

West Midlands 'Trailblazer' Deeper Devolution Deal: Implementation Plan

August 2023



West Midlands
Combined Authority



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Introduction

This document contains high-level implementation plans for each of the workstreams in the trailblazer deeper devolution deal (the deal), updated where relevant from the Implementation Plan shared with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Board in June and complemented by the summary above. The deal was agreed in principle by the WMCA and His Majesty's Government (HMG) in March 2023. The purpose of this document is to provide WMCA Board with an overview of the implementation activities that are underway and scheduled.

Overview of the Deal

The deal contains over 190 separate commitments from Government to: fund specific projects; give the region greater influence over policies and programmes; confer a new function onto WMCA; and strengthen ways of working with Government across a range of policy areas.

For some of these commitments, there are deliverables or activities with set deadlines, which means the implementation plan can be relatively definitive in these areas. For other commitments, particularly those that commit to further co-production of policy, the outputs and attendant deadlines are less tightly defined. The implementation plans provided here therefore reflect the heterogeneity of the commitments.

The implementation of commitments will be an iterative and dynamic process, responding to new information from government and external events, further deliberations within the region and interdependencies between policy areas.

For example, any outcomes and metrics that the WMCA is required to report against to satisfy the scrutiny protocol (see section on Governance and Accountability) will have to respond to developments in negotiations over the single settlement (see section on Single Settlement, Fiscal devolution and Capital Funding), which are proceeding to different timescales. For this reason, it is not possible to write a definitive, single implementation plan that captures all of the relevant information. Where plans change, WMCA will work with regional partners to re-calibrate and evolve its response, such as through existing local authority reference groups. Deal implementation is necessarily an ongoing process and will require continued engagement and further detail to be added on to each workstream over time.

The rest of this Implementation Plan is divided into 25 different workstreams covering the different aspects of the deal. The sections are organised in the order of the deal text with cross-referencing to the relevant pages and paragraphs of the deal Text. Each section follows a similar format.

Governance and Accountability

Deal text reference

- Pages 9 to 14

Summary of deal commitments in this area

The deal:

- makes clear that the trailblazer commitments in general, and the single settlement commitment in particular (see page 6) are conditional on stronger scrutiny arrangements. There is also a move to standardise scrutiny processes across mayoral combined authorities (MCAs) through the publication of the English Devolution Accountability Framework;
- states that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) will engage WMCA, and other MCAs, on the development of a ‘scrutiny protocol’ that sets out the relationship between the Mayor, the MCA and its scrutiny and audit functions. The scrutiny protocol will focus on ensuring that each institution has a sustained culture of scrutiny;
- includes measures to enhance the profile and quality of scrutiny committees within MCAs;
- builds on existing Mayor’s Question Time, where the Mayor visits all parts of the region to take questions from the public and chaired by an independent person;
- suggests that where appropriate and only if requested, the Mayor and Portfolio Holders could attend up to one constituent council meeting a year;
- introduces quarterly broadcasted sessions with the Members of Parliament (MPs) representing West Midlands parliamentary constituencies where MPs will be able to scrutinise the Mayor; and
- reinforces existing practices at the WMCA where the Mayor and portfolio leads attend, when appropriate, WMCA Overview and Scrutiny committee meetings.

Legal or financial implications

- The scrutiny protocol and internal review of scrutiny function have potential legal and governance implications. The requirement to design and deliver new MPs sessions will need new, dedicated, resource.
- The deal requires an unspecified amount of funding support for communications and research to be given to chair of scrutiny committees.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Bob Sleigh

Exec Lead: Helen Griffiths

SRO: Julia Cleary

Reference Group: Via Overview & Scrutiny

How will this work be administered?

- WMCA Governance Team will lead the administration of new accountability and scrutiny arrangements.

How will this work be delivered?

- WMCA Governance Team will be responsible for delivering the MPs’ sessions in collaboration with the Mayor’s Office and Portfolio Holders.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be engaged on the development of terms of reference for new MPs' sessions through the overview and scrutiny process.
- Local authorities will be engaged on developments in the English Devolution Accountability Framework (EDAF), and will be consulted where the scrutiny protocol calls for action on the part of portfolio holders.
- Local authorities will be engaged on the outcome of the internal review of scrutiny functions and will have a decision-making role on any proposed changes that are brought to WMCA Board.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Scrutiny protocol to be written – by summer 2023.
- Terms of reference for MPs' sessions – by summer 2023.
- 'Plain English guidance' to increase awareness across the region of the roles of the Mayor, MCA, local authorities and the government – expected by summer 2023.
- Review of Independent Review of Greater Manchester Combined Authority scrutiny arrangements and consider implementation - by March 2024.
- WMCA resolution to introduce the MPs' sessions – to be confirmed.

Outstanding issues and questions

- The relationship between the outcomes and metrics in the EDAF and those required for the single settlement is unclear.

Single Settlement, Fiscal Devolution and Capital funding

Deal text reference

- Pages 17 to 18 for business rates retention
- Pages 21 to 23 for single settlement
- Page 69 for Digital, cultural and environmental projects
- Page 32, para 104, for the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- **Business rates retention (BRR).** over ten years will enable constituent authorities to retain 100% of the rates generated in their respective areas. This replaces the rolling BRR arrangements that have been in place as an annual pilot since 2017. Government has reserved the right to re-set (full or in part) the growth baseline and the ‘no detriment’ protection mechanism in the pilot has been removed. The ‘no detriment’ protection mechanism has not been used in over six years of the pilot so the absence of ‘no detriment’ protection in the deal is considered to be low risk.
- **Single settlement.** WMCA currently manage in the region of 100 individual grants from Government, all with their own declaration requirements and monitoring and reporting requirements ranging from light touch to considerably onerous. The implementation of a “single settlement” will simplify the overall funding landscape. The main characteristics of the single settlement will mean WMCA manages funding to correspond with five ‘functional pillars’: local growth and place, local transport, housing and regeneration, adult skills and net zero. The settlements are intended to cover an entire Spending Review period of typically 5 years. The region will no longer need to bid into specific competitive funding rounds but will instead receive future funding lines through allocation in exchange for agreeing a series of outputs and outcomes, with funding decisions to be taken via the region’s governance infrastructure.

- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.** DLUHC committed to provide £60m to help address cost pressures on the Metro Extension project, subject to approval of a business case.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** DLUHC has committed to provide £25m capital funding for green and innovative projects, subject to approval of their respective business cases. The projects that will be, and are being, submitted to DLUHC for approval are: additional Air Quality monitors; a Cultural Heritage Infrastructure Fund, capital support for West Midlands Industrial Decarbonisation and Smart City Region.

Legal or financial implications

- **Business rate retention.** The deal does not provide any guidance on how retained business rates should be apportioned between local authorities and WMCA, but WMCA financial plans assume the existing arrangements will be maintained. This will be subject to local agreements and consents in due course. The outcome of this agreement has implications for the financial sustainability of WMCA. It is likely that local arrangements where local authorities pool gains to ‘bail out’ individual local authorities who suffer a detriment, as per the current pilot, could remain in the amended ten-year scheme, subject to local consents.

- **Single settlement.** Until the scope of the settlement is agreed, which we are exploring within the region and engaging with Government on, it is not possible to firmly assess the quantum of funding that WMCA will receive through the settlement. WMCA has the option to not agree to an MoU on the terms of the single settlement with Government, should we consider it to be detrimental to the region. If the implementation of the single settlement lives up to its full potential, there are significant implications for how WMCA makes investment decisions and the governance, outcomes and data structures needed to support local decision making.
- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.** None, as the business case for this project has already undergone significant development with the Department for Transport.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** None, as the business cases for each project have been under development for some time, some of which have gained approval from WMCA Executive Board and are ready to be submitted to DLUHC.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Bob Sleigh

Exec Lead: Linda Horne

SRO: Carl Pearson

Reference Group: LA Finance Directors

How will this work be administered?

