



WEST MIDLANDS
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Summary of Consultation Responses

Functions required to deliver the devolution
agreement in the West Midlands

September 2016

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1. Executive Summary

The Seven Metropolitan Constituent Councils, led by the West Midlands Combined Authority, carried out the public consultation on the 'Scheme' document from 4th July 2016 – 21st August 2106.

The Scheme outlines the functions required for the West Midlands to deliver the devolution agreement. Further details of the ambition to deliver the devolution agreement are contained within the recently published [WMCA Strategic Economic Plan \(SEP\)](#).

The consultation survey was hosted on the front page of the Constituent Councils' websites and the West Midlands Combined Authority 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 (excluding 45 duplicates and 4 tests).

Paper copies of the consultation were available in public buildings, such as libraries, in the seven Metropolitan Council areas. 19 responses were received through this medium (excluding 2 spoilt paper copies).

High Level Summary		Strongly Agree/ Agree		Strongly Disagree / Disagree		Don't Know			
Consultation Questions		Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses		%	
1. Transport		1025	79	233	18	47		4	
2. Low Emissions		931	71	316	24	86		7	
3. (HS2) Growth		836	65	357	27	99		8	
4. More and Better Homes		893	69	302	23	95		7	
5. Skills and Employment		994	77	239	19	61		5	
6. Finance		703	54	454	35	145		11	
7. Efficient and effective governance		777	60	291	22	232		18	
		Positive Impact		No Impact		Negative Impact		Don't Know	
8. Local Community Interests		654	51	200	16	247	19	189	15
		Strongly Agree/ Agree		Strongly Disagree / Disagree		Don't know			
		Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses		%	
9. Equality		1086	84	123	9	84		6	

2. Development of the devolution agreement in the West Midlands

In 2015 the seven metropolitan Councils of the West Midlands: Birmingham, City of Wolverhampton, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull and Walsall committed to the establishment of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). During the process of formalising this commitment, partnership working across the West Midlands three LEP geography of the Black Country LEP, Coventry & Warwickshire LEP and the Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP was agreed, including non-constituent areas within the three LEPs and key economically linked authorities across the West Midlands.

The development of the government's devolution agenda created the opportunity for the West Midlands Combined Authority to negotiate and subsequently agree a devolution agreement. The agreement has since been ratified by the seven constituent councils and, in line with the legislative requirements of the [Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill 2016](#), a consultation has been carried out in relation to the proposals in the [Mayoral WMCA 'Scheme'](#), and associated documents such as the [governance review](#).

The Scheme outlines the functions required for the West Midlands to deliver the devolution agreement. Further details of the ambition to deliver the devolution agreement are contained within the recently published [WMCA Strategic Economic Plan \(SEP\)](#).

West Midlands Consultation

The Seven Metropolitan Constituent Councils, led by the West Midlands Combined Authority, carried out the public consultation from 4th July 2016 – 21st August 2106.

The consultation was carried out in connection with the proposals in the [Mayoral WMCA 'Scheme'](#), to inform the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government's decision regarding the transfer of functions to the West Midlands Combined Authority required to deliver the devolution agreement. This report provides the Secretary of State with a summary of consultation responses.

3. Consultation across the West Midlands

Consultation Survey

The consultation survey was hosted on the front page of the Constituent Councils' websites and the West Midlands Combined Authority website.

The survey consisted of 9 key questions, two profile-based questions and a free text option to provide any further feedback on the Scheme. 1309 responses were received through this medium (excluding 45 duplicates and 4 tests).

Paper copies of the consultation were available in public buildings, such as libraries, in the seven Metropolitan Council areas. The consultation poster, attached with the supporting documentation at appendix A, was displayed prominently in these public buildings. 19 responses were received through this medium (excluding 2 spoilt paper copies).

There was also supporting PR across the seven metropolitan Councils and the West Midlands Combined Authority to signpost people to the website to take part in the consultation. Usual Council channels for Councillor engagement were also available for the public.

Stakeholder engagement building up to the consultation

- **The WMCA Strategic Economic Plan launch was held at the ICC in Birmingham** on 10th June 2016 – this included a press launch, an update on transport, the Mental Health Commission chaired by Norman Lamb MP, and the Collective Investment Fund. Following the launch of the SEP, the Shadow West Midlands Combined Authority Board (WMCA) hosted its AGM in shadow form which highlighted the progress made by the emerging West Midlands Combined Authority in the past year.
- **West Midlands forum for growth held in Solihull, 28th June 2016**
This was a developers' conference demonstrating how the UK can drive economic growth through the West Midlands (over 400 attendees).



