

# **West Midlands Combined Authority Consultation—Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme**

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more information**

**[www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk](http://www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk)**



# **West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme**

## **Consultation Summer 2016**





Thank you for taking part in this survey.

## Background

In November 2014 the seven West Midlands Metropolitan Borough Councils (Birmingham City Council, City of Wolverhampton Council, Coventry Council, Dudley Council, Solihull Council, Sandwell Council and Walsall Council) began discussing the benefits of creating a Combined Authority for the West Midlands region.

After much negotiation, and further discussions with government, the seven Metropolitan Councils agreed to form a West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), which formally came into being on 17 June 2016. The seven Metropolitan Borough Councils are now Constituent Councils of the WMCA.

As these negotiations progressed the government began discussing the potential of a devolution agreement with the newly forming Combined Authority. This first devolution agreement, agreed in principle in November 2015, is based on government promising long term secure investment and on powers moving from Westminster to the West Midlands region.

An elected Mayor for the WMCA geographical area (the Constituent Councils) is a government condition of the devolution agreement. Pending the Parliamentary process to create the Mayoral Combined Authority, the election for the Mayor will take place across the seven Constituent Councils on 4 May 2017.

## Where are we now?

This first devolution agreement will see £36.5 million per year over the next 30 years of new investment funding. This guaranteed income stream, along with other financial measures, will enable the WMCA to fund an £8 billion investment programme.

Having negotiated and accepted the devolution agreement, the seven Constituent Councils and the WMCA have approved the creation of a Mayoral Combined Authority including the election of a Mayor and the associated Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme for consultation.

It is the proposals in the Scheme which form the basis of this consultation.

These arrangements will allow the West Midlands region to deliver the devolution agreement. Further details of how the aspirations of the devolution agreement will be delivered are contained in the recently published Strategic Economic Plan, which is available on the WMCA website.

The full details of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme are available in the supporting documents, along with 'Frequently Asked Questions', the devolution agreement, Governance Review and Strategic Economic Plan.

A Public Sector Equality Assessment of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme has been undertaken, and can also be found in the supporting documents. All documents can be found on the WMCA website, the address can be found at the bottom of each page of this consultation.

**The proposals in the Scheme, including the functions of the Mayoral WMCA, are the subject of this consultation.**

This consultation asks for your views on the different functions it is proposed that the Mayoral WMCA could have.

Prior to any decisions being made, findings from the consultation will be sent as part of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme to inform the decision making of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, before an Order could be laid before Parliament.

It will give the Secretary of State an understanding of what the public, partners, stakeholders, businesses and voluntary sector think of the functions and responsibilities of a Mayoral WMCA and how the Scheme meets the Secretary of State's key tests. The key tests and considerations are:

- whether the Secretary of State considers that making the Order [based on the Scheme] is likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in the Combined Authority 'area' (i.e. the Constituent Councils),
- To reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- To secure effective and convenient local government.

There are nine questions on the proposals in the Mayoral WMCA Scheme plus boxes to provide any additional feedback.

# Transport

## Transport networks

Getting around the West Midlands by car or public transport is not as easy as we would like it to be. For instance, congestion is costing the regional economy around £2 billion per year. Ensuring our residents and businesses can reach job opportunities across the region is key to economic growth and success.

By devolving functions to a Mayoral WMCA, the region will be able to create a more efficient, integrated West Midlands transport network, specifically a Key Route Network of local roads.

Local councils currently receive funding from central government for managing and maintaining their roads on a year by year basis. As part of the devolution agreement the West Midlands will receive more funding and this will be guaranteed on a five yearly basis.

This together with the functions identified in the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme will allow the Constituent Councils and partners to collaborate to deliver more effective and coordinated improvements and maintenance of the West Midland's region road network.

**1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Mayoral WMCA should get the functions highlighted above, and detailed in the 'transport' section of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme, to deliver these ambitions?**

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Please tell us why below

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## Low emissions

In some areas of the West Midlands region, air quality is very poor. Air quality however is not limited by council boundaries which makes tackling it on an individual council basis difficult.