- **Business rate retention.** This will be administered via the pre-existing mechanisms between LAs, WMCA and Government that have been in place since 2017.
- **Single settlement.** The single settlement will be administered by WMCA. The principles for how decisions will be taken is the subject of collaborative, on-going work across the region between the CA and LAs.
- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.** This will be administered through the existing structures for the first phase of the Metro extension project.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** Each business case for these projects contains a management case that sets out how WMCA, and partner organisations in some instances, will administer these projects. See the relevant plans below for more detail

How will this work be delivered?

- **Single settlement.** The different projects or services funded through the single settlement will be delivered through a range of mechanisms, which can include direct delivery by a constituent authority. The purpose of the single settlement is to free the region from the top-down control and pre-definition of delivery arrangements associated with the grant making process, with greater trust and flexibility locally to deliver against 'outcomes' agreed between the region and HMT. The arrangement gives far more scope for the region to decide collectively how funding should be delivered.
- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.** This will be delivered through contract structures already put in place by Transport for the West Midlands (TfWM) for these works.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** Each business case for these projects contains a management case that sets out how WMCA, and partner organisations in some instances, will administer these projects. See the relevant plans below for more detail.

Single Settlement, Fiscal Devolution and Capital funding

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- WMCA is engaging across the region with LAs and with HMT/DLUHC on the design of single settlement. The single settlement MoU will go to a WMCA Board meeting in the autumn.
- The Finance Directors' group will be informed of single settlement and business rate retention developments and have the opportunity to advise and influence accordingly.
- Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Stakeholder Board will continue to engage Dudley and Sandwell representatives about progress with Metro.

Key milestones and deliverables

- **Single settlement.** We are working towards agreeing an MoU for the single settlement in the autumn, most likely linked to the Autumn Statement. The date for the Autumn Statement is yet to be formally confirmed but November is a possibility.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** The 4 projects to be funded from the £25m allocation have been designed to be initiated and deliver benefits over the next one, or in some cases two, financial years. The next milestone is to ensure these refreshed business cases complete the WMCA internal assurance and governance process as soon as possible, so they can be submitted to DLUHC for final approval. We would hope to have achieved this by mid-summer.
- **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension funding.** a refreshed business case is required for DLUHC. The business case is already well developed and had challenge from DfT. In order to de-risk the delivery of this project, it is essential this proceeds through WMCA governance processes as soon as possible. WMCA are in dialogue with Government with respect to developing an appropriate timeline for submitting the business case to secure the funding.
- **Digital, cultural and environmental projects.** Each project business case sets out how the projects will be administered, which varies in each case. See the plans below (for example, culture and digital).

Outstanding issues and questions

- The region is working collaboratively through the range of policy and delivery implications of the single settlement, which we expect will require significant further engagement over the coming year and beyond.



Data

Deal text reference

- Pages 15 to 16 for Data

Summary of deal commitments in this area

The deal commits the Government and WMCA to transform its approach to accessing, using, sharing, and reusing data. It does so through:

- **Legal:** a legal gateway for the safe sharing of data;
- **Accountability:** a data partnership for timely access to data at right geographical level;
- **Engagement:** representation on the Chief Data Officers Council and the establishment of a Local Chief Data Officers Council; and
- **Innovation:** working with the Spatial Data Unit, hosting a data symposium, and the training and development of data experts

These advances in data capability should then be used to support decision making, evaluation and monitoring of the Single Settlement (see below).

Legal or financial implications

- We need to understand the extent to which: the WMCA is compliant with Government Functional Standards on data / data maturity, information security, and assured organisational connectivity, whether the WMCA has appropriate information governance arrangements in place and platforms to store shared data.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Bob Sleigh

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

SRO: Si Chun Lam

Reference Group: New LA data officers group

How will this work be administered?

- There is an existing Research, Intelligence, Analysis and Data (RIAD) Steering Group in place, with a Terms of Reference refreshed in November 2022.
- A task-and-finish group reporting to the Steering Group will be best placed to lead on the data workstream, in line with the WMCA's RIAD Implementation Plan (and the Data & Analytics Development Plan)

How will this work be delivered?

- This is set out in the existing RIAD (and Data & Analytics Development Plan).
- The work will be delivered by a series of task-and-finish groups reporting to the WMCA Steering Group, led by the Head of Research, Intelligence, and Inclusive Growth.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Constituent local authorities will be engaged on the development and content of the Data Partnership through a new LA officers data group - West Midlands Insights on Society and Economy. .



Key milestones and deliverables

The work will be delivered as follows:

Legal:

- Data audit: as soon as possible, the WMCA should commission and independent data audit to ensure that the WMCA is fully compliant with those standards.
- Data partnership: alongside this, the WMCA will need to identify appropriate people to negotiate a data partnership.

Accountability:

- Compliance: the WMCA will need to ensure we have a process in place for information security and assurance, research compliance.
- ‘Conway’ data platform: develop a data platform for storing data from different sources.

Engagement:

- Representation: a standing item on our research and intelligence journey on the WMCA Exec Board.
- Partnership: establishment of a Local Authority Data Group with constituent local authority insight leads.

Innovation:

- People: developing job families aligned to civil service digital, data analysis and technology roles; developing expectations and standards for data literacy across all internal roles,
- Influence: develop partnerships and networks with constituent local authorities, research partners and private sector to fully maximise opportunities with SDU and the data symposium.
- Data symposium: hold a data symposium (tentative plan for late-2024).

Outstanding issues and questions

WMCA

- Governance arrangements: no timescales or details established yet.
- Appropriate resourcing: no approved funding for the delivery of these programmes of work as of yet.
- Health: the health element specifically looks at working with Health and Wellbeing Boards, and NHS bodies.

Government

- Timescales and /or further details needed from Government regarding the Chief Data Officers Council, the Local Chief Data Officers Council, the Spatial Data Unit, the Data symposium and the accountability framework.

Levelling Up Zones

Deal text reference

- Pages 16 to 19 on Levelling Up Zones
- This section excludes discussion of Investment Zones, which were not formally part of the deal offer

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- The deal commits Government to work with WMCA to designate a number of specific 'Levelling Up Zones' (up to 6) within which 100% of business rates growth above an agreed baseline will be retained for 25 years, subject to a business case. Retained rates would not be subject to reset at any national reset within this period. WMCA is encouraged to support the success of sites by aligning other investments with them.
- Investment Zones were announced as part of the 2023 Spring Budget outside of the formal Devolution Deal: and more detailed guidance on these has been published for these than is currently available for Levelling Up Zones.

Legal or financial implications

- The Business Rate Retention commitment within Levelling Up Zones requires a statutory instrument, similar to the process for designating Enterprise Zones
- Fiscal/financial incentives – although HMG has not identified additional government funding/fiscal streams, designation of Levelling Up Zones could act as a catalyst for coalescing other local and regional funding streams, which will be identified according to the specific needs and opportunities of each Levelling Up Zone.
- Governance – to be confirmed but initial discussions with DLUHC have indicated that as Levelling Up Zones were identified as 'locally led', the governance structures are likely to incorporate: an overarching West Midlands/DHLUC Levelling Up Zones Programme Board with Individual Levelling Up Zones Boards for each area designated.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sharon Thompson

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director for Strategy, Integration and Net Zero

SRO: Jonathan Skinner

Reference Group: LA DSG, SLAOG and Directors of Economic Development Officers' groups

How will this work be administered?

- Programme Board to be advised, but likely to report to WMCA Board.
- Individual Levelling Up Zones to have dedicated Board & governance agreed by LA(s).
- Designated local authority areas will have responsibility for administering the delivery of their respective areas, while the WMCA will be responsible for liaison with DLUHC to ensure compliance with Devolution Deal expectations.

How will this work be delivered?

- The delivery of Levelling Up Zones will be led by respective local authorities, who will be accountable for the delivery of expected outcomes, with support from WMCA where required. The designation process is still to be confirmed, based on work already undertaken with local authority partners in the development of the initial round of Investment Zones (under the Truss government) which has established a portfolio of development and regeneration opportunities.



Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Levelling Up Zones– require a Designation framework to be developed with DLUHC. WMCA will work closely with its local authority partners both bilaterally and through the DSG during this process to ensure designation mechanisms are fair and transparent.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Autumn 2023: LUZ proposals are submitted to Government in line with the national Investment Zone programme.
- April 2024: It is anticipated that LUZs – particularly those that contain business rate retention powers – will commence, aligned to the Investment Zone programme.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Designation process – liaison with DLUHC underway
- Governance – outline timeline in development
- Administrative & delivery arrangements etc to be agreed with local authority partners

Transport Planning, Innovation and Mass Transit

Deal text reference

- Pages 24 to 27 for transport planning and innovation, page 30 for mass transit

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- WMCA to deliver a pioneering Local Transport Plan (LTP) approach which embeds quantifying carbon reductions.
- TfWM to establish a transport 'sandbox' with government with associated use cases and other innovation activity.
- TfWM to deliver an influencing transport lab.
- WMCA to develop a proposal for the West Midlands to bid to host the 2027 World Intelligent Transport Systems Congress.
- WMCA to develop a local, last mile freight and logistics programme.
- Supporting the development of the Very Light Railway in Coventry.

Legal or financial implications

- The LTP and ITL programmes have resources secured from the Transport Levy and DfT grants respectively.
- Transport sandbox scope will be subject to detailed discussion with DfT. The individual use cases will need to be assessed for legal, equalities and financial implications.
- A funded World Intelligent Transport Systems Congress bid will need to be developed with DfT including detailed financial case.
- VLR development is subject to Single Assurance Framework.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Bird

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw, Executive Director, TfWM

SRO: Mike Waters, Director of Policy Strategy Innovation, TfWM

Reference Group: STOG

How will this work be administered?

- Some approvals required by WMCA Board, oversight by Strategic Transport Board.
- Delivery implementation monitoring by Senior Transport Officers Group and TfWM Strategy Board.

How will this work be delivered?

- The Sandbox requires a new relationship with government, and local authorities are a key part of that approach. This also applies to the ITL programme and possible local, last mile freight and logistics programme. The freight programme can enhance Plan for Growth implementation and the sandbox kerbside management use case.
- Last mile freight logistics will be delivered by Local Authorities within a regional framework
- Local Transport Plans continue to be developed and delivered by Local Authorities within an agreed regional framework



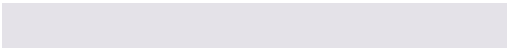
Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- These areas are complex in nature therefore require a combination of engagement, codesign, consultation and delivery between authorities and TfWM, and other regional partners.
- For example, Coventry City Council continues to lead R&D and the testing of VLR technology. TfWM working with Birmingham City Council and Solihull MBC, have commissioned a future mass transit study, including investigating future VLR opportunities for East Birmingham and North Solihull Corridor (aligning to the Levelling Up Zone for that area).

Key milestones and deliverables

- Winter 2022/23 – 2025: ITL programme
- Spring 2023 Operational transport sandbox begins.
- Autumn 2023: Developed use cases.
- Winter 2023: Published LTP QCR targets.
- 2023-2026: Proven VLR technology and city demonstrator delivered.
- 2025 onwards: Research and development helps to update the current TWA Order processes and regulations.
- 2027 onwards: Full VLR routes could form part of a CRSTS2 programme.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Uncertainty on national legislation and policy reforms, especially for new low speed zero emission vehicle categories.
- 

Bus and Bus Services

Deal text reference

- Page 27

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Devolving Commercial BSOG to the WMCA following a national reform policy consultation process.
- Implementing a further set of Bus Bye Laws, with TfWM having the ability to enforce bye laws on bus vehicles to help improve safety.

Legal or financial implications

- Commercial BSOG: Transfer of powers from the Transport Secretary of State (s154 (1) of Transport Act 2000) to the Mayor (on behalf of the WMCA). This is subject to formal public consultation and a legislative process.
- WMCA resource implications will need to be assessed as the detail of statutory instrument develops and be considered alongside other bus transformation work. Resources will need to be allocated to fully administer BSOG, once devolved.
- Further bus bye laws would be subject to detailed EqIA and public consultation. This will be progressed through a scoping exercise – the expectation is that this can be funded via existing resources.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Bird

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw, Executive Director, TfWM

SRO: Pete Bond, Director of Integrated Transport Services, TfWM and Mark Corbin, Director of Network Resilience

Reference Group: STOG

How will this work be administered?

- Schemes approvals will be required by WMCA Board, with oversight by Strategic Transport Board, TDC and Bus Alliance Board. Scrutiny sessions may also be required.
- Delivery implementation monitoring by STOG and TfWM Strategy Board.

How will this work be delivered?

TfWM reform priorities for commercial BSOG are: -

- Incentivising greener vehicle fleet investment and maximising our position as the UK investment leader in decarbonising bus fleets.
- Incentivising and directing private bus operators to expand bus services into areas of poor accessibility.

TfWM and DfT have already begun to identify cross boundary bus service issues around BSOG devolution.

TfWM will undertake a full scoping exercise with DLUHC and DfT on how to speedily enact a further set of bye laws including on the bus vehicles.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- TfWM reform priorities for devolved commercial BSOG will be subject to engagement with authorities through STOG, EP reference group and the Bus Alliance Board.
- Engagement and codesign will be required for bus bye laws/ASB powers implementation. This will involve partners such as local authorities, DfT, DLUHC, West Midlands Police/OPCC/BTP and transport operators.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Summer 2023: TfWM to respond to national policy consultation process for BSOG reform.
- Summer 2023: WMCA to respond to forthcoming consultation on national ASB Action Plan.
- 2023/2024: DfT to enact BSOG reforms and future bus bye laws for TfWM.
- 2024/2025: Reformed commercial BSOG devolved.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Uncertainty on when DfT will formally consult on national policy reforms and how we fully influence that to meet our desired outcomes.

Roads

Deal text reference

- Page 30

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Government will work with the WMCA to explore opportunities for traffic officers on the Key Route Network.
- Government is considering options for tackling pavement parking and will work with WMCA to explore appropriate powers for mayoral combined authorities and their constituent authorities in this area.

Legal or financial implications

- Supporting resources would need to be secured and funding identified, and necessary legal permission in place for allowing traffic officers on the Key Route Network.
- Pavement parking powers require national legislation changes.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Bird

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw, Executive Director, TfWM

SRO: Mark Corbin, Director of Network Resilience

Reference Group: STOG

How will this work be administered?

- Approvals will be required from WMCA Board, with oversight by Strategic Transport Board.
- Delivery implementation monitoring by STOG and TfWM Strategy Board.

How will this work be delivered?

- Pavement parking powers would be sought on behalf of constituent local authorities. It would be a decision for individual authorities to decide whether they wanted to enact these powers. TfWM would potentially support authorities to prepare schemes (similar to Moving Traffic Offence powers applications).

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- There will be commitment to engagement and the codesign of the traffic officer pilot
- Pavement parking enforcement would be a decision for individual authorities to decide whether they wanted to enact and deliver these powers (subject to national legislation and following guidance).

Key milestones and deliverables

- Summer/Autumn 2023: TfWM to develop a full business case with relevant partner organisations.
- 2024 onwards: approved business case and live trial operational.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Uncertainty on when DfT will publish its formal response to the 2020 pavement parking powers enforcement consultation and outlining next steps. Powers require national legislation changes.

Rail partnership with Great British Railways

Deal text reference

- Page 27 to 28

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- New partnership agreement between West Midlands Rail Exec (WMRE) and Great British Railways (GBR). WMRE is currently negotiating this agreement with the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) on behalf of the West Midlands region.

Legal or financial implications

- Short term resource is in place within WMRE. Additional medium-term resource may be required, subject to joint scoping and project planning with GBRTT.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Bird

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw, Executive Director, TfWM

SRO: Mal Drury Rose, Executive Director (WMRE), Director of Rail (TfWM)

Reference Group: STOG

How will this work be administered?

- Approvals required by WMRE Board, and WMCA Board. Delivery implementation monitoring by WMRE Officers Group, STOG and TfWM Strategy Board.

How will this work be delivered?

- This partnership deal will outline WMRE's role in the future West Midlands rail industry and the commitments will be embedded in the outcomes that the partnership will achieve.
- The partnership will deliver greater local accountability and influence over rail services in the region.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- There is ongoing commitment to engagement with constituent authorities, through existing WMRE member and officer representation.