Stakeholder engagement during the consultation, 4th July – 21st August 2016

- **Mayoral WMCA consultation event, 16th August 2016, (over 70 attendees).**



The WMCA: Making Our Mark *Mayoral WMCA Consultation Event*

When: Tuesday 16th August.

Where: iCentrum, Innovation Birmingham Campus, Holt Street, Birmingham Science Park, B7 4BB.

Time: 7:30am for 8am to 9:30am.

Cost: Free to attend

This was an opportunity to engage with businesses across the West Midlands to discuss the role of the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority and the purpose and functions that an elected mayor working with the West Midlands Combined Authority can deliver. This discussion was set against the context of the Combined Authority's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). Chaired by Greg Lawson (President of GB Chamber) with key note addresses from Martin Reeves, Chief Executive of the West Midlands Combined Authority and Councillor Pete Lowe, Vice-Chair. The morning included workshops for delegates, to reflect and discuss in groups and provided an opportunity to feedback and ask questions.



- **Parliamentary Black Country event, 12 July 2016**

A showcase exhibition of Black Country Manufactured Goods at the House of Commons, the West Midlands Combined Authority held a stand at the event.

- **The first 100 days – what should be at the top of the West Midlands mayor's in-tray? 21 July 2016**

A debate/ policy discussion about plans for a regional mayor held at Birmingham Library and organised by Centre for Cities.

- **Business delegation from India's tour of the West Midlands, 9 August 2016**

Meet and greet from the West Midlands Combined Authority Head of Communications to introduce and discuss West Midlands Combined Authority business and future ambition.

- **Cllr Sleigh on BBC West Midlands, 18 August 2016.**

Discussions around the Mayor's priorities, such as smart ticketing.

- **The Transport for West Midlands 'Exhibition Bus'**

As part of ongoing Transport for West Midlands summer public engagement across the region, the exhibition bus was used for promotion of the West Midlands Combined Authority consultation.



Press releases

- Press releases were issued from each of the seven Metropolitan Councils advising residents that the consultation was live, ongoing and coming to an end.

E.g. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council:

The screenshot shows the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council website. The header includes the council's name and logo, navigation links for Resident, Business, and About the Council, and a search bar. The main content area features a press release titled "Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority consultation closing soon". The release states that the consultation will close at midnight on Sunday August 21. It also mentions that proposals in the scheme will go to the Secretary of State (SoS) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). A calendar for August 2016 is visible on the right side of the page, with the 24th highlighted. The footer contains links for Pay it online, Report missed bin, Current Consultations, and Find your councillor.

- The West Midlands Combined Authority put out the following release, available on the WMCA website:

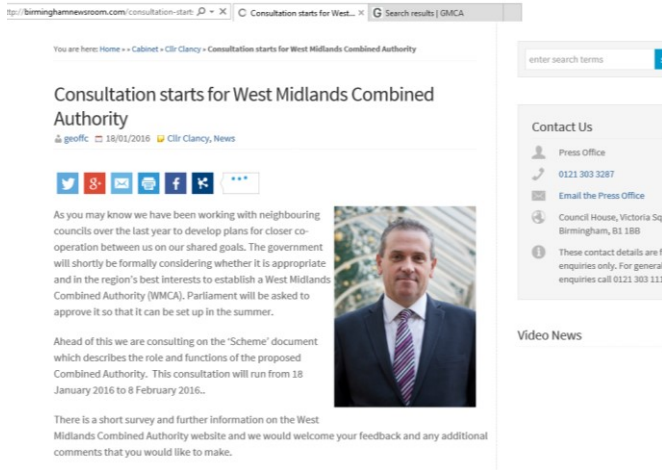
<https://westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/news/mayoral-west-midlands-combined-authority-consultation-begins/>

- The Coventry & Warwickshire LEP featured the consultation in their monthly newsletter, alerting members to the closing date.

