



West Midlands Combined Authority

WMCA Board

Friday 10 June 2022 at 11.00 am

Minutes

Constituent Members

Andy Street (Chair)
Councillor Mike Bird
Councillor Ian Brookfield
Councillor Kerrie Carmichael
Councillor Ian Courts
Councillor Steve Clark
Councillor Patrick Harley
Councillor Brigid Jones
Councillor Stephen Simkins

Mayor of the West Midlands
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
City of Wolverhampton Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Birmingham City Council
City of Wolverhampton Council

Non-Constituent Members

Councillor Matthew Dormer
Councillor Matt Jennings

Redditch Borough Council
Stratford-on-Avon District Council

In Attendance

Councillor Cathy Bayton
Councillor Greg Brackenridge
Simon Foster
Khuram Mahmood

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
West Midlands Fire Authority
West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner
Young Combined Authority

In Attendance via Microsoft Teams

Lee Barron
Councillor Dean Carroll
Zak Christie
Councillor Andrew Day
Councillor Olivia Lyons
Councillor Izzi Seccombe
Hamaam Shire
Mark Smith
Councillor Kristofer Wilson

Midlands Trades Union Congress
Shropshire Council
Young Combined Authority
Warwick District Council
Cannock Chase District Council
Warwickshire County Council
Young Combined Authority
Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Shaun Davies (Telford & Wrekin), Councillor George Duggins (Coventry), Councillor Tony Jefferson (Stratford-on-Avon), Councillor Abdul Khan (Coventry), Councillor Bob Sleigh (Solihull), Councillor Ian Ward (Birmingham), Tom Westley (Black Country LEP) and Sarah Windrum (Coventry & Warwickshire LEP).

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

3. Forward Plan

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

4. Appointment of WMCA Boards and Committees 2022/23

The board considered a report of the Interim Director of Law & Governance on the appointments made by constituent, non-constituent and observer member authorities to the WMCA Board and its committees/sub-boards for 2022/23, and on timetable of meetings for the WMCA Board and its committees/sub-boards for 2022/23.

Councillor Brigid Jones noted that only three of the fourteen appointments made by constituent authorities to sit on this board were women and stressed the importance of ensuring that decision making bodies such as this one better reflected the communities that they served.

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 chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Richard Worrall be appointed chair of the Transport Delivery Committee.
- (3) The appointments made by the Mayor as Portfolio Leads and Deputy Mayor be noted.
- (4) The timetable of meetings for 2022/23 be agreed.
- (5) It be agreed that the Public Service Reform Board should no longer continue to meet, and that public service reform-related decision making should be undertaken through the WMCA Board.
- (6) The Interim Director of Law & Governance be given delegated authority to approve any subsequent minor changes to the individual appointments made to boards/committees.

5. Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Annual Report

The board considered a report of the Interim Director of Law & Governance appending the fourth annual report of the WMCA's Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Cathy Bayton explained that the annual report summarised the scrutiny activity during the last year, demonstrating how the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee were holding the Mayor, Portfolio Leads and decision-making boards to account. She thanked Councillor Lisa Trickett and Councillor Liz Clements for the scrutiny leadership roles that they had played and the support that they had given to her during 2021/22.

Councillor Stephen Simkins noted that there had been a number of governance reviews undertaken during the last year and that it would be helpful for this board to see a progress update on each one of these. The Chair welcomed this suggestion and asked the Interim Director of Law & Governance to prepare such a report for the next meeting.

Resolved:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2021/22 annual report be noted.

6. Financial Monitoring Report 2021/22

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub on an update on the WMCA's finances as at the end of the 2021/22 financial year. The report contained the unaudited position, and the external audit procedures would be completed between July and September, with a provisional signing date for the 2021/22 statutory accounts set for 31 September.

Councillor Ian Brookfield expressed his disappointment that the Wolverhampton city centre metro extension would not be open in time for the start of the Commonwealth Games. Councillor Mike Bird stressed the importance of the WMCA agreeing a three-year budget to provide it with financial stability. The Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub confirmed that it was intended to bring a full report to the board meeting on 16 September setting out the financial pressures on the WMCA and the sustainable solutions to these pressures.

Councillor Patrick Harley noted that the spend incurred to date on the Wednesbury - Brierley Hill metro extension would not adversely impact the expected completion date of the project.

