



**West Midlands  
Combined Authority**

## **Environment & Energy Board**

**Monday 10 March 2021 at 10.00am**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present**

Councillor Ian Courts (Chair)	Portfolio Lead for Environment, Energy & HS2
Councillor Waseem Ali	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Oliver Butler	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Andy Mackiewicz	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Barbara McGarrity	City of Wolverhampton Council
Matthew Rhodes	Energy Capital

#### **In attendance**

Councillor Peter Fowler	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
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#### **39. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Maria Crompton (Sandwell), Councillor Jim O'Boyle (Coventry), Suzanne Ward (Environment Agency) and Councillor Waseem Zaffar (Birmingham).

#### **40. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

#### **41. Climate Neutral Malmö**

The board received a presentation from Jonas Kamleh from the City of Malmö municipality on how the city sought to reduce its carbon emissions through an agreed action plan and road map. He explained how this was being implemented and monitored, and shared his experiences of how other cities may try to implement similar plans and the lessons they could learn from Malmö. He stressed the importance being able to react in an agile way to changing situations, and how citizens needed to be engaged and involved in the process. Greater success had been achieved when citizens had been able to co-create the changes that were needed to be taken.

Resolved:

That Jonas Kamleh be thanked for his attendance at the board and his informative presentation.

**41. WM2041 Five Year Plan: 2021 - 2026**

The board considered a report from the Director of Inclusive Growth & Public Service Reform setting out the contents of a report to be submitted to the WMCA Board on 19 March seeking approval of a delivery plan to accelerate the WMCA's work on net zero.

The development of the Five Year Plan to meet the WM2041 net zero ambition had been supported by the commissioning of WSP to provide an independent evidence base as to how this might be achieved. The report summarises the independent advice and outcomes from that work for the WMCA Board, along with an outline of the next steps for delivery.

The Head of Environment reported that the work undertaken by WSP provided a high level overview that would then enable more detailed discussions to take place in respect of prioritisation and implementation. The Chair welcomed the report and stressed the importance of ensuring funding was targeted at those projects best able to deliver carbon reduction targets.

Resolved:

The report be noted.

**42. Natural Capital Action Plan**

The board considered a report from the Director of Inclusive Growth & Public Service Reform providing an overview of the Natural Capital Plan that had been developed with partners, and reflected the independent advice from the draft WM2041 Five Year Plan and extensive stakeholder engagement with natural capital leads from regional organisations, including local authorities.

The 'WM2041: A Programme for Implementing an Environmental Recovery' report highlighted the need to address inequalities of access to green space that had been magnified during the first COVID-19 lockdown. In response to this, the WMCA commissioned the New Economics Foundation to produce a report on access to green space across the West Midlands. Delivering a regional Natural Capital Plan would require the involvement of a range of different stakeholders from the public, voluntary, research and private sectors. To deliver its natural capital priorities, the WMCA was well-positioned to connect with the UK government and regional bodies, supporting local authorities as it navigated the implementation of the new environmental measures set out in the draft Environment Bill. It could also provide clear communications to individuals and communities across our region to show clearly how everyone's efforts fitted into the wider picture.

Councillor Andy Mackiewicz welcomed the report, and stressed that this work should include recognition of the natural capital work also being undertaken by local authorities in the region.

Resolved:

- (1) The vision and outcomes for the WMCA natural capital work be agreed.
- (2) The Natural Capital Action Plan be agreed.

- (3) The proposed role and delivery structure for the WMCA be agreed.
- (4) The submission of an expression of interest to the Environmental Land Management Scheme in the WMCA be supported.
- (5) The establishment of a Natural Capital Board and Natural Capital Officer Group be supported.
- (6) The Community Green Grants programme be approved to improve access to green space for communities across the West Midlands (subject to funding).

**43. Active Travel Update**

The board received an update on those projects delivered as part of the Active Travel Fund. Funding of £3m had been used to deliver 57 infrastructure schemes, including 14 pop-up cycle lanes. In addition, the West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme intended to deliver 1,500 bikes across the region by July. The Chair welcomed the report, but stressed the importance of ensuring that transport policy making reflected the modal-shift aspirations of these projects to ensure that the benefits were maximised.

Resolved:

That the update be noted.

**44. De-carbonising Transport - A Critical Objective for a New Local Transport Plan**

The board considered a report from the Managing Director, Transport for West Midlands, on the work being undertaken reviewing the West Midlands statutory Local Transport Plan. A key objective for the new Local Transport Plan would be to set out how the West Midlands transport system would be decarbonised in line with local and national targets.

The current and fourth West Midlands Local Transport Plan was called Movement for Growth and was comprised of a strategic plan and delivery plan. Since Movement for Growth was adopted approximately five years ago there had been significant global and local change in policy context. Whilst the WMCA is formally the local transport authority, the combined authority was a partnership and the Local Transport Plan was therefore developed collaboratively with the constituent authorities. The Strategic Transport Board provided the direction for this work, however, changes to the Local Transport Plan must be approved by WMCA Board and (as a minimum) meet specific statutory requirements on consultation.

As Transport for West Midlands took forward the development of a new Local Transport Plan, the indicative goals set out in the WM2041 Five Year Plan would be taken as a minimum target. Scenarios would also be explored to better understand what would be required to deliver decarbonisation of the West Midlands transport system faster.

The Chair noted the importance of ensuring the public were engaged in the development of new transport policies. The Transport Strategy & Place Manager confirmed that work was being undertaken to better understand what the public wanted from its transport network, as well as giving a realistic sense of the scale of the changes required to reduce carbon emissions. The Head of Environment confirmed that the Behavioural Insights Team was supporting this work, and she could provide a further update on this at the next meeting.

Resolved:

- (1) The work Transport for West Midlands was undertaking to review the West Midlands Local Transport Plan in partnership with local highway authorities and in light of the climate emergency and wider policy drivers of change be noted.
- (2) The next steps with regard to development of a draft new West Midlands Local Transport Plan be noted.

**45. WM2041 Programme Update**

The board noted a plan of items to be reported to its future meetings.

The meeting ended at 12.10pm.