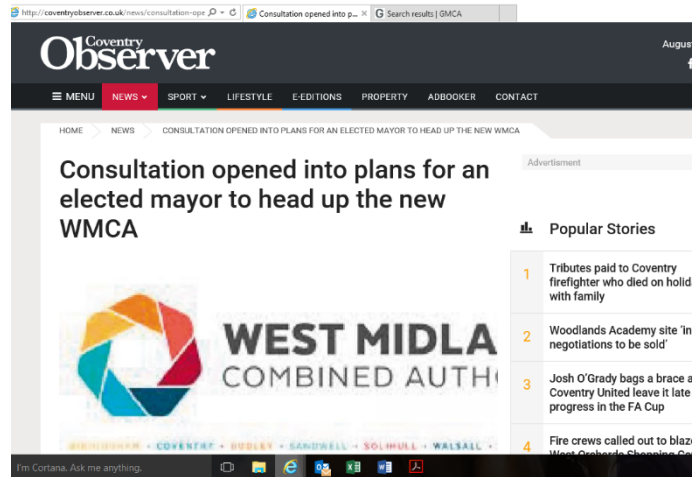
The screenshot shows an email newsletter from the Coventry & Warwickshire LEP. The main heading is "Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority consultation closing soon". The text below states that less than two weeks remain for people to submit their responses to the consultation on a future elected Mayor for the West Midlands Combined Authority. It also mentions that the consultation will close at midnight on Sunday, August 21. The newsletter includes the West Midlands Combined Authority logo and provides information about the consultation process, including where to find more information and how to submit responses. The footer contains links for About Us, Email Options, and Share This, along with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

A cross-section of regional media coverage during the consultation period

The Birmingham News Room



The Coventry Observer



The Halesowen News



The Tyburn Mail





B31 Voices, Connecting Communities, Birmingham

Thursday, August 25, 2016 Sign in / Join

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Have Your Say on West Midlands Combined Authority legislation

By Sas Taylor - July 5, 2016

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WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY

BIRMINGHAM • COVENTRY • DUDLEY • SANDWELL • SOLIHULL • WALSALL • WOLVERHAMPTON

A consultation is underway on legislation which will dictate how a new West Midlands Mayor and Combined Authority will work.

Seven local authorities in the West Midlands (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton) have already negotiated a devolution deal with the government which will see the creation of a West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and

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West Midlands mayor to be elected on May 4 2017

15.07.19 JUL 2016 | UPDATED 17.40.19 JUL 2016 | BY JONATHAN WALKER

A date has been set for the election of the first West Midlands mayor, but the job will only last three years.

    **36** SHARES  COMMENTS



The vote for the first ever West Midlands mayor takes place in 2017

The first ever West Midlands mayor will be elected on May 4 2017 - but they will only be in office for three years.

Utility Bill Discount

You Could Be Entitled To £379 Off Your Gas & Electricity Bills



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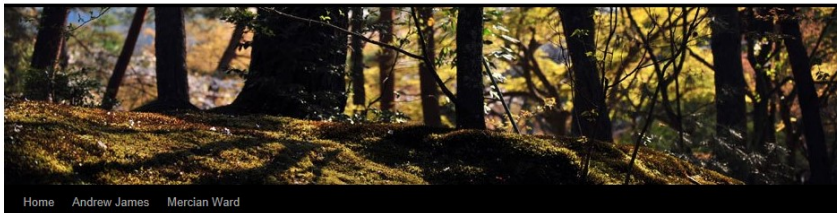


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Councillor Andrew James' blog, Tamworth Councillor

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← [Where Will Your Children Be?](#)

[Council asks Lichfield to Refuse Arkall Farm Development](#) →

Still Time to Have Say on 'Metro Mayor' Plans

Posted on 10/08/2016



Members of the public in Tamworth are being reminded that they now have less than two weeks to respond to a consultation on the functions and responsibilities of an elected Mayor for the West Midlands Combined

Authority (WMCA).

The Mayoral WMCA Functions Scheme consultation will close at midnight on Sunday August 21.

Proposals in the scheme, including the functions of the Mayoral WMCA, are set out in this consultation and its findings will go to the Secretary of State and the Department for Communities and Local Government.



