



West Midlands Combined Authority

WMCA Board

Friday 25 June 2021 at 11.00 am

Minutes

Constituent Members

Andy Street (Chair)	Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority
Councillor Bob Sleight (Vice-Chair)	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Ian Brookfield	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Ian Courts	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Patrick Harley	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Brigid Jones	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Stephen Simkins	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Rajbir Singh	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor David Vickers	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Ian Ward	Birmingham City Council

Observer Members

Councillor Greg Brackenridge	West Midlands Fire Authority
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The following participated in the meeting remotely via Microsoft Teams:

Councillor Adrian Andrew	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Cathy Bayton	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Mike Bird	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Andrew Day	Warwick District Council
Councillor Matt Dormer	Redditch Borough Council
Councillor George Duggins	Coventry City Council
Simon Foster	West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner
Councillor Peter Fowler	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Kath Hartley	Transport Delivery Committee
Kashmire Hawker	Young Combined Authority
Councillor Matt Jennings	Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Rob Johnston	Midlands Trades Union Congress
Councillor Abdul Khan	Coventry City Council
David Lane	Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee
Councillor Olivia Lyons	Cannock Chase District Council
Councillor Jeremy Oates	Tamworth Borough Council
Tim Pile	Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership
Councillor Izzi Seccombe	Warwickshire County Council
Tom Westley	Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership

Councillor Kristofer Wilson
Sarah Windrum

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Coventry & Warwickshire Local
Enterprise Partnership

144. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Lee Barron (Midlands TUC), Councillor Tony Jefferson (Stratford-on-Avon) and Councillor Sebastian Lowe (Rugby).

145. Chair's Remarks

(a) Former Members of the WMCA Board

The Mayor noted that Nick Abell (Coventry & Warwickshire LEP), Councillor George Adamson (Cannock Chase), Councillor Julie Jackson (Nuneaton & Bedworth), David Jamieson (West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner) Councillor Peter Nutting (Shropshire) and Councillor Qadar Zada (Dudley) were no longer members of the board and thanked them for their contributions to the work of the WMCA whilst they had been members.

(b) Deborah Cadman, Former Chief Executive, WMCA

The Mayor reported that Deborah Cadman had now taken up her role as Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council and thanked her for all the work she had done on behalf of the WMCA whilst she had been its Chief Executive.

146. Minutes - 19 March 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

147. Forward Plan

The forward plan of items to be reported to future meetings of the board was noted.

148. Confirmation of Statutory Officer Appointments

The board considered a report from the Interim Head of HR on the appointments of an Interim Chief Executive and Interim Director of Law & Governance, and their statutory roles for the WMCA.

Following the resignations of both the Chief Executive and the Director of Law & Governance, recruitment processes had been undertaken in order to appoint to these roles on an interim basis. Both of these roles performed statutory functions for the WMCA in accordance with the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. The Chief Executive role had the statutory responsibility as Head of Paid Service and the Director of Law & Governance had statutory responsibility for the role of Monitoring Officer for the Authority.

Resolved:

- (1) The appointment of Laura Shoaf as Interim Chief Executive and the WMCA's Statutory Head of Paid Service be endorsed.
- (2) The appointment of Satish Mistry as Interim Director of Law & Governance and the WMCA's Statutory Monitoring Officer be endorsed.

149. Annual Delivery 2020/21: End of Year Update on High Level Deliverables

The board considered a report from the Director of Finance that provided an end of year summary of the progress against portfolio deliverables for 2020/21

As part of its business planning and performance reporting arrangements, the WMCA would normally publish an Annual Plan. However, on 5 June 2020 the WMCA Board agreed not to publish an Annual Plan for 2020/21 given the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the likely need to review and repurpose planned activity to support response and recovery. The report provided a comprehensive summary of delivery and progress against 2020/21 WMCA portfolio activity. It enabled the board and other stakeholders to review the progress activity that supported the realisation of the WMCA vision of a healthier, happier, better connected and more prosperous region.

Councillor Ian Ward noted that the high level deliverables did not reference activity in respect of air quality or affordable housing policy and delivery, which were key issues across the region. Councillor Ian Courts indicated that it was important that the WMCA complemented and contributed to the work being done by constituent authorities and undertook to report back to a future meeting of the board on the work being done in this area. Councillor Mike Bird reported that the Housing & Land Delivery Board was working with a consortium of housing associations to develop a region-wide approach to delivering affordable housing, and he would continue to keep this board updated on progress in this regard.

Resolved:

The end of year summary of progress against portfolio deliverables for 2020/21 be noted.

150. Appointment of WMCA Boards and Committees 2021/22

The board considered a report from the Interim Head of Law & Governance, Clerk and Monitoring Officer setting out the appointments made by constituent, non-constituent and observer member authorities to the WMCA Board and its committees/sub-boards for 2021/22. The report also set out the timetable of meetings for the forthcoming year and the appointments made by the Mayor for the positions of Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Lead areas.