By devolving functions to a Mayoral WMCA, the region and partners will be able to create and deliver low emissions and clean air zones, thus improving public health.

### **2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Mayoral WMCA should get the functions highlighted above, and detailed in the 'low emissions' paragraph of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme, to deliver these ambitions?**

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Please tell us why below

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## High Speed 2 (HS2) growth

The HS2 Growth Strategy is about maximising the benefits of HS2 for the West Midlands. However, there is a concern that this huge investment will only benefit a small portion of the West Midlands region.

By devolving functions to a Mayoral WMCA, the region and partners will be able to make sure HS2 benefits the whole West Midlands region through the creation of a combined authority-led development corporation. This will include the Metro extensions from Curzon in central Birmingham to Solihull HS2 Interchange Station and from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill.

### **3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Mayoral WMCA should get the functions highlighted above, and detailed in the HS2 growth section of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme, to deliver these ambitions?**

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Please tell us why below

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## More and Better Homes

There is a large amount of brownfield land in the West Midlands, which through remediation, could be brought back into productive use. The West Midlands also needs more homes and better homes.

Through the Mayoral Functions Scheme, the West Midlands will receive the Homes and Communities Agency's (HCA) objectives and functions, and exercise these alongside the HCA to deliver our housing and economic growth strategies. Specifically the Mayor will receive the HCA compulsory purchase order powers, although to exercise these powers, the Mayor would require the consent of the appropriate council(s).

**4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Mayoral WMCA should get the functions highlighted above, and detailed in the 'More and Better Homes' section of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme, from Westminster to deliver these ambitions?**

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Please tell us why below

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## Skills and employment

The West Midlands has above average low-wage jobs and a low-skilled workforce, which is hampering productivity and economic growth in many businesses.

In order to provide better jobs and opportunities for existing workers and future generations, the area needs to move to a higher-wage, higher-skilled economy.

Through devolution, the Mayoral WMCA will bring together partners from across education, industry and the third sector to deliver better skills and training for jobs now and in the future. This will involve looking at further education provision, apprenticeships, working closer with the Department for Work and Pensions and connecting local employers with local schools.

The strategy will be focused on the needs and perspective of an individual, whether they are in education, in work, or out of work in order to deliver the higher-wage, higher-skilled workforce.

**5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Mayoral WMCA should get the functions highlighted above, and detailed in the 'skills and employment section' of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme, to deliver these ambitions?**

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Please tell us why below

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# Finance

The West Midlands economy needs more investment in order to compete at a global level.

By devolving functions to a Mayoral WMCA, the West Midlands will have access to a number of funding streams including a Mayoral precept (an additional charge to council tax payers), business rate supplement and the ability to borrow.

The legislation gives the Mayor the ability to raise a precept in order to deliver investment into the regional economy. As part of the checks and balances of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme, this precept forms part of the Mayoral annual budget and is therefore subject to agreement by the West Midlands Combined Authority board and would be subject to the existing local council capping arrangements.

Through the Scheme, the Mayor would also be able to raise a business rate supplement to create funds to invest into specific schemes within the regional economy. This would require agreement with the relevant Local Enterprise Partnership board(s) and the West Midlands Combined Authority board.

**6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Mayoral WMCA should get the functions highlighted above, and detailed in the 'finance section' of the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme, to deliver these ambitions?**

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Please tell us why below

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# Secretary of State Statutory Tests

In deciding whether to proceed with a Statutory Order in Parliament that reflects the functions being requested in the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme, the Secretary of State must consider that making the Order:

- is likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in the Combined Authority 'area' (i.e. the Constituent Councils),
- reflects the identities and interests of local communities
- secures effective and convenient local government

**7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the functions proposed in the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme will secure effective and convenient local government in the West Midlands region?**

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Don't know

Please tell us why below

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**8. What impact, if any, do you think that the functions proposed in the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme will have on the identity and interests of local communities?**

- ☐ Positive impact  
☐ No impact  
☐ Negative impact  
☐ Don't know

Please tell us why below

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**9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the West Midlands Combined Authority should have the same duty to consider equality as councils do?**

