

Cabinet

Special Meeting - Wednesday 20 September 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

Meeting venue: Conference Room 2, Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall.

Livestream <http://www.WalsallCouncilWebcasts.com>

Portfolios

Councillor M.A. Bird,
Leader of the Council



Councillor G. Perry,
Deputy Leader
Resilient Communities



Councillor A. Andrew,
Deputy Leader and
Regeneration



Councillor K. Ferguson,
Internal Services



Councillor K. Pedley,
Adult Social Care



Councillor G. Flint,
Wellbeing, Leisure and
Public Spaces



Councillor S. Elson,
Children's



Councillor M. Statham,
Education and Skills



Councillor K. Murphy,
Street Pride



Councillor G. Ali,
Customer



Quorum 3 members

Democratic Services, The Council House, Walsall, WS1 1TW
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The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Specified pecuniary interests

The pecuniary interests which are specified for the purposes of Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 are the interests specified in the second column of the following:

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by a member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of a member.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Regulations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority:</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to a member's knowledge):</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority;</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:</p> <p>(a) that body (to a member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) either:</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</p>

Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended)

Access to information: Exempt information

Part 1

Descriptions of exempt information: England

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
 - (a) to give any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.
8. Information being disclosed during a meeting of a Scrutiny and Performance Panel when considering flood risk management functions which:
 - (a) Constitutes a trades secret;
 - (b) Its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the risk management authority);
 - (c) It was obtained by a risk management authority from any other person and its disclosure to the public by the risk management authority would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that other person.

Part I – Public session

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of interest
3. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended):**
There are no items for consideration in the private session of the agenda

Leader of the Council: Councillor Bird

Key decision

4. Approval of the West Midlands Combined Authority West Midlands Trailblazer Deeper Devolution Deal and Implementation Plan ***Enclosed***

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Cabinet – 20 September 2023

Approval of the West Midlands Combined Authority West Midlands Trailblazer Deeper Devolution Deal and Implementation Plan

Portfolio: Councillor Bird, Leader of the Council

Related portfolios:

Service: Chief Executive

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

- 1.1. The deal aims to reboot the economy, provide vital housing, jobs and skills, build on existing strengths in transport, and drive net zero ambitions. This will generate economic growth and levelling up outcomes for all our residents, businesses and communities.

2. Summary

- 2.1. The West Midlands deeper devolution deal was agreed in principle at the Mayor of the West Midlands and portfolio leaders (MPL) group on 10 March 2023 and announced in the Chancellor's spring statement the following week.
- 2.2. The deal will mark a new phase of devolution by bringing new powers and control over investment to the region. The deal includes several provisions that will enhance the existing functions of the WMCA and will unlock over £1.5 billion of funding for the region. The deal recognises that the WMCA has lacked the key levers and flexibility to 'unleash the potential of devolution', and addresses this through a range of new powers, responsibilities and resources. Many of the offers in the deal are firsts for regional devolution. It commits government to a single, departmental-style settlement with the WMCA at the next spending review, in return for new accountability arrangements and a single outcomes framework.
- 2.3. The devolution proposals will enable the region to locally prioritise, control and decide how funding is spent within devolved area, and therefore ensure greater local alignment with the council's existing policies and strategies for sustainable

economic growth and levelling up across our communities. The acceptance and implementation of the deal will have positive benefits and impacts across the borough and is therefore a key decision.

- 2.4. The deal that was agreed in principle in March 2023 has been subjected to on-going negotiations and dialogue with government and the WMCA constituent members, including the development of a more detailed implementation plan. The WMCA has requested that the constituent authorities consider and, if acceptable, approve the new proposals and implementation plan, as set out in section 4 and **Appendix 1 and 2**. Subject to approval by all the constituent authorities, formal ratification of the deal will be sought at WMCA board in October 2023.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That Cabinet endorse the West Midlands deeper devolution deal and implementation plan (**Appendix 1 and 2**).
- 3.2. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to take part in the continuous negotiations that form part of the evolution and development of the West Midlands deeper devolution deal and implementation plan, and to agree the order and other documentation required to implement the deal.
- 3.3. That Cabinet note that a further report may be brought before Cabinet in the event of any material or significant changes as a result of the ongoing negotiations.

4. Report detail – know

Context

- 4.1. The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) was formed in 2016, with all seven West Midlands councils as constituent members, together with 10 councils joining as non-constituent members and the (then) three local enterprise partnerships (LEPs). Following the agreement and approval of the first two devolution deals in 2016 and 2018 respectively, further devolution from central government, a new deeper devolution deal (DDD) is now proposed.
- 4.2. Since reaching an in-principle agreement on the DDD in March 2023, the WMCA and local authority representatives have continued to undertake significant work, in consultation with central government, to work-up the further detail and a delivery strategy through the development of an implementation plan.
- 4.3. The DDD contains over 190 commitments of different types. Taken together, the deal represents a significant step forward for the region's multi-year financial stability, particularly over local government revenue retention. This will help to reduce financial risks, de-risk investment decisions, provide new funding to deliver affordable housing, regeneration and transport schemes and give the

region an influential role in shaping government policy in line with our shared inclusive growth agenda. The commitments include:

- a. Providing new funds to the WMCA and its constituent authorities, such as for housing and regeneration;
 - b. Increasing flexibility and local decision-making power over existing and future funds, particularly through the single settlement;
 - c. New partnerships and co-working with government to design and deliver programmes, such as employment support, culture and heritage and working with Great British Railways; and
 - d. Undertaking further work with government on regional priorities, including transport innovation.
- 4.4. The implementation plan is structured around the 8 thematic summaries (**Appendix 1**) and 25 different workstreams. It sets out for each commitment the approach to administration, delivery, co-development, milestones and deliverables, and issues/ area of concern. There is variation in the commitments set out in the deal. For some commitments, there are deliverables or activities with set deadlines, which means the implementation plan is relatively definitive in these areas. For other commitments, particularly those that commit to further development of policy, the outputs and deadlines are less tightly defined. The implementation plan provided in **Appendix 2** reflects the diverse nature of the commitments.
- 4.5. Some of the key provisions in the deal are set out below:
- 4.6. **Housing deal and affordable housing programme** - a new landmark housing deal worth up to £500 million, offering greater flexibility to drive brownfield regeneration and unique powers and funding to deliver affordable housing at pace, including a route to full devolution of the affordable housing programme funding.
- 4.7. **Growth zone/ investment zone** - the creation of up to six growth zones (formerly known as levelling up zones (LUZ)), backed by 25-year business rate retention, with an expected total value to the region of at least £500 million, to target investment and encourage jobs and regeneration in areas agreed between the WMCA and government. This includes proposals for a Walsall specific zone. In addition, whilst the government's investment zones policy was not part of the formal deal, it was announced at the same time and significant effort is going into the development of an investment zone (IZ) proposal for the West Midlands to help drive the economy of the region forward in line with the plan for growth. The implementation plan seeks to align these two policy initiatives and other related initiatives already underway in order to ensure a strategic approach is taken to investment and development of key sites and corridors across the region.

- 4.8. **Single settlement** - there is a commitment to a single funding settlement, where for the first time, a region will be treated as if it were a government department with a new departmental-style budget arrangement. WMCA currently manage in the region of 100 individual grants from government, all with their own declaration requirements and monitoring and reporting requirements. The implementation of a single settlement will simplify the overall funding landscape. The intention is to develop a memorandum of understanding with government about how the process of a single pot of funding will work, including the scope of the funds included in the settlement, how it will be apportioned, and assurance and accountability arrangements. Fiscal devolution will include retention of business rates for the next 10 years – worth an estimated £45 million a year to the WMCA and local authorities.
- 4.9. **Bus Service Operators Grant** - the proposed devolution of the bus service operators grant (BSOG) will enable the WMCA to change the mechanisms for providing public subsidy to private bus operators which will improve accessibility across the region and support the decarbonisation of bus fleets.
- 4.10. **Governance and Accountability** - the deal makes provision for enhanced accountability arrangements, including the development of a ‘scrutiny protocol’ and mayoral scrutiny by MPs. Discussions with government on these topics have commenced and WMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee members will continue to be engaged as appropriate. Any proposed changes will require WMCA board approval.
- 4.11. Other provisions in the DDD include:
- A commitment to be involved in decisions on major government land disposals and reconfiguration, driving regeneration and unlocking private investment through repurposing and redeveloping publicly owned land.
 - A new role for the WMCA in integrating and promoting business support services across the region. This will be powered by a new strategic productivity partnership with departments across government, greater involvement in the governance of the British Business Bank’s UK funds, and collaboration with the UK Investment Bank on commercial arrangements for infrastructure finance.
 - A new strategic innovation partnership will give the West Midlands a unique voice in setting out regional innovation opportunities to inform the UK research and innovation’s future funding strategies.
 - The Department for Business and Trade (‘DBT’) will recognise the West Midlands Growth Company as the lead agency for investment in the region and work with them to develop a West Midlands international strategy.
 - Measures to tackle digital exclusion including greater influence over high-speed broadband investment across the region and a £4 million fund for devices and data to get more people online.

- Greater local responsibility for developing and delivering careers advice and a partnership with Department for Work and Pensions to target employment support.
 - A new partnership with Great British Railways to offer greater local oversight and control of public transport services and support the roll out of integrated smart ticketing.
 - The UK's first formally designated transport 'regulatory sandbox' to enable the region to test and develop cutting-edge transport solutions. This will deliver cleaner and safer vehicles and innovative transport services to our streets faster while supporting new jobs and investment.
 - A commitment to devolve retrofit funding from 2025, to allow the WMCA, and partners, to set priorities for investment in insulation and green energy for homes. This will provide the certainty and consistency to build confidence in the marketplace and accelerate the delivery of warmer homes and net zero targets.
 - A commitment to a new partnership with national arts and culture organisations to shape their investment in regional cultural priorities.
 - The creation of a joint governance board to provide oversight of post-16 technical education and skills in the WMCA area. This will ensure that the training offer is aligned with local skills needs, provide strategic oversight of the local skills improvement plan, support better data sharing and the development of an all-age careers' strategy. A commitment to the creation of a new regional labour market partnership board to oversee the development and implementation of a regional labour market strategy.
- 4.12. Since the in-principle agreement in March 2023, a collective decision has been taken at WMCA board not to pursue the statutory process to provide WMCA with the 'health improvement duty' offered through the deal. This duty does not form part of the deal that the council and the West Midlands local authorities are being asked to ratify.

Council Plan priorities

- 4.13. The Council Plan 2022-2025 identifies 5 key priorities:
- **Economic** - enable greater local opportunities for all people, communities and businesses.
 - **People** - encourage our residents to lead more active, fulfilling and independent lives, and maintain or improve their health and wellbeing.
 - **Internal focus** - council services are customer focused, effective, efficient and fair.
 - **Children** - our children should: have the best possible start, be safe from harm, and be happy, healthy, and learning well.

- **Communities** - empower our communities so that they feel connected and that they belong in Walsall. Create safe and healthy places whilst building a strong sense of community.
- 4.14. The proposed DDD will support all five council priorities and help to increase the economic prosperity of the area and provide healthy and positive community impact for the people of Walsall, by aiding, funding and delivering strategic economic and development priorities.
- 4.15. The WMCA's strategic economic plan (Making our Mark) sets out how the West Midlands will become the best region in the UK to do business. It included the delivery of a set of objectives including economic growth, employment & skills, accessibility, business competitiveness & productivity, land, public service reform, housing and environment. The strategy is for a rapid acceleration in growth, employment and productivity through targeted actions in key sectors, enhanced innovation incubation and skills development alongside public sector reform. The proposed deal will support the implementation of the strategic economic plan objectives and build upon the progress and success to date.

Risk management

- 4.16. There is a risk that, despite the commitment to working closely with government to secure the devolution provisions and funding commitments, any changes in policy or government could prevent the DDD plans from coming to fruition. There is also a risk that negotiations with government do not lead to the expected level of devolutionary commitment currently envisioned. Council officers will continue to work with the WMCA and government to secure the best possible deal and benefits for Walsall.
- 4.17. The deal is a non-statutory agreement between different government departments and WMCA and its constituent authorities. Therefore, if the necessary two-thirds agreement at WMBC board in October to ratify the deal is not obtained, the consequences are at the discretion of the secretary of state (SoS) for DLUHC. Should the necessary agreement not be obtained, there is a risk that all or some of the commitments in the deal, and their benefits to the region, may be withdrawn or modified. There is recent precedent for this outcome in other parts of England that are in the process of seeking (non-deeper) devolution deals. In particular, non-ratification of the deal and accompanying governance review and scheme would end the statutory process required to progress the devolution of the bus service operators grant (BSOG).
- 4.18. There is a risk that future investment decisions of the WMCA fail to be made in an open and transparent way or embrace the founding principles of how investment will seek to benefit all communities appropriately. This is a low risk that will continue to be mitigated through the established governance arrangements and the single assurance framework agreed with government.

Financial implications

- 4.19. As referenced above, there is a commitment to a single funding settlement with government, which will be set out through the development of a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU will be co-developed and negotiated by WMCA officers with HM Treasury and DLUHC, with support from local authority senior officers and finance directors. The negotiations on the MOU are expected to conclude post the October WMCA board meeting, therefore approval will be sought at a subsequent board meeting, with the council's delegated authority to approve sought under this reports' recommendation. Fiscal devolution will also include the 10-year business rate retention; the workings of this scheme offered through the deal will also form part of this latter approval process.
- 4.20. The commitments in the deal provide a mixture of new funding streams for the region, as summarised in the following table.