Key milestones and deliverables

- April 2023 – Sep 2023: Joint implementation teams.
- October 2023 – March 2024: Joint development of partnership.
- April 2024 – December 2024: Pilots underway as partnerships embedded into GBR regions.
- January 2025 onwards: Go-Live.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Although a GBR transition team has been established within Network Rail, GBR reforms are subject to a supporting Transport/Rail Bill, which has not been laid before Parliament yet. This means there is uncertainty about fundamental questions such as the exact role, responsibilities and timescales for establishing a functioning GBR

Affordable Homes Programme

Deal text reference

- Pages 33 to 36

Summary of deal commitments in this area

Phase 1: 2023-26

- WMCA will set the overall strategic direction for the deployment of the AHP in the region for the first time outside of London.
- Homes England will invest at least £200 million of AHP funding within the WMCA area by March 2026 with a clear ambition for WMCA, local partners and Homes England to work together to invest up to £400 million to build more social and affordable homes by 2026.

Phase 2: Post 2026

- AHP funding will be devolved to WMCA – empowering WMCA to take many of the decisions currently taken by Homes England (around sites, providers and standards) – while continuing to partner with local authorities and HE. In this new ‘trailblazing’ model of delivery, the WMCA will make the key strategic decisions over local investment and spend of Affordable Homes Programme in the WMCA area in line with its strategic framework.

Legal or financial implications

- Subject to review & amendment of existing Homes England governance processes for current programme (2021-26): administration of funds will continue to sit with HE, with oversight & direction from WMCA. The implementation plan will explore the options for this process in discussion with HE and DLUHC, and in consultation with LA partners.
- There are no revenue funding inclusions within the deal for this workstream, which is currently being managed through existing resources. The scale of capital funding will be dependent upon the region providing a strong pipeline and delivery performance.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ian Courts

Exec Lead: John Godfrey, Interim Executive Director for Housing, Property & Regeneration

SRO: Rob Lamond

Reference Group: LA DSG and SLAOG officer groups

How will this work be administered?

- Through the Housing & Land Delivery Board reporting to WMCA Board for Phase 1. Early discussions are commencing with DLUHC and HE to ensure an appropriate agreement is in place by Autumn 2023.
- Phase 2 will require further governance arrangements to be agreed with DLUHC and HE.

How will this work be delivered?

- Delivery of the AHP up to 2026 will continue to be administered by Homes England but with a stronger strategic role for WMCA, with delivery of new affordable homes coming from investment into schemes with local authorities, registered providers and other providers.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- LA partners will be closely consulted through DSG and SLAOG groups as greater clarity emerges from discussions with DLUHC and HE colleagues. The deal is clear that existing relationships and agreements will be preserved through the new arrangements and that the deal should represent nil detriment to partners in the region.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Outline agreement DLUHC-HE-WMCA in place Autumn 2023.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Joint scheme pipeline & opportunities need to be developed with constituent members.
- Phase 2 details still to be developed.

Land Reform & Public Land

Deal text reference

- Pages 36 to 37

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- A formal public land reform partnership with the government led by Cabinet Office will be signed which provides WMCA with new strategic leadership, and clarity on Government Department/agency land and buildings, centring on decisions on disposals/development in the Government estate in the region.
- The new partnership with Cabinet Office will include a joint plan to anticipate where there may be potential upcoming disposals and reconfiguration of government land and buildings within the West Midlands to drive regeneration outcomes.

Legal or financial implications

- Legal & governance process for WMCA involvement in HMG decision making procedures to be developed in collaboration with Cabinet Office (and in accordance with WMCA existing decision-making governance).
- Funding to support this will need to be considered further through discussions with Cabinet Office.
- Financial implications from decisions ultimately made in the joint approach to Government land and assets will need to work through the partnership agreement to ensure appropriate protections are in place.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ian Courts

Exec Lead: John Godfrey, Interim Executive Director for Housing, Property & Regeneration

SRO: Rob Lamond

Reference Group: LA DSG and SLAOG officer groups

How will this work be administered?

- Joint working with the Cabinet Office, LGA and WMCA is currently in place with the Place Pilots programme. This programme will build upon these existing mechanisms and report via Housing & Land Delivery Board to WMCA Board.

How will this work be delivered?

- Partnership Plan will be co-developed by WMCA with the Cabinet Office.
- Individual land disposals/asset work will include a wide range of local and national bodies.
- WMCA will also work closely with local authority partners to understand if they have ownerships that they would like to identify as part of any comprehensive development scheme.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be engaged through the DSG and SLAOG groups to keep them informed of progress with Government during the negotiations with Cabinet Office. Clearly, once the agreement is in place and assets or land proposals are developing, LA partners will be invited to participate and co-design and delivery solutions if they wish to put forward their own land/assets.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Indicative target for a draft agreement with Cabinet Office is Autumn 2023.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Legal, Metrics and Evaluation and partnership plan TBD

Single Regeneration Fund

Deal text reference

- Pages 31 to 32

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- The government will devolve £100 million brownfield funding to WMCA to administer and deploy to drive placemaking, housing and urban regeneration across the whole region within this spending review period, supporting WMCA to deliver an output of 4,000 homes, as well as (for the first time) commercial and mixed-use development. This is subject to an internal business case between DLUHC- HMT, which WMCA have contributed to.
- WMCA will deploy the funds at scale and pace to de-risk stalled and challenging housing, urban and commercial development sites ensuring the overall programme delivers the outputs agreed with HMG.

Legal or financial implications

- The SRF will require a new Programme Business Case to be developed under the SAF process.
- Legal agreements of T&CS required with HMG
- Financial M&E will be undertaken on programme and individual schemes
- There is currently no identified revenue funding available to WMCA to administer this programme
- Profiling of the devolution of the £100m is currently under discussion with DLUHC with a regional preference for a single lump sum from the outset.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ian Courts

Exec Lead: John Godfrey, Interim Executive Director for Housing, Property & Regeneration

SRO: To be confirmed

Reference Group: LA DSG officer group

How will this work be administered?

- Funds will be deployed by WMCA via the Single Assurance Framework consistent with the criteria and approach used for existing Housing & Land funds.

How will this work be delivered?

- Schemes will be promoted by public and private sector partners who will deliver the outputs and outcomes.
- Key priority schemes are identified through regular engagement by WMCA with LAs and the private sector to identify and remove barriers to regeneration and development and achieve agreed outcomes from funding.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be able to submit schemes to the SRF under existing procedures.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Devolution of funding anticipated Summer 2023 subject to HMG business case processes and profiling of allocation.
- Target of 4,000 new homes set to accompany this fund
- Other targets to be confirmed.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Clarification on T&Cs is ongoing with DLUHC.
- Internal HMG funding approval process and allocation profiling agreement.

Skills

Deal text reference

- Pages 39 to 43

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Creation of a joint governance board to provide oversight of post 16 technical education and skills in West Midlands. Our current intention is to build on our existing Skills Advisory Board, and to integrate with the Board referenced as part of the employment support workstream.
- WMCA to have strategic oversight of post-16 skills offer linked to delivering the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), including a role in signing off the application for the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF).
- Free courses for jobs: WMCA will have additional flexibility in how they can spend this existing budget in 23/24; Once 80% of the budget has been delivered in year, funds will be devolved. Funding will move into a single settlement in next SR.
- Careers: joint governance of careers in the West Midlands; WMCA to have a role in oversight of current contract, and work with DfE to shape and manage performance of future contracts. New pilot funding to respond to career priorities for those at risk of being NEET.

Legal or financial implications

- WMCA are already in receipt of Bootcamp and FCFJ funding. There will be no new monies for these programmes, though there will be greater flexibility in how funds can be used.
- There will be a small amount of pilot funding for careers, value to be confirmed.
- At present, we plan for a Skills function to form part of the formal public consultation and legislative approvals process. However, we are confirming with DfE to what extent the new Skills commitments in the deal amount to a new function.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr George Duggins

Exec Lead: Clare Hatton, Director of Employment and Skills

SRO: Fiona Aldridge

Reference Group: LA Employment & Skills Officers Group

How will this work be administered?

