

WMCA Board

Date	10 February 2023
Report title	HS2 Growth Delivery Programme
Portfolio Lead	Environment, Energy & HS2 - Councillor Ian Courts
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Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note and support the progress made as detailed in this report.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed update of the actions and activities undertaken on behalf of the WMCA over the last twelve months, by the WMCA HS2 Regional Enterprise Board (REB) and the workstreams that support the delivery of the WMCA HS2 programme.

Background

2. HS2 will provide vital high-speed rail links between cities and regions across the UK, and will reduce journey times between some of the country's largest cities creating economic benefits and thousands of jobs.
3. HS2 will enter service between 2029 and 2033 when Phase One (London to Birmingham) is complete with stations at London Euston, Old Oak Common, Interchange and Birmingham Curzon Street. Services will expand as future phases of the network are built over the coming years stretching to Manchester, Crewe and the East Midlands.

4. In 2015, following the submission of the first HS2 Growth Strategy and the subsequent formation of the WMCA, the HS2 Growth Delivery Board (GDB) was used as the main means by which the challenges and opportunities that would be presented by HS2, were dealt with at a regional level. The key focus of our original strategy was on 'People, Business & Place (inc. connectivity & environment) to maximise the wider social, economic and environmental benefits HS2 would bring and the wider opportunities offered to this region.
5. In the refresh of the programme governance, approved by the WMCA Board in July 2021, it was agreed that the WMCA HS2 Regional Enterprise Board would focus on six key opportunities. This ensured that the region sought to maximise the benefits of not just the construction and future operation of HS2, but the wider economic benefits that could be realised by focussing on the following:
 - **Economic opportunity** – focus on business opportunities to help local and regional businesses to succeed.
 - **Education opportunity** – focus on enhanced training and development of skills for local people.
 - **Employment opportunity** – target key employment opportunities that are created not just by the construction of HS2, but as part of the wider regeneration aspirations of the region and by the attraction of new industry.
 - **Environmental opportunity** – focus on the potential of 'natural capital' and how we can use this in partnerships with HS2 Ltd and partners to achieve our WM2041 targets.
 - **Engagement opportunities** – linking both people and organisations to the wider opportunities presented by HS2 across this region and help change the narrative of what HS2 really means to people in this region.
 - **Energy opportunity** – looking at how we can capitalise on renewable energy and decarbonisation presented by HS2.

People

6. Over the last 12 months, considerable progress has been made with both the release of data from HS2 Ltd, and with the delivery of employment & training support across the entire region. We have also seen continued significant engagement with schools across the region, helping pupils better understand the opportunities created by HS2. Below is a snapshot of some of these key achievements on the construction of HS2 which has already created more than 12,000 new jobs:
 - As of December 2022, 849 residents of the West Midlands were employed directly by HS2 Ltd
 - As of December 2022, 7,953 FTE were engaged on West Midlands on HS2 contracts.
 - 38% of all jobs posted on the 'HS2 jobs board' were for roles within the WMCA geography.
 - 399 'apprenticeship starts' (Annex 1 fig 1)
 - 729 workless starts having completed a minimum of 26 weeks continuous employment that had little or limited skills when their training programme began (Annex 1 fig 2)
 - 2249 students took part in workshops in this region with a total of forty-eight workshops delivered by The Small Piece trust. Significant further engagement is planned for 2023.

(All statistics provided by HS2 Ltd December 2022)

7. In support of this, the WMCA and its partners have also provided construction training to nearly 1500 local residents with a view to becoming employed on the HS2 construction programme, with an average of 50% of these attaining employment on the programme after training. We are also continuing to invest over £1.5m a year funding training directly linked to HS2 construction project.
8. We have now established training pathways agreed with BBV as HS2 Main Works contractor for labour supply to the project, operating in 10 colleges across the WMCA including the Black Country, Solihull, Birmingham, Coventry and Warwickshire and a new Community Hub at South and City College Birmingham and are supporting other developing hubs in Wolverhampton and Walsall.