Fund	Value	New Money
Growth zones	c.£0.5bn (min)	Yes
Business rates retention	c.£450m	Difficult to Assess
Affordable housing programme	£200-400m	Yes
Single regeneration fund	£100m	Yes
Wednesbury to Brierley Hill metro extension	£60m	Yes
Smart city region	£10m	Yes
Air quality sensors	£0.5m	Yes
Digital devices	£4.0m	Yes
Industrial decarb	£10.5m	Yes
Natural environment	£1m	Yes
Cultural infrastructure fund	£5m	Yes

- 4.21. The potential value of the deal to the region is, to a large extent, influenced by the region's ability to establish growth zones as intended, and the retained revenue which will flow back to local authorities through the business rates system.
- 4.22. In addition to the sums in the table above, the deal, particularly through single settlement and other initiatives like the affordable housing programme, provides

greater flexibility on how funding is used and brings decision-making over spending closer to the region.

- 4.23. The WMCA has a budget setting process similar to councils that require the consent of its board. In addition, the Mayor has the power to set the budget for his functions subject to restrictions. For the WMCA budget (including Mayors), where no funding has been provided for its activities and/or functions, and no other funding stream is available, the constituent members are responsible for the funding. If no local agreement is made, then it is apportioned according to population.
- 4.24. As the scope and budgets, including the additional monies in relation to DDD, grows there is a risk that the devolution activities may result in an overspend on operational and capital budgets. As the WMCA has limited revenue income streams, there is a risk that it may result in an increase to constituent subscriptions. If capital budgets overspend it may fall onto constituents to service the debt if external funding fails or is clawed back, as the WMCA is underwritten by the constituent members.
- 4.25. As stated in paragraph 4.18, there is a risk that future investment decisions of the WMCA fail to benefit all communities appropriately. This is a low risk mitigated through the established governance arrangements and the single assurance framework agreed with government. In relation to regeneration schemes, Strategic Investment Board has approved business case development funds for key pipeline projects to ensure that Walsall projects will be ready to bid for funding i.e. the single regeneration fund at the appropriate time.

Legal implications

- 4.26. The deal states that the new proposed functions and devolved powers in relation to the payment of the bus service operators grant (BSOG) is a public authority function that will require a formal statutory process. The devolution of such powers can be dealt with under section 105b of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 (the 2009 Act) but requires a governance review, scheme and currently the consent of the constituent authorities to the laying of the order. There are currently proposals in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill to make changes to the consent requirements, for example, where the devolution of new powers and functions are to be excisable by the Mayor, whereby only the consent of the Mayor is required. There are also proposals that remove the consent requirements for constituent authorities where there is a proposal to add further areas to a mayoral combined authority the effect of which is only the consent of the Mayor and the joining authority are required.
- 4.27. The WMCA, in consultation with the leaders of the constituent local authorities, have undertaken a governance review across the whole geography of the WMCA area in accordance with section 111 of the 2009 act to consider how the transfer of the delivery of the BSOG from the secretary of state to WMCA

(as a mayoral function) would impact on the effectiveness of service delivery. As outlined in the deal, this is an administrative function that will be exercised by the Mayor, with decisions from WMCA board inputting into the policy of allocation taken by a two-thirds majority and subject to consultation on the national reforms of grant that the government is currently working on.

- 4.28. Having considered the findings of the governance review as set out in **Appendix 3**, the WMCA conclude that an order by the secretary of state to make the changes considered in the review, including delegating additional functions to the WMCA, would be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in relation to the WMCA area. The WMCA have therefore resolved to prepare and publish a scheme under section 112 of the 2009 act for the devolution of the BSOG.
- 4.29. A draft scheme has been prepared by the WMCA for the BSOG devolution in consultation with the constituent authority leaders that will confirm the adoption of the new powers and duties detailed in the draft scheme at **Appendix 4**.
- 4.30. The decision to submit the governance review and scheme to the secretary of state will require a unanimous decision of all the WMCA members under the terms of the constitution.
- 4.31. Formal ratification of the deal by WMCA board in October will take place at the same time as the board formally asking the secretary of state to lay a draft order with respect to the formal statutory functions arising from the deal.

Procurement Implications/Social Value

- 4.32. There are currently no procurement implications arising directly from this report.

Property implications

- 4.33. There are currently no property implications arising directly from this report.

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.34. Under the health workstream in the implementation plan, the deal seeks commitments to digital and data pilots which will empower residents to improve their understanding and use of health data through education and skills development; work on innovations to include artificial intelligence (AI) labs; and shared data and care records, building on the West Midlands' smart city region strengths. Taken together, the commitments set out in the deal will collectively improve health and wellbeing of communities across the region.

Reducing Inequalities

- 4.35. An equalities impact assessment (EqIA) is appended to this report (**Appendix 5**).

Staffing implications

- 4.36. Existing staff resources from across several service areas, in particular economy, environment & communities and resources & transformation directorates, are providing support to the work of the WMCA. Officers work to represent the council and its priorities through partnership working in office-led working groups across the region. Officers continue to play an active role in discussions and negotiations to ensure the council is effectively engaged and can respond and receive the benefits of the devolution deal.

Climate Impact

- 4.37. The deal will help drive the net zero ambitions for the West Midlands by devolving tools and funding that will remove uncertainty and inefficiencies in the existing funding system, such as devolving housing retrofit funding and incentivising net zero bus service transition. There is recognition of the region's involvement in wider energy system management and planning, and responsibility for heat zone designation, energy efficiency advice and attracting private sector finance. In addition, funding is anticipated for industrial decarbonisation programmes for regional businesses, natural environment finance models and air quality monitors to support the region's wider environment and net zero ambitions.

Consultation

- 4.38. The deal and agreement in-principle were prepared by the WMCA in consultation with the constituent members and government. Dialogue also has continued throughout the development of the implementation plan.
- 4.39. Public consultation will be undertaken as required, subject to legal guidance, for any new proposed functions that require a formal statutory process (see Legal section).

5. Decide

- 5.1. Options considered include:

- a) Preferred approach as recommended in this report. Approval of the West Midlands DDD and implementation plan will enable Walsall to secure economic and inclusive growth benefits for its communities and residents as set out in local policies and strategies. The devolution 'offers' will provide flexibilities in the way tools and funding are implemented and delivered across the area.
- b) Do-nothing. Without the necessary local authority approval, the WMCA board would not be able to recommend approval of the deal and the devolved funding and powers to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits would be lost. This would disadvantage the area by limiting opportunities for development and transition and slowing growth.

6. Respond

- 6.1. Subject to approval of the report recommendations and the appropriate approvals from the other constituent members, formal ratification of the deal will be sought at WMCA board in October 2023. This will occur at the same time as the board formally asking the secretary of state to lay a draft order with respect to the formal statutory functions arising from the deal.

7. Review

- 7.1. Delivery of the deal and implementation plan will be delivered through the established WMCA governance arrangements, including WMCA board, sub-committees and overview and scrutiny, and portfolio leads.
- 7.2. The WMCA will be held accountable through the local government accountability framework, English devolution accountability framework and enhanced scrutiny measures. In addition, the Mayor and WMCA will be expected to present to parliamentary select committees as requested, in conjunction with Mayor's question time and quarterly engagement with West Midlands MPs.

Appendices

Appendix 1: West Midlands Deeper Devolution Deal: Thematic Summaries

Appendix 2: West Midlands Deeper Devolution Deal: Implementation Plan

Appendix 3: Governance Review for the devolution of the Bus Service Operators Grant

Appendix 4: Draft Scheme for the devolution of the Bus Service Operators Grant

Appendix 5: Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers

- Cabinet Report 7 March 2016 'Approval of the Order to establish the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- Cabinet Report 2 June 2016 'Approval of the West Midlands Combined Authority Draft Mayoral Scheme, Mayoral Elections Order, and West Midlands Devolution Deal (1)'.- Cabinet Report 20 June 2018 'Approval of the West Midlands Combined Authority West Midlands Devolution Deal 2 and Implementation Plan'.

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Dave Brown
Executive Director

08 September 2023



Councillor Bird
Leader

08 September 2023

West Midlands 'Trailblazer' Deeper Devolution Deal: Thematic Summaries

August 2023



West Midlands
Combined Authority



4	Introduction
6	Operating more effectively
9	Special Feature: Single Settlement
10	Economy
12	Employment and skills
14	Special feature: A transport network closer to the standards of London
16	Transport
18	Supporting clusters
20	Net Zero and Environment
24	Special Feature: Unlocking Regeneration through Levelling Up Zones
26	Transforming Places
28	Pride in Place



Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide local authorities (LAs) an overview of the trailblazer deeper devolution deal (the deal) between the region and Government. It sets out how the commitments in the deal will be implemented, how LA partners will be engaged in decision-making, LAs roles in delivery and indicative timescales for commitments to be progressed and implemented. A more detailed breakdown of deal implementation activities is set out in the fuller implementation plan that follows these summaries. The different policy areas in the deal have been grouped into the following themes:

- Operating more effectively. This covers governance and accountability, data and the single settlement;
- Economy. This covers business support and finance, innovation, trade and investment and visitor economy;
- Employment and skills. This covers adult skills, careers and employment support;
- Transport. This covers rail, buses, transport innovation, transport planning and infrastructure capital support;
- Supporting clusters. This covers digital, social economy and Places for Growth;
- Net zero and environment. This covers energy efficiency, industrial decarbonisation, heat zoning, natural capital, local area energy planning and air quality;
- Transforming places. This covers housing, regeneration, Levelling Up Zones and business rate retention;
- Pride in place. This covers homelessness, anti-social behaviour and early years.

In addition, there are three further special features that cover areas of the deal in more detail. These are:

- Single settlement;
- Transport;
- Levelling Up Zones.

Plans on a page

For every thematic summary, a 'plan on a page' is provided to show indicative timescales for implementation activities.

A bar like the below with a single diamond is used to indicate a deadline:



A bar like the one below with a diamond at either end is used to indicate the duration of an activity:



- Operating more effectively
- Economy
- Supporting nascent clusters
- Pride in Place

- Transforming places
- Adult Skills and Employment Support
- Net Zero and Environment
- Transport

Overview of the deal

There are over 190 different commitments in the deal. The commitments are of different kinds, including:

1. Commitments to provide new funds to the region;
2. Commitments to increase flexibility and local decision-making power over existing and future funding;
3. Commitments to new partnerships to plan and manage the delivery of government programmes; and
4. Commitments to enable the region to co-design new policy initiatives with Government.

The highest number of commitments relate to the themes of economy, operating more effectively and transport. Taken together, these commitments, the policy levers and funding they include, represent a step-change in our ability to realise our collective vision of a better connected, more prosperous, fairer, greener and healthier West Midlands.

Financial value of the deal to the region

The total value of the deal in fiscal terms to the region is estimated at c£1.5 billion. This estimate is to a large extent influenced by the ability of the region to establish Levelling Up Zones as intended, and the economic growth in the region which will flow back to LAs through the Business Rates system.

Fund	Potential Value	New Money?
Levelling Up Zones ¹	c.£0.5bn Minimum	Yes
10-year Business Rates Retention	c.£450m	Difficult to assess
Affordable Housing Programme	£200-400m	Yes
Single Regeneration Fund	£100m	Yes
Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension	£60m	Yes
Smart City Region	£10.0m	Yes
Air Quality Sensors	£0.5m	Yes
Digital Devices	£4.0m	Yes
Industrial Decarb	£10.5m	Yes
Natural Environment	£1.0m	Yes
Cultural Infrastructure Fund	£4.0m	Yes

¹ Estimate based on incremental Business Rate Retention if all 6 LUZs are given Government consent and delivered.

Operating more effectively

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Power and Participation

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Governance, Scrutiny and Accountability

What will the deal achieve?

A condition set by government for the region to receive the benefits of the deal is strengthening existing WMCA scrutiny arrangements and introducing new processes to enhance our accountability, both to central government and to our residents.

What will we deliver?

- Quarterly MPs/Mayor/Portfolio Leader sessions.
- Review of WMCA overview and scrutiny arrangements.
- Revised outcome reporting to Government.
- Publication of a Scrutiny Protocol by Government.
- Enhanced Mayoral Question Times.
- Enhanced resources and profile for WMCA scrutiny committee chairs.

How will local authorities be involved?

- The Terms of Reference for MPs Quarterly Sessions will be shared with Regional Chief Legal Officer and Senior Local Authority Officer Group for feedback;
- LAs will have the opportunity to vote on a resolution to implement the MPs Quarterly Sessions at WMCA Board;
- Through the Regional Chief Legal Officers Meeting, local authorities will be consulted on the recommendations of the review of WMCA overview and scrutiny practices by DLUHC and the Centre for Local Governance and Scrutiny.

Data

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will increase the range of central government data that WMCA and partners have access to, improve data sharing within the region and support our ability to use outcomes evidence in decision making. Improvements in the region's data sharing capability are key to supporting the realisation of benefits across multiple other elements of the deal, for example, partnership agreements in housing and adult skills.

What will we deliver?

- Changes to WMCA data governance;
- Access to the Chief Data Officer's Council;
- A Data Partnership with Government;
- Data sharing gateways with Government departments.

How will local authorities be involved?

LA leaders will be asked to agree proposed changes to enhance WMCA Data Governance and get WMCA ready for enhanced data sharing and agree new data sharing practices and principles at a regional level.

