



Young Combined Authority

Young Combined Authority (YCA) Board update, March – June 2022

Engaging with Levelling Up

The YCA Board's meeting in May was focused on understanding and shaping the region's response to Levelling Up and the development of our Trailblazer Devolution Deal. YCA members were joined by the following WMCA policy leads to share their insights on Trailblazer Devolution Deal proposals:

- Adam Harrison, TfWM Principal Policy & Strategy Officer
- Fiona Aldridge, Head of Insight for Skills & Economy
- Mubasshir Ajaz, Head of Health & Communities
- Patricia Willoughby, Head of Housing & Regeneration
- Supported by Sara Rasul, Corporate Strategy Lead, and Claire Dhami, Head of Systems Change & Inclusion.

The YCA Board's priorities in **housing & regeneration** included: increasing affordable housing, investing in community spaces as part of town centre improvement, accelerating work towards zero carbon homes and maximising on any skills opportunities.

During their conversations on **skills**, the YCA shared their insights on how to increase the uptake of apprenticeships. YCA members also highlighted the need for improved support for university leavers and careers guidance.

One of the key topics within the YCA's exploration of **transport** was the region's e-scooter trials and how these may be more successful if opened up to under 18s. The YCA also discussed the challenge of behaviour change and how they feel that public transport reliability, affordability and safety are barriers to better travel choices.

YCA Board members were most interested in the **health & wellbeing** work that was focused on tackling health inequalities for future generations. This included proposals to support healthier lifestyles. The group were also interested in Mental Health, which is being driven by the Commission.

More activity...

- ✔ **Local Transport Plan:** the YCA Board dedicated their main meeting in March to learning about Transport for West Midlands' work to reimagine the way transport works in the region, so that it is fairer, greener, healthier and gets people to where they need to be. The YCA members shared their insights around the best ways to encourage young people to make good transport choices, as well as the current barriers to making those decisions such as the cost and accessibility of public transport options.
- ✔ **WMCA Equality Scheme:** the YCA Board also gave feedback on the Combined Authority's Equality Scheme, that was approved by the WMCA Board in March and sets out how the organisation will promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout its workforce and activity.
- ✔ **Environment:** on 22 March, the YCA's Environment subgroup met with Councillor Ian Courts (WMCA Portfolio Lead Member for the Environment & Energy) and the WMCA's environment team. The conversation highlighted lots of opportunities for the YCA to engage with the agenda.
- ✔ **Mental Health:** the YCA's Wellbeing subgroup have had a number of meetings focused on how they can engage with the new West Midlands Mental Health Commission. This has included informing the Commission's decision to focus on Mental Health in education as part of its 'young people' theme.
- ✔ **National YCA:** representatives from the West Midlands YCA have continued to meet with young leaders from other Mayoral Combined Authority regions as the 'National YCA.' Having had an initial call with some of the Northern Metro Mayors, the group are working towards a second M10 session in July that will be focused on the Environment.

Stay up to date with the YCA!

Follow us on social media: @wmyoungboard

For any questions, please email: Esha.Jhamat@wmca.org.uk