Funds will be deployed through existing granted and procured arrangements with LAs, colleges and other training providers. Priorities for new or flexible investment will be identified through:

- Engagement with Skills Advisory Board (advisory) and Economic Growth Board (decision making). LAs are represented on both Boards.
- Discussions will also be held with LA employment & skills officers group, that meets on a monthly basis.
- We are currently exploring the role and remit of the new Board – and its integration with the Board out in the employment support strand.

How will this work be delivered?

- FCFJ and Bootcamp funding will be delivered through existing mechanisms – via our grant funded and contracted providers. In addition to the groups/Boards identified above, we will be holding bi-laterals with each LA in which we will discuss priorities for new flexibilities in each area.
- We are currently in discussions with DfE as to how wider commitments will be delivered. We have met with relevant senior staff and are establishing regular meetings to ensure progress. Further detail is not currently available, but we will update as the work progresses.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be consulted on local need and priorities for investment.
- As grant-funded learning providers, LAs in many parts of the region are also delivery partners.
- WMCA will work with LAs to co-develop the all-age carers strategy and the NEET pilots.

Key milestones and deliverables

Ongoing. A series of key milestones and deliverables to be developed.

- LSIP/LSIF – Skills Advisory Board, June 23

Outstanding issues and questions

- We are awaiting further information and engagement from DfE.

Employment Support

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Creation of a regional Labour Market Partnership Board. Our current intention is to build on our existing Skills Advisory Board, and to integrate with the Board referenced as part of the skills workstream.
- The deal commits to a co-design approach to all future contracted employment support programmes, with delegated delivery on a CA footprint.

Note – while there are no new contracted employment programmes expected in this SR, we will be working with DWP to shape the Universal Support Offer that was announced in the budget alongside the deal.

Legal or financial implications

- WMCA will be commissioning contracted employment programmes on behalf of DWP, on a CA footprint. Details and processes to be agreed with DWP.
- This may require legislative change, as well as changes to DWP wider commercial model.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr George Duggins

Exec Lead: Clare Hatton, Director of Employment and Skills

SRO: Fiona Aldridge

Reference Group: LA Employment & Skills Officers Group

How will this work be administered?

Priorities for contracted employment programmes in the WMCA area will be identified through:

- Engagement with Skills Advisory Board (advisory) and Economic Growth Board (decision making). LAs represented on both.
- Discussions will also be held with LA employment & skills officers group, that meets on a monthly basis, and is already considering UKSPF employment support investment.
- We are currently exploring the role and remit of the new Board

How will this work be delivered?

- Discussions with DWP are on-going as to how this work will be delivered, with key contacts now identified.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be consulted on local need and priorities for investment, to inform co-design with DWP. This will ensure alignment with UKSPF investment on employment support.

Key milestones and deliverables

- A series of key milestone and deliverables to be developed.

Outstanding issues and questions

- We are awaiting further information and engagement from DWP. In addition to DDD arrangements, this will also involve opportunities to shape wider budget announcements including the Universal Support Offer and Work Well Partnerships.



Innovation

Deal text reference

- Pages 47 to 49

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Strategic Innovation Partnership with Government
- Working in partnership to grow innovation clusters (innovation pilots & programmes):
 1. Innovation accelerator (already funded and being delivered/evaluation underway)
 2. Innovate UK regional action plan
 3. Innovation adoption & diffusion pilot/s
 4. FE Innovation pilot
 5. Locally led place-based knowledge transfer programmes
 6. Innovative procurement pilot
- As far as possible any work on these commitments will align with the priority spatial areas (Investment Zone, LUZs, etc.), and the work of Business Growth West Midlands, using each place's innovation priorities.

Legal or financial implications

- No legal implications at this stage.
- Ref commitment 2-6, new pilot programmes will require Innovate UK programme board approval and possibly DSIT & HM Treasury spending approvals.

Where these commitments involve new spending for or by the region, key decisions will be taken via the Economic Growth Board, Investment Board and WMCA Board (as with Innovation Accelerator).

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: TBC

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO: Jonathan Skinner

Reference Group: LA Directors of Economic Development group

How will this work be administered?

- Within the West Midlands, direction will be steered by the WM Innovation Board, working in an advisory capacity to the Economic Growth Board who take any strategic decisions. A representative of City of Wolverhampton Council is invited to the Innovation Board in their capacity as Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation to strengthen local authority links.
- Supported directly by WMCA officers, the Innovation Board's direction will be developed in conjunction with:
 - o WM Directors of Economic Development
 - o University leaders, with research-intensive universities providing specialist advice on relevant areas.

How will this work be delivered?

- At a national level, a senior Partnership will be put in place to provide the opportunity to articulate its research and development priorities to UK Research and Innovation and Science Ministers.
- This will be supported by joint work on the analysis of public research and development investment, working most closely with those organisations that do most research.
- Government and the WMCA will develop measures to evaluate impact.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities will be consulted about innovation priorities and the proposed content of joint innovation plans with Government agencies through the Directors of Econ Dev group (advisory), along with the Innovation Board. Decisions will be via the Economic Growth Board and WMCA Board/Investment Board (whether policy or financial matters).

Key milestones and deliverables

- First meeting of the ministerial-level Strategic Innovation Partnership sought for autumn 2023.
- Innovation Accelerator is live, with 5 projects receiving £33m in total to March 2025.
- Innovate UK regional action plan launched on 20 July with milestones for particular commitments within that plan being overseen by the Innovation Board.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Nationally:
 - the degree of alignment between DSIT, UKRI and its research councils and agencies.
 - Government's timelines for commitments, particularly the various pilots in the DDD and their procurement routes.
- Within the region, R&D institutions like universities and catapults need to forge a clear understanding about their priorities for boosting research and innovation income, linked to wider economic objectives.
- Ensuring strong connections with complementary agendas – particularly on FDI, skills, land supply and business support which all can help nurture strong place-based innovation clusters.

Business Productivity

Deal text reference

- Pages 50 to 52

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Establish a Strategic Productivity Partnership between WMCA and DBT, DLUHC, DCMS to bring greater coherence to business support and finance landscape to boost enterprise, business growth and jobs.
- This is based upon WMCA's role as the lead institution for integrating business productivity interventions at the city region level and discrete roles in respect of national programmes and agencies (e.g. Help to Grow; British Business Bank, etc.).
- Closer relationship with the British Business Bank.

Legal or financial implications

None

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: TBC

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO: Jonathan Skinner

Reference Group: LA Business Support Officers group

How will this work be administered?

- WMCA and Government to initiate the Strategic Productivity Partnership.
- Regional direction to be steered by the Economic Growth Board.
- Fortnightly delivery meetings with local authority business support officers.
- External technical input via an expert panel.

How will this work be delivered?

Delivery is likely to continue to be through a mixed model, albeit with stronger coordinate and coherence within the region's economic strategy objectives (West Midlands Plan for Growth, Inclusive Growth Framework, etc.):

- National DBT schemes (Help to Grow, Made Smarter, Export Academy) and the potential to co-design new pilots.
- Business Growth West Midlands, funded by UK SPF and including local provision through a hub-and-spoke model with some specialist regional-wide commissioned programmes.
- Local authority 'spokes' provide opportunity to align with core statutory functions (planning, trading standards, etc.).
- Alignment with complementary regional offers (skills, net zero, energy & digital infrastructure, transport, inward investment).
- Greater coordination and collaboration with private sector (e.g. banks, accountants, consultants)

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Deliver – local authority-based delivery is at the centre of the Business Growth West Midlands hub-and-spoke model and will be developed through the fortnightly delivery meetings with local authority business support officers.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Develop scope for Strategic Productivity Partnership with DBT and across Government (summer 2023) working towards the first meeting (October 2023).
- Exploration of the scope to include business support in the context of the single settlement (summer 2023).
- Agree closer relationship between WMCA and British Business Bank (by October 2023).
- Establish Expert Panel for technical insight, build the evidence base and logic chain with Government about the key issues to boost productivity across the region (by autumn 2023).
- Sharpen the interface with private sector providers, building upon the Business Growth West Midlands offer (by autumn 2023).
- Develop options for harnessing Help to Grow and Made Smarter alumni activity within the Business Growth West Midlands system (by autumn 2023).
- Monitoring and evaluation framework (ongoing).