The West Midlands Insights on Society and Economy group with local authorities will develop proposals for local data sharing and scope out what data is held within local authorities and WMCA and what data would be beneficial from central government. Together, they will build on the process used to create the Birmingham Data Charter and lead to the co-creation of a West Midlands Data Charter.

Single settlement

Exec Lead: Linda Horne

What will the deal achieve?

The deal offers the region the opportunity to receive government department-style multi-year financial settlements. This will reduce the amount of competitive bidding for government funding, provide more certainty over levels of funding and enable joined-up, strategic funding delivery. The single settlement will also streamline reporting and evaluation processes associated with bidding to multiple competitive pots. The single settlement will provide us with greater power over investment decisions locally, and greater ability to fund our priorities.

What will we deliver?

- A Memorandum of Understanding covering the design principles for the single settlement.
- Reduction in competitive bidding for government funding.
- Streamlined monitoring, evaluation and assurance processes.
- Funding from central government with fewer prescribed spending conditions.
- Greater funding certainty for greater time periods, enabling simpler financial planning.

How will local authorities be involved?

- The decision on whether or not to sign the MoU will be taken to WMCA Board for agreement.
- The Senior Local Authority Group (SLAOG) will be used to co-develop negotiating positions to be communicated to DLUHC and Treasury. Finance Directors and other subject matter experts from local authorities will also be engaged.
- Special sessions with Leaders will be arranged over Summer and early Autumn to update them on negotiations and refine negotiating positions.
- After the MoU has been developed, there will be further engagement through Chief Execs on the changes that are required to WMCA governance and decision-making structures to make most of single settlement funding.
- As part of our approach to funding delivery, we currently expect place-based plans to set out local funding priorities and strategies that join up the multiple functions – and funding streams – of the single settlement.

Operating more effectively

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025	
Governance and Scrutiny	◆ Develop <u>ToRs</u> for Mayor/MPs Sessions ◆					◆ WMCA Board resolution			◆ First session		
				◆ Publication of Scrutiny Protocol		Publication of Plain English Guidance			◆		
	◆ Review of WMCA/GMCA governance and scrutiny with DLUHC										
Single Settlement	◆ Negotiate MoU with GMCA, HMT and DLUHC ◆							◆ MoU to Board		◆ Assumed SR	
	◆ Co-develop MoU with Local Authority partners ◆										
								◆ Review WMCA decision making ◆		◆	
								◆ Develop data, M&E capability ◆		◆	
								◆ Develop assurance and scrutiny ◆		◆	
Data	◆ Improvements to WMCA data governance ◆										
	◆ Develop Data Partnership with Government ◆										
	◆ Establish data sharing Gateway(s) ◆										
	◆ Build Local Data Sharing Network ◆										
	◆ Attend Chief Data Officer's Council ◆										
									◆ Data Symposium ◆		



Special Feature: Single Settlement

Challenge & Opportunity

The region has proved its capability to deliver large-scale funding programmes that make a real difference to people, communities and businesses.

Whether it's the 100 derelict sites that have been unlocked, the 200 transport projects the region will deliver by 2026 or the tens of thousands of adult learners who have received support to boost their skills – we have shown we can work in partnership to deliver change at scale.

With the right tools, the region could do more. We receive funding from government through a myriad of funding streams, each with a separate delivery timetable, different output prescriptions and overlapping reporting and accountability arrangements. This gets in the way of our ability to take joined up, strategic decisions drawing on all our resources in the round.

How the deal addresses it

The commitment to a single department-style settlement for the region will change this.

It will allocate a single capital and revenue settlement to the region spanning multi-year Spending Review periods, supporting medium-term, strategic planning.

It will allow us to realise the benefits of delivering local growth and place, local transport, housing and regeneration, adult skills and net zero functions in parallel, generating more impact for the region.

It will give the region greater flexibility and more control to deliver projects and initiatives aligned to local needs and place-based opportunities.

It will significantly reduce pressures on officer time from having to make repeat bids into national funding competitions, with decisions routed through regional decision-making structures instead.

Why that's different from pre-deal

The single settlement represents a significant step forward relative to the status quo.

The single settlement will change the way the region works with and receives funding from government for the better, underpinned by new accountability arrangements and a jointly agreed outcomes framework.

It will see new ways of working between partners across the region, with more local control over decisions routed through local decision-making and accountability structures.

When things will happen

- Summer 2023: Early engagement within the region on the design of the single settlement;
- Autumn 2023: A memorandum of understanding between the region and government;
- 2024: Further work across the region to prepare for single settlement implementation, working towards an allocation at the next Spending Review (timing tbc, but assumed to be Autumn 2024);
- 2025 (tbc): Following the next Spending Review, the first single settlement would be allocated to the region.

Economy

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Inclusive economy

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Trade and investment

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will help to bring greater foreign direct investment into the region and help more businesses to export by strengthening the region's influence over the Department for Business and Trade, increasing the region's visibility to overseas investors, securing support from the Office for Investment and better connecting businesses to sources of export and investment support.

What will be delivered?

An International Strategy, joint agreement of future High Potential Opportunities and joint delivery with the Department for Business and Trade.

How will local authorities be involved?

Directors of Economic Development will work with the WMCA and West Midlands Growth Company to progress the commitments in the deal, feeding into the Economic Growth Board and Combined Authority Board.

Innovation

What will the deal achieve?

The deal gives the region greater influence over national innovation funding and makes a number of commitments that will help businesses across the region to innovate and adopt new technologies, building on the region's status as an Innovation Accelerator and the recently-published WMCA – Innovate UK Action Plan.

What will be delivered?

A new Strategic Innovation Partnership, bi-annual meetings with HMG Science Ministers and a knowledge transfer partnership with Innovate UK.

How will local authorities be involved?

LA officers will be engaged via Business Support Officers Group and Directors of Economic Development. Directors of Economic Development are, with Innovation Board and universities, shaping the direction of the Partnership, with the Economic Growth Board and Combined Authority Board in decision-making roles.

Visitor Economy

What will the deal achieve?

The deal strengthens the West Midlands Growth Company's role in coordinating the region's visitor economy.

What will be delivered?

West Midlands Growth Company to be granted Destination Development Partnership pilot 2 status and support more LAs to achieve Local Visitor Economy Partnership status.

How will local authorities be involved?

LAs have been engaged in the development of DDP proposals through signing off the Growth Company’s Business Plan, while two LAs have already received LVEP status. LAs will be engaged through ongoing quarterly meetings.

Business support and finance

What will the deal achieve?

The deal gives the region greater influence over national business support programmes now and the ability to make the case for devolved business support in future. The deal will also help to better align sources of SME finance and infrastructure investment with regional opportunities.

What will be delivered?

A new Strategic Productivity Partnership, regional engagement in the future of Growth Hubs, a role for the region in the governance of the British Business Bank’s regional fund (MEIF2).

How will local authorities be involved?

With input from the Business Support Officers Group and Business Insights Forum, Directors of Economic Development are shaping commitments in this section of the deal to feed into Economic Growth Board and CA Board. Across this theme, data and intelligence gathered through the Business Growth West Midlands Service will be used to inform policy design in the economy and skills partnership.

	May	June	July	August	Sept	October	November	December	2024	2025
Business support								Report to SoS on outcomes of SPP		
									Bi-annual SPP meetings	
Business support										
Business support										
Innovation										
Innovation										
Trade and Investment										
Trade and Investment										
Trade and Investment										
Trade and Investment										

Employment and skills

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Education and Learning

Exec Lead: Clare Hatton

Adult skills and employment

What will the deal achieve?

Although the deal has separate chapters on adult skills and employment support, we continue to advocate to Government that these are complimentary and should be treated as one workstream. This will ensure adult skills and employment support are properly integrated and mutually reinforcing.

In adult skills, the deal commits to the creation of a joint governance board to provide oversight of post-16 technical education and skills in the WMCA area, ensuring our training offer is aligned to local skills needs, providing strategic oversight of the Local Skills Improvement Plan, supporting better data sharing and providing oversight for the development of an all-age careers strategy. The deal offers greater flexibility over how existing adult skills funding (Free Courses for Jobs and Skills Bootcamps) can be spent and a commitment to fully devolve these funds as part of the single settlement. The deal recognises WMCA as the central convenor of careers provision, with joint governance of the current National Careers Service contract and a commitment to co-designing future careers provision for all ages in the region.

On employment support, the deal commits to the creation of a new regional Labour Market Partnership Board to oversee the development and implementation of a regional labour market strategy. It provides a new role in co-designing future contracted employment programmes for young people and adults, which the CA will commission on behalf of DWP on a WMCA footprint.

We continue to push for the Joint Governance Board for Adult Skills and the Labour Market Partnership Board to be combined into one.

What will be delivered?

- Terms of reference for an integrated adult skills and employment support board;
- Sign-off of the Local Skills Improvement Plan and of the application for the Local Skills Improvement Fund that supports LSIP implementation;
- An all-age careers strategy;
- Co-design of future contracted employment support programmes, on a WMCA footprint (N.B. no new contracted employment support programmes expected during this SR period);
- Free Courses for Jobs and Skills Bootcamps expanded to create a stronger training offer that meet labour market and skills needs across the economy;
- Better access to data that supports planning and delivery of adult skills provision and demonstrates outcomes and impact;
- Joint governance of the current National Careers Service contractor and role in shaping future specifications.

How will local authorities be involved?

- LAs will have a key role in new governance structures for skills and employment support programmes within the WMCA area. These are currently in development. In the interim, we will engage with LAs via Directors of Economic Development, with governance decisions taken at Economic Growth Board;
- The CA will also work closely with individual LAs and our LA Employment & Skills Officers Group to understand and respond to employment and skills needs in their area – to inform adult skills procurement in each area;
- Adult skills provision will continue to be delivered through an ecosystem of LAs, FE colleges, independent training providers, universities and the VCS. LAs will continue to receive grant funding for community learning provision;
- The CA will also work closely with individual LAs and our LA Employment & Skills Officers Group to understand and respond to employment and skills needs in their area – to inform commissioning of employment support provision.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025
Adult Skills and employment	Develop new governance structures – with agreed Terms of Reference - for employment and skills									
	Deploy greater flexibility in Adult Skills funding									
	MoU signed with HMT and DLUHC on Single Settlement								Assumed SR	



Special feature: A transport network closer to the standards of London

Challenge

After decades of underinvestment, our region is beginning to turn our transport network around. But significant challenges remain in tackling the defining issues of our time, such as climate change, air quality, our health, and now the cost of living and energy pressures facing our citizens.

To enable Inclusive Growth means improving people's access to opportunities. But the pandemic and the cost of living crises have resulted in problems to overcome. Public transport costs have gone up whilst demand to travel has dropped, this has put levels of service at risk. And although people are driving less as fuel has increased in cost, this has not resulted in a proportionate uptick in travel by other modes; people are less socially and economically active.

Progress has been made to strengthen the West Midlands' transport since the first two devolution deals in 2015 and 2017: the next five years will see at least 40% more investment in transport capital compared to the last five years. Moreover, the region remains a world leader in the future of transport.

Connectivity reduces production costs, enables businesses to reach customers more effectively, links employers to a wider pool of potential employees and ultimately encourages business development. Without an integrated network, our progress on levelling up and economic standing relative to other regions will be constrained.

How the deal addresses it

- The deal commits to explore a fully integrated, multi-modal fares and ticketing structure alongside pay as you go ticketing infrastructure pilots and co-development of a regional branding proposition for rail – key tenets of regional transport integration;
- A formal partnership between the West Midlands Rail Executive and Great British Railways (GBR) will increase local, democratic accountability over the region's railway;
- The deal unlocks an additional £60 million for the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension;
- With the devolution of the Bus Service Operators Grant, we can change the mechanisms for providing public subsidy to private bus operators to improve accessibility across the region and support the decarbonisation of bus fleets.

Why that's different from pre-deal

We have made great improvements to our network since the first devolution deal was agreed. However, the pandemic has shifted patterns and behaviours, with patronage remaining below pre-pandemic levels. The bus industry, in particular, is facing acute challenges.

The deal gives the region a greater set of tools to face these challenges and create an integrated transport system that is fit for the future. In line with our Local Transport Plan, we will use the provisions of the deal to deliver a network with improved accessibility, reduced traffic and decarbonised public transport.

When things will happen

- 2024/2025: Reformed commercial BSOG devolved;
- January 2025 onwards: WMRE – GBR Partnership goes live;
- 2027 onwards: Full very light rail routes could form part of the second round of the City Region Sustainable Transport Scheme.



Transport

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Connected Communities

Exec Lead: Anne Shaw

Rail

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will lead to a partnership agreement between West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) and Great British Railways (GBR). This will enhance local accountability and influence over the regional rail network. It will increase our ability to influence rail planning with local growth and social priorities, better integrate rail with other modes of transport and support the roll out of integrated smart ticketing.

What will we be delivered?

A new partnership agreement between WMRE and GBR and a pilot for fully integrated fares and ticketing.

How will local authorities be involved?

The partnership agreement will be approved through the WMRE Board.

Infrastructure and planning

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will drive further investment in the regional transport network, alleviate cost pressures on existing schemes and support regional transport planning. This is additional to the announcement of a further round of funding through the City Region Sustainable Transport Scheme.

What will be delivered?

£60m of additional funding towards the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension and additional transport planning resources for the Combined Authority implement new data and analytical tools.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Senior Transport Officer's Group will support the development and oversight of relevant business cases, with strategic decisions taken by the Combined Authority Board. Coventry City Council is leading the development of very light rail infrastructure.

Buses

What will the deal achieve?