Resolved:

- (1) The financial position as at 31 March 2022 be noted.
- (2) The update on the 2022/23 year to date position be noted.
- (3) The progress on City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement be noted.
- (4) The increase in the Sprint Phase 1 budget (to be fully funded by third parties) be approved.
- (5) The budget virement between Sprint Phase 1 and Phase 2 actioned under local delegations at a value of £4.318m be noted.
- (6) The revised cost to complete of Wolverhampton city centre metro extension, and the funding solution identified, be noted.
- (7) The acceptance of £11.25m of funding for 2022/23 to support Bootcamp activity be noted.

- (8) Authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub and the Executive Director of Economic Delivery, Skills & Communities to accept any funds awarded following submission of WMCA's Multiply Investment Plan.
- (9) The acceptance of £17.25m Active Travel Fund 3 funding be noted.
- (10) The acceptance of £250,000 British Film Institution grant, plus the extension of current funding to 31 March 2023, be noted.
- (11) The acceptance of £30m funding for Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas be noted.
- (12) The update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund be noted.
- (13) Authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Transport for West Midlands and the Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub (s151 Officer), in conjunction with the Portfolio Lead for Transport to review, agree and submit the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid in line with the timescales published by Government.
- (14) The extending of the role and remit of the Investment Board to cover all WMCA projects, allowing investment decisions to be made for values between £5m and £20m in line with the Single Assurance Framework be approved.
- (15) The Treasury Management Outturn be noted.

7. West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Transport for West Midlands seeking approval for the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan indicative revenue funding allocation, for submission to the Department for Transport by the end of June 2022.

Councillor Stephen Simkins expressed concern at suggestions that bus services subsidised by Transport for West Midlands were being withdrawn. The Chair asked that the Director of Integrated Transport Services meet with Councillor Stephen Simkins to discuss these concerns in more detail.

Resolved:

- (1) The indicative revenue funding allocation for the period from 2022/23 to 2024/25 for delivery of the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan be approved.
- (2) Responsibility for approving the final revenue funding allocation for the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan be delegated to the Executive Director for Transport for West Midlands in consultation with the Mayor, Portfolio Lead for Transport and the Portfolio Lead for Finance.

- (3) The s151 Officer be authorised to accept the Bus Service Improvement Plan funding, subject to the final allocation being in line with the indicative plan approved by WMCA Board and subject to the terms and conditions of the funding being acceptable to the s151 Officer.
- (4) The anticipated outputs associated with the reduced level of revenue funding through the Bus Service Improvement Plan be noted.
- (5) The position for a draft variation to the West Midlands Enhanced Partnership Scheme by the end of June 2022, which would need to be supported by bus operators and local authorities as well as Transport for West Midlands, be noted.
- (6) The Interim Director of Law & Governance be authorised to 'make' the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme variation, subject to completing the statutory process.
- (7) The current situation on revenue and recovery funding for the bus network following the report in January 2022 and its potential impact on the bus network, be noted.

8. Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas Scheme 2021/22 - Acceptance of Grant

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Transport for West Midlands seeking approval to proceed with the Zero Emissions Bus Regional Areas Scheme project by accepting the Offer of Grant.

Councillor Ian Courts welcomed the report and congratulated all of the officers who had been involved in the project. In response to a question from Councillor Mike Bird, the Director of Integrated Transport Services confirmed that for this particular project, one hydrogen refuelling station site would be required in Walsall, although this might increase to two or three further sites by 2030.

Resolved:

- (1) The acceptance of the £30.383m grant funding awarded through the Government's Phase 2 of the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas 2021/22 competition announced on 26 March 2022 be approved.
- (2) Transport for West Midlands be authorised to specify two 'red lines' within the grant funding agreement of:
 - (a) Open access to the hydrogen refuelling station by other agreed third parties;
 - (b) Transport for West Midlands to be party to the supply agreement, to protect the WMCA's interests in the event of an operator exiting the local bus market, or a change in regulatory approach.
- (3) It be noted that these 'red lines' might result in monies being returned to the Department for Transport and the scheme not progressing if bus operators were not able to sign-up to these conditions.

- (4) It be noted that the revised total value of the project, which was inclusive of the £30.383m grant funding from the Department for Transport, was lower than that approved in September 2021 due to reduced scope.
- (5) Delegations to the Monitoring Officer and the Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub to enter into the various funding agreements and contracts which would be reasonably required to enable delivery of the project be approved.
- (6) The update on project risks and mitigations, and that these would continue to be reviewed and managed as the project progresses, be noted.

9. Commissioning of Skills Delivery Programmes, including Adult Education Budget, National Skills Fund and Multiply Element of UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Economic Delivery, Skills & Communities setting out how the WMCA had secured additional skills funding to support local and regional employment and skills priorities, along with the headline approach of how it intended to commission this skills funding over the next three years, reflecting local and regional priorities, and ensuring an agile and locally responsive approach that helped more people gain essential skills, move into good jobs, and that supported the WMCA's wider ambitions for inclusive green economic growth.