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

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In order for us to better understand the responses received, please also answer the following questions:

**Which council area are you or your organisation most closely associated with?**

- ☐ Birmingham
- ☐ City of Wolverhampton
- ☐ Coventry
- ☐ Dudley
- ☐ Sandwell
- ☐ Solihull
- ☐ Walsall
- ☐ Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

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**Are you responding to this survey as**

- ☐ A resident
- ☐ A business or organisation
- ☐ A councillor within the West Midlands
- ☐ An employee of a council within the West Midlands
- ☐ Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Please share any further comments you have about any element of the proposals in the Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme

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Please provide your email address (if you have one) so that we can send you the results of the consultation once complete

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## Equality and diversity monitoring

In order to help us monitor our services effectively, would you please complete this monitoring form. All information provided by you will be treated in confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act and used for statistical purposes only.

Answering these questions is voluntary. If you choose not to answer any or all of the questions it will not make any difference to the service you receive. However, by answering the questions below, you will help us make our services fairer and more accessible to all.

If you do not wish to answer any monitoring questions, please tick the box below:

☐ Prefer not to answer any equality monitoring questions

## What is your age?

- ☐ 17 years and under
  - ☐ 18–24 years
  - ☐ 25–34 years
  - ☐ 35–44 years
  - ☐ 45–54 years
  - ☐ 55–64 years
  - ☐ 65–74 years
  - ☐ 75–84 years
  - ☐ 84+
  - ☐ Prefer not to say
- 

## Marital Status?

- ☐ Married/In a civil partnership
  - ☐ Co-habiting/Divorced/Widowed/Single/Other
  - ☐ Prefer not to say
- 

## What is your race or ethnic group?

### White

- ☐ English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
  - ☐ Irish
  - ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller
  - ☐ Other White Background (specify below if you wish)
- 

### Asian/Asian British

- ☐ Bangladeshi
  - ☐ Chinese
  - ☐ Indian
  - ☐ Pakistani
  - ☐ Any other Asian Background (specify below if you wish)
-



### **Black/African/Caribbean/Black British**

- ☐ African
  - ☐ Caribbean
  - ☐ Any other Black/African/Caribbean Background (specify below if you wish)
- 

### **Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups**

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
  - ☐ White and Black African
  - ☐ White and Asian
  - ☐ Pakistani
  - ☐ Any other Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Background (specify below if you wish)
- 

### **Gender Identity**

- ☐ Female
  - ☐ Male
  - ☐ Gender Neutral/No Gender
  - ☐ Prefer not to say
- 

### **Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?**

- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ Prefer not to say
- 

### **Do you consider yourself to have a disability?**

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Prefer not to say

If yes, do you have a disability which affects your day to day activities, which has lasted, or you expect to last, at least a year?

- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ Not sure
  - ☐ Prefer not to say
- 

### **Sexual Orientation**

- ☐ Lesbian/gay woman
  - ☐ Gay man
  - ☐ Bisexual
  - ☐ Heterosexual/straight
  - ☐ Unsure
  - ☐ Prefer not to say
- 

### **Religion**

- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ No Religion
- ☐ Any other religion
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Please hand back your completed consultation to staff where you picked it up, or return it to the following address by Friday 19 August:

PO Box 9421  
Birmingham  
B19 3YZ



**WEST MIDLANDS**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

[www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk](http://www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk)

BIRMINGHAM COVENTRY DUDLEY SANDWELL SOLIHULL WALSALL WOLVERHAMPTON

# Glossary of terms

## **1. West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)**

The West Midlands Combined Authority is made up of the seven West Midlands Metropolitan Councils which have come together to tackle the 'big ticket' items that each council by themselves couldn't deal with. Many of the 'big ticket' strategic items concern improving how people and goods get around the region, creating new jobs and opportunities, making sure people have the necessary skills to make the most of these new jobs and looking to build new homes and communities.

## **2. West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral Functions Scheme**

The 'Scheme' is the document produced by the West Midlands Combined Authority, proposing how the Devolution Agreement will be implemented, who will be responsible for what functions and how the Mayor will work with the West Midlands Combined Authority Board. The Scheme, by its nature, is a complex document as it will create the legal basis for the functions of the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority. In this context 'Functions' means powers, and refers to what a Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority can do.