Business

9. Regarding the wider economic impacts, it was agreed by the HS2 REB to reform the 'WMCA HS2 Strategic Supply Chain Panel' to ensure that as many businesses HS2 as possible from within the WMCA region are aware of the potential opportunities presented by HS2.
10. We have had several conversations to gather intelligence from local professional services firms that are engaged with local SMEs to help us develop a firm understanding of the challenges that are faced by businesses in this region. We have also held, and have planned, several 'Roundtable events' which have been attended by local businesses to share with them the potential opportunities presented not just by the construction of HS2, but also by the wider supply chain. To support this further, we have held our second WMCA HS2 Mayoral Supply Chain event which was attended by nearly 150 companies.
11. To date, 2,750 businesses have delivered work on HS2, many of which are from the West Midlands and over two thirds are SMEs. We are currently working with HS2 Ltd to try and get a more detailed local picture on the specific regional business engagement numbers and will report back in due course on progress.
12. Following Brexit and the post covid impacts, we have discussed with Government departments such as BEIS & DHLUC, the potential for future central government policy changes and the development of funding initiatives that may be needed, to help support our local businesses engage in HS2 and the wider regeneration of our region.

Place

13. With regards to the wider development of stations and other key assets, we have worked extensively to support the development and delivery of the following key infrastructure:
 - **Curzon Street Station** – Work has continued to support the development and delivery of not only the station, but the wider 'Curzon Commercialisation' opportunities and active and sustainable transport opportunities. This has included working with both DfT & HS2 Ltd ensuring that the public transport schemes, in particular the delivery of the Eastside Metro extension is delivered in a timely and efficient manner.
 - **Interchange Station** – Significant financial and professional support has helped us achieve the delivery of the necessary connectivity into the Interchange site that will facilitate future development opportunities. This along with the financial support offered for the design and delivery of the 4500 multi-story car park, in place of the proposed 7500 space surface level car park, opens the entire site for development that will yield significant returns for this region when delivered.

- **Washwood Heath Depot** – The Washwood Heath Masterplan is expected to be issued to wider stakeholders in early 2023. It will offer approximately twenty-four hectares of key development & employment land in one of the key growth areas within the East Birmingham North Solihull Growth Corridor. It is hoped that construction on site can start in 2026 following formal approval.

Connectivity

14. Regarding wider connectivity and facilitating access to these sites, significant work on the 'Regional Transport Strategy' has looked to ensure that these assets and others that will be delivered as part of the wider economic growth delivered by HS2, are fully connected to both people and businesses to ensure that the full benefits of HS2 are realised.
15. On the sustainable transport front, as part of the initiatives that have been undertaken, there has been a specific focus on active and sustainable travel. In 2020 a Task and Finish Group was established to develop a network of routes feeding into the developments around HS2 stations and other assets. Recently this work has focused on areas where there are opportunities to further improve and add to this network, such as Delta Junction in Warwickshire and the 'Wider Curzon Area.'

Environmental

16. On the environmental front, there has been significant direct and indirect activity by HS2 Ltd in our region to date including:
 - Creation of 43 new habitats within the West Midlands covering approx.115 hectares including 74 new ponds.
 - BBV will be planting 1,000 hectares of woodland, wildflower grassland and wetland across the region - about the area of 1,300 football pitches.
 - £4,296,103 has been awarded in the West Midlands (Warwickshire, Solihull and Birmingham) from HS2's Community & Environment Fund (CEF) and Business & Local Economy Fund (BLEF)
 - 81 local projects in the West Midlands have received funding since 2017.
17. We are now also actively working with HS2 Ltd on re-launching the WMCA HS2 Environment & Landscape Board to capitalise on these opportunities yet further and will provide a further update on this in due course.

Financial Implications

18. There are no financial implications in relation to this report. All projects and programmes that are within the HS2 programme are funded accordingly via individual funding strategies as identified within the respective project & programme business cases.

Legal Implications

19. There are no legal implications in relation to this report.

Impact on Delivery of Strategic Transport Plan

20. As part of the wider development of the HS2 Growth Strategy, and most recently the refresh that took place in 2021, alignment with the Strategic Transport Plan (STP) a review was undertaken to ensure that the schemes within the STP are also contained within the 'HS2 Wider Connectivity' section with the HS2 Growth Strategy ensuring synergies across respective documents.

21. This work has again been reviewed during 2022 following the development of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, (CRSTS) specifically looking at key growth corridors such as 'East Birmingham North Solihull' (EBNS) to ensure that priorities are aligned.