The deal hands more power to the region over payments to bus operators; commits to investigate additional powers to tackle anti-social behavior on the transport network; and to further work to obtain pavement parking powers for local authorities.

What will be delivered?

Devolution of the Bus Services Operator Grant (BSOG).

How will local authorities be involved?

Transport Support Group will test and refine advice to DfT on the design of the BSOG scheme and its appropriate boundaries. The BSOG Governance Review and Scheme is provided alongside this document for local authority feedback and will be approved at WMCA Board in October.

Transport innovation

What will the deal achieve?

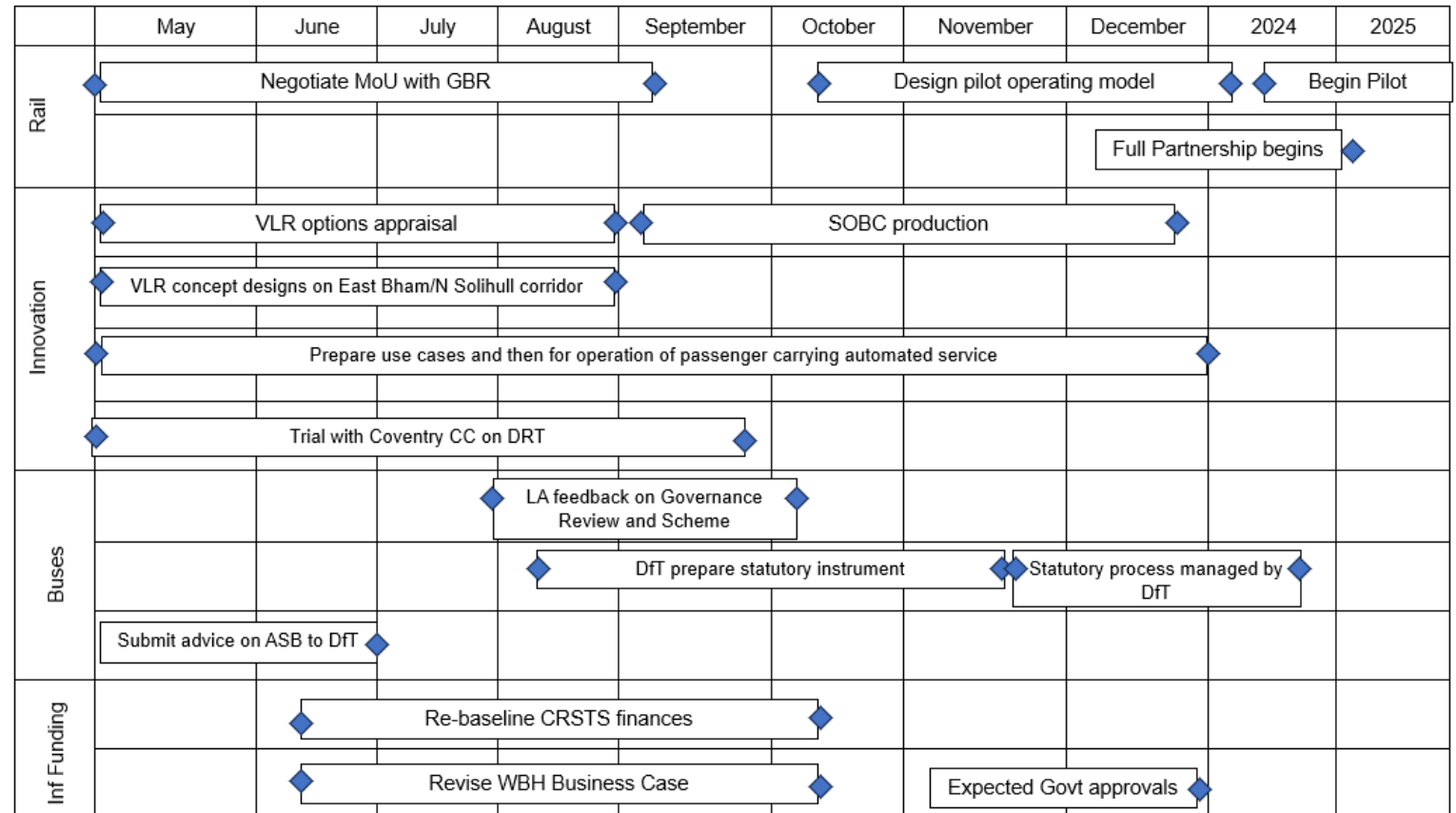
The deal will enable the region to test and demonstrate new, innovative technologies to drive behaviour change in transport usage, including through low-emission and autonomous vehicle trials.

What will be delivered?

Funding and sponsorship from the Department for Transport to develop proposals and evidence.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Senior Transport Officer's Group will support policy development, with strategic decisions taken by the Combined Authority Board.



Supporting clusters

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Economy

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Digital

What will the deal achieve?

The commitments in the deal recognise West Midlands 5G's contribution to mapping and closing digital connectivity gaps in the region. The deal includes a commitment from government to engage with the WM Digital Infrastructure Leadership Group to accelerate broadband roll-out, provides funding to purchase devices to boost digital inclusion and provides funding for the Smart City Region project. This will introduce a network of sensors in healthcare settings to enable remote monitoring and the deployment of 5G technology to underpin remote health diagnosis.

What will we deliver?

- £4m fund for digital inclusion to roll out 20,000 devices;
- £10.1m for Smart City Region project;
- Greater high speed broadband coverage across the region.

How will local authorities be involved?

Accelerating broadband roll out will be coordinated by WM5G, but local authorities will be essential in managing the delivery of broadband through intelligence on forthcoming works and use of planning powers to deliver works.

The Smart City Region project will be project managed by WM5G and delivered by NHS partners in each local.

For digital inclusion, local authorities will take receipt of the purchased devices and distribute them to their networks of voluntary sector organisations, who, in turn, will distribute them to vulnerable residents.

Social Economy

What will the deal achieve?

Recognising WMCA's commitment to double the size of the social economy, the deal will enable WMCA to provide specialist business support to social economy organisations to grow their trading activity. It will also enable local areas develop their own circular, inclusive local social economies.

What will we deliver?

The £1.75 million Social Economy Business Support programme will provide an opportunity for social enterprises, community-owned businesses, co-ops and trading charities, the opportunity to gain the business skills and confidence needed to grow their businesses. This programme will provide incentive grants to encourage increased trading income, leading to more employment, volunteering and beneficiary impact.

The local place-based Cluster development will provide £50,000 each to 8 localities – one per constituent LA and one identified by Power to Change.

How will local authorities be involved?

For the Business Support programme, local authorities will be asked to help recruit participants from their area. For the place-based cluster development, local authorities will identify and offer their support for place-based economy clusters.

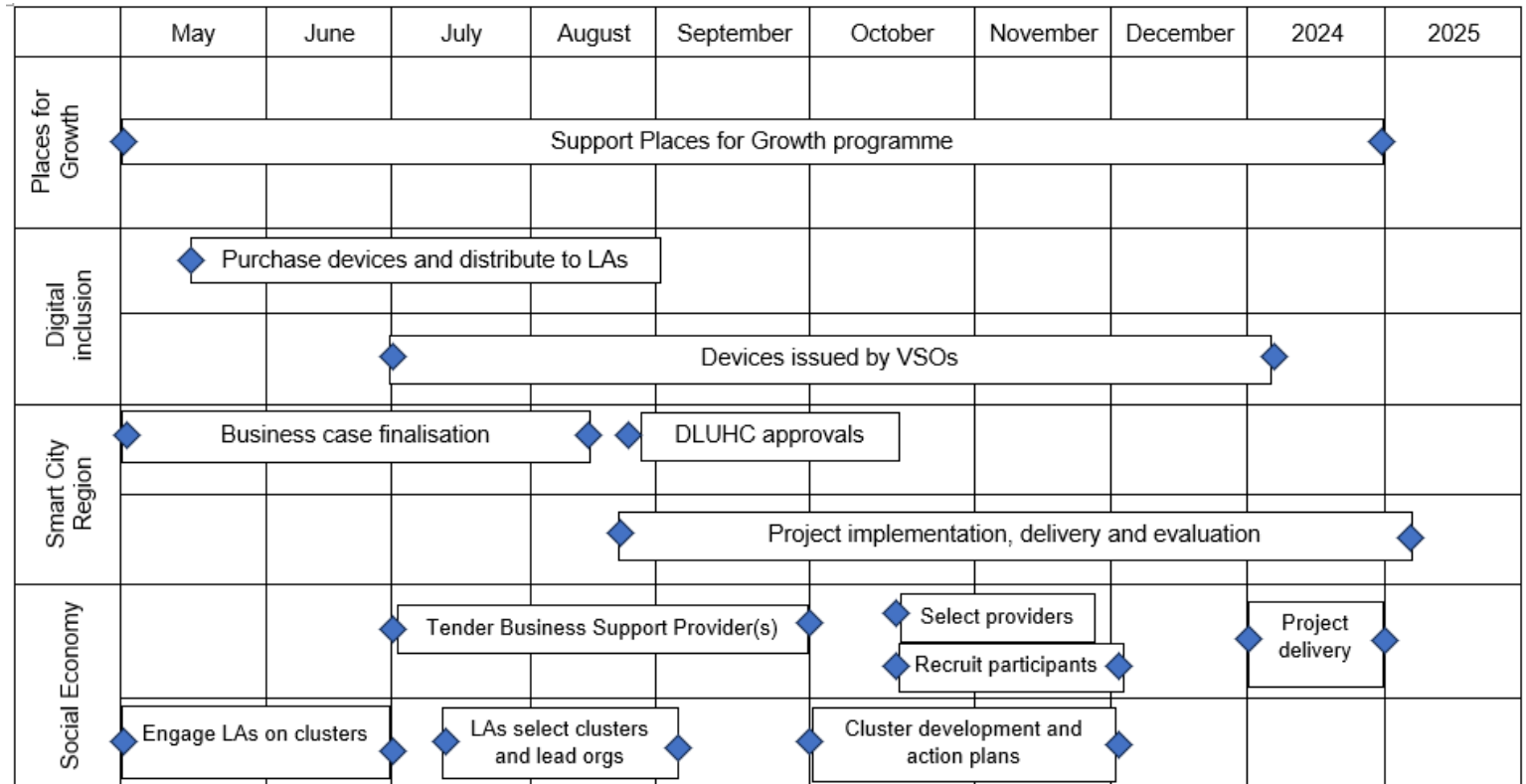
Places for Growth

What will the deal achieve?

In recognition of the region's growing skills clusters such as in transport and infrastructure a new West Midlands Fast Stream pilot will set a blueprint for establishing long term career pathways for people in the region by delivering a pipeline of civil service talent and skills

What will we deliver?

We will support Government to relocate 2,100 civil service roles to the West Midlands by 2025.



Net Zero and Environment

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Climate resilience

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Domestic retrofit and minimum energy efficiency standards

What will the deal achieve?

The deal secures a greater role for the region in measures that will support retrofit and net zero delivery through the devolution of retrofit and potentially other net zero funding. The deal also opens up the opportunity for local authorities to adopt additional powers to enforce tighter minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES); and commits to further work to bring more private investment into energy efficiency upgrades.

What will be delivered?

Aside from the delivery of retrofit and market enabling activity through the single settlement, the deal provides the opportunity to strengthen MEES with enhanced energy efficiency requirements, allowing the region to maintain its trajectory regardless of national policy decisions in this area. However, this needs to be considered within the context of adequately resourcing existing, as well as any additional, standards.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Local Authority Retrofit Officers Group meeting provides the opportunity to explore how these opportunities should be taken forward in partnership with LAs, with senior level engagement through the Net Zero Directors group.

Industrial decarbonisation

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will support efforts to increase businesses' energy efficiency and resilience to high energy costs, identified through the work of the Mayor's Industrial Energy Taskforce. The deal also re-affirms the greater role the region will be able to play in coordinating the roll-out of clean heat infrastructure, which will further support industrial and domestic heat decarbonisation.

What will be delivered?

The deal provides an additional £10.5m from DLUHC to compliment the £14.1m from DESNZ for businesses to undertake energy efficiency audits and invest in energy efficiency measures, agreed as a result of the groundbreaking work of the Black Country Industrial Cluster.

How will local authorities be involved?

The WMCA has worked with partners to align this funding with other publicly and privately funded programmes already in place, such as the recent Decarbonisation Net Zero programme tendered by WMCA using UKSPF funding. The WMCA will coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of the outputs delivered through these programmes.

Local Area Energy Planning

What will the deal achieve?

The deal encourages the WMCA to use its convening power and partnerships to drive local area energy planning across the region, and to use Energy Capital's expertise to inform approaches to energy system investment and management. This is backed in the deal by the expectation that National Grid will engage with the WMCA to ensure their investments will meet local needs and encouragement to engage with OfGEM on their future systems and network regulation workstream, focusing on network investment.

What will be delivered?

The WMCA will develop a Local Area Energy Planning programme in partnership with local authorities and industry across the region to provide partners with data, tools, expertise, resources and influence to support local area energy planning and investment. Collaborative decision-making structures are being established, which bring together private sector energy system investors, to consider energy infrastructure investment from a multi-vector perspective and feedback will be provided to OfGEM and government. This will ensure that the offer in the deal and its underlying intent are achieved.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Local Area Energy Planning-Coordination Group will oversee this programme, working closely with an industry Net Zero Infrastructure Delivery Panel. Additional workshops will be led by LAs to drill down into specific issues in specific areas. Energy Collaboration Days will also continue to be held monthly to enable joint working between energy officers across both the public and private sector.