Outstanding issues and questions

- Resolve representation of WMCA on British Business Bank governance bodies for Midlands Engine Investment Fund.
- Understand relevance of UK Infrastructure Bank for WMCA – particularly on region's infrastructure funding needs.

Trade & Investment and Places for Growth

Deal text reference

- Pages 53 to 56 for Trade and Investment, Page 70 for Places for Growth

Summary of deal commitments in this area

Trade & Investment (T&I) elements of the deal, DBT will:

- Recognise the West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) as the lead agency and adopt the WMCA economic geography for T&I, co-developing an investment plan.
- Provide a convening role to increase the international profile of the region as an investment destination.

In partnership with WMCA/WMGC, DBT will:

- Co-develop a West Midlands international strategy and delivery plan spanning both trade and investment.
- Review key account management (with a view to a longer-term financial commitment) and share intelligence
- Support the recruitment and management of business focussed trade mission to accompany mayor-led visits
- Seek to improve the take up of significant WMCA-based companies in ministerial and high-profile trade missions
- Agree for a UK export academy.
- Jointly develop WMCA-specific events and other activity such as sector themed workshops, sub-regional initiatives and supply chain projects.

The region will:

- Provide signposting to public support
- Invest in skills pipeline development and the formation of a transport and infrastructure cluster.

In terms of Places for Growth, the Deal commits to:

- Continued relocation of civil and public service roles into the region, and the development of a transport and infrastructure cluster through investment into skills pipeline development.
- Government working with the WMCA to explore further opportunities for programmes to develop skills and career pathways into the civil service and public services linked to Transport & infrastructure cluster.
- Establishment of a West Midlands Fast Stream Pilot, to deliver a pipeline of civil servant talent and skills.

Legal or financial implications

NA

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: TBC

WMCA Executive Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

WMGC SRO: Dan Storer

DBT lead for the T&I elements: TBD

Reference Group: LA Directors of Econ Dev Group

How will this work be administered?

- WMGC will ensure WMCA and LAs are consulted and informed as appropriate – including through the Directors of Economic Development meeting and the WMGC Board and will escalate key decisions to the Economic Growth Board.
- The Places for Growth work will require the creation of a working group with key partners. The groups and Board mentioned above will also be engaged and informed of developments as appropriate.



How will this work be delivered?

- The T&I work will largely be delivered in partnership between WMGC and DBT, consulting and informing WMCA and the LAs as appropriate.
- The Places for Growth work will be led by WMGC and WMCA, working closely with Cabinet Office and the Places for Growth team, consulting and informing WMCA and the LAs as appropriate. A shared engagement plan to establish the West Midlands as Transport Infrastructure cluster by HMG is required. Corresponding commitments by the Government Property Agency are required, to provide further space for relocating agencies and departments through acquisitions of new space within the region. .

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

Upon securing express permission from WMCA and Local Authorities (LAs), WMGC will act as the lead agency for the region in liaison with DBT.

- Our expectation is therefore that WMGC will lead the development and delivery of most elements of this part of the deal. WMGC will engage with local authorities throughout, using existing channels such as quarterly bilaterals, the Directors of Economic Development meeting, and the Economic Growth Board.
- In some areas – such as key account management and the nascent Strategic Relationship Management piece – local authorities will be consulted through bilaterals, the Directors of Economic Development meeting, and the Economic Growth Board. On this piece specifically, WMGC expects there will be an element of co-design and co-delivery.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Secured permission from WMCA and each LA for WMGC to be recognised as the lead agency for matters related to T&I by DBT.
- WMGC ‘lead agency’ recognition by WMCA and geographic footprint alignment; decision on DBT membership of WMGC.
- Emerging thinking on the West Midlands International Strategy brought to the Economic Growth Board in July 2023 ahead of further work and consultation through to the Autumn.
- Places for Growth overall target is to deliver increased relocations into regions by 2025
- Working arrangements in place to assess UK business environment and HMG-WMGC data sharing.
- MoU between WMGC, WMCA and Office for Investment; signposting arrangement between DBT.

Outstanding issues and questions

- On-going development of the international Strategy.
- While the DDD refers to the WMCA geography, further work is on-going to determine what exactly this covers (e.g. the seven Metropolitan authorities; the non-constituent members; etc.)
- In relation to Places for Growth, appropriate governance and decision-making process to be fully scoped.

Energy and Retrofit

Deal text reference

- Pages 57 to 61

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Piloting the devolution of Net Zero funding, including for retrofit, through allocation (from 2025).
- Develop local area energy plans across the WMCA area, and WMCA continuing to work with central Government to explore how local area energy plans and spatial planning could be meaningfully integrated.
- Confirming that the WMCA may assume the role of heat network zoning coordinator and play a key role in the delivery of heat decarbonisation infrastructure.
- Agreement to explore a range of potential funding options to pilot a new approach to transitioning businesses and clusters to a net zero energy system.
- An option to put forward a case for the WMCA to set minimum energy efficiency standards that exceed the national standards for the private rented sector.
- Requirement by Ofgem for National Grid Electricity Distribution to engage with WMCA to inform its business plan.
- Recognition by Ofgem of the need to look further at roles and responsibilities at a sub-national level (potential for a pilot).
- Trialling of novel approaches to energy innovation zones to inform investment planning.

Legal or financial implications

- Details of a retrofit funding settlement are to be negotiated, however we would expect this to include admin and ancillary funding; we do not expect any of our proposals to require a change to legislation.
- The LAEP and energy infrastructure commitments did not have a funding or statutory responsibility assigned to them so at this point there are no additional legal or financial implications.
- In assuming the role of the heat network zoning coordinator and heat network delivery it is expected that there will be some additional legal and financial implications, but what that will be is not fully clear at present as this is a developing area for Government.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr John Cotton

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO: Cheryl Hiles & George Simms

Reference Group: New LA Retrofit Steering Group / LA Net Zero Directors Group

How will this work be administered?

- Via a newly established Retrofit Steering Group.
- Regular Net Zero Directors' meetings.
- To embed LAEP as a core function the "Local Area Energy Planning Co-ordination Group" has been created to form a two-way working relationship with the "Net Zero Infrastructure Delivery Panel".

How will this work be delivered?

- For retrofit, the government will facilitate work ahead of the 2025 period to develop a business case, and design a pilot and evaluation approach, harnessing local authority best practice.
- WMCA will work up input to proposals with partners and gather evidence through the SMART Hub programme and local authority retrofit working group.
- If the WMCA or LAs are to adopt the role of heat network zoning coordinator, it will require support from central government.
- For local area energy planning there is no government facilitation beyond their support for the programme, but engagement with DLUHC would be useful to share learnings.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authorities are closely involved in the LAEP development process (co-design/deliver) and workshops are taking place now to begin informing this process
- Local Authorities will be key consultees in the development of retrofit funding arrangements via the LA Retrofit Steering Group.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Retrofit – Ongoing
- LAEP/Energy Infrastructure – Ongoing (SIF dates: discovery 03/04/2023 – 30/06/2023, alpha 02/10/2023 – 29/03/2024, beta to be confirmed)

Outstanding issues and questions

- On the single settlement, what additional net zero funds beyond retrofit could be included within the single settlement process, in addition to retrofit?
- On heat network zoning, we are awaiting final details of the role and responsibilities around heat network zoning coordinators and associated support.
- The WMCA want to engage with government, including DLUHC and DESNZ on any future opportunities to support our LAEP programme and links to spatial planning.
- Will OfGEM and Government support the WMCA's proposal for a regional energy system governance pilot in the West Midlands?

Environment (including climate adaptation, natural environment and air quality)

Deal text reference

- Pages 61 to 62

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- A commitment to support the creation of a fund to support natural environment financing through increasing investment from the private sector.
- Recognition of the work the West Midlands is undertaking in relation to climate adaptation through a case study to be included in the National Adaptation Plan.
- Support for the regional monitoring of air quality through funding to support the deployment of additional low-cost sensors across the region.