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A cross-section of Twitter activity during the consultation period

July & August 2016 summaries

JUL 2016 SUMMARY

Tweets	Tweet impressions
48	104K
Profile visits	Mentions
4,401	392
New followers	
167	

AUG 2016 SUMMARY

Tweets	Tweet impressions
46	62.7K
Profile visits	Mentions
3,134	310
New followers	
116	



West Mids CA @WestMids_CA

4 Jul

Consultation in to Mayoral functions @WestMids_CA starts today. Visit bit.ly/29aWqLX and have your say #wmcaconsultation

13 4

West Mids CA Retweeted



GBSLEP @GBSLEP

16 Jul

Mayoral WMCA to generate additional investment for WMids? Have your say: ow.ly/qWFO301TVEe #wmcaconsultation

7 1

West Mids CA Retweeted



Paul Faulkner @GBChamberBoss

27 Jul

16/8/16 -Chamber event on the @WestMids_CA Mayor with @martinreeves. Key for the region. Free-register on GBCC site

General Price

Member Price: Free

Future Faces Members: Free

Non-Member Price: Free

All prices exclude VAT

In partnership with

Event Description:

You and 7 others

26 8





West Mids CA Retweeted



West Mids CA Retweeted





Website analytics for the consultation period

4,015 – Sessions: 2692 New | 1323 Returning
 3,348 – Users
 9,028 – Page views

*N.B. Sessions – a session is the period of time a user is actively engaged with the website
 Users – users that have had at least once session within the date range
 Page views – total number of pages viewed*

4. Consultation statistics summary

Overview of consultation format

The consultation was completed by 1309 respondents, this includes 19 paper copies and excludes 4 test responses, 45 duplicated responses and 2 spoilt hard copies.

The survey and supporting documents are appended to this report, at appendix A.

Questions 1 – 9 of the consultation gave background to the devolution deal and Scheme detail on each function area section, posing a question in relation to this function area, with the following options:

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

These options were proceeded by an open text feedback for each question:

“please tell us why below”.

A summary of the key themes from this free text feedback is contained within the ‘responses by question’ section below. Percentages may exceed 100% in sum total due to multiple responses.

A separate open text feedback was available at the end of the consultation:

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

For the purpose of this summary this free text feedback has been grouped into common themes in pages 37 – 38 of this report.



Top line consultation results

Consultation Questions	Strongly Agree/ Agree		Strongly Disagree / Disagree		Don't know	
	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%
10. Transport - The Mayoral WMCA should get functions from Westminster to deliver: an efficient integrated West Midlands Transport Network, more funding and more effective and co-ordinated improvements of road networks between constituent councils and partners.	1025	79	233	18	47	4
11. Low Emissions - The Mayoral WMCA should get functions from Westminster to deliver low emissions and clean air zones, thus improving public health.	931	71	316	24	86	7
12. High Speed 2 (HS2) Growth - The Mayoral WMCA should get functions from Westminster to ensure HS2 benefits the whole region, including the Metro extensions from Curzon to Solihull HS2 Interchange Station and from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill.	836	65	357	27	99	8
13. More and Better Homes - The Mayoral WMCA should get functions from Westminster to deliver housing and economic growth strategies.	893	69	302	23	95	7
14. Skills and Employment - The Mayoral WMCA should get functions from Westminster to deliver better skills and training for jobs now and in the future and deliver a high-wage, high-skill workforce.	994	77	239	19	61	5

15. Finance - The Mayoral WMCA should get functions from Westminster to deliver key ambitions. The region will have access to a number of funding streams. The Mayor will have the ability to raise a precept in order to deliver investment into the regional economy. The Mayor would also be able to raise a business rate supplement to create funds to invest into specific schemes within the regional economy.	703	54	454	35	145	11		
16. Secretary of State Statutory Tests Efficient and effective governance - A Mayoral WMCA will promote more efficient and effective governance in the West Midlands region.	777	60	291	22	232	18		
	Positive Impact		No Impact		Negative Impact	Don't Know		
17. Secretary of State Tests Local Community Interests - What impact will a Mayoral WMCA have on the identity or interests of local communities?	654	51	200	16	247	19	189	15
	Strongly Agree/ Agree		Strongly Disagree / Disagree		Don't know			
	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%		
18. Equality - The Combined Authority should have the same duty to consider equality as other local authorities do.	1086	84	123	9	84	6		

Respondents may not have answered all questions and % are rounded and so may not add up to 100%.

5. Response breakdown by question

Question 1

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.”

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]

Question 1 Response Summary

79% of respondents strongly agree/agree that the Mayoral WMCA should get the transport functions detailed in the Scheme. Of all functions consulted on, transport was the area receiving the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing functions and funding should be transferred.