Heat Zoning Network Pilot

What will the deal achieve?

Heat networks will be an important element of our energy infrastructure going forward and form important anchor projects in the delivery of local net zero solutions. The deal commits to heat network zoning as a national programme and identifies the WMCA and its constituent authorities as heat network zone coordinators (by 2025), with the ability to require buildings, within designated zones, to connect to heat networks.

What will be delivered?

Heat Network Zones are currently being scoped and piloted by Birmingham and

Coventry. This will lead to the identification of potential heat network zones across the region, supported by LAEP, providing the necessary scale to engage key partners, including commercial investors, to bring schemes forward that meet local needs. For the new role established by Government for Heat Zone coordinators, this role will be scoped with Local Authorities and resources sought to enable implementation.

How will local authorities be involved?

Where local authorities have the potential for heat networks, they will be approached directly to collaborate with the WMCA. LA's will remain central to the development and delivery of heat networks and associated zone(s) but may choose to work collaboratively with the WMCA to share resources and expertise to drive the delivery of these networks and zones.

Net Zero and Environment

Natural capital

What will the deal achieve?

The region will enable the region to attract more investment in natural capital schemes, supporting the development of the region's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

What will be delivered?

£1m to the region through the Local Investment in Natural Capital (LINC) Programme to boost regional capacity.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Natural Capital Officers group is supporting the development of the LINC Programme and will work to develop and bring forward projects from the constituent authorities to the LINC project pipeline. The pipeline will attract significant private investment into the region to help delivery of our targets for nature recovery, climate adaptation and mitigation and connecting people with nature. This will be fed into both the Environment and Energy and WMCA Boards.

Air Quality

What will the deal achieve?

The deal provides £0.9m in capital funding to install air quality monitors across the region in areas where there are gaps in coverage. The data from these sensors will be fed into a web-based dashboard accessible to the public.

What will be delivered?

Air quality sensors and a live web-based dashboard.

How will local authorities be involved?

Officers working on air quality in the different local authorities will help decide where the low-cost sensors provided through this funding are located, ensuring that they are being placed in areas with no coverage currently. Data from the sensors will be published on an air quality web platform that will be developed in collaboration with local authorities through the West Midlands Environment Protection Group. This work will support the aims and outcomes identified in the West Midlands Air Quality Framework, currently out for consultation following consideration by the WMCA Environment and Energy Board.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025	
MEES						LA engagement on MEES					
LAEP		LAEP development & implementation									
Industrial Decarb	DESNZ and DLUHC Develop Business Case										
						Project delivery					
Heat Zoning	Government to have established Heat Zoning Coordinators										
Air Quality	Develop Business Case										
			DLUHC approvals			Project delivery					
Natural Capital	Create and manage pipeline of investable projects										
		Create Natural Asset Register									
							Setup Fund				



Special Feature: Unlocking Regeneration through Levelling Up Zones

Challenge & Opportunity

The West Midlands has a strong track record of regenerating brownfield land, unlocking over 100 derelict, stalled and contaminated sites across the region and delivering thousands of new homes, workspaces and jobs.

However, the speed of delivery and breadth of outcomes that could be achieved have been hindered by the complexity, prescriptive measures and cyclical nature of funding streams.

The trailblazer deal presents an opportunity to overcome these barriers to high-impact regeneration.

How the deal addresses it

Through our pioneering Levelling Up Zones, the region will be able to bring together multiple regeneration levers – funding simplification, optimisation of publicly owned land and greater influence over affordable housing provision – and pursue a joined-up approach to the design and delivery of regeneration programmes, aligned to regional priorities and complementing existing activity.

As part of this package, the deal allows the region to establish areas that could attract 100% business rate growth retention for 25 years. This greater degree of revenue retention certainty will support local authorities to make longer-term, strategic investments in infrastructure and regeneration projects.

Taken in conjunction with the single settlement, the Zones represent a game-changer for the region, its financial position and the economic prospects of some of its most deprived communities.

Investment Zones

In addition, in March 2023 Government also announced the West Midlands as one of 8 Investment Zones – innovation-led economic clusters offering both tax incentives and business rate retention.

In the West Midlands, our approach will be to ensure Investment Zones complement and add value to Levelling Up Zones.

This will give the region an expansive toolkit to drive growth and investment across the region and build its comparative economic advantage over other parts of the country.

Why that's different from pre-deal

Instead of fragmented, output-driven funding approaches, the deal puts the region in a position to adopt a strategic and empowered approach to regeneration that meets the needs of, and opportunities for, local communities.

The package of measures will ensure the West Midlands is a beacon for private sector investment.

When things will happen

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



Transforming Places

Inclusive Growth Fundamental: Affordable and Safe Places

Exec Lead: John Godfrey

Regeneration

What will the deal achieve?

The deal will give the region more influence over Homes England policy and funding decisions, ensuring different programmes align for maximum impact and better reflect our priorities; more influence over the disposal of government owned land in the region, to help unlock land assembly opportunities for regeneration schemes; and a flexible source of funding to support commercial, employment and mixed-use development on brownfield land.

What will we deliver?

A Strategic Place Partnership between Homes England, government departments and arm's length bodies; a Public Land Partnership with the Cabinet Office; and a £100m Single Regeneration Fund, which will deliver 4,000 homes across the region.

How will local authorities be involved?

The pipeline of sites for the Single Regeneration Fund will be co-produced by LAs and the Combined Authority. Projects will be approved via the existing SAF process, with local authority leaders and deputies approving funding via Investment Board.

Housing

What will the deal achieve?

The deal gives the region increasing levels of influence and direction over Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) funding and spending decisions, beginning with an Affordable Homes Partnership with Homes England between 2023 and 2026 and leading to the devolution of AHP to the region at the next Spending Review. In addition, the region will now, for the first time, be able to use AHP funds for estate regeneration purposes.

What will we deliver?

At least £200m, and up to £400m, will be spent in the region via the Affordable Homes Programme between 2023 and 2026. This delivery will inform the negotiations for the successor programme post-2026.

How will local authorities be involved?

Local authorities will be key in identifying suitable sites for AHP, informing the joint pipeline and supporting the delivery of sites through coordination of planning processes and social housing development plans. Local authorities are still able to bid for AHP funding separately and can leverage the region's improved access to Homes England to escalate and resolve issues.

Business rates retention and Levelling Up Zones (see special feature)

Exec Lead for BRR: Linda Horne

What will the deal achieve?

The deal provides local authorities with certainty that they will be able to retain 100% of their business rates for the next 10 years, a marked improvement on the one year rolling arrangement at present and estimated to be worth £450 million to the region. This certainty will help to underpin additional, longer-term investment decisions where business rates incomes are likely to be stable.

The deal also allows the region to bring together regeneration levers to drive joined up investment and regeneration in up to 6 Levelling Up Zones – including, for example, areas that could attract 100% business rate growth retention for 25 years – complementing the national Investment Zones programme.

What will we deliver?

Retained business rates would flow to local authorities. Once operational, the Zones would have local management structures with some outcome reporting to the Combined Authority.

How will local authorities be involved?

Constructive engagement across the region is already underway to co-design the designation of Levelling Up Zone sites, as presented to Board in August.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025
Growth Zones	◆ Negotiate Zone criteria with DLUHC ◆									
	◆ Co-develop Zone proposals with LAs ◆			◆ WMCA Board approval for Zone proposals ◆						
			◆ negotiate interventions with DLUHC ◆				◆ Sites announced at assumed SR ◆			
SRF	DLUHC Bus Case to HMT ◆		◆ Negotiate Fund T&Cs ◆		◆ Funding begins for projects up to FY 25/26 ◆					
AHP	◆ Engage LAs to ensure pipeline is <u>uptodate</u> ◆									
	◆ Create joint AHP team with HE ◆			◆ Develop strategy, joint pipeline ◆					◆ Full devo of AHP from assumed ◆	
Partnerships	◆ Negotiate Strat Place Partnership, Public Land Reform, AHP agreements with Govt ◆									
					◆ Consult LAs on emerging proposals ◆			◆ WMCA Board approval ◆		
BRR	◆ Negotiation with DLUHC on design of 10yr BRR ◆						◆ Scheme announced at assumed SR ◆			
	◆ Consult LAs on DLUHC proposals ◆								◆ Beginning of 10 Year BRR ◆	

Pride in Place

Inclusive Growth Fundamentals: Affordable and Safe places, Connected Communities

Exec Lead: Ed Cox

Homelessness

What will the deal achieve?

The deal commits to further work between the WMCA, Homes England and DWP to secure investment and systems change to join up the homes and jobs agenda for young people across the region. Additionally, in Birmingham, investment has been secured to enable homeless families living in Temporary Accommodation to move into the private rented sector.

What will be delivered?

An expansion of the Live and Work model in additional localities across the region and a Rent Simplification pilot for young people in supported accommodation to enable transition into work. Birmingham City Council will use the £3.8m secured to lease good quality private sector accommodation for homeless families living in Temporary Accommodation.

How will local authorities be involved?

For the Live and Work expansion and Rent Simplification pilot local authority partners will be engaged regularly via the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce and the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce Members Advisory Group. The Rent Simplification pilot proposal is being developed in partnership with DWP and local authority benefits teams. As we progress the feasibility of the model and establish mechanisms for delivery, we will work with our local authority partners to establish how this could be delivered across local authorities within commissioned supported accommodation for young people. The investment to lease good quality private rented sector properties in Birmingham for homeless families, supporting Birmingham City Council's ongoing work to end the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families, will be managed and delivered directly by Birmingham City Council and overseen by DLUHC.

Early Years

What will the deal achieve?

The deal invites engagement with government to explore pilot opportunities in relation to early years provision.

How will local authorities be involved?

The Combined Authority has encouraged the Regional Directors of Children's Services to take forward this opportunity.

Anti-social behaviour

What will the deal achieve?

The deal commits to further work between the region and Department for Transport (DfT) to explore how devolution could help to address anti-social behaviour on the public transport network. The deal also recognises the street-based anti-social behaviour issues facing local authorities.

What will be delivered?

Engagement between local authorities, the Combined Authority, central government and the Police and Crime Commissioner to explore ways to address these issues.

How will local authorities be involved?

Further engagement is needed to understand the policy options that could be available to the region.

Culture

What will the deal achieve?

The deal provides the means to coordinate and strengthen our cultural and heritage offer. The Regional Culture and Heritage Framework will align and maximise funding from arm's length bodies, such as the Arts Council, including opportunities for co-investment and greater collaboration. DLUHC will also fund a Cultural Infrastructure programme to extend, refurb and improve cultural venues to better support our places, communities and citizens.

What will be delivered?

- A new partnership agreement with between the region and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and its arm's length bodies, to align different funding streams and a Regional Cultural and Heritage Framework to guide its work;
- £4 million capital funding to support regional culture projects, building on the £4.1 committed through the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund for culture.

How will local authorities be involved?

- Local authorities will be engaged in the development of the Culture and Heritage Framework through the Local Authority Cultural Officers Group;
- Each of the seven constituent authorities will receive a grant through the Cultural Heritage Infrastructure Fund.

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2024	2025
Partnership Agreement	Develop Regional Culture and Heritage Framework									
	Develop Arm's Length Body Partnership Agreement and Forward Plan									
Cultural Infrastructure	Business case finalisation					DLUHC approvals				
							Project implementation, delivery, evaluation			
Homelessness				monthly discussions with DWP to consider simplifying benefits systems, develop and design pilot						
			Follow-up with Homes England on LAs and RPs' bid development							
	Support DWP developed Shared Outcomes Fund bid									



West Midlands
Combined Authority

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 Sleight

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 Sleight

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



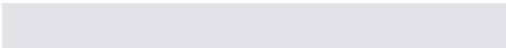
Commitments to local authority engagement and co-design

- 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 Dhimi, 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

West Midlands Combined Authority Draft Governance Review

The Transfer of functions in relation to Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 to WMCA as a Mayoral function

The Transfer of functions in relation to Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000 to WMCA

Proposal for the Making of an Order under sections 105A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016

Introduction

This report has been prepared by the West Midlands Combined Authority in consultation with the Leaders of Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton Local Authorities. The report sets out the findings of the governance review undertaken across the whole geography of the WMCA area in accordance with section 111 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 (the 2009 Act) to consider how the transfer of the delivery of Bus Service Operators Grants (BSOG) from the Secretary of State to WMCA as a Mayoral function would impact on the effectiveness of service delivery. As outlined in the deal, this is an administrative function to be exercised by the Mayor, with decisions from WMCA Board inputting into the policy of allocation taken by a two-thirds majority subject to consultation on National reforms.

The Governance Review has been undertaken as part of the overall review of functions which was carried out by WMCA to support the Trailblazer Devolution Deal negotiated between the WMCA and the Government.

Executive Summary

The West Midlands has been at the forefront of devolution in England. In November 2015, the government and WMCA agreed an ambitious devolution deal, including a directly elected mayor and powers to improve transport, skills, housing and to drive growth in the region. In 2017, devolution was deepened, and new funding agreed, including significant further investment in transport. The West Midlands has seized these opportunities, demonstrating what local leaders can achieve when empowered with the tools they need. Local leaders have increased investment in transport from £38 million in 2016/17 to £363 million in 2021/22, pioneered new approaches to brownfield development and net zero homes and delivered the c. £130 million Adult Education Budget, securing an over 10% increase in 2020 alone in the portion of the population with Level 3 skills.

The West Midlands is now embarking on a new phase by bringing greater investment, control over investment and powers to the region.