Legal or financial implications

- None. The funding received to deliver the environment elements of the deal is being taken forward through the Single Assurance Framework, as it has come with grant funding and we will work with the conditions specified.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr John Cotton

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO: Jackie Homan, Head of Environment

Reference Group: LA Net Zero Directors group and sub-groups

How will this work be administered?

- WMCA Environment and Energy Board.
- Net Zero Directors, Net Zero Officers Group and Natural Capital Officers Group.
- Regular catch-ups with the local Air Quality Officers through dedicated meetings as well as the regular WM Environmental Protection Group.

How will this work be delivered?

- The work on air quality and natural capital financing is set out in the grant applications, and Full Business Case, that we had to prepare to access the funding on offer. In order to deliver, we are committed to working with the local authorities as part of the project governance structure.
- On climate adaptation, we will continue to work with climate change strategy officers in each of the local authorities, through the Net Zero Officers Group, as well as with the Sustainability Working Group for Climate Adaptation.
- We will also work with civil servants at DEFRA on the wording to be included in the National Adaptation Plan as well as to continue our lobbying for additional resource to be made available to support climate adaptation at a sub-national level.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- This will take place primarily through the LA Net Zero Directors and LA Low Carbon Officers and Air Quality Officers groups.

Key milestones and deliverables

- All the funding provided through the deal for environment projects needs to have been spent by 31st March 2025. As a result, programme plans have been developed and signed off through the WMCA's SAF process.

Outstanding issues and questions

None.



Smart City Region Health & Care Programme (SCR) and Digital Infrastructure

Deal text reference

- Page 68 for Smart City Region, Pages 68 to 69 for Health and Care Programmes, Page 63 for digital infrastructure

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- **Smart City Region:** DLUHC has committed to invest up to £10.1m funding in scaling-up the technology trials that the West Midlands has successfully pioneered to deliver radically more effective health and social care services and boost productivity. There are five key spending objectives covering scaling-up Remote Monitoring, Community Diagnostics, Preventative Healthcare, Exemplar hospital and a Learning Network to share findings and built the region's knowledge base – working in partnership with the West Midlands NHS and social care integrated care boards (ICBs).
- **Digital Infrastructure:** DSIT has committed to share Open Market Review data – which relates to gigabit broadband coverage – with the WMCA/ WM5G and set-up a new governance group called the Digital Infrastructure Leadership Group (DILG) to explore new market interventions in urban regions, working with the GMCA.

Legal or financial implications

- **Smart City Region:** None. There is no financial commitment from the WMCA.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** No.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Patrick Harley

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Executive Director, SINZ

SRO for Digital infrastructure: Ian Martin

Reference Group: WM Digital Forum

How will this work be administered?

Smart City Region:

- Will be administered and delivered through a combination of WM5G and WMCA health & wellness staff, NHS ICB teams – including LA social care teams – as well as with human resources leads in local employers and private sector partners which will co-invest in technology solutions.
- In-house resources from WMCA will provide overarching project management and sourcing and be responsible for risk management, budget management and timely, quality delivery on individual project components.
- Nominated WMCA and ICB staff have the necessary skills and capabilities to comply with appropriate standards and procedures having previously worked on major projects with complex procurement and management requirements.
- An Advisory Board will be established with senior representation from the three regional ICBs and a Director level SRO from within WMCA.

Digital Infrastructure:

- Will be administered and delivered by the WM5G connectivity team led by Chris Hudson. We are working through the detailed terms of reference for DILG and also bringing on-board our broadband lead by end May to lead the engagement with DSIT regarding broadband data and initiatives.
- Progress will be reviewed at a working level through the Digital Forum which meets every month and includes the LA leads as well as at a senior level through the WM5G Board which also meets monthly.

How will this work be delivered?

Please see above.

Key milestones and deliverables

Smart City Region: The core delivery team will come together from across WM5G and WMCA's health experts and will adhere to our high standards in governance, managing, reporting and storing project documentation as well as any data and lessons learnt. (The governance structure is provided in the Commercial Case section). The project will be managed in accordance with PRINCE2 principles along with tools from Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) to allow consistency across teams and representatives.

Autumn 2023, Phase 1, Design and Mobilisation

- Funding and scope agreed and signed off (agreed at Investment Board 24 July)
- Funding drawn down (now expected to be drawn down from DLUHC in October)
- IG process agreed
- Resource requirements, comms and engagement strategy agreed
- Convening of relevant working groups

Autumn 2023 – Spring/summer 2024, Phase 2: Sourcing and Procurement

- Tech requirements co-designed
- Connectivity mapping, modelling, demonstrations complete
- Contracts awarded; contract signatures with preferred suppliers
- IG requirements met
- Training and support strategy developed
- Learning Network established with first members

July 2024-March 2025, Phase 3: Deployment and Build

- Testing complete
- First phase deployed
- First mobile diagnostic unit in operation
- First use of Thrive at Work Programme
- Smart Hospital working making progress
- Learning Network expansion evidenced

March 2025, Phase 4: Evaluation

- Digital infrastructure: TBC as part of set-up process with Govt for DILG.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- We will keep Local Authorities fully engaged directly and through their role on ICBs in workstreams that affect them.
- We will co-design the Learning Networks with Local Authorities to ensure they shape the content and events.
- Local Authorities will be consulted on the Remote Monitoring (with its links and reliance on social care) and Preventative Healthcare (with its connections to employers in the region) workstreams.

Outstanding issues and questions

- **Smart City Region:** Main dependency is that we achieve final business case approvals from DLUHC, WMCA and NHS ICBs by end June at the latest to ensure that we can mobilise, source and start delivery this year.

Culture

Deal text reference

- Pages 65 to 66

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Formal partnership – the Regional Culture and Heritage Framework – with arm’s length bodies of DCMS, including Arts Council England, Historic England, Sport England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the National Lottery Community Fund and the British Tourist Association (trading as Visit England / Visit Britain).
- The government will support WMCA with £25 million of additional capital funding, £4m of which will be allocated towards cultural and heritage projects.

Legal or financial implications

- Capital funding is subject to approval of a suitable business cases (DLUHC, WMCA), which we are progressing. The staff capacity to deliver the work will come from existing allocations and the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Patrick Harley

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Salla Virman, Senior Policy Officer, Culture

Reference Group: LA Cultural Officers Group

How will this work be administered?

- WMCA will work with DCMS and the relevant arm’s length bodies in spring 2023 to establish terms of reference for the regional culture and heritage framework. WMCA Cultural Leadership Board will be consulted on these frameworks, and they should then be formally approved by the WMCA Board.
- Capital funds will be administered by WMCA and a separate business case will be produced for the SAF process and decision making.

How will this work be delivered?

- WMCA will work with DCMS and the relevant arm’s length bodies in spring 2023 to establish terms of reference for the regional culture and heritage framework and agree a forward plan over the coming year, before finalising the framework in 2024. Delivery of the capital investment will be through a contestable call based on EOI submissions from local authorities, with strands to support a few larger awards and a smaller capital awards programme.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

Partnership with arm’s length bodies:

- The WMCA has already undertaken consultation and will keep the local authorities engaged throughout the process. The WMCA will also consult local authorities on the development of the cultural strategy through the LA Cultural Officers Group.

Capital funding:

- WMCA’s £4m Cultural Infrastructure Fund will make a range of capital awards to support development of cultural & heritage infrastructure projects within the WMCA area. The programme is being co-designed with input from WMCA’s Cultural Leadership Board and will specifically focus on pride of place. It is anticipated that the programme will be launched in autumn 2023, with projects to be completed by 31 March 2025.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Our aim is to share a draft outline for the Regional Culture and Heritage Framework with Board in February/early spring 2024.
- Once on-going business case development processes are complete, capital investment will be delivered by 31 March 2025.

Outstanding issues and questions

- In the process of developing and agreeing the business case with HMG to release the culture funding.

Tourism

Deal text reference

- Page 66

Summary of deal commitments in this area

Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) accreditation for Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country (BSBC) (achieved) to deliver strategic regional priorities as per the WM Tourism Strategy and Recovery Plan.

