skill levels of local people match and exceed the national average that employers have the right support so their employees have the skills they need, and people of all ages have access to the best education and training. The WMCA will ensure acceleration of the housing market to support economic growth and to provide a better range and more sustainable mix of homes. The drive to improve productivity across the region is also vital to achieving the strategic economic plan's vision, while a public service reform programme includes an initial programme of activating supporting people with complex needs, reforming criminal justice and improving employment, skills and mental health.

Equality of outcomes is integral within the Strategic Economic Plan and three Commissions have been formed to support its key vision and priorities. Equality considerations will form an integral aspect of each priority within the Strategic Economic Plan and the equality impact of any policy decisions and schemes will be fully assessed.

MOVEMENT FOR GROWTH

“Movement for Growth”, Transport for the West Midlands’s (TFWM) Strategic Transport Plan is the long term, overall transport strategy document for the West Midlands. Providing transport investment to reduce transport poverty and social isolation, health inequalities and encourage positive mental health is an important objective in the strategy. The need for accessibility is integral to our future transport system through such measures as accessible information provision, infrastructure design, comprehensive local network coverage, disability awareness and supporting services such as Ring and Ride and Community Transport. Working with partners to ensure that individual transport needs are understood and met is a key element of the transport strategy.

The provision of transport investment, such as new and improved public transport routes serving deprived communities and initiatives such as travel training and shared mobility will also support equality and improved accessibility.

Promoting the importance of social well-being is also a key objective in Movement for Growth. The document supports improvement in the quality of life for people not involved in the world of work. Better access to work, services, healthcare, education, entertainment, and other life enhancing opportunities is needed for all, particularly those from socially excluded groups.

HS2 CONNECTIVITY PROGRAMME

The HS2 Connectivity Programme includes a range of transport measures which will ensure the benefits from HS2 are spread as far as possible across the region, enabling existing businesses to expand and providing opportunities for new businesses. The Connectivity programme ensures the region benefits from investment in the two new station hubs, and their associated development zones, provides access to jobs and training for all residents and opens up new areas for major regeneration, housing and business growth across the Midlands. Importantly, it will enable businesses and people across the Midlands access to what will become one of the best connected locations in the country boosting business and employment opportunities for other parts of the region.

To achieve accessibility, an Early Assessment Sifting Tool (EAST) will measure the accessibility impact of

the preferred package of schemes and will be analysed against a range of key indicators. This will include identifying future issues relating to accessibility of the two HS2 stations by public transport, including 26 key corridors in total.

KNOWING OUR COMMUNITIES - THE REGION AT A GLANCE

The West Midlands Metropolitan Area comprises Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Key equality highlights (as per the 2011 Census) are presented below.

ESTIMATED POPULATION

The population was 2,736,460 million in 2011.

Population density is the highest in Birmingham, with 40.7 people per hectare and lowest in Solihull with 11.7 people per hectare.

The population has grown faster than previously anticipated. Births have been increasing compared with 2001. There are increasing concentrations of younger people within the West Midlands Metropolitan area with potential implications for housing and employment.

The population is projected to increase by 16.1% by 2037.

International net in-migration has continued at a high rate but with variations in the origins of migrants.

The growing population is likely to become increasingly diverse. The changing population may result in the need for more infrastructure and pressure on the environment.

RACE AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND

The West Midlands Metropolitan area has the largest non-White regional population outside of London. Asian or Asian British is the ethnic group that makes up the biggest non-white proportion of the population.

66% of the population has a white ethnic background, which compares to an average of 80.5% in England and Wales. Birmingham is the most ethnically

diverse district (47% being minority ethnic groups), followed by Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Coventry. The two biggest ethnic minority groups are Pakistani (at 7.3%) and Indian (at 6.8%).

According to the University of Birmingham IRIS department, Birmingham is now classified as a 'Super diverse' city composing 187 different nationalities/ethnicities.

There are distinct concentrations of minority ethnic communities within the metropolitan area.

FAITH OR BELIEF

People in the West Midlands Metropolitan area have a greater level of religious affiliation than in England overall. 53.8% of the population declared that they are Christian. This compares to 59.3% in England and Wales. 20.3% of the population declared that they have no religion, whilst 12.2% declared that they are Muslim.

SEX

The split between the sexes (50.8% female and 49.2% male) is similar to England and Wales.

AGE

The West Midlands Metropolitan area has one of the highest proportions of population aged under 16 and a lower proportion of people aged over 65 compared with other regions. The mean age is 37.4 which compares to 39.4 in England and Wales. The only districts that slant older are Solihull and Dudley. Walsall has got a higher proportions of younger aged groups but it also has a higher proportion of people above retirement age.

Birmingham specifically is described as the youngest city in Europe, with under 25s accounting for nearly 40% of the population.

The younger population, with the proportion of people aged 0 to 19, is projected to drop slightly from 26.7% in 2012 to 25.8% in 2037.

The West Midlands Metropolitan area also generally

has a lower percentage of people aged 65+ with the exception of Solihull and Walsall that have higher proportions of people above retirement age than nationally.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

1.3% of the West Midlands population identified themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual in 2015. However, key organisations such as Stonewall estimate the figure to be higher at 5-7%.

DISABILITY

The West Midlands Metropolitan area has a larger percentage of people in households with a limiting long-term illness (6% of households compared to 4.7% in England and Wales). It also has a slightly larger proportion of disabled people than England and Wales (19% versus 18% in England and Wales). The Equality Act defines disability as any physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term effect on people's ability to carry out day to day activities. This includes people with mobility difficulties, sight loss, hearing loss, people with mental health impairments, dyslexia and other neurodiverse conditions, speech impairments and people with learning disabilities. Progressive conditions such as HIV, cancer, dementia and multiple sclerosis are also included.

SOCIAL INEQUALITY

The West Midlands Metropolitan area has smaller percentages of managers, professionals, small employers and self-employed workers. Conversely, it has higher percentages in the never worked and student categories, though there are differences by district. For example, in Solihull there are 13% in the higher managerial and professional category and 23% in the lower managerial and professional. In Sandwell, the percentages are much lower (5 and 14).

Overall, the West Midlands Metropolitan area has a higher proportion of working age residents claiming out of work benefits compared to England and a higher percentage of working age residents who are economically inactive. It also has the highest proportion of the working age population having no qualifications among all the English regions.

32% of households are in multiple deprivation. Household multiple deprivation is most severe in the Black Country and Birmingham.

