



## WMCA Board Meeting

<b>Date</b>	13 October 2017
<b>Report title</b>	West Midlands Competitive Positioning Project
<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	Mayor of the West Midlands
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<b>Report has been considered by</b>	WMCA SEP Board - 12 October 2017 WMCA Programme Board - 13 October 2017

### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

#### The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the proposed West Midlands Brand Framework (identity system), which is based on a 'family of brands' with common features - for example the hexagon shape - to deliver a unified brand identity for the region.
- (2) Approve the approach that each corporate entity - West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA); West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC); Transport for West Midlands and the Mayor's Office - develop and finalise individual organisational brands against the principles of the above framework.
- (3) Support further consumer testing and consultation work to be undertaken by Transport for West Midlands on the non-rail elements of the transport family.
- (4) Agree that the West Midlands Growth Company works with Local Enterprise Partnerships to finalise brand assets to enable profile at a sub-regional level.

- (5) Approve the adoption of the 'Make Your Mark' ident as a key component in providing alignment and demonstrating regional unity, both within the identity framework and beyond via associated partners organisations.

## 1.0 Purpose

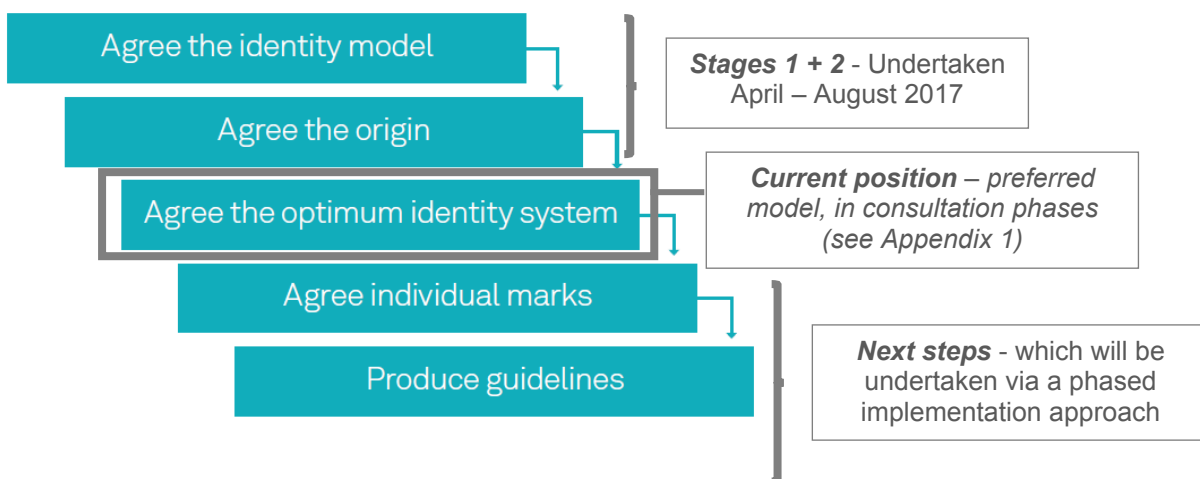
- 1.1 For the Board to receive and consider a presentation that outlines a new regional brand identity framework (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 For the Board to consider this paper and agree the above recommendations.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) partners have been working to establish and deploy a new integrated brand framework for the region, which will provide brand direction for the region over the next 5-10 years. This development will empower the West Midlands competitive positioning by providing a platform for collaboration across both public and private sectors.
- 2.2 Upon the request of the Mayor of the West Midlands, a working group - see the list below - was established to consider two key factors: (i) *the corporate portfolio* - brand alignment between entities; alongside (ii) *external profile* - promotion of the region from an economic development perspective. Partners include: (a) The Mayor's Office - Andrew Browning; (b) the West Midlands Combined Authority - Jan Jennings and Martin Reeves; (c) Transport for West Midlands - Laura Shoaf and Malcom Holmes and (d) the West Midlands Growth Company - Neil Rami and Emma Gray.

## 3.0 The Branding Process

- 3.1 The brand is centred on a proposition called "Make your Mark", which is rooted in the region's rich industrial heritage. However, it is forward looking in orientation, celebrating the modern assets and achievements of the region as a place to live, work and visit.
- 3.2 In order to create an optimum brand identity system for the West Midlands, based on the "Make your Mark" proposition, the following five-stage process has been adopted:



## 4.0 Current position and next steps

- 4.1 As identified in the above diagram, the project is midway through the process. A preferred 'Family Hybrid' branding model is currently in consultation with stakeholders.