The employee and business groups had the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing with the transfer of transport functions (89% and 87% respectively). The group with the lowest proportion of respondents agreeing was the Councillor group, though still comparatively high at 70% strongly agreeing/agreeing.

Birmingham and Wolverhampton had the greatest proportions of respondents agreeing with the transport functions (with 86% of respondents in each City agreeing). 55% of respondents from Coventry agreed.

Free Text Response by Key Themes

27% of responses (183 comments) cited the need to work collaboratively/centrally planning policy/ensuring strategic overview.

More of a focus on public transport/cycle/sustainable modes of transport etc. was cited by 12% of responses (79 comments).

10% of responses (69 comments) supported local control and devolution/local areas understanding regional issues better.

10% of responses (68 comments) also cited that the transport network/transport links is a priority for the region and important for the economy.

The potential for Birmingham to take priority/funding not shared evenly/larger Councils overtaking smaller Councils was cited in 6% of responses (42 comments)

The need to access more/better/longer term funding for this issue was cited in 42 responses (6%)

Focus on fixing roads/improvements to roads/roadworks/traffic light improvement etc. was cited in 5% of responses (35 comments)

21 responses (3%) believed that pooling resources would lead to efficiencies/more cost effective.

3% of responses (20 comments) believed congestion is a priority and 10 comments were generally positive without further detail.

10 comments related to regional versus national issues/clash with highways agencies.

5 respondents were unsure if the West Midlands Combined Authority will get the funding promised from central government.

Further comments were received regarding the need to use expert advice/plan schemes together, concerns about fighting within areas for funding, the need for better country-wide planning/not just regional, supportive of powers being reviewed at set intervals and querying how the existing transport arrangements/contracts will work.

Question 2

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]

Question 2 Response Summary

71% of respondents agreed that the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority should get functions proposed in the Scheme to deliver low emissions. This was the third highest ranking question where respondents agree functions relating to low emissions should be granted.

The group with the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing to the functions was employees (84%). The group with the greatest proportion of respondents disagreeing was residents (33%), though the majority of the residents overall (66%) agreed that the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority should receive the functions detailed in the low emissions section of the Scheme.

Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Sandwell had the greatest proportions of respondents agreeing with the low emissions functions (with 78% of respondents in each area agreeing). Coventry received the smallest proportion of agreement to the proposals (50%).

Free Text Response by Key Themes

19% of responses (106 comments) were received regarding support of this function area for consistency and efficiency/ supportive at a West Midlands level/regional decisions needed.



10% of responses (54 comments) cited that air quality is not fixed at borders/there are no boundaries and 8% (44 comments) believing air quality/tackling pollution is important.

Action needed to improve health / help NHS was cited in 40 comments (7%), and general agreement/supportive comments were 5% (29 comments) of responses, with 20 comments (4%) believe low emissions need to be controlled.

6% of respondents (34 comments) believe that it is Councils that should have the responsibility regarding low emissions, and 5% (27 comments) believe it should be handled nationally.

Integration with low carbon public transport was cited in 5% of responses (26 comments) and the suggestion of incentives for electric cars or green transport cited in 13 comments (2%).

4% of respondents (24 comments) believed that low emissions are not important or that there are better ways to spend money.

17 respondents (3%) have concerns about emissions/pollution. 17 responses (3%) also contained concerns that some areas will unfairly take priority.

2% of respondents (12 comments) were worried about congestion charging and an increase in parking fees.

Question 3

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]

Question 3 Response Summary

65% of respondents agreed that the Mayoral WMCA should get functions to ensure HS2 benefits the whole region.

The group with the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing to the functions was businesses (84%), followed by councillors (77%). The group with the lowest proportion of respondents agreeing was the resident group (58% in agreement).

Birmingham had the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing with the functions to ensure HS2 benefits the whole region (with 77% agreeing). 37% of respondents from Coventry agreed with the proposals.

Free Text Response by Key Themes

30% of free text responses (177 comments) to question 3 were not supportive of HS2/ believed it to be a waste of money/better spent elsewhere/believe the West Midlands Combined Authority should oppose it.

25% of respondents (149 comments) believe the WMCA and the Mayor need to ensure a co-ordinated/ collaborative approach to ensure HS2 benefits the whole region/ has a joined up approach and/or protects the West Midlands' needs.



10% of responses (59 comments) cite that HS2 won't benefit all areas or will benefit Birmingham only.