The new deal is estimated to be worth in the region of £1.5bn and it is hoped that this will reboot the economy, provide vital housing, jobs and skills, bolster our existing strengths in transport and Smart City Region innovation, and drive our net

zero ambitions. The deal looks to create a more prosperous and better-connected West Midlands which is fairer, greener and healthier.

In February 2022, Government announced, in its Levelling Up White Paper, new devolution deals for the West Midlands, along with Greater Manchester. Since then, the region and its partners have been working closely with Government to secure the best deal for the region, its economy and its communities.

The Deal recognises that the WMCA currently lacks the key levers and flexibility to 'unleash the potential of devolution' and goes on to address this through a range of new powers, responsibilities and resources.

WMCA Leaders agree that in order to fulfil local economic priorities and provide the best services for the citizens of the West Midlands, there is a need to draw down significant additional powers and funding from the Government through a deeper devolution deal. There is consensus that powers and funding should sit at the lowest feasible level of governance and that they should be drawn down from government and not drawn up from local authorities.

The WMCA has therefore commissioned this Governance Review to look at whether transferring responsibility for the proposed new functions - the distribution of Bus Service Operator's Grant (BSOG) to WMCA and subject to national reform, policy making powers in relation to BSOG allocation - is likely to improve the delivery of the service in the WMCA area.

This Review seeks to evidence how the deal will deliver significant new responsibilities and investment that will benefit our communities and businesses across the region.

When referring to WMCA as the decision-making body in this document, it means the WMCA Board made up of those members appointed by the seven constituent councils, the ten Non- Constituent Councils and the Mayor, taking decisions in accordance with statutory voting rights.

Section 1: Summary of the Wider Deal

This section sets out the wider deal including those non-statutory powers that do not require formal consultation, but which provide the wider context for the deeper devolution deal.

Governance and Accountability

The WMCA will be held accountable through the mechanisms set out in the Local Government Accountability Framework, English Devolution Accountability Framework and enhanced scrutiny measures. The Mayor and WMCA will be expected to present to Parliamentary Select Committees as requested, in conjunction with Mayor's Question Time and quarterly engagement with West Midlands MPs.

Administration of the Bus Service Operators Grant would be treated as a part of the normal business operations of the Combined Authority and would be subject to the

same accounting, auditing and transparency requirements as other income and expenditure.

Fiscal Devolution, Funding and the Single Settlement

The commitment to 10-year Business Rates Retention across the region is estimated to be worth £450m over the period and will drive confidence in public sector borrowing, de-risk investment modelling and accelerate delivery. It will also remove the uncertainty of the current pilot scheme, boosting public financial sustainability and local authority spending power.

Through its 'Single Settlement', the Government commits to giving WMCA single capital and revenue funding certainty, equivalent to government departments – increasing regional autonomy and the ability to prioritise decisions locally in the areas of:

- local growth and place
- local transport
- housing and regeneration
- adult skills
- housing retrofit

These settlements will cover an entire spending review period.

In addition, Government has committed to a £25m capital fund to support business decarbonisation, culture, environmental programmes and the West Midlands' Smart City Region initiative.

Transport

Building on the West Midlands' strengths in transport innovation, as the country's first future transport zone, and its close partnership working with Government, the Deeper Devolution Deal provides:

- Devolution of the Bus Service Operators Grant to improve services and incentivise net zero transition;
- A pioneering Local Transport Plan approach which embeds 'quantifying carbon reductions' (QCR);
- Leading a collaborative research and learning programme through an 'influencing transport lab' (ITL);
- Establish the UK's first transport sandbox to test new innovations and inform national policy, while boosting global investment and cluster growth;
- Closer partnership with Great British Railways to deliver a rail service closer to the standards of London;

- Additional £60m to Wednesbury-Brierley Hill Metro extension
- Supporting development of the region's ambitious Very Light Railway scheme in Coventry.

Housing, Land and Regeneration

A £100m Single Regeneration Fund will be deployed flexibly across the region, and for the first time, brownfield land funding will support commercial, employment land and mixed-use development, as well as delivering 4,000 homes.

The commitment of up to £400m Affordable Housing Programme ('AHP') funding to the region, and greater influence over affordable housing delivery and strategy acts a precursor to full devolution of the AHP, worth billions of pounds in funding, to the region from 2026, this is the first time this has happened outside Greater London.

The WMCA will be involved in decisions on major UK government land disposals and reconfiguration, this will help in driving regeneration and unlocking private investment through repurposing and redeveloping publicly owned land.

The region will also be able to designate 'Levelling Up Zones': priority areas that would benefit from enhanced and targeted fiscal measures. These 'growth zones' will attract 25 year Business Rates Retention (with no reset).

Skills and Employment Support

Further areas of post-19 education and skills will be devolved to WMCA along with greater oversight of post-16 technical education and skills, and careers, including a crucial role to ensure the local skills system responds to the Local Skills Improvement Plan ('LSIP'). This will include, from the next Spending Review, greater devolution of non-apprenticeship adult skills functions and funding, and greater freedoms around Free Courses for Jobs and Bootcamps. WMCA will also become the 'central convenor' for careers advice in the region, working closely with Government to ensure provision meets the economic needs of the West Midlands.

Alongside establishing a Regional Labour Market Partnership Board, WMCA will be able to co-design contracted employment support programmes with DWP to ensure they are the aspirations of the region, supported by enhanced data-sharing agreements and in the longer term may commission such services on behalf of the DWP.

Business Productivity and Innovation

WMCA will adopt a new role in integrating and promoting business support services across the region, this will be powered by a new Strategic Productivity Partnership with departments across Government, greater involvement in the governance of the British Business Bank's UK funds, and collaboration with the UK Investment Bank on commercial arrangements for infrastructure finance.

Building on the West Midlands' participation in the £100m Accelerator funding, through a Strategic Innovation Partnership WMCA will be able to present regional innovation opportunities to inform UKRI's future funding strategies. This will include working collaboratively to bolster regional R&D growth and pilot new initiatives, such as the UK Further Education Innovation Fund, place-based knowledge transfer programmes, and public procurement flexibilities.

Trade and Investment

The Department for Business and Trade ('DBT') will recognise the West Midlands Growth Company as the lead agency for investment in the region and work with them to develop a WM International Strategy, enhance data sharing routes and undertake a review of key account management with the region's major employers.

DBT will also support WMCA to boost West Midlands' presence in trade missions and dedicate support from the UK Export Academy to increase trade opportunities.

Net Zero and Environment

From 2025, Government will pilot with the West Midlands the devolution of housing retrofit funding. This will remove uncertainty and inefficiencies in the existing funding system and inform future models for Government net zero funding.

There is recognition of the region's involvement in wider energy system management and planning, and responsibility for heat zone designation, energy efficiency advice and attracting private sector finance. In addition, funding from the £25m capital pot is anticipated for industrial decarbonisation programmes for regional businesses, natural environment finance models and air quality monitors to support the region's wider environment and net zero ambitions.

Digital and Data

The Department of Science and Technology ('DSIT') will work proactively with WMCA through a Digital Infrastructure Leadership Group to accelerate broadband roll-out and connectivity, and through a £4m fund, provide 20,000 devices to boost digital inclusion.

Government will agree a new Data Partnership with WMCA, which will streamline WMCA's negotiations with individual government departments over access to specific datasets and support timely access to data particularly around: skills, careers and labour markets; business support, trade and investment; and energy and climate resilience.

Alongside this, Government will work with WMCA and its public body partners across the region to improve routes for data-sharing to enable WMCA to undertake regional analysis of data to better inform strategic decision-making locally.

Culture, Social Economy and Tourism

To maximise the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund, a new Regional Culture and Heritage Framework will seek to align and maximise funding from arm's length bodies, including opportunities for co-investment and greater collaboration. Local authorities will be closely involved in the development of the Framework and continue to engage directly with funding bodies.

Recognising WMCA's commitment to double the size of the social economy, Government will work with the Combined Authority to develop a pioneering Social Economy Accelerator Programme and Growth Fund.

DCMS and Visit England will work with WMCA and WMGC to create England's second Destination Development Partnership pilot and the associated merits of establishing WMGC as a Local Visitor Economy Partnership ('LVEP').

Section 2: Purpose of the review

The purpose of this governance review, undertaken in accordance with Section 111 of the 2009 Act is to look at the exercise of statutory functions in the West Midlands with a view to deciding whether the new function contained in the deal would be likely to

- Improve the exercise of statutory functions in the area of the WMCA;
- Secure more effective and convenient local government for the area; and
- Reflect the identities and interests of our local communities

If the Review demonstrates that transfer of the new function to WMCA would improve service delivery, the WMCA will prepare and publish a scheme with the new function and changed constitutional arrangements. Under section 105B of the 2009 Act, the review needs to demonstrate that the exercise of the power to make an Order under section 105A in the West Midlands area would be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in relation to the West Midlands area.

Given that the implementation for the new function will be under Section 105A of the 2009 Act, a public consultation will not be required. The Secretary of State will be provided with a copy of the agreed scheme and governance review and will need to consider whether a new order should be made under the 2009 Act to provide the WMCA with the new function suggested by the deal.

Only the new powers and duties contained within the deal require consideration as part of the statutory process. However, in order to provide the context within which these powers and duties will be exercised, a summary of all the proposals, has been included. The full Deal text can be accessed here [West Midlands Combined Authority: "Trailblazer" deeper devolution deal - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424442/West_Midlands_Combined_Authority_-_Trailblazer_deeper_devolution_deal_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

The new function requiring agreement under the requirements of the 2009 Act relates to the paying of the **Bus Service Operators Grant**. Under sections 154 (1) and 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000

Background

Commercial Bus Service Operator's Grant (BSOG) is existing funding which Government currently pays directly to operators. BSOG is directly linked to bus fuel consumption, and this can undermine environmental objectives, with a reduced incentive on operators to invest in more zero emission buses. Circa £26m per annum was paid to bus operators across the WMCA area (pre-pandemic).

With a unique bus market, with one commercial operator operating over 95% of the West Midlands bus network, ensuring that value for money is achieved locally from public subsidy and planning an effective recovery for bus services post pandemic is difficult. This has been further exacerbated by a reduction in local bus market competition, with five local bus operators ceasing operations since March 2020, and ongoing bus industry pressures such as driver shortages, wage, and fuel cost inflation. The WMCA needs new levers to incentivise and influence the direction and navigation of a modern and responsive bus network but importantly to stimulate private sector competition back into our bus market.

Proposal

Subject to national reform, and through greater local control and design of policy, the WMCA would look to incentivise bus operators to use the grant to ensure investment in bus services aligns with WMCA policy outcomes. WMCA priorities for BSOG would seek to target: -

- Incentivising greener vehicle fleet investment and maximising our position as the UK investment leader in decarbonising bus fleets. Further boosting over £150m of fleet investment between public and private partners.
- Incentivising and working with private bus operators to expand bus services into areas of poor accessibility. This would place greater focus on where bus route mileage is delivered, compared to the current approach focused on total quantum. This would help to tackle the issue of 'overbussing' on certain routes to maintain a dominate commercial position at the expensive of more marginal, socially beneficial services, thus helping to deliver greater benefits with the same level of public funding.

The WMCA is directly managing two additional bus support funding grants, which are Network Stability Fund and Network Planning Fund (Bus Recovery Grant extension). The local management of this grant (on behalf of DfT) has delivered a stable bus network throughout 2022, supporting the most successful Commonwealth Games ever, and allowed for close working with bus operators to plan and improves services from January 2023.

Administering the Bus Service Operators Grant will support WMCA early engagement with bus operators in the West Midlands, ahead of the further devolution of powers in

relation to policy and BSOG. This may mitigate against unpredictable and potentially disruptive market behaviour and may act to encourage high levels of professional conduct in the market being maintained during this period. These powers would assist being able to gain valuable insight and the additional scrutiny provided by WMCA may be able to encourage more efficient practices by the operators.

Section 3: New Statutory Responsibilities

This section sets out the formal statutory process of the governance review in relation to the new statutory function that will be taken on by the WMCA.

Legal context

The Government and the WMCA have reached agreement in relation to the devolution to the WMCA of a further range of powers.

To give effect to certain elements of the Deal, it is necessary for the WMCA to comply with the requirements of sections 105B and has chosen to carry out this Governance Review under sections 111 and 112 of the 2009 Act which set out the procedure to be followed in order to make changes to existing combined authority arrangements.

However, it should be noted that many aspects of the Deal do not require legislative change to implement. The power outlined below is the only one that is expected to require legislative or regulatory change before it can be exercised by Mayor and therefore follow the process outlined:

1. **Bus Service Operators Grant** - The government will devolve powers for the payment of the bus service operators grant to WMCA as a general function of the Mayor. This is in line with the commitment in the National Bus Strategy and the government is currently working on the reform of the grant. WMCA will provide support to identify the funding for bus services entirely within the WMCA boundary that is paid to commercial operators and would be suitable to be devolved to WMCA, both currently and subject to national reform.

The reform of the grant, and subsequent devolution to the WMCA Board of policy making powers, will enable the grant to support the government's and WMCA's shared priorities to support important local bus services and reduce environmental impacts through facilitating the transition to zero emission buses. This devolution will also be supported by the WMCA delivering commitments set out on in its adopted Enhanced Bus Partnership (EP) Plan and Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

It is proposed that there be a three-stage process to achieve these ambitions:

1. Immediate devolution of powers under Section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 to the WMCA to administer BSOG
2. WMCA to then administer its share of the BSOG funding according to current Department for Transport (DfT) policy.
3. That the proposed Statutory Instrument include a commitment to further devolve policy powers to the WMCA Board under Section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000 subject to the conclusion of national consultation and guidance being issued by the Secretary of State.

