

RESETTING THE REGION

Our strong history of collaboration has powered our pandemic response.

We have:



- adapted existed plans and programmes and transformed the region's public transport system to be Covid-safe



- set up a rapid recruitment team to find suitable candidates for industries in critical need of extra staff, such as supermarkets, care homes, hospitals and other essential services.



- set up new groups and taskforces. Our economic impact group was convened on 4 March 2020 and meets every week to understand the impact on the regional economy, pinpoint gaps for emergency support and drive economy recovery.



- researched to understand peoples' experiences - we convened 36 people in a representative citizens panel to set their priorities for region. Academics, business leaders and partners examined how new megatrends will affect the West Midlands' recovery.



- used evidence to develop and guide our decision making

We came together as a region to set up new programmes, address gaps in support, lobby government and allocate funds to support our communities. Now we need to strengthen this partnership work as we face the future.

We must reset the way we think and work together across the region to deliver fundamental change. Evidence from the region's social, economic and environmental analysis points to a series of linked challenges, exacerbated by the pandemic, that can only be addressed together. They will be the test of the region's ability to build a fairer, greener and healthier future for everyone who calls the West Midlands their home:



Deliver good jobs

- Estimated 17.7% of all businesses in the WMCA have been temporarily closed by the latest restrictions
- 135,000 fewer workforce jobs across the region year-on-year.
- 261,000 people were furloughed in January 2021, a rate of 14.5%



Support thriving places and communities

- Footfall in Birmingham city centre had only recovered to 31% of its pre-pandemic levels by early December with expenditure at 17% - the lowest of any city in the UK
- For the WMCA, it is estimated the loss of sales in Hospitality has been around £3.25bn.
- Overall, online retail sales rose to a record high of 33.9% as a share of all retail spending.



Embed our green ambitions

- Stay within a cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget of 74.1 MtCO₂ for the period of 2020 to 2100. At 2016 CO₂ emission levels, the carbon budget would be used within six years
- WMCA requires a 60% reduction in car mileage to meet our carbon reduction targets



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2.2+

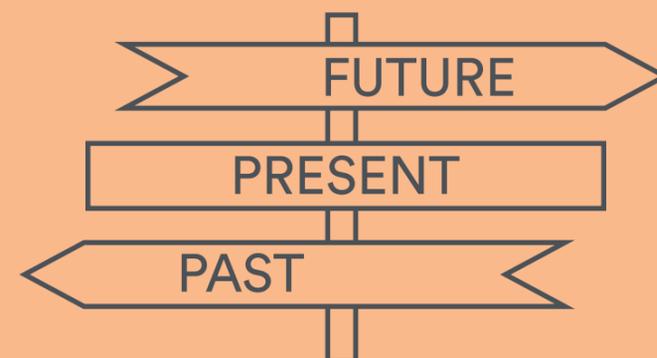
Tackle inequality and level up

- COVID-19 deaths are 2.2 times higher in the most deprived areas compared to least deprived areas and all deaths 1.9 times higher
- Nearly one in seven are looking for employment within Birmingham – which has the worst levels of joblessness in the UK, with five of its ten constituencies with the highest jobless rates across the entire UK



Prevent a lost generation

- 207,645 claimants aged 16 years and over in January. +90,055 claimants since March.
- Youth Claimants has nearly doubled to 41,230 and 8.4% of all 16 to 24 year olds
- Educational activities amongst primary school children fell by a quarter to 4.5 hours a day
- A fifth of the population don't use the internet – the highest number in the UK
- Highest proportion of employers saying they find digital skills difficult to obtain from applicants



Where next?

We're ambitious for the West Midlands and want to do much more than simply recover from the pandemic by rebuilding and recharging our region to come back stronger. We can only do this by working in partnership, focusing together on our shared challenges and finding new and innovative ways to make a lasting difference.

Together we're determined to lead the region to take its rightful place in the world with economic and cultural recovery shared with everyone. We will build a fairer, greener and healthier future for everyone who calls the West Midlands their home.