Birmingham, Sandwell, and Wolverhampton are the three most deprived authorities in the metropolitan area as per the 2015 Index of Deprivation. Specifically, they ranked 7th, 13th and 17th of the 326 authorities in England and Wales. Walsall (33rd most deprived) and Coventry (54th most deprived) also have high levels of deprivation.

SUMMARY OF KEY TRENDS/ISSUES

- The area has seen significant population growth over the past decade and it is projected that recent trends will continue.
- Births in the West Midlands Metropolitan area have been increasing rapidly and there are increasing concentrations of younger people with implications for employment and housing.
- As people continue to live longer there will also be an increase in the percentage of people over the age of 65 and people with disabilities with potential implications for a number of areas, such as transport and health and social services.
- The working age population will make up a smaller percentage of the population
- Continued population growth will result in greater need for housing
- The growing population will likely become increasingly diverse.
- Social inequality remains an issue with increased levels of multiple deprivation
- Segregation between different cultural groups is also continuing with distinct concentrations of minority ethnic communities within the area.

It is against this background that the scheme has been developed. With such diverse communities and the number of challenges present, focusing on achieving equality outcomes is of utmost importance.



THE WEST MIDLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY'S WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

A summary of key statistical information (September 2016) is included below.

GENDER:

As of January 2017, 44.5% of the WMCA's workforce are women. The representation of women at higher salary level positions is slightly lower with 41.7% of staff paid between £32,000 and £43,000 p.a. being women and 39% of staff paid over £43,000 p.a. being women.

ETHNICITY:

28.6% of the WMCA's workforce are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The representation of minority ethnic staff at senior positions is slightly lower overall, with 29.2% of staff paid between £32,000 and £43,000 p.a. being from minority ethnic backgrounds and 20.8% of staff paid over £43,000 p.a. being from minority ethnic backgrounds.

DISABILITY:

9.1% of the WMCA's workforce have declared that they have a disability. The representation of people with a disability at senior positions is slightly lower, with 7.8% of staff paid between £32,000 and £43,000 p.a. and 7.8% of staff paid over £43,000 p.a. having declared a disability.

AGE:

An age breakdown is shown below.

Age	%
16-25	6.4
26-30	9.1
31-35	14.7
36-40	20.3
41-50	28.6
51-65	20.6
65+	0.3

UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES

We have defined our objectives following continuous engagement and consultation with customers, staff and other stakeholders, as well as research insights and data.

RESEARCH AND INSIGHT

Transport Focus's Bus, Tram and Rail Passenger Surveys measure passengers' satisfaction with their local services. Passengers rate their satisfaction with a wide range of aspects of their journey. Information is broken down by a number of factors such as gender, age and disability which can help identify specific issues for different protected characteristics.

Transport for the West Midlands (TfWM) annual customer satisfaction surveys and ongoing mystery shopper programme help measure perceptions of public transport while a customer audit program enables measurement of the quality of the services provided to customers, for example in call centres and in Travel Centres.

Before and After surveys are always conducted for major capital schemes and projects, while product testing takes place with customers to ensure new products/services meet their needs and are fit for purpose.

Our Annual Workforce (Employment and Recruitment) Report contains data on diversity of our workforce and is used to monitor progress and draw out the issues we need to take action on. We also continually engage with our employees both informally and more formally through annual employee engagement surveys.

INITIATIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

External Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

SAFETY AND SECURITY

We recognise that feeling safe on and around the transport network is very important for everyone and that perceptions of safety will significantly affect people's travel experience and their travel choices. The Public transport network across the West Midlands continues to be one of the safest in the U.K. and we are committed to making it even safer.

The Safer Travel Partnership, a collaboration of Transport for the West Midlands (TfWM), West Midlands Police, British Transport Police and Transport Operators is the first safer travel partnership of its kind and works on the bus, rail and Metro network focusing on crime reduction and community safety. Moreover, a dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour Team complements the safer travel police team by tackling incidents on the network such as smoking, rowdy behaviour and intimidation of staff and passengers.

Reductions in crime have been seen in virtually all of the key crime types and across all public transport modes. Furthermore, with a focus on tackling anti-social behaviour, surveys from the independent watchdog "Transport Focus" show that passenger perception of safety on buses across the region has improved by 10% over the last three years.

There is a high level of CCTV coverage across the whole public transport network. Over 1,000 cameras monitor bus, rail and Metro stations and bus stops across the West Midlands, with further cameras on board buses, trams and trains. The state of the art Safer Travel Command Centre provides monitoring of the digitally recorded images, on HD monitors, 24 hours a day. As of December 2015 a new service has been deployed where CCTV operatives can access cameras on services in real time. This enables the team to use mobile devices or tablets to monitor directly any instances that occur on the network and can respond accordingly



The West Midlands continues to boast the only tram network in the UK to achieve 'Secure Tram Stop award' at every stop with all park and ride sites meeting the Park Mark Standard. Working with London Midland, all but eight of the 60 plus rail stations have now met and achieved Secure Stations status.

Additionally we have recently received independent "Safer Bus station" awards for Coventry Pool Meadow and Cradley Heath stations. These are the first accreditations of their kind in the country and demonstrates our commitment to working in partnership to reduce crime and create safe non-threatening environments.

We also continue to work towards limited Police accredited powers for selected security staff working within bus and train stations. Such accreditation will ultimately enable us to be more proficient in tackling low level anti-social behaviour.

We recognise that women, minority ethnic groups, disabled people and younger people are more likely to express concerns over public transport safety. A newsletter identifying key Safer Travel Partnership initiatives has been circulated to key equality groups in the region to raise awareness and alleviate concerns over public transport safety.

KEY INITIATIVES

"See Something, Say Something" is a campaign designed and run by Safer Travel. It encourages members of the public to report any nuisance or anti-social behaviour during their bus journey. The reports are recorded and dealt with by the Safer Travel Anti-Social Behaviour team. The campaign is very successful with over 100 reports every month which feed directly into ongoing police work and have led to many successful operations. A youth version of the campaign has also been launched in schools.

Project Empower was set up to tackle sexual harassment on public transport which victims would previously have felt was not worth reporting to police. Evidence suggested sexual offences on the network were vastly underreported, so Project Empower was created to raise awareness of this and to encourage people to report these offences. Since Project Empower was launched, reporting has increased and a number of perpetrators convicted in court.