Councillor Ian Ward indicated that the role and membership of these boards should be included within the remit of the planned governance review and the Chair confirmed that this would be the case.

Resolved:

- (1) The members nominated by constituent, non-constituent and observer member authorities to sit on the WMCA Board and its committees/sub-boards be noted.
- (2) Councillor Cathy Bayton be appointed as Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Tim Pile be appointed as Chair of the Strategic Economic Development Board and Councillor Kath Hartley be appointed as Chair of the Transport Delivery Committee.

- (3) The appointments made by the Mayor to the positions of Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Lead areas be noted.
- (4) The timetable of meetings for 2021/22 be agreed.
- (5) The intention to establish a new HS2 Board, and to submit the terms of reference of this board to the next meeting of the WMCA Board on 23 July, be noted.
- (6) Authority be delegated to the Interim Monitoring Officer to approve any subsequent minor changes to the individual appointments made to board/committees.

151. Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Annual Report

The board considered a report from the Interim Director of Law & Governance setting out the annual report of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that highlighted its key achievements during 2020/21.

Overview & Scrutiny was a statutory requirement for the WMCA to undertake. The committee had the responsibility to review the work of the Mayor and the WMCA, to make recommendations to the WMCA Board and its committees and call-in decisions that have already been made for further scrutiny. The annual report was intended to set out clearly and succinctly the work of the committee over the last 12 months and helped to demonstrate the WMCA's commitment to critical self-assessment and transparency in its decision making.

Councillor Cathy Bayton thanked the outgoing chair, Councillor Lisa Trickett, for the stewardship of the committee during the last two years and indicated that she wished to continue to provide constructive challenge to the WMCA decision making bodies to ensure the region's needs were recognised and addressed. She also thanked Governance staff that had ably supported the scrutiny function during the last year. The Chair expressed his own thanks to Councillor Lisa Trickett for leading the scrutiny function during the last two years.

Resolved:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2020/21 annual report be noted.

152. Young Combined Authority - Annual Review

The board considered a report from the Head of the Chief Executive's Office setting out the annual report of the Young Combined Authority, highlighting its key achievements during 2020/21.

Kashmire Hawker thanked the board for providing young people with the opportunity and mechanism to express their voices, concerns and solutions to issues that impacted on the lives of the region's younger people. On behalf of the Young Combined Authority, he also expressed his condolences to the family and friends of Shakur Pinnock who had died in the previous week following an accident in Wolverhampton whilst riding on an e-scooter.

Councillor Brigid Jones thanked the members of the YCA for the commitment they had shown in advocating on behalf of their peers, and urged all portfolio leads to engage with the YCA as part of the work of their own boards during the coming year.

Resolved:

The Young Combined Authority 2020/21 annual review be noted.

153. State of the Region 2021

The committee considered a report from the Director of Strategy that detailed the main findings from the State of the Region executive summary, placing it into the wider context of developing the five regional challenges approved at Strategic Economic Development Board and WMCA Board during March 2021. The analysis directly influenced and reflected the region's shared priorities, which in turn were informing the development of the WMCA's corporate strategy.

WMREDI partners across the region had together developed the fifth annual State of the Region report. It was a high-level report in comparison to its predecessors due to the wealth of research and supporting reports published throughout the pandemic. As in previous years, the report highlighted the major challenges facing the region, its citizens and businesses and the challenge facing all bodies charged with improving the wellbeing, economy and environment of the region.

Councillor Ian Ward noted three key challenges for the region: improvements in air quality, provision of good quality jobs and the supply of affordable housing. In all three areas he expressed concern at the current situation in the region, stressing the need to achieve improvements across all these areas.

Resolved:

- (1) The executive summary of the State of the Region report, which fulfilled the WMCA's statutory responsibility to provide an assessment of regional economic conditions, be considered.
- (2) The executive summary be noted, and it be noted that a more detailed report was being prepared that would encompass a wide range of evidence produced by the WMREDI partners and the Office for Data Analytics over the last 12 months
- (3) The next steps to further develop the region's response to the five challenges endorsed by board in March 2021 be endorsed.

154. Financial Monitoring Report 2021/22

The board considered a report from the Director of Finance on the WMCA's finances as at the end of March 2021 (including the financial implications of COVID-19), subject to an external audit review.

An update on the latest position for the current financial year, the ongoing refresh of the Combined Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan and on the final 2022/21 position against all WMCA treasury activity in the line with CIPFA code best practice requirements was also provided.

Councillor Rajbir Singh noted the WMCA's projected budget deficits through to 2026/27 and sought assurances that measures were being undertaken to address these. The Director of Finance confirmed that the board had recognised these deficits when it set its 2021/22 budget earlier in the year, and work was now being undertaken as part of the strategic planning process to be able to present a balanced budget to the board at its meeting on 14 January 2022.