WMCA will work with DfT once the consultation period has concluded to finalise the design of a national BSOG reform package using the evidence generated through the consultation to present options to ministers that set out the impacts on and acceptability to key stakeholders, including WMCA.

If national reforms are delayed significantly, the exploration of alternatives including full BSOG policy devolution for the WMCA, may be brought forward.

Process to be followed

105B - Section 105A orders: procedure

Section 105A(1)(a), (1) (b), (2) and (3)(b) of the 2009 Act (other public authority functions): provides for the Secretary of State to make provision by order for a function of a public authority that is exercisable in relation to a combined authority's area to be a function of the combined authority and to make provision by order conferring on a combined authority in relation to its area a function corresponding to a function that a public authority has in relation to another area.

The Secretary of State may make an order under section 105A only if a proposal for the making of the order in relation to the combined authority has been made to the Secretary of State by the appropriate authorities, or the appropriate consent is given and the Secretary of State considers that the making of the order is likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in the area or areas to which the order relates.

For the purposes of subsection (1)(b), the appropriate consent is given to the making of an order under section 105A only if:

- in the case of an order in relation to an existing combined authority, each appropriate authority consents;
- in any other case, each constituent council consents.

Section 111 of the 2009 Act

Section 111 of the 2009 Act allows combined authorities to undertake, in relation to an existing combined authority (such as the WMCA), a review of one or more “combined matters”. For the purposes of section 111 of the 2009 Act a “combined matter” is defined at subsection 111(3) as being:

a. a matter in relation to which an order may be made under any of sections 104 to 107;

b. in relation to the combined authority or any executive body of the combined authority, where that body exists at the time of the review, a matter concerning the combined authority or the executive body that the combined authority has power to determine.

Insofar as sub-section 111(3)(a) of the 2009 Act is concerned, sections 104 to 107 of the 2009 Act set out the range of matters that the Secretary of State may include

within an order concerning a combined authority. These include power for the Secretary of State to:

- make in relation to a combined authority any provision that may be made in relation to an Integrated Transport Authority under certain provisions of the Local Transport Act 2008;
- make in relation to a combined authority any provision that may be made in relation to an Economic Prosperity Board (EPB) in relation to the exercise of local authority functions;
- make provision for a function of a public authority that is exercisable in relation to a combined authority's area to be a function of a combined authority;
- make provision for conferring on a combined authority in relation to its area a function corresponding to a function that a public authority has in relation to another area;
- make provision for any function of a combined authority which has an elected mayor (a "mayoral combined authority") to be a function only exercisable by the elected mayor;
- make provision for the costs of an elected mayor for the area of a combined authority that are incurred in, or in connection with, the exercise of "mayoral functions" to be met from precepts issued by the authority under section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992.

Section 112 of the 2009 Act

Where a combined authority that has undertaken a review under section 111 of the 2009 Act concludes that the exercise of the power by the Secretary of State to make an order under any one or more of sections 104, 105, 105A, 106 and 107 would be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in relation to an area of a combined authority, it may prepare and publish a 'scheme' relating to the exercise of the power or powers in question.

In addition to the above requirements, the Secretary of State cannot make an order under sections 104, 105 or 105A of the 2009 Act without the consent of the constituent councils or the WMCA.

Section 4: Governance options, Conclusions and Recommendation

- Option 1 – To endorse the findings of the governance review and proceed with the scheme.
- Option 2 – Not to endorse the findings of the governance review and only implement those parts of the deal that do not constitute new powers or duties.

As previously stated, any new powers or functions would need to be devolved to the Combined Authority via secondary legislation, and therefore would require Government (and local) approvals to make the relevant order.

Conclusion

The review has found that the evidence shows that the Deeper Devolution Deal will maximise the WMCA's current role and responsibilities and revolutionise how Government funding is implemented leading to more effective delivery of statutory functions. The deal represents a significant step forward in delivering more and better jobs to the area. It delivers significant new responsibilities and investment that will benefit our communities and businesses across the region. It means that decisions previously taken centrally can now be taken closer to the people affected and gives the area greater financial freedom and flexibility to manage our investment choices according to local priorities.

Administering the Bus Service Operators Grant will support WMCA early engagement with bus operators in the West Midlands, ahead of the further devolution of powers in relation to policy and BSOG. This may mitigate against unpredictable and potentially disruptive market behaviour and may act to encourage high levels of professional conduct in the market being maintained during this period. These powers would assist being able to gain valuable insight and the additional scrutiny provided by WMCA may be able to encourage more efficient practices by the operators.

The further devolution to WMCA of the policy element of Bus Service Operators Grant, would provide WMCA with flexibility as to its application and would allow WMCA to deploy the grant to incentivise operators to move to zero emission vehicles thus providing environmental benefits to air quality locally and also incentivise operators to expand services to areas of under-provision providing economic and social benefits to those who live and work in the area.

Recommendations:

1. To improve the effective exercise of statutory functions across the area of the WMCA, adopting the new power under Section 154 (1) and duty contained within the deal (Option 1) is considered optimal for the reasons detailed below.
2. To improve the effective exercise of statutory functions across the area of the WMCA, adopting the new power under Section 154 (3) subject to national consultation and guidance from the Secretary of State is considered optimal for the reasons detailed below.
3. That a governance scheme is published (a draft scheme is included at Appendix A) that confirms the adoption of the new powers and duties detailed in this report.

The reasons are summarised below:

- a. The deal delivers significant new responsibilities and investment that will benefit our communities and businesses across the region.

b. Bus Service Operators Grant

Section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000:

Administering the Bus Service Operators Grant will support WMCA early engagement with bus operators in the West Midlands, ahead of the further devolution of powers in relation to policy and BSOG. This may mitigate against unpredictable and potentially disruptive market behaviour and may act to encourage high levels of professional conduct in the market being maintained during this period. These powers would assist being able to gain valuable insight and the additional scrutiny provided by WMCA may be able to encourage more efficient practices by the operators.

Section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000:

Devolving section 154 (3) of Bus Service Operators Grant to WMWCA will improve the exercise of this statutory function in the West Midlands by enabling WMCA to deploy the grant to incentivise a move to zero emission vehicles and also an expansion of services to areas which are underprovided for. This new function will support the government's and West Midlands' shared priorities to support important local bus services and reduce environmental impacts through assisting the change to zero emission buses.

c. The proposals will build on established regional governance arrangements which represent the views of local communities

d. The proposals will secure more effective and convenient local government by reducing complexity and streamlining the delivery of public services within the area.

e. The statutory criteria for preparing and publishing a scheme are met, i.e., the making of an order under S104 and S105A to enable the adoption of the new powers and duties for the area of the WMCA is the best option and will be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in that area.

f. In addition, adoption of the new powers and duty will:

- **have a positive impact on the interests and identities of local communities** by securing environmental benefits through low emission vehicles and by expanding bus services to areas with low accessibility.
- **secure more effective and convenient local government** by reducing complexity and streamlining the delivery of public services within the area.

West Midlands Combined Authority

Draft Scheme for the transfer of functions in relation to Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 to WMCA as a Mayoral function

Draft Scheme for the future transfer of functions in relation to Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000 to WMCA

Proposal for the Making of an Order under sections 105A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 (the 2009 Act)

This scheme has been prepared by the West Midlands Combined Authority in consultation with the Leaders of Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton Local Authorities.

The scheme sets out proposals for conferring on WMCA of the function of the Secretary of State of administering Bus Service Operator's Grant under sections 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 as a Mayoral function.

The scheme also sets out proposals for the future conferring on WMCA of the function of the Secretary of State in relation to the making of policy for the administration of Bus Service Operator's Grant under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000. It is proposed that this function be conferred to be exercisable subject to the the conclusion of consultation on national BSOG reform and the publication of guidance by the Secretary of State.

If national reforms are delayed significantly, the exploration of alternatives including full BSOG policy devolution, may be brought forward.

Introduction

The West Midlands has been at the forefront of devolution in England. In November 2015, the government and WMCA agreed an ambitious devolution deal, including a directly elected mayor and powers to improve transport, skills, housing and to drive growth in the region. In 2017, devolution was deepened, and new funding agreed, including significant further investment in transport. The West Midlands has seized these opportunities, demonstrating what local leaders can achieve when empowered with the tools they need. Local leaders have increased investment in transport from £38 million in 2016/17 to £363 million in 2021/22, pioneered new approaches to brownfield development and net zero homes and delivered the c. £130 million Adult Education Budget, securing an over 10% increase in 2020 alone in the portion of the population with Level 3 skills.

The West Midlands is now embarking on a new phase by bringing greater investment, control over investment and powers to the region.

The new deal is estimated to be worth in the region of £1.5bn and it is hoped that this will reboot the economy, provide vital housing, jobs and skills, bolster our

existing strengths in transport and Smart City Region innovation, and drive our net zero ambitions. The deal looks to create a more prosperous and better-connected West Midlands which is fairer, greener and healthier.

The WMCA have conducted a Governance Review under Section 111 of the 2009 Act (the Review) in relation to the delegation to the Combined Authority of additional functions and duties relating to:

- Bus Service Operators Grants (under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000)
- Bus Service Operators Grants (under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000)

Governance Review and Proposal

Background

Commercial Bus Service Operator's Grant (BSOG) is existing funding which Government currently pays directly to operators. BSOG is directly linked to bus fuel consumption, and this can undermine environmental objectives, with a reduced incentive on operators to invest in more zero emission buses. Circa £26m per annum was paid to bus operators across the WMCA area (pre-pandemic).

With a unique bus market, with one commercial operator operating over 95% of the West Midlands bus network, ensuring that value for money is achieved locally from public subsidy and planning an effective recovery for bus services post pandemic is difficult. This has been further exacerbated by a reduction in local bus market competition, with five local bus operators ceasing operations since March 2020, and ongoing bus industry pressures such as driver shortages, wage, and fuel cost inflation.

The WMCA needs new levers to incentivise and influence the direction and navigation of a modern and responsive bus network and to stimulate private sector competition back into our bus market.

Proposal

Administering BSOG will support WMCA early engagement with bus operators in the West Midlands, ahead of the anticipated further devolution of powers in relation to policy and BSOG. This may mitigate against unpredictable and potentially disruptive market behaviour and may act to encourage high levels of professional conduct in the market being maintained during this period. These powers would assist WMCA in being able to gain valuable insight and the additional scrutiny provided by WMCA may be able to encourage more efficient practices by the operators.

Subject to national reform, and through greater local control and design of policy, the WMCA would look to incentivise bus operators to use the grant to ensure investment in bus services aligns with WMCA policy outcomes. WMCA priorities for BSOG would seek to target: -

- **Incentivising greener vehicle fleet investment and maximising our position as the UK investment leader in decarbonising bus fleets.** Further boosting over £150m of fleet investment between public and private partners.
- **Incentivising and working with private bus operators to expand bus services into areas of poor accessibility.** This would place a greater focus on where bus route mileage is delivered, compared to the current approach focused on total quantum. This would help to tackle the issue of ‘overbussing’ on certain routes to maintain a dominate commercial position at the expensive or more marginal, socially beneficial services, thus helping to deliver greater benefits with the same level of public funding.

The WMCA has direct experience in managing bus funding support grants, such as Local Transport Fund (up to July 2023), BSOG+ (up to 2025) and local raised funding through the WMCA’s Transport Levy (for subsidies services).

With significant investment made to support bus services across the West Midlands, the devolution of BSOG funding to the WMCA would support this continued improved local planning of bus services. As stated above and subject to national reforms, WMCA requires flexibility in the way in which the grant is distributed to support its aim of incentivising a move to zero emission buses and an expansion of services into areas with poor accessibility. WMCA can also act as a trailblazer area for the early delivery of national BSOG reforms, working in partnership with DfT.

Overall, these reforms would help to achieve our wider network expansion plans that match the Government’s Levelling Up mission and the aim to increase bus use outside of London, bringing us much closer to London standards. This aligns with the WMCA’s Local Transport Plan outcomes to improve accessibility, electrify the transport system and reduce traffic to drive behaviour change.

Bus services are important for those who lack access to a private vehicle, those on the lowest incomes, and for those living in the most deprived communities. The WMCA area has some of the most deprived wards in England and circa 25% of households do not have access to a car, with this increasing to 40% in some of our most deprived communities.

The devolution of BSOG administration and anticipated policy making powers to WMCA would enable WMCA to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits through the distribution of the grant and to improve the effectiveness of service delivery.

Conclusion

Having considered the findings of the Review, the WMCA concluded that an Order by the Secretary of State to make the changes considered in the Review, including delegating additional functions to the Combined Authority, would be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in relation to the Combined Area. The WMCA have therefore resolved to prepare and publish this Scheme under section 112 of the 2009 Act.

Functions exercised by the Mayor

Bus Service Operators Grant (Public Authority Function) (Section 105A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009)

It is proposed that the Government will devolve powers for the payment of the bus service operators grant to WMCA to be a general function of the Mayor under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000.

It is further proposed that the Government will devolve powers, at a future date to be agreed with WMCA, following the conclusion of nation consultation and guidance being issued by the Secretary of State in relation to bus service operators grant to WMCA under section 154 (3) of the Transport Act 2000.