The Restorative Justice Scheme is aimed at young people aged 10-17 who live in the West Midlands who have been involved in low level crime on or around public transport. They take part in victim awareness sessions and also carry out reparation sessions cleaning buses for operators or working at bus stations. Victim, passenger and staff feedback has been extremely positive as has the response from the young people themselves. Reoffending rates are significantly lower and importantly none have gone on to reoffend on public transport.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

Transport accessibility has improved greatly in recent years but accessing the network is still a barrier for many older and disabled people. Improving transport accessibility is a key priority for the Combined Authority, not only in terms of infrastructure improvements, but also in terms of accessible information provision and improved customer service across the network.

We continue to work in partnership with bus operators to improve the quality of all aspects of bus travel and to make travel easier for disabled people. Features such as low floor buses, accessible well-lit passenger shelters, easy access kerbing, improved passenger information and audio and visual Real Time Information are helping to make bus travel more attractive for everybody with drivers trained in customer care and disability awareness. Over 200 buses operating in the region now have on-board next stop announcements to assist blind and partially sighted passengers, with 100 more planned to be delivered during 2016 through the ground-breaking Bus Alliance agreement.

We have also continued to expand the numbers of bus stops/shelters with Real Time information enabled and have funded trials of on bus audio-visual technology which especially benefit people with visual impairments.

Accessibility improvements have also been implemented in rail stations across the West Midlands Metropolitan Area and continue to form a key element of our Rail Strategy in partnership with London Midland.

We provide grant funding for the provision of the Ring and Ride service, a fully accessible door to door transport service operating in the West Midlands for people who find it difficult or impossible to use conventional public transport with approximately 850,000 trips carried out every year.

Our 'Project Designer Guidance' document forms part of the Gateway and Equality Impact process for major projects such as bus station refurbishments. Contractors are required to fill in the document demonstrating how they will meet best practice access standards. Moreover, any new project is equality impact assessed to ensure key equality and accessibility considerations are taken into account.

We have continued to produce and distribute a range of accessibility resources for people with disabilities. Our newest product, the Communication Pocket Guide, was developed in partnership with Sandwell Deaf Community Association and is a laminated resource which includes key messages to assist people with different disabilities when using public transport. Messages can be written and wiped clean to aid communication with the driver or other passengers.

Travel information is provided in a range of ways to ensure that it is accessible to a wider range of people. The Network West Midlands website includes a journey planner to help plan any rail, bus or Metro journey. The Journey Planner tool identifies whether stations are step-free and can be used to plan a step-free, accessible trip. The website also includes interactive travel maps with all public transport options in a specific area. A number of mobile applications also help with journey planning and can provide real time travel information. The "Getting Around" guide is a useful guide providing information on accessible travel in the West Midlands.

All customer facing employees have received comprehensive customer care, equality and disability training which is refreshed on a regular basis.

Engagement, Consultation and Information Sharing

Engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including hard to reach groups and individuals is a key element of our engagement strategy.

A mapping exercise was completed to produce an up-to-date equality profile for the West Midlands population based on the 2011 Census data. Understanding the equality profile of the West Midlands has helped better target individuals with protected characteristics.

Our equality contacts database was also updated. The list was significantly expanded which allows us to offer information on changes to a wider range of groups across all protected characteristics.

Your Public Transport Matters events which take place on a regular basis enable the travelling public to talk directly with WMCA employees, local councillors and operators while Exhibition Buses provide an opportunity for us to take key information and updates into communities and consult on proposed changes and developments.

Passenger Champions are members of the public who complete bus audits on behalf of the WMCA and regularly offer feedback and discuss results. A WMCA Youth Forum is involved in different activities across the network and makes sure that young peoples' voices are heard, while regular engagement and consultation takes places with key community groups across all protected characteristics to identify key issues, barriers and opportunities going forward. We also engage with organisations that represent or work with a wide range of equality and community groups. We have visited over 25 community groups since 2014 across all protected characteristics to provide information on our services and receive feedback on improvement needs.

Structured consultation with equality and disability groups has taken place for all key new projects, schemes and strategies as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process and has informed decision making.

Key network and other changes are communicated to equality contacts in a range of ways including via email and through the Talking Newspapers. Documents are also available in alternative formats, such as Easy Read, Braille, CD audio and other languages.

PROCUREMENT

Procurement processes have been revised to ensure that best practice equality procurement standards are met.

Our procurement process involves the following:

- Asking contractors a range of equality questions at the pre-qualification stage about their policies and practices, the answers of which are taken into account in the selection process and monitoring contractors' workforce profile by age, gender, disability and ethnicity.
- Including equality criteria when contract compliance indicators are drafted.
- Ensuring that the contractor is aware that they are responsible for meeting the Equality Act duties in their employment and delivery of services.
- Communicating to contractors equality related information on a regular basis.

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Sustainability initiatives are wide ranging but there is a strong focus on improving outcomes for unemployed people and people on low incomes as well as younger age groups.

The award winning WorkWise service helps unemployed people return to work by providing free journey planning, travel to interviews and travel to a new job, enabling them to find, start and stay in work. Up to April 2016, Work Wise had supported over 35,000 unemployed people to travel to a new job, with 8,600 people supported in 2015/16 alone. In 2015, the WorkWise team piloted a Travel Training curriculum resource to support trainers working with the unemployed to improve ICT, literacy and numeracy skills via the use of online journey planning, timetables and ticketing lesson plans. Feedback on this resource has been very positive, and it is currently being rolled out to other providers.

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) is a new project to help support the travel needs of 15-29 year old people NEETs (not in Education, Employment or Training). A ticketing offer is currently being developed so that we can support these young people to access interviews, training opportunities and once in employment support their initial journeys to work. In addition we are offering an advice and guidance service to provide practical journey planning advice, support and confidence in using sustainable travel.

A key element of our Young Person's Delivery Plan is the award winning letzgogreen.org website. This fun and informative website is designed to teach Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 primary school children how to travel sustainably and safely. We also offer Letzgogreen workshops to primary schools across the West Midlands to support the transition to secondary schools and encourage children to travel sustainably to their new school. In addition to Letzgogreen, we offer free resources, help and support for travel training sessions and a free Travel Training manual for Special Educational Need (SEN) establishments.