Resolved:

- (1) The proposed commissioning and procurement approach for skills programmes to support ongoing delivery of adult training and education to address local and regional economic and skills needs be approved.
- (2) Authority to carry out commissioning of the specified skills funding, including any procurement activity as required, be delegated to the Executive Director of Economic Delivery, Skills & Communities, in consultation with the s151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, and in discussion with the Portfolio Lead for Skills & Productivity.
- (3) Authority for the approval of the final Multiply Investment Plan to the Department of Education by 30 June 2022, be delegated to the Executive Director of Economic Delivery, Skills & Communities and the Director of Finance & Business Hub, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Skills & Productivity, noting that this investment plan had been developed in conjunction with the local authority/local enterprise partnership Employment & Skills Officers Group, and that any further changes to the plan following this board meeting would be communicated to members.

10. Update on Trailblazer Devolution Deal

The board considered a report of the Executive Director of Strategy, Integration & Net Zero on the latest progress being made in relation to the Trailblazer Devolution Deal.

The Trailblazer Devolution Deal process was continuing with devolution proposals being developed across a wide range of themes. Proposals were being developed in accordance with the principles and plans previously agreed by the WMCA Board. In particular, proposals had a clear focus on drawing down powers and finance from Government, and the roles and responsibilities held by local authorities would not be drawn away from them through this process.

Councillor Mike Bird stressed the importance of being innovative and aspirational in the devolution deal submission. The Executive Director of Strategy, Integration & Net Zero reported that substantial work was being undertaken around the idea of levelling up zones, which was an example of some of the innovative work that was being developed. The board would see the detail of this thinking at future meetings.

Resolved:

The progress being made in relation to the Trailblazer Devolution Deal be noted.

11. Public Service Reform Board - 1 March 2022

The board received the minutes of the Public Service Review Board meeting held on 1 March 2022.

The Chair noted that this was the last meeting of the board and thanked the members who had participated in its meetings.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2022 be noted.

12. Wellbeing Board - 8 March 2022

The board received the minutes of the Wellbeing Board meeting held on 8 March 2022.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2022 be noted.

13. Environment & Energy Board - 9 March 2022

The board received the minutes of the Environment & Energy Board meeting held on 9 March 2022.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2022 be noted.

14. Transport Delivery Committee - 14 March 2022

The board received the minutes of the Transport Delivery Committee meeting held on 14 March 2022.

The Chair noted that Councillor Kath Hartley was stepping down as chair of this committee for the forthcoming year. He thanked her for her commitment towards improving public transport across the region during the time she had chaired this committee.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2022 be noted.

15. Investment Board - 21 March 2022

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board meeting held on 21 March 2022.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2022 be noted.

16. Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee - 12 April 2022

The board received the minutes of the inquorate Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee meeting held on 12 April 2022.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2022 be approved.

17. HS2 Regional Enterprise Board - 12 April 2022

The board received the minutes of the HS2 Regional Enterprise Board meeting held on 12 April 2022.

In respect of minute no. 6 ('WMCA HS2 Strategic Supply Chain Activities & Proposed Mayoral Supply Chain Summit'), Councillor Ian Courts noted the successful supply chain event held on 9 June that had promoted the opportunities available to local businesses as part of the construction programme for the HS2 line.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2022 be noted.

18. Investment Board - 25 April 2022

The board received the minutes of the Investment Board meeting held on 25 April 2022.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2022 be noted.

19. Housing & Land Delivery Board - 27 April 2022

The board received the minutes of the Housing & Land Delivery Board meeting held on 27 April 2022.

In respect of minute no. 50 ('Quarterly Report on Housing & Land Portfolio Deliverables and Progress on Housing & Land Annual Business Plan'), Councillor Mike Bird welcomed the recent memorandum of understanding that had been signed with L&G to commit to £4bn of investment into the region during the next seven years.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022 be noted.

20. Economic Growth Board - 13 May 2022

The board received the minutes of the Economic Growth Board meeting on 13 May 2022.

In respect of minute no. 13 ('Trailblazing Devolution Deal - Economic Positions'), Councillor Patrick Harley noted that there was significant scope for the West Midlands to improve its access to foreign direct investment.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2022 be noted.

21. Young Combined Authority: March - June Update

The board considered a report setting out the activity of the Young Combined Authority during March – June 2022.

Resolved:

The update be noted.

22. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 15 July 2022 at 11.00am.

The meeting ended at 12.40pm.