Equalities Implications

22. Each of the individual projects and programmes contained within the overall HS2 programme are required to undertake equalities impact assessments as part of their standard project development and for these to be reviewed and revised as part of the standard regular project and programme reporting cycles that are currently in place.

Inclusive Growth Implications

23. The primary drivers for the HS2 programme are to ensure that 'inclusive growth' in all its forms is at the heart of every project and reflects the activities stated within the '6 E's' above and within the REB 'Terms of Reference'. It is the essence of all the work that is undertaken and will remain a key focus of the programme for the future.

Geographical Area of Report's Implications

24. HS2 and the potential benefits from both the construction and the 'legacy' of the project, stretch across the breadth of the West Midlands region. The membership of the REB has been designed to ensure that all parts from the WMCA are represented to guarantee that these opportunities are maximised.

Other Implications

25. No other implications have been identified at this time.

Schedule of Background Papers

N/A

Annex 1
Fig: 1

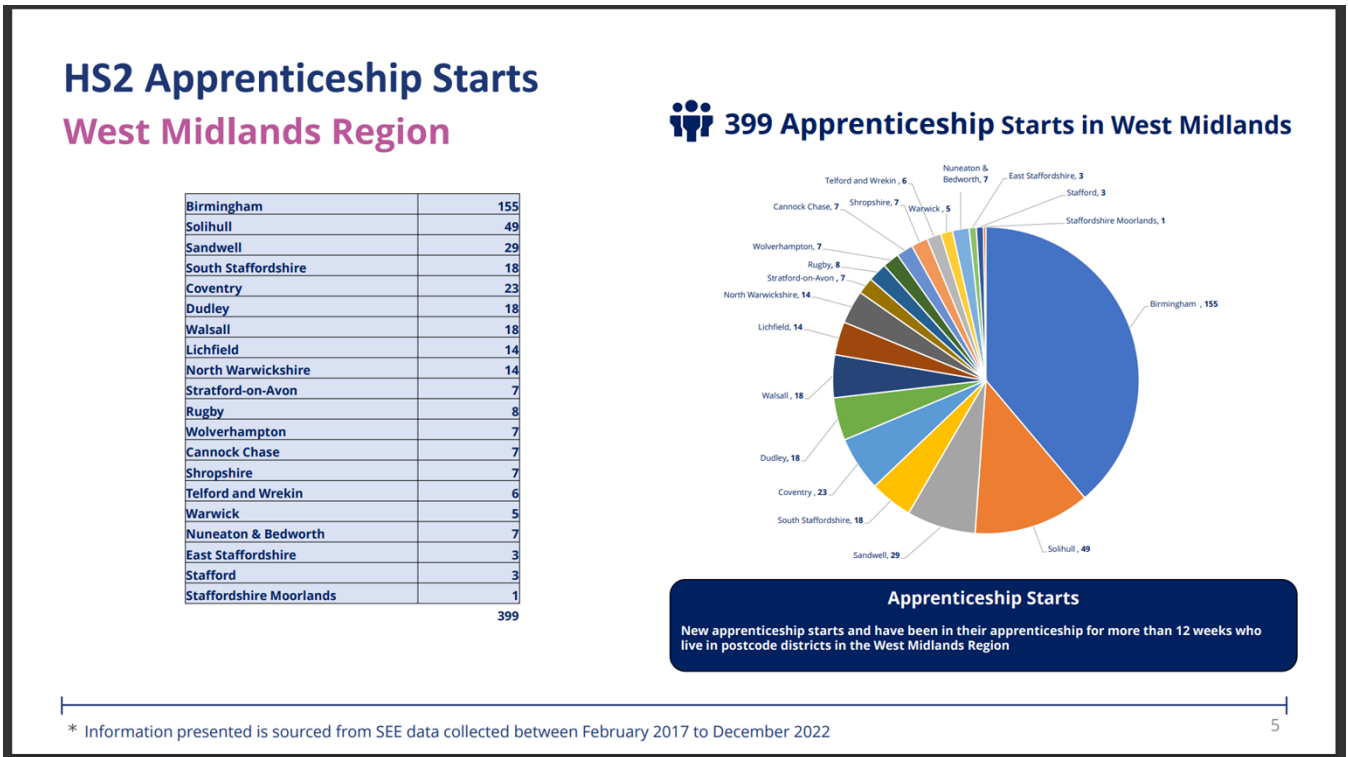


Fig: 2