Through the SNSC programme, in 2015/16 we worked in partnership with local authorities to support 60 secondary schools, colleges and universities. This included supporting the establishments with free site audits, staff and student travel surveys, writing and updating their Travel Plan, Smart Event boxes and offering free walking and cycling activities (including the very popular Big Bike Challenge) to encourage more active travel to their sites. The team also delivered face to face engagement with young people at Fresher's Fairs, open days, journey planning sessions, and curriculum based workshops such as Careers Crossroads workshops, directly engaging with over 13,400 students during 2015/16.

INTERNAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

In support of our commitment to equality and diversity, the following initiatives are in place:

- Employees are kept abreast of equalities throughout the year. Since 2012 we have run annual equality campaigns and regular campaigns on specific topics, such as Mental Health, Neurodiversity and Disability Awareness. Moreover, all employees receive online equalities training as part of the induction process.
- In partnership with Princes Trust, Virgin Trains, London Midland and National Express we have run a Get into Transport Programme since 2012. The five-week programme provides valuable experience in public transport for young people primarily from lower socio-economic backgrounds. They spend three weeks gaining work experience in various customer service departments in the WMCA, Virgin Trains and National Express and the programme culminates in a number of two-year apprenticeships being awarded.

- We have a strong Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) ethos that has been communicated to all employees through campaigns and a number of regular volunteering and charitable activities aiming at giving something back and improving the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of the West Midlands. A number of employees have signed up as CSR champions and will help shape up the CSR agenda going forward.
- We continue to maintain sickness levels below the public sector average and on par with the private sector average and deliver a range of benefits and initiatives such as onsite acupuncture, regular yoga sessions, fresh fruit on 'Munchy Mondays', flu jabs, regular health and well-being campaigns, nutrition and building personal resilience courses and access to our Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programmes.
- We are an advocate of flexible working arrangements as demonstrated by the Flexible Working Hours Scheme which seeks, as far as is practicable, to balance the needs of the individual with the needs of the organisation and wellbeing of the wider team. In response to feedback from managers and employees across the organisation further guidance has been provided to supplement our Flexible Working Hours Scheme to ensure a fair, transparent and consistent approach is adopted. In addition, guidance has been included on occasional working from home, which is another way of supporting flexible working within the workplace.
- Posts are advertised in a variety of ways and a variety of media, including with specialist agencies (such as Remploy specialising in disability employment) and our commitment to diversity is advertised in national diversity catalogues, such as the National Careers Directory. As a result of our approach we have a broadly representative workforce and significantly improved representation of people with disabilities. 9.6% of our workforce have declared that they have a disability which compares to less than 3% in 2012.
- We have been shortlisted for diversity awards, including twice for the European Diversity Awards, the Women1st Awards and the National Diversity Awards. We were highly commended in the 2014 European Diversity Awards and won Diverse Company of the Year in the Excellence in Diversity awards in 2015. We also ranked 8th in the 2016 Top 50 Inclusive Employers List. In 2017 we won the Inclusion and Diversity award in the HR Distinction Awards.

NEXT STEPS - OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Objective 1: Provide accessible, affordable and inclusive services to our wide range of customers and deliver schemes and programmes that will help promote inclusion and improve well-being outcomes for hard to reach groups.

In the next three years we will take action resulting in:

- Equality considerations further becoming an integral element of our decision making process
- Improved accessibility of our services for all and fair and equitable treatment of customers
- Sustainable access to education, training and employment for unemployed, apprentices and young people through active travel
- Inclusive access to learning including learner support for those with additional needs
- The development and delivery of employment and skills initiatives that meet the needs of diverse communities and are accessible to all
- The development and delivery of mental health initiatives that will help support good mental health and well-being across the region
- A better understanding of the needs and requirements of people with multiple complex needs and the delivery of a number of initiatives to reduce inequalities and improve life chances for people with multiple complex needs
- Delivery of programmes to reduce offending and re-offending of young people and women offenders
- Improved public transport availability and accessibility for all, including disabled users
- A transport system that promotes and improves the health of West Midlands' residents and where active travel is more attractive and accessible to all

- Reduction in total recorded crime and improved passenger perception with personal safety on the transport network.
- Decision making being shaped by involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including equality groups
- Increased collaboration with our partners to deliver the equality agenda

By 2020 we will have:

- Maintained and developed high quality accessible infrastructure to meet the needs of disabled passengers and older age groups
- Improved our accessible information provision for customers
- Produced an increased number of accessibility aids to improve people's travel experience
- Driven up bus passengers' customer satisfaction (including disabled customers) by working in partnership with operators in a range of initiatives (as outlined in the action plan)
- Increased the numbers of buses on the network with audio visual technology enabled
- Improved accessibility of our assets and reduced the numbers of accessibility related customer complaints
- Ensured that 100% of our customer facing staff have received comprehensive, face-to-face equalities and disability related training
- Improved the equality monitoring of concessionary pass users and used that information to target underrepresented groups
- Improved the accessibility of our websites to the recommended European standards
- Continued to ensure that young people, educators and unemployed people have had access to education, training and employment opportunities through the provision of sustainable travel packages
- Widened participation in learning, particularly from groups that are under-represented in adult learning
- Improved health outcomes and reduced health inequalities for people with mental health needs in regards to employment, housing, criminal justice and healthcare and raised awareness of mental health and well-being amongst employers and communities
- Improved outcomes for people with multiple complex needs

- Reduced repeat offending by those with particular vulnerabilities – specifically young people and women offenders and reduced number of first entrants to the criminal justice system.
- Reduced total recorded crime and improved passenger perception with personal safety on the network by a further 10%
- Expanded our list of community contacts
- Considered ways to improve communication of changes (i.e. bus service changes) to hard to reach groups and, as a result, reduced the numbers of communication related customer complaints
- Implemented more affordable ticketing solutions for young people
- Continued to increase the amount of cycling infrastructure and implemented a range of cycling and walking initiatives

Objective 2: Develop and maintain a fair, inclusive and diverse workforce, which provides individuals with the opportunity to reach their full potential within an environment where they are safe, supported and respected.

In the next three years we will take action to:

- Improve workforce data, increase transparency and address barriers to employment for equality groups underrepresented in the workforce
- Ensure staff at all levels are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act's general and specific duties.
- Review and update HR policies to strengthen equalities and inclusion content where necessary
- Ensure the Combined Authority attracts a wide pool of candidates reflecting regional diversity
- Ensure all staff feel equally supported and respected within their role and staff well-being is enhanced.