Destination Development Partnership (DDP) pilot 2 to deliver:

- Demonstrable impact and return on investment
- Shared learnings
- Efficiencies across the wider DDP for the visitor economy
- research and insight
- digital innovation
- product development
- business support

Subject to:

- LVEP accreditation for Coventry & Warks (underway)
- WMGC Commonwealth Games Legacy funding (achieved)

Legal or financial implications

- WMGC will sign an agreement with VisitBritain that sets out the requirements for the DDP pilot. This will include spend, KPIs and governance.
- Funding will be secured through the WMGC Commonwealth Games legacy allocation with spend against the business case approved by the WMCA Investment Board.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Patrick Harley

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Salla Virman, Senior Policy Officer, Culture

Reference Group: LA Directors of Econ Dev Group

How will this work be administered?

- The WMGC board will sign off progress against the LVEP and DDP agreements. All LVEP partners are represented on this board. VisitBritain will be invited to attend for the DDP / LVEP agenda items.
- Advice and oversight will come through the industry-led WM Tourism and Hospitality Advisory Board, which will also provide the leads for working groups.
- Updates will be reported to the Economic Growth Board of the WMCA through the WMGC report.
- The WMGC project management office will establish a risk register and monitor procurements, KPIs and evaluation.

How will this work be delivered?

- Local authority priorities are being agreed through the development of the Global WM Programme. These will inform the BSBC LVEP and DDP growth plans, which are co-signed by WMGC as the lead accountable organisation, and VisitEngland.
- Quarterly meetings will maintain LA destination engagement and record progress.
- The growth plans will include an agreement of deliverables by the DDP, and measurable KPIs, and set out governance, sign off the proposed budget allocation, and state targets and KPIs.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Local authority partners to be closely consulted through existing WMGC relationship routes including the Directors of Economic Development group.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Formal announcement of DDP pilot by end July 2023.
- Set up of any additional governance needed for reporting into Visit England.
- Commissioning of monitoring and evaluation
- Mechanism to share learning.

Outstanding issues and questions

- Dependencies include the Coventry and Warwickshire LVEP accreditation which could go to panel in parallel with the DDP agreement.
- Final WMGC visitor economy budget allocation – staffing and 3rd party costs.

Homelessness

Deal text reference

- Page 37 on Live and Work, page 69

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Expand the Live and Work model in additional localities across the WMCA region.
- Pilot a Rent Simplification model for young people in supported accommodation to enable transition into work.

Legal or financial implications

- Live and Work: Dependent on Homes England funding and ability to secure investment for an evaluation.
- Rent Simplification: Dependent on DWP securing funding.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kerrie Carmichael

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Neelam Sunder, Homelessness Strategic Lead

Reference Group: Homelessness Taskforce

How will this work be administered?

- This work will be overseen by the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce and Members Advisory Group.

How will this work be delivered?

- The Live and Work proposal will primarily be delivered via Homes England. We will work with and support Homes England to engage Registered Providers to develop proposals to deliver Live and Work schemes. We will work with DLUHC, Homes England and Registered Providers delivering Live and Work schemes to capture the learning and build an evidence base for the model. We will support Homes England to form a task group to take this work forwards. This work will also align with the joint Affordable Homes Programme work agreed in the DDD, currently being taken forward by the WMCA HPR team and the Homes England regional affordable housing team.
- The Rent Simplification pilot proposal will be developed in partnership with DWP. As we progress the feasibility of the model and establish DWP mechanisms for delivery, we will work with our local authorities to establish how this could be delivered across local authorities within commissioned supported accommodation for young people. The delivery of the pilot would rely on local authorities, and they can choose to opt out of this pilot.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- Live and Work: local authorities will be engaged throughout the lifecycle of this project through Homelessness Taskforce.
- Rent Simplification: local authorities will deliver this pilot with their commissioned supported accommodation services for your people.



Key milestones and deliverables

Live and Work:

- Meet with Homes England quarterly to contribute to plans on how the Live and Work model can be expanded – ongoing
- Organise online seminar for 7 LAs and Registered Providers to discuss opportunities for Live and Work model expansion – May 2023 - completed
- Follow up with Homes England on LA/ Registered Providers' bid development – June onwards
- Report progress to the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce (Feb, April, July, Sept, Nov) and the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce Members Advisory Group (Jan, April, July, October).

Rent Simplification:

- Meet with central DWP Housing Policy Team monthly and support to prepare business case for pilot – ongoing
- Facilitate contact between DWP Housing Policy Team and local authority benefits teams to feed into pilot design - ongoing
- Support DWP colleagues to develop a bid to the Shared Outcomes Fund – May – July 2023
- Support DWP colleagues to prepare a business case for autumn fiscal event (if Shared Outcomes Fund bid is unsuccessful) – September - December 2023
- Report progress to the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce (Feb, April, July, Sept, Nov) and the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce Members Advisory Group (Jan, April, July, October).

Outstanding issues and questions

- This area of work is ongoing and dependent on DLUHC, Homes England and DWP commitment and investment – we are in continued dialogue to progress.

Health

Deal text reference

- Pages 67 to 68

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- Health Duty: Formal duty to improve public's health, concurrent with local authorities with associated potential public health pilot projects including Healthier Food Environment, Tobacco Alliance, Vaping as quit tool; regional disability strategy.
 - Note: Though this is a commitment in the deal, the region has resolved not to take it forward.
- Digital and Data Pilots: empower residents in the WMCA area through improving their understanding and use of health data through education and skills development; work with NHS England to develop artificial intelligence lab(s); regional linkages of shared care records within the West Midlands integrated care boards; sharing data across the public sector.
- Workforce: use of aligned budgets along with its adult education budget, to help tackle workforce shortages in the NHS and boost capacity within the voluntary and community sector.
- Development of a pan-disability needs assessment and a regional disability strategy.

Legal or financial implications

- None.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Izzi Seccombe

Exec Lead: Clare Hatton

SRO: Dr Mubasshir Ajaz

Reference Group: LA Directors of Public Health

How will this work be delivered?

- The CA will not proceed to take forward the health improvement duty but will continue to progress the commitments in the deal relating to disability and, working with Integrated Care System partners, the health workforce, Smart City Region, digital and data. The CA will also support constituent LAs to take forward work on tobacco and healthy eating if and where it can help to secure additional resources, which would be subject to further policy development work to take forward.

Early Years

Deal text reference

- Page 69

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- The deal text includes a commitment from DfE to discuss opportunities for early years pilots, consistent with the Government's wider early years strategy and policies

Legal or financial implications

- At present, meeting the loose commitment contained in the deal to engage DfE on Early Years strategy depends upon local authority capacity and appetite.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kerrie Carmichael

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Claire Dhami, Head of Social Change and Inclusion

Reference Group: LA DCS network

How will this work be administered?

- There would need to be a further conversation within the region about whether there is appetite to take forward any further work on early years, following initial engagement on proposal options.

How will this work be delivered?

- N/A

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- N/A

Key milestones and deliverables

- N/A

Outstanding issues and questions

- None

Anti-Social Behaviour

Deal text reference

- Page 69

Summary of deal commitments in this area

- The deal text includes a commitment to discuss emerging proposals for addressing anti-social behaviour with the Police and Crime Commissioner, and recognises the place-based anti-social behaviour powers facing LAs.

Legal or financial implications

- The commitment on anti-social behaviour does not require additional resource from within the WMCA, as engagement will be primarily through the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.

Portfolio Holder, Exec Lead and SRO

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kerrie Carmichael

Exec Lead: Ed Cox, Exec Director, SINZ

SRO: Claire Dhami, Head of Social Change and Inclusion

Reference Group: LA DCS network

How will this work be administered?

- ASB provisions will depend on OPCC leadership and further LA engagement.

How will this work be delivered?

- As above.

Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- LA partners and the OPCC will drive these areas of work and draw in WMCA officers as required.

Key milestones and deliverables

- Milestones and deliverables subject to LA and OPCC discussions with departmental contacts.

Outstanding issues and questions

- There was enthusiasm from local authority partners and the OPCC for these provisions. It is up to them how to take this forward.





West Midlands
Combined Authority