Resolved:

- (1) The draft outturn position for the financial year ending 31 March 2021, which was subject to external audit review be noted.
- (2) The final revenue and capital budgets for 2021/22 be approved.
- (3) The update on the COVID Bus Services Support Grant and Light Rail Revenue Restart Grant be noted.
- (4) The update on the Investment Programme, including the successful completion of the HM Treasury Gateway Review and the progression of schemes through the WMCA Assurance Framework to allocate the remaining headroom of £15.4m, be noted.
- (5) The initial Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022/23 to 2026/27 and the proposed next steps be noted.
- (6) The use of £0.8m of Investment Programme transport allocation to support Midland Metro capital costs be noted.
- (7) The Treasury Management out-turn position for 2020/21 be noted.

155. Commonwealth Games Transport Plan

The board considered a report from the Director of Network Resilience on the Commonwealth Games 2022 Transport Plan. Transport for West Midlands had now prepared a draft of the transport plan for consultation and engagement.

In 2019, the board had agreed the guiding principles for the Commonwealth Games transport provision in a draft Games Strategic Transport Plan, following an engagement exercise to gather feedback from residents, business and wider games partners. The guiding principles were clean and green, a 'public transport' games, safe, secure, efficient and reliable, long term benefits (creating a legacy for through transport) and to minimise disruption to users and access for all.

Councillor Ian Ward welcomed the work undertaken to prepare this plan, and urged members of the public, businesses and organisations across the region to submit consultation responses with their views.

Resolved:

The draft Commonwealth Games Transport Plan be approved for consultation and engagement commencing June to September 2021.

[Kashmire Hawker declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item in respect of his role as Administrator - Ceremonies, Culture & Queen's Baton Relay with the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee.]

156. Environment & Energy Board - 10 March 2021

The board received the minutes of the Environment & Energy Board meeting held on 10 March.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2021 be noted.

157. Strategic Economic Development Board - 11 March 2021

The board received the minutes of the Strategic Economic Development Board meeting held on 11 March 2021.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021 be noted.

158. Transport Delivery Committee - 15 March 2021

The board received the minutes of the Transport Delivery Committee meeting held on 15 March 2021.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March be noted.

159. Investment Board - 22 March 2021

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board meeting held on 22 March 2021.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2021 be noted.

160. Investment Board - 19 April 2021

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board meeting held on 19 April 2021.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2021 be noted.

161. Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee - 19 April 2021

The board received the minutes of the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee meeting held on 19 April.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2021 be noted.

162. Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

The public and press be excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business in accordance with s100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 as it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as specified in the paragraphs of the Act.

163. Arden Cross Multi-Storey Car Park

The board considered a report from the Managing Director of the Urban Growth Company on the full business case for the first phase of the proposed multi-storey car park at the Arden Triangle site. The report set out the findings and recommendations of the WMCA's Assurance Team, outlined the loan proposal which had been put forward to part fund the phase 1 cost of the car park and the observations of the Director of Finance's meetings held over the period April to June 2021.

Resolved:

- (1) The funding of a £50m loan from WMCA to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (up to £45m principal and up to £5m of interest rolled up) for a multi-storey car park and associated infrastructure at the Arden Cross Triangle which formed part of the wider growth plans for the UK Central Hub area be approved.
- (2) Note that the commitment and drawdown of the loan would be subject to:
 - (i) WMCA approval of the next iteration of the business case that was to be submitted in 2022/23.
 - (ii) Confirmation from the Department for Transport of the availability of the £50m grant for the multi-storey car park project.
 - (iii) Confirmation of the funding strategy for the wider infrastructure works needed to enable the development at the Arden Triangle site.
 - (iv) WMCA due diligence of the final signed Value Capture Agreement to ensure the obligations of the loan were passed through to Arden Cross Ltd.
- (3) The delegation of the WMCA Monitoring officer and WMCA Director of Finance to enter into the contract for the above, subject to the above conditions being met, their satisfaction with due diligence and having consulted with the Finance Directors Group, be approved.
- (4) That the conditions accompanying the £50m Department for Transport grant were yet to be made available be noted, and should these ultimately include any terms which were specifically onerous or present a significant risk of clawback, WMCA may need to review whether it was possible to enter into the agreement with the Department for Transport.

[Councillor Ian Courts declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item in respect of his membership of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.

Councillor Bob Sleight declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item in respect of his membership of the board of the Urban Growth Company and his membership of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.

Councillor Ian Ward declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item in respect of Birmingham City Council's ownership of land connected to this development.]

164. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 23 July 2021 at 11.00am

The meeting ended at 12.30pm.