By 2020 we will have:

- Extended our workforce and recruitment data monitoring to include all protected characteristics
- Increased transparency by making a range of data available in the public domain, in line with the "Think, Act" report recommendations
- Ensured that 100% of our staff have received equalities awareness training and considered ways to expand knowledge of unconscious bias among all employees

- Attained the “Leaders in Diversity” accreditation
- Offered apprenticeships, work experience and training opportunities to an increased number of young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds and to people with learning disabilities
- Formulated an Equality Employee Group and engaged employees in a number of equality initiatives and campaigns
- Developed and delivered an equality and inclusion engagement and communication strategy to encourage all employees to improve their equalities understanding
- Worked to reduce the stigma associated with mental health by promoting mental and physical well-being and by training people to become Mental Health First Aiders
- Further raised awareness among people managers of key equality and inclusion considerations
- Explored ways to increase accountability for progressing equality amongst senior managers
- A detailed action plan is included as Appendix 1 identifying actions under each category.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE SCHEME

Progress on the Equality Scheme Action Plan will be reviewed monthly as part of the Annual Plan monitoring process and will be reported to the Corporate Services and Transport for the West Midlands boards who will monitor the delivery of the plan. It will also be reviewed annually with a progress report submitted to the Combined Authority Board. The Single Equality Scheme will be fully reviewed and amended on a three-yearly basis, with the next version of the scheme due in January 2020.

Even though a full review will take place in 2019 we consider this scheme to be a living document, constantly open for scrutiny, comment, consultation and enhancement. Equalities is a constantly changing field. Comments, suggestions and advice are welcomed throughout our equalities work and so the scheme may be amended prior to the date specified.

This scheme is publicly available on the Combined Authority website and to staff on our internal intranet site.

CONSULTATION FEEDBACK, QUERIES AND QUESTIONS

For consultation feedback, questions or queries and if you feel that the WMCA has not acted in accordance with its Equality Act duties, please contact the Equalities and Diversity Manager at:

WMCA
 16 Summer Lane
 Birmingham
 B19 3SD
 01212147401
 Email: equalities.team@wmca.org.uk

If you would like a copy of this document in a form more suited to your needs, please contact Customer Relations on 0121 214 7214 or email customer.relations@wmca.org.uk



APPENDIX 1: ACTION PLAN: 2017-2019

Objective 1: Provide accessible, affordable and inclusive services to our wide range of customers and deliver schemes and programmes that will help promote inclusion and improve well-being outcomes for hard to reach groups

AIM	ACTIONS REQUIRED	TIMESCALES	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Equality considerations are an integral element of the decision making process	Ensure Equality Impact Assessments are conducted for new/ revised schemes, projects, strategies and policies and all objectives as part of the business planning process.	Ongoing	Equality Manager
Improve public transport accessibility for older and disabled people	Continue to provide alternative services for people unable to use conventional public transport (i.e. Ring and Ride and Community Transport Services)	Ongoing	Network Co-ordination Specialist
	Monitor the effectiveness of the Ring and Ride service provision and develop new initiatives to deliver increased customer satisfaction and operational efficiency	Y1-3	Network Co-ordination Specialist
	Ensure production and publicity of accessibility related material that improve the travel experience of disabled people. Continue to produce new accessibility aids as per demand/need and following consultation with disabled users.	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Explore the feasibility of a voluntary card scheme for people who need priority seating	Y1-Y2	Equality Manager
	Continue to work with operators to overcome barriers to public transport for disabled users and improve customer satisfaction levels	Y1-3	Equality Manager/ Head of Network Delivery
	Ensure equality considerations form part of the Bus Alliance and any service change activities, i.e. bus network reviews	Y1-3	Equality Manager/ Head of Network Delivery
	Continue to explore opportunities for accessibility improvements in rail stations in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area	Ongoing	Rail Partnerships Manager
	Work in partnership with bus operators to increase the numbers of buses on the network with audio visual technology enabled	Ongoing	Head of Network Delivery
	Develop and distribute disability awareness related resources to all bus operators, to be communicated to all frontline staff	Y2-Y3	Equality Manager

Improve the accessibility of our services and infrastructure and affordability of public transport to enable more people to use public transport	Continue to provide comprehensive equality and disability awareness training for all customer facing staff and offer regular awareness sessions on a number of equality related issues. Liaise with disability groups to ensure the training is fit for purpose	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Ensure that WMCA owned buildings/assets are accessible, and that any refurbishments/redevelopments meet best practice accessibility standards	Y1-3	Equality Manager
	Continue to provide Language Line for those whose first language is not English	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Continue to provide documents in alternative formats for people with disabilities and whose first language is not English	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Monitor the equality profile of concessionary pass holders by key protected characteristics to identify any trends/gaps and publish key stats on an annual basis	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Work with partners to introduce a wider range of ticketing options, products and discounts for young people and apprentices to make public transport journeys more affordable	Y1-Y3	Head of Network Delivery
	Better integrate National Express (NX) and TfWM staff in bus stations to ensure seamless customer service	Y1	Head of Customer Services
Improve sustainable access to education, training and employment	Identify key transport issues affecting young people, older people and disabled people and develop policies to ensure the needs of these groups are met	Y1-3	Head of Policy and Strategy
	Develop and deliver support packages for Young People and Educators to improve sustainable access to education and skills opportunities	Y1-3	Head of Sustainable Travel
Inclusive access to learning funded through WMCA including learner support for those with additional needs	Develop and deliver support packages for apprentices, young people and unemployed people to improve sustainable access to training and employment opportunities	Y1-3	Head of Sustainable Travel
	Develop a commissioning framework for the devolved Adult Education Budget that promotes inclusive access to learning including through the location of learning activity and support provided for learners.	Y1-3	Employment & Skills Programme Lead