Since the award of Bus Service Operators Grant is a public function of the Secretary of State the Order will be made under section 105A of the 2009 Act. The procedural requirements under Section 105B do not include a requirement for public consultation before the making of an Order and in this case it is not thought necessary for a public consultation exercise to be carried out.

WMCA will provide support to identify the funding for bus services entirely within the WMCA boundary that is paid to commercial operators and would be suitable to be devolved to WMCA, both currently and following national reform.

Governance and constitutional matters

Governance Arrangements

A decision in relation to the conferring of a new function on WMCA would require a unanimous vote of the members representing the Constituent Authorities at the WMCA Board.

The Award of Bus Service Operator's Grant will need to be included as a Mayoral function in the definition of Mayoral general functions set out in Article 22(5) of the West Midlands Combined Authority Functions and Amendment) Order 2017

Review and Scrutiny

The operation of the function of the award of Bus Service Operators Grant will be subject to review and Scrutiny in accordance with the Constitution and the Scrutiny Protocol.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	West Midlands Combined Authority Deeper Devolution Deal (DDD) 3		
Directorate	Economy, Environment & Communities		
Service	Regeneration & Economy		
Responsible Officer	Dave Brown		
Proposal planning start	Autumn 2022- initial planning and outline of proposed DDD commitments and engagement with government.	Proposal start date (due or actual date)	October 2023- planned ratification of the DDD by WMCA Board.
1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Policy	Yes	New
	Procedure	No	N/A
	Guidance	No	N/A
	Is this a service to customers/staff/public?	No	N/A
	If yes, is it contracted or commissioned?	No	N/A
	Other - give details		
2	What is the business case for this proposal? Please provide the main purpose of the service, intended outcomes and reasons for change?		
	<p>The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) was formed in 2016, with all seven West Midlands Councils as constituent members, together with 10 councils joining as non-constituent members and the (then) three Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Following the agreement and approval of the first two Devolution Deals in 2016 and 2018 respectively, further devolution from government- a new 'Deeper Devolution Deal' (DDD)- is now proposed. If approved by the constituent authorities that deal will be ratified by WMCA Board in October 2023 and commitments will be implemented thereafter.</p> <p>The deal aims to reboot the economy, provide vital housing, jobs and skills, build on existing strengths in transport, and drive net zero ambitions – generating economic growth and levelling up outcomes for all our residents, businesses and communities.</p> <p>The deal will mark a new phase of devolution by bringing new powers and control over investment to the region. The deal includes several provisions that will enhance the existing functions of the WMCA and will unlock over £1.5 billion of funding for the region. The deal recognises that the WMCA has lacked the key levers and flexibility to 'unleash the potential of devolution', and addresses this through a range of new powers, responsibilities and resources. Many of the commitments in the deal are firsts for regional devolution. It commits government to a single, departmental-style settlement with the WMCA at the next spending review, in return for new accountability arrangements and a single outcomes framework.</p>		



The devolution commitments will enable the region to locally prioritise, control and decide how funding is spent within devolved area, and therefore ensure greater local alignment with the council's existing policies and strategies for sustainable economic growth and levelling up across our communities.

The key provisions in the deal include:

- A new landmark housing deal worth up to £500 million to drive brownfield regeneration and deliver affordable housing at pace, including a route to full devolution of the affordable housing programme funding.
- The creation of up to six Growth Zones backed by 25-year business rate retention, with an expected total value to the region of at least £500 million, to target investment and encourage jobs and regeneration.
- A commitment to a single funding settlement, where for the first time, a region will be treated as if it were a government department with a new departmental-style budget arrangement. The intention is to develop a memorandum of understanding about how the process of a single pot of funding will work, including the scope of the funds included in the settlement, how it will be apportioned, and assurance and accountability arrangements. Fiscal devolution will include retention of business rates for the next 10 years – worth an estimated £45 million a year to the WMCA and local authorities.
- The proposed devolution of the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) will enable the WMCA to change the mechanisms for providing public subsidy to private bus operators which will improve accessibility across the region and support the decarbonisation of bus fleets.
- The deal makes provision for enhanced governance and accountability arrangements, including the development of a 'scrutiny protocol' and mayoral scrutiny by MPs.
- A commitment to be involved in decisions on major UK government land disposals and reconfiguration, driving regeneration and unlocking private investment through repurposing and redeveloping publicly owned land.
- A new role for the WMCA in integrating and promoting business support services across the region - powered by a new strategic productivity partnership with departments across government, greater involvement in the governance of the British Business Bank's UK funds, and collaboration with the UK Investment Bank on commercial arrangements for infrastructure finance.
- A new strategic innovation partnership will give the West Midlands a unique voice in setting out regional innovation opportunities to inform the UK research and innovation's future funding strategies.
- The Department for Business and Trade ('DBT') will recognise the West Midlands Growth Company as the lead agency for investment in the region and work with them to develop a West Midlands international strategy.
- Measures to tackle digital exclusion including greater influence over high-speed

broadband investment across the region and a £4 million fund for devices and data to get more people online.

- Greater local responsibility for developing and delivering careers advice and a partnership with Department for Work and Pensions to target employment support.
- A new partnership with Great British Railways to offer greater local oversight and control of public transport services.
- The UK’s first formally designated transport ‘regulatory sandbox’ to enable the region to test and develop cutting-edge transport solutions. This will deliver cleaner and safer vehicles and innovative transport services to our streets faster while supporting new jobs and investment.
- A commitment to devolve retrofit funding from 2025, to allow the WMCA, and partners, to set priorities for investment in insulation and green energy for homes. This will provide the certainty and consistency to build confidence in the marketplace and accelerate the delivery of warmer homes and net zero targets.
- A commitment to a new partnership with national arts and culture organisations to shape their investment in regional cultural priorities.

3 Who is the proposal likely to affect?

People in Walsall	Yes / No	Detail
All	Yes	All people of the West Midlands, including Walsall will be able to access and benefit from the proposed devolution commitments through the implementation of the Deeper Devolution Deal. Targeted projects, employment opportunities and service changes / improvements arising from the deal will affect specific groups. For example, bus/ public transport users, home and business owners, low-income households, cultural/ leisure users, etc. Further detail on impacts will be identified as initiatives are developed and implemented following ratification of the deal.
Specific group/s	Yes	
Council employees	Yes	
Other (identify)		

4 Please provide service data relating to this proposal on your customer’s protected characteristics.

The deal aims to reboot the economy, provide vital housing, jobs and skills, build on existing strengths in transport, and drive net zero ambitions – generating economic growth and levelling up outcomes for all Walsall’s residents, businesses and communities. The deal builds upon previous devolution benefits and successes and marks a new phase of devolution by bringing new powers and control over investment to the region. It is recognised that protected groups can be disproportionately economically disadvantaged, so activity to reduce deprivation and increase employment opportunities will have a positive impact on these groups. For example, the deal includes specific commitments that will lead to activities to support delivery of affordable homes; improve bus service accessibility; tackle digital exclusion; deliver careers advice and targeted employment support; and investing in insulation and green energy for homes.

The development of new interventions from the deal will have a positive impact on the following characteristics, individuals and the wider residents of Walsall.

- Out of the 317 local authorities, Walsall is the 25th most deprived area and 17th most deprived affecting children.
- The median annual wage income (2021) is lower in Walsall (£28,500) compared with the West Midlands region (c. £30,000) and the national average (c. £31,250).
- Walsall performs significantly worse in terms of GVA per head at c. £16,000 compared with the UK average (c. £29,000) and is the lowest across the Black Country Authorities.
- 26.3% of residents have no education qualifications.
- The proportion of residents with a qualification of NVQ4 or above is falling and at 26.9% is 16% points lower than the national average.
- 28.6% of residents are of non-white ethnic group. People of South Asian background (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) for the largest proportion of BAME in Walsall.
- 28.6% of households in Walsall are one-person households.
- Walsall's crime rates have been increasing since 2013 following a previous long period of decrease.
- Walsall's housing stock has grown in line with or above the UK average since 2001. Instead issues lie with the quality of the existing housing stock.
- 23.7% of households are social rented and 16.5% are private rented.
- 25% of households have no access to car or van.

(Statistics from ONS 2021 and Walsall ESAP(2022)).

5 Please provide details of all engagement and consultation undertaken for this proposal. (Please use a separate box for each engagement/consultation).

Consultation Activity
Establishment of the West Midlands Combined Authority

Type of engagement/consultation	Survey- online and paper copies made available	Date	Aug-Sept 2015 Jul-Aug 2016
Who attended/participated?	General public		
Protected characteristics of participants	Unknown- surveys did not breakdown responses by protected characteristics.		

Feedback

Between 3 August and 11 September 2015 the seven West Midlands local authorities undertook engagement with key stakeholders on the proposals to form a combined authority and the draft governance review. 305 responses were received, a response rate of 65% of which;

- 69% believed that the WMCA provided a platform for better joined up working with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's)
- 67% believed that the WMCA would make an improvement to economic development and regeneration and impact growth and prosperity
- The positive impact on economic development was ranked the highest priority by Walsall at 77%.

The Seven Metropolitan Constituent Councils, led by the WMCA carried out public consultation on the 'Scheme' document – Functions required to deliver the devolution agreement in the West Midlands, from 4th July 2016 – 21st August 2016. The consultation survey was hosted on the front page of the Constituent Councils websites and the WMCA website. The survey consisted of 9 key questions, two profile based questions and a free text option to provide any further feedback. 1309 responses were received through this medium.

Paper copies of the consultation were available in public buildings, 19 responses were received through this medium.

The scheme outlines the functions required for the West Midlands to deliver the devolution agreement. This started with Devolution Deal's 1 and 2 and is continued and expanded through the third Devolution Deal.

Public consultation was undertaken between 18 January and 8 February 2016 asking all stakeholders (public, businesses partners) what their views were of the establishment of the Combined Authority with 1907 responses received.

There was no strong evidence that suggested there was public concern that the proposal is being operated in a discriminatory manner, however the public consultation survey results did not break down responses by different equality protected characteristics.

6	Concise overview of all evidence, engagement and consultation		
<p>The Council is seeking Cabinet approval in September 2023 for the WMCA Deeper Devolution Deal (DDD) and Implementation Plan prior to ratification by the WMCA Board in October. This EqlA has been prepared to support the decision-making process.</p> <p>As the delivery of the deal commitments begin to develop, including specific project related activity, there will be a need for further consultation activity and specific detailed EqlAs. The type of activity and timescales are, as yet unknown, however they will be designed to identify key stakeholders and, dependent upon the proposed work programme, will be rolled out to a wider consultative base. For example, the devolution of the Bus Services Operator Grant (BSOG), including the transfer of powers from the Transport Secretary of State to the Mayor, will be subject to a formal consultation and legislative process. Further bus bye laws will also be subject to a detailed EqlA and public consultation exercise.</p> <p>The WMCA Inclusive Growth Board and Overview and Scrutiny Committee will ensure that any major initiatives within the Devolution Deal programme will be assessed and monitored in order to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).</p>			
7	How may the proposal impact each protected characteristic or group? The impact may be positive, negative, neutral or not known. Give reasons and if action is needed.		
Characteristic		Impact Yes / No	Reason Action needed Yes / No
Age	<p>The Combined Authority through the latest proposed Devolution Deal will be delivering and working up interventions, projects and funding delivery that will benefit the people and businesses of Walsall. The Implementation Plan is structured around 9 thematic summaries and 25 different workstreams. The range of these proposals is wide and covers many aspects, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport planning, innovation & mass transit • Bus and Bus Services • Roads • Rail Partnership • Affordable Homes Programme • Skills • Employment support • Energy and retrofit • Culture • Tourism • Homelessness • Health • Early years <p>It is expected that these initiatives / funding streams will have a positive effect / impact on all Characteristic</p>		
Disability			
Gender reassignment			
Marriage and civil partnership			
Pregnancy and maternity			
Race			
Religion or belief			
Sex			
Sexual orientation			
Armed Forces			
Care responsibilities			
Health, Social and economic inequalities			
Other (Give Detail)			

		groups. Action will be required to ensure that the positives from these workstreams/ programmes are maximised for the people of Walsall.		
8	Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative effect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details.		(Delete one) Yes / No	
	The devolution proposals will be considered in detail for each workstream as delivery of the Implementation Plan progresses. Opportunities to actively link delivery and consultation to relevant and complimentary council projects and programmes funded will be explored and applied where appropriate. For example, projects being implemented as part of the Town Deal funds and other council strategies.			
9	Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation feedback suggest you take?			
A	No major change required Yes, this is applicable to the majority of the proposals.			
B	Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality Yes, proposals which will have an impact on specific groups (e.g. devolution in relation to bus services) will be subjected to individual detailed EqIAs and that there is an on-going action and monitoring plan to mitigate impacts.			
C	Continue despite possible adverse impact N/A			
D	Stop and rethink your proposal N/A			
Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	Action	Responsibility	Outcome Date	Outcome
On-going	Review and monitor delivery of deal commitments as set out in the Implementation Plan.	Staff within the Economy, Environment & Communities directorate, plus other directorates subject to the workstream	On-going	Inform the development and delivery of workstreams, including ensuring best practise consultation approaches and the identification of any impacts on protected characteristics and ensure appropriate mitigate where required. Maximise outputs for Walsall and its residents, communities and businesses.

On-going	Review benefits and impacts to Walsall as a result of the deal and implementation plan commitments.	Staff within the Economy, Environment & Communities directorate	On-going	Qualitative and quantitative analysis of benefits to Walsall.

Update to EqIA	
Date	Detail
tbc	Individual detailed EqIAs to be prepared for specific projects and workstreams as required.

Contact us

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