## **3. Brownfield land**

This is land which has previously been used, often contaminated/polluted land. It can be more expensive to build new factories, offices or homes on this type of land as it sometimes need to be 'cleaned up' first either by demolishing existing buildings or removing pollution.

## **4. Remediation**

This is the process for cleaning up previously polluted land ready for someone to be able to build a school, factory or homes on the site. It can be expensive to deal with past uses of land.

## **5. Constituent Councils and Non-Constituent Councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships**

A Constituent Council is one of the seven West Midlands Metropolitan Councils which has signed up to be a full member of the West Midlands Combined Authority and create the body by collaborating to tackle 'big ticket' strategic issues across the West Midlands region. A combined authority is not a merging of councils. Services carried out by the councils will continue to be carried out as they have always been. The Combined Authority is about working together on strategic issues for better outcomes for the region.

A Non-Constituent refers to other local councils or Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) which want to play a part in the West Midlands Combined Authority as it could benefit their area, but are not part of the formal West Midlands Combined Authority area. Further partnership working is reflected in 'observer status', for authorities or organisations that want to engage with the West Midlands Combined Authority, for example the Fire Authority.

## **6. Devolution Agreement**

This is an agreement between the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Government. It outlines what funding the Government is prepared to offer on a long term basis, what powers government is willing to give to the West Midlands Combined Authority and what government expects in return. The first Devolution Agreement will see £36.5 million per year coming to the region over the next 30 years. In total this secure funding stream will be used to generate an extra £8 billion of investment into the region's economy. The West Midlands Combined Authority is already beginning to discuss a second devolution agreement with government.

## **7. Devolving powers**

This means central government and government bodies giving some of its powers to the West Midlands region, so that decisions affecting local communities can be taken locally.

## **8. Governance**

This is the word to describe how the Mayor and the West Midlands Combined Authority Board will make decisions, how the Mayor and the West Midlands Combined Authority Board can vote – what is the required majority etc. Governance ensures any decisions are agreed in a legally binding and transparent way.

## **9. HS2 Growth Strategy**

High Speed 2 is the second high speed railway to be built in the UK. The first high speed railway links London with the Eurostar rail service taking passengers through the Channel Tunnel. This second route will initially run from London Euston to Birmingham Curzon Street. Later phases will run up to Manchester and Leeds.

The HS2 Growth Strategy is a plan that explains how all the local councils next to the HS2 route can get the most economic benefit out of this transport link. Two stations will be sited in the West Midlands, the interchange in Solihull and Curzon Street in Birmingham. The Growth Strategy looks at how linking the interchange in Solihull to the airport, Birmingham International Rail Station and likewise linking Curzon Street to the wider area can bring about increased jobs, economic growth and opportunities.

## **10. Laying a Statutory Order before Parliament**

This is a parliamentary expression for seeking parliamentary approval for the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority arrangements. Once the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government has considered the consultation, and if satisfactory, a Parliamentary 'Order' is created, reflecting the Scheme. The Constituent Councils are required to approve the 'Order' and if approved the Secretary of State will subsequently seek parliamentary approval to provide the necessary statutory powers to enable the West Midlands Combined Authority to undertake the functions outlined in that Order.



### **11. Public Sector Equality Assessment**

This assessment checks that the suggested West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral Functions Scheme does not discriminate against any particular group, that it deals with all people in the region fairly and provides for equality of opportunity.

### **12. Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)**

This sets out our economic priorities and how the West Midlands Combined Authority will use the Devolution Agreement funds to improve the regional economy, invest in transport infrastructure, facilitate the building of homes and improve the life chances of the people in the region.

### **13. Statutory Tests**

This is mandatory 'test' that the Secretary of State will use to consider whether the West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral Functions Scheme (and subsequent Order) is likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in the Combined Authority 'area' (i.e. the Constituent Councils), to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and to secure effective and convenient local government.