The development and delivery of employment and skills initiatives that meet the needs of diverse communities	Develop and deliver an employment support pilot for the hardest to help, targeted at meeting the needs of specific local communities.	Y1-3	Employment & Skills Programme Lead
	Monitor the delivery of the Work & Health Programme (through DWP contracts) to ensure that it meets the needs of local communities.	Y1-3	Employment & Skills Programme Lead
Develop and deliver mental health initiatives that will help support good mental health and well-being across the region	Launch a three-year programme to help 3,000 people with mental health needs gain and stay in employment	Y1-3	WMCA & DWH project
	Launch a ‘West Midlands Workplace Wellbeing Commitment’ to be voluntarily adopted by public and private sector employees with a target of 200 organisations signed up by end of year 2	Y1-3	PHE/WMCA
	Trial an innovate ‘Wellbeing Premium’, a tax incentive for employers demonstrating their commitment to staff wellbeing	Y1	WMCA and LA Housing leads and providers
	Support those with complex needs or who are homeless to move into good quality housing and where possible into work	Y1	PHE Offender health/CRC NOMS and Prison
	Develop a pilot programme that more effectively supports people with mental ill health as they prepare to leave prison and settle back into the community	Y1	NHS Offender Health/CIS and OPCC
	Implement a programme to make more regular use of the Mental Health Treatment Requirement in the Magistrates and Crown Courts	Y1	PHE/WMCA
	Launch a ‘Zero Suicide Ambition’ approach across the region and involve a number of regional stakeholders	Y1-3	NHS England (NHSE) /CCGs PaulTurner GP / Linda Ouzouza Charles / NHSE / Geraldine Strathdee
	Establish a group of experts to recommend a primary mental health care model for the region that ensures people’s mental health needs are more effectively supported	Y2	NHS Engalnd/NHS Improvement
Implement measures to help ensure the region meets national access and waiting time standards for early intervention in psychosis services.	Y1	Max Birchwood and Implementation team	

	<p>Help to trial 'Integrated Personal Commissioning' in the region for those with mental ill health</p> <p>Establish a group to develop better specialist 'perinatal' mental health services across the region for women during pregnancy and after they give birth to their babies</p> <p>Understand why detentions under the Mental Health Act are rising in the region and identify specific inequalities</p> <p>Launch a programme of community initiatives to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing</p> <p>Launch a large public health programme to train people across the region in Mental Health First Aid</p>	<p>Y1</p> <p>Y1</p> <p>Y1</p> <p>Launch Y1 and Ongoing</p> <p>Launch in Y1 and Ongoing</p>	<p>MH providers</p> <p>Merit Vanguard/ WMCA WMCA/PHE</p> <p>WMCA/PHE</p>
<p>Deliver initiatives to improve life chances for people with multiple complex needs</p>	<p>Develop an understanding of the current position of the Multiple Complex Needs cohort in the region in order to develop a robust business case and early support arrangements for people</p> <p>Develop the "blueprint" assessment of current service arrangements and outline proposals for changing the system to provide better, more cost-effective support to these groups.</p> <p>Social Emotional mental Health pathfinder to provide intensive support to very vulnerable secondary age children in five pilot sites.</p> <p>Develop further pilots, for example mentoring young people with multiple complex needs.</p> <p>Developing proposals for digital enablers to support key workers and users with multiple complex needs.</p>	<p>Y1</p> <p>Y1</p> <p>Y1</p> <p>Y1</p> <p>Y1</p>	<p>Multiple Complex Needs Lead</p>
<p>Deliver programmes to reduce offending and re-offending of young people and women offenders and reduce the numbers of first time entrants to the criminal justice system</p>	<p>Develop "shadow" arrangements to assess the potential for preventative interventions to free up resources currently used by high cost reactive services in the criminal justice system.</p> <p>Develop work with women offenders, including the 'New Chance' pilot evaluation.</p> <p>Review youth offending services across the region to identify potential improvements in cost-effectiveness and impact.</p>	<p>Y1</p> <p>Y1</p> <p>Y1</p>	<p>Criminal Justice Lead</p> <p>Criminal Justice Lead</p> <p>Criminal Justice Lead</p>

Ensure more customers have access to the information they need to enhance their travel experience	Work with partners to facilitate the development of mobile applications which will improve the travel experience of disabled customers	Y1-Y2	Head of Smart Travel
	Ensure key accessibility considerations are embedded within future apps and within the new TfWM app strategy	Y1-Y3	Head of Smart Travel
	Ensure the CA marketing and communication strategies and services are inclusive of all sections of society	Ongoing	Head of Communications
	Continue to provide RNIB Reach enabled Real Time Information Displays across the network and in all major interchanges	Ongoing	Head of Smart Travel
	Identify and understand the current take up of mobile and online technology and of the RNIB key fobs by different sections of the population and use the information gained to inform our future strategies and activities	Y1	Equality Manager
	Equality impact assess future smart technology initiatives to ensure they do not disadvantage any of the key protected characteristics	Ongoing	Head of Smart Travel
	Develop a digital inclusion programme to ensure customers who are digitally capable can independently access digital services provided by the Combined Authority	Y1-Y3	Digital Experience Manager
	Ensure, wherever possible, customers are informed about service or bus stop changes in advance and in ways that do not exclude people with disabilities.	Ongoing	Head of Network Delivery
	Increase level of staff announcements in bus stations regarding bus service changes and major delays	Ongoing	Head of Customer Services
Roll out displaying fares information at bus stops, including promoting local hop fares and providing enhanced information at interchanges	Y1	Digital Marketing and Information Manager	

Reduce total recorded crime and improve passenger perception with personal safety on the transport network by a further 10% by the end of 2019.	Expand the “See Something Say Something” initiative through the use of smartphone applications built as part of Network West Midlands (NXWM) suite of journey apps	Y2	Safety and Security Manager
	Build on the success of Project Empower and focus on detection of offences and promotion of reporting and awareness raising with women’s groups to help maintain reductions	Ongoing	Safety and Security Manager
	Increase focus and coordination of safer travel education through appointment of dedicated key worker to engage with schools and relevant groups including Youth Crime Commissioners and TfWM youth forum to gather views of Young People on new projects	Ongoing	Safety and Security Manager
	With assistance from Office of the Police Crime Commissioner funding, reach landmark 100 restorative justice referrals across the West Midlands for young people committing acts of Anti-social behaviour and crime on the public transport network.	Y1-Y3 & explore funding options	Safety and Security Manager
	Work with partners to improve the network’s environmental features including waiting facilities, vehicle conditions and other assets to further enhance passengers perceptions of personal safety	Ongoing	Safety and Security Manager
	Proactively identify repeat victims of crime and vulnerable users ensuring communications and support are tailored to their needs and where required, they are assisted back into public transport use. Increase focus on vulnerable communities identifying and engaging those most at risk of harm	Ongoing	Safety and Security Manager
	Put in place a dedicated Communications resource and key worker to coordinate regular and targeted communications about key achievements, increase understanding of passengers needs and concerns and keep them informed about policing on public transport	Ongoing	Safety and Security Manager
	Proactively manage offenders on the network to behave lawfully including support, prevention and where necessary enforcement of those engaged in repeat criminal activity often driven by alcohol or drugs	Ongoing	Safety and Security Manager

Engage with more of the region's diverse communities to inform the development and delivery of our strategies and programmes	Continue engagement with a range of community groups across all protected characteristics to further understand some of the barriers they face in accessing public transport and services	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Liaise with relevant internal and external stakeholders to address issues and ensure community engagement feedback feeds into the Equality Impact Assessment process	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Consult with equality/community group contacts on emerging policies/strategies/reviews/schemes making sure they are involved in all aspects of service development and use feedback to shape policies/strategies.	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Consider the development of a TfWM Transport Access forum to help embed accessibility considerations into the decision making process	Y2-Y3	Equality Manager

Objective 2: Develop and maintain a fair, inclusive and diverse workforce, which provides individuals with the opportunity to reach their full potential within an environment where they are safe, supported and respected.