9% (54 comments) of respondents were supportive of HS2, comments include HS2 bringing vital connection / better integration / improving the economy / health and easing congestion. A further 7 comments were supportive without further information and 3 respondents believe the HS2 functions in the Scheme will give economies of scale.

5% of respondents (30 comments) believe that more Metro/rapid transport routes are needed, 4% (22 comments) would like to see improved rail/rail links/rail services and 3% (17 comments) believe good connections/better links are needed.

4% of responses (21 comments) believe they have/there is a lack of information, or they were unsure regarding HS2 and 2% of respondents questioned whether HS2 will go ahead/raised doubts about funding for HS2.

7 responses cited the belief that HS2 should not be a local government issue, 4 responses were not supportive of metro extensions, and 3 believe that the issue under discussion is already done via other roles.

7 respondents believe more investment is needed in transport in general, 2 that new technology such as driverless cars should be used and 1 that the West Midlands needs to compete with other counties/areas.

Further responses cited transparencies regarding Small Medium Enterprise (SME) supply and regarding the ability to review powers at a set time.

Question 4

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's) 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]

Question 4 Response Summary

69% of respondents agreed that the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority should get functions to deliver housing and economic growth strategies. Of all functions consulted on, housing was the fourth highest ranking area where respondents agree functions should be granted.

The group with the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing to the functions was businesses (85%), followed by employees (76%), residents (65%) and councillors (60%).

Birmingham had the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing with the functions to deliver housing (with 80% agreeing), followed by Wolverhampton and Sandwell (with 75% of respondents agreeing). 49% of respondents from Coventry agreed with the proposals.

Free Text Response by Key Themes

Building on brown field sites / regenerated brown field space / this area being key to the economy was cited in 17% (92 comments) of responses.

16% of responses (88 comments) cite West Midlands Combined Authority coordination/leadership/regional overview needed/less red tape.



Housing/more affordable quality housing/social housing being essential/area essential to economic growth was cited in 86 comments (16%), further housing stock specific comments included:

- The re-use/renovate of unused housing/ensuring empty homes are used/old housing regenerated (20 comments).
- Housing stock needs to be fit for purpose/good quality (5 comments)
- Adequate funding needed for housing (3 comments)
- Issues over social housing benefit (1 comment)

67 comments are regarding the belief that this area is the local councils remit/ the West Midlands Combined Authority should not over power local councils/that councils should have the final say.

9% of responses (48 comments) did not want the mayor/WMCA to have this power, with a further 15 comments negative about housing numbers increasing/the HCA.

39 comments were expressly against building on greenfield sites, or commented in support of protecting green sites (7%)

7% of responses (38 comments) support local input/local decision makers/ensure local residents have a say

25 comments (5%) were regarding concerns/uncertainty/concerns around compulsory purchase power abuse.

4% of responses (22 comments) questioned the effectiveness if Councils/the government could overturn West Midlands Combined Authority's decisions/more red tape.

21 comments (4%) were supportive of local infrastructure to back up housing / e.g. transport / schools/ health.

4% of responses (20 comments) believe the proposals will favour one area over another and 2% (9 comments) would like to see assurance that Scheme is evenly balanced/all areas are providing housing.

14 comments (3%) highlighted concern about the cost of cleaning up brownfields sites/ that it must be done properly, 2 comments cited the use of brownfield sites/believed them to be a burden on the environment.

2% of responses (11 comments) cited issues with developers/power of developers/developer led housing.

5 responses cited the need to build on green fields as well / find ways to build on green field, 4 responses suggested building on current unused Council / property owners land.

There were 4 positive comments with no further information. Further comments were regarding this issue as a national not local issue and regarding stopping 'Right to Buy'.

Question 5

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]

Question 5 Response Summary

77% of respondents agreed that the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority should get functions to deliver better skills and training for jobs now and in the future. Of all functions consulted on, this was the second highest ranking area where respondents agree functions should be granted.

The group with the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing to the functions was employees (87%), followed by businesses (83%), councillors (82%) and residents (72%).

Birmingham and Wolverhampton had the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing with the functions to deliver better skills and training (with 83% agreeing in each area).



Free Text Response by Key Themes

The most common free text comment (93 comments, 18%) was regarding the Mayor/WMCA working together/ in collaboration with business/education and Local Councils. Linked to this theme, 61