- 4.2 **The rationale** - West Midlands' partners need to:
- ensure that the emerging brand landscape is aligned e.g. the formation of the WMGC, the new West Midlands Rail franchise;
  - support multiple customer interactions and journeys, both within the region and externally and
  - enable 'out of region' promotion and have an agreed route for collective representation domestically and internationally

- 4.3 **The specification** – a regional identity system that will deliver a distinctive brand framework, with the place proposition at the heart of its concept, which will be achieved consistently by using core features (i.e. messaging, ident shape, colour, font).

**The benefits** – of a West Midlands brand framework include delivery of:

- a regional brand portfolio which will bring clear alignment when executed collectively and independently;
  - platform for collaboration which will enable promotion of the region and sub regions; and
  - a flexible identity framework, which will incorporate a system that will provide options for engagement and adopting the brand.
- 4.4 Having established the brand foundations, stakeholder consultation has been undertaken across key groups (see Appendix 2). To date the identity system has largely received positive endorsement. However, it should be noted that two observation points have arisen during this process (a) to ensure that the identity system is compliant with the Equality Impact Assessment and (b) issues have been raised about the Transport for West Midlands brand idents. A detailed response was received from Malcolm Holmes, Programme director, West Midlands Rail, explaining the background to the branding process and critical timelines for roll-out of the rail branding in line with the new franchise.
- 4.5 It is proposed that each organisation takes full responsibility for its own branding implementation. It makes sense to have a phased implementation, as appropriate to the business needs, context and resource capabilities of each organisation. The aim must be for full brand alignment to be delivered within a 24-month period. It is recommended that as the remainder of the non-rail, TfWM family will need to be brought forward, linked to strategic developments for example of the metro system, that this is completed within the next 12-month period. As a result of the feedback received during the consultation, it seems prudent to undertake some more detailed consumer testing and consultation on the non-rail elements of the transport family prior to full implementation. Any proposed changes will need to be considered by TfWM and ultimately approved by the WMCA Board. For the reasons outlined in the report, the rail branding as it is directly linked to the new franchise has already been approved through the appropriate governance channels and so should not be included in this process.

## 5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 This project has been funded via WMCA and WMGC budgets. Any future costs to undertake further consumer testing, establish branding guidelines and to implement the new branding and identity will have to be met completely by the responsible, individual organisation.

**6.0 Legal implications**

6.1 None directly arising from this report.

**7.0 Equalities implications**

7.1 This project will ensure that an Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken to ensure that outputs are compliant.

**8.0 Other implications**

8.1 None directly arising from this report.

**9.0 Schedule of background papers**

9.1 N/A

## APPENDIX 1 – PROPOSED WEST MIDLANDS IDENTITY SYSTEM



# Work in Progress

Proposed framework based on hexagon formation – (a) core colour and fonts to be finalised and (b) Idents are examples only and will be concluded by each corporate entity

**Note:** The Board will receive a detailed presentation on the day.

## APPENDIX 2 – CONSULTATION PROGRESS SUMMARY

<b>Timings</b>	<b>Groups</b>
<b>13.09.17 – completed</b>	<b>Three LEP Group</b> <i>Attended:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jonathan Browning, Paula Dees</li> <li>▪ Chris Loughran, Roger Mendonca</li> <li>▪ Sarah Middleton</li> <li>▪ Martin Reeves</li> </ul> <i>Unable to attend:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stewart Towe</li> </ul>
<b>13.09.17 – completed</b>	<b>WMGC marketing group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nick Blofeld</li> <li>▪ Chris Loughran</li> <li>▪ Fiona Allan</li> <li>▪ Ninder Johal</li> <li>▪ Prof. Stuart Croft</li> </ul>
<b>29.09.17 – completed</b>	<b>7 METS Chief Executives</b> - Martin Reeves to lead on consultation
<b>September - completed</b>	<b>New WMCA CE</b> - Martin to brief Deborah Cadman
<b>September - completed</b>	<b>ABCA Group</b> - The Black Country Chief Executive group – Local Authorities and LEP - emailed with update outside the groups meeting schedule
<b>02.10. 17 - completed</b>	<b>WMGC Board</b>
<b>12.10.17</b>	<b>SEP Board</b>
<b>13.10.17</b>	<b>WMCA Programme Board</b> <b>WMCA BOARD</b>