AIM	ACTIONS REQUIRED	TIMESCALES	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
To improve workforce data, increase transparency and address barriers to employment for equality groups underrepresented in the workforce	Monitor workforce profile for each protected characteristic annually, to identify potential areas to improve representation. Report bi-annually and via the annual equalities review document	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Continue to collect, analyse and monitor recruitment data on protected characteristics to identify any gaps.	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Introduce an online recruitment system and update application and monitoring forms to allow recruitment monitoring across all protected characteristics (including religion/belief and sexual orientation)	Y1	Equality Manager
	Expand the levels of equality monitoring to include areas previously not included and publish on the WMCA site on an annual basis	Y1	Equality Manager
	Produce an annual equal pay audit and make the audit available in the public domain.	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Impact assess new and revised HR and L&D processes/policies/initiatives to ensure they are fair and equitable	Ongoing	Equality Manager

Staff at all levels are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act general and specific duties and are engaged in delivering the equality agenda.	Ensure all new starters complete the online equalities training at Induction Level	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Run quarterly equality campaigns on a range of equality related issues covering areas such as disability, ethnicity, age and gender, i.e. International Women’s Day.	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Continue to deliver face to face equality and disability awareness training to all customer facing staff	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Deliver ‘Unconscious Bias’ training to senior managers and consider ways to expand knowledge of unconscious bias among all employees	Y1-2	Equality Manager
	Equality awareness materials distributed/made available to existing and new staff members on a regular basis	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Continue to look for ways to promote the equality agenda through internal communication tools	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Form an equality working group to lead on the equality agenda and promote equalities internally	Y1	Equality Manager
	Attain Leaders in Diversity Accreditation	Y1-Y2	Equality Manager
	Develop recruitment related equality guidance for recruiting managers	Y2	Equality Manager
Consider how equality considerations could be embedded into different programmes, i.e. Leadership programmes and explore ways to increase accountability for progressing equality and inclusion at all levels of the organisation	Y2-Y3	Equality Manager	
We attract a wide pool of candidates reflecting regional diversity	Review and analyse existing recruitment activities, processes and routes ensuring opportunities are made available to a wide range of candidates.	Y1-3	HR Business Manager
	Publicise employment opportunities to equality groups in the region, i.e. via specialist agencies such as Remploy	Ongoing	HR Business Manager
	Deliver annual “Getting to Transport” programmes in partnership with Princes Trust and a range of operators offering training and apprenticeship opportunities to young people, typically from lower socio-economic backgrounds.	Y1-3	Learning and Development Manager

All staff feel equally supported and respected within their role and staff well-being is enhanced	Continue to collate, analyse and monitor data by each protected characteristic on key processes, i.e. training, grievances, leavers and turnover, promotion and disciplinary cases. Analyse survey and other data and take action if significant inconsistencies are identified	Ongoing	Equality Manager
	Identify processes and practices not considered to be applied consistently across the organisation that impact fairness and develop a mechanism to ensure consistency across management applications.	Y1-Y2	HR Business Manager/Equality Manager
	Deliver regular mental health and well-being programme/activities for staff across the organisation and consider establishing a mental-health first aiders programme	Y1-3	Equality Manager
	Consider the introduction of a Performance Related Pay Reward Scheme and ensure it is equitable and fair.	Y1-Y2	Head of People and Change
	Undertake a benchmarking exercise to identify maternity/paternity policies and other entitlements offered by comparable employers in order to identify any potential for reform proposals	Y1-Y2	Equality Manager
	Review working patterns of roles where flexible working does not apply. Determine whether these can be improved to be more inclusive	Y2-Y3	Head of Customer Services
	Introduce an Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) scheme to encourage staff and teams to engage in volunteering activities	Y1	Equality Manager
Deliver equality through procurement by making sure that practices are fair and contractors abide by key equality principles	Continue to include equality considerations in key procurement documents and communicate through our procurement process our commitment to working with partners who promote equality.	Ongoing	Procurement Lead Officer
	Equality remains a mandatory assessment criterion as part of the PQQ process	Ongoing	Procurement Lead Officer
	Promote the benefits of diversity to our suppliers through communications		Equalities Manager/ Procurement Lead Officer
	Consider ways to further embed equalities within the procurement process		Equalities Manager/ Procurement Lead Officer

APPENDIX 2: THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 IN DETAIL

Prior to the introduction of the Equality Act, anti-discrimination laws were spread across a number of different statutory and regulatory provisions. The Equality Act replaces those provisions with one single act which simplifies the law, and removes many inconsistencies between the application of the different forms of protection and makes the law easier to understand and benefit from.

The provisions which the Equality Act replaces include:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Parts of Employment Act 1989
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Parts of Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Most of Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The main part of the Equality Act begins by setting out what it describes as protected characteristics. These are:

AGE: A person discriminates on the basis of age if he or she treats another person less favourably because they are of a particular age or belong to a particular age group. Whilst age discrimination currently only

applies in the employment or vocational training sector, the intention of the legislation is that it will also offer protection in relation to the provision of goods and services.

DISABILITY: A person is deemed to be disabled for the purposes of the Equality Act if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Equality Act provides some additional protections not previously available. These include:

- making a provision that it will be discrimination if a person with a disability is treated less favourably because of something which arises from the disability – e.g. spelling errors caused by dyslexia – provided that the employer knew, or could reasonably be expected to have known, about the disability;
- making indirect discrimination relevant to disability discrimination;
- removing the need to consider the list of capacities when deciding if a person has a disability; and
- making it unlawful, except in certain circumstances, to enquire about a candidate's health before offering them work.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT: A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. This is a new definition and no longer requires that a person be under medical supervision to be protected.

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP: Protection is provided to employees who are married or in a civil partnership. It does not provide protection to those who are not married or in a civil partnership.

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY: Pregnancy meaning the condition of being pregnant. Maternity meaning the period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.

A person discriminates against a woman in non-work cases if:

- He/she treats her unfavourably because of her pregnancy or, in the period of 26 weeks beginning with the day on which she gives birth he/she treats her unfavourably because she has given birth.

RACE: Refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

RELIGION OR BELIEF: Religion means any religion, including reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism).

SEX: It applies both to men and women.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: This is whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes

TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION

DIRECT DISCRIMINATION

This occurs where person A treats person B less favourably than they would treat others because B has, is thought to have, or associates with someone who has, a protected characteristic.

ASSOCIATIVE DISCRIMINATION

This is defined as direct discrimination by A against B because B associates with a person who has a protected characteristic.

PERCEPTIVE DISCRIMINATION

This is defined as direct discrimination by A against B because A believes B to have a protected characteristic, whether or not B actually possesses that characteristic.

INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION

This occurs where person A has a condition, policy, provision, criterion or practice which is applied to everyone but puts at a particular disadvantage people who have a protected characteristic and person A cannot show it to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For the purposes of indirect discrimination, a legitimate aim is a lawful decision made by A which benefits a business or organisation and which is a proportionate means of achieving that benefit.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is defined as occurring where person A engages in unwanted conduct which is related to a relevant protected characteristic and that conduct has the purpose or effect of violating B's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for B. Harassment can be discriminatory even when it is not directed at the complainant and where the complainant does not have the protected characteristic.

THIRD PARTY HARASSMENT

There are circumstances where harassment can be of an employee by a third party. The Equality Act renders employers potentially liable if their employees are harassed by people other than employees of the company, for example customers or suppliers. It should be noted, however, that liability will only arise when harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions and the employer was aware that it had taken place but failed to take reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

VICTIMISATION

Person A victimises person B if A subjects B to a detriment because B does, has done or may do a protected act. For the purposes of this section, a protected act is defined as:

- bringing proceedings under the Equality Act;
- giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Equality Act;
- doing any other thing for the purposes of or in connection with the Equality Act; or
- Making an allegation (whether or not express) that A or another person has contravened the Equality Act.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The Equality Act also deals with adjustments which must be made for those with a disability.

The duty to make adjustments is divided into three parts:

- First, where a provision, criterion or practice of A (where A is the person upon whom the duty is imposed – e.g. an employer or service provider) puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, then A must take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take (the reasonable adjustment) in order to avoid the disadvantage,
- Secondly, where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, A must take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take (the reasonable adjustment) in order to avoid the disadvantage, and
- Thirdly, where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, A must take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take (the reasonable adjustment) in order to provide the auxiliary aid.

POSITIVE ACTION

The Equality Act allows employers and others to take positive action if they believe that employees or job applicants who share certain protected characteristics are experiencing a disadvantage which is linked to that characteristic or are not participating sufficiently in a particular activity. The proposed positive action, which is an entirely voluntary affair, must be a proportionate means of achieving a specific aim and may be to:

- enable or encourage persons who share the protected characteristic to overcome or minimise that disadvantage,
- meeting needs, or
- enable or encourage persons who share the protected characteristic to participate in a particular activity.

Positive action can only be used where:

- the person who is the subject of the positive action is as qualified as others being recruited or promoted. In other words promoting a less able applicant merely because of his or her race would not be acceptable;
- the employer does not have a policy of treating people with a particular protected characteristic more favourably than others are treated; and
- taking the action in question is proportionate.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT HEALTH-RELATED CHECKS

A prospective employer must not ask about the health of an applicant before offering them work or before including them in a pool of people to whom work will be offered when it becomes available, unless it is in order:

- to establish whether reasonable adjustments are needed for the applicant in order to enable them to participate in the selection process,
- to establish whether the applicant will be able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned,
- to monitor diversity in the range of persons applying to the prospective employer for work,
- to take positive action to assist a person with a disability, or
- in relation to work where it is a requirement to have a particular disability, to establish whether the applicant has that disability.

Once a person has passed through the application stage and been offered a job, whether conditional or unconditional, it then becomes permissible to carry out health-related checks.

EQUAL PAY

Under the old legislation, in order to show that there was a pay inequality it was necessary to find a comparator – someone of the opposite sex doing a comparable job that was being paid more. Now it may be possible for a person to show that, even though there is no real comparator, they would have been paid more if they had been of a different sex, even though there is no one of a different sex doing that work, or comparable work, for the employer. The Equality Act also deals with pay secrecy and makes it unlawful for an employer to prevent or restrict employees from discussing their pay for the purposes of establishing whether differences exist.



APPENDIX 3: GROUPS CONSULTED SINCE 2013

Access Development Group Coventry
Access in Dudley
African Caribbean Community Initiative
Action for the Blind
African Befriending Service
African Caribbean Resource Centre
Age Concern Dudley
Age Well Oldbury
Age Well Smethwick
Age Well Tipton
Age Well Wednesbury
Age Well West Bromwich
Asian Blind Association
Asian Care Information Centre
Asian Sikh Welfare Association
BACOP
Beacon Centre for the Blind
Birmingham Focus Macular Degeneration Group
Birmingham Focus on Blindness
Birmingham People First
Black and Asian Disability Group
Brett Young Day Centre
British Stammering Association
Council of Disabled People Coventry and Warwickshire
Coventry Older People's Forum
Dudley Council for Voluntary Services
Fircones Friends in Retirement Grapevine
Halesowen Asian Elderly Association
Macular Disease Association
Mencap Wolverhampton
Midweek 50
Pedmore Senior Citizen's Club
Queen Alexandra College
Sahara Project
Saheli Women's Group
Sandwell Deaf Community Association
Sandwell Visually Impaired
Sensory Loss Team Solihull
Solihull Action through Advocacy
Somali Disability Group
TOADS
Walsall Black Sisters
Walsall Over 50s Forum
Walsall Rotary Club
Wheelchair Users Group
Wolverhampton Neighbourhood Partnership
Wolverhampton Older Peoples Forum
Wolverhampton Over 50s Forum
Wolverhampton Women's Support Centre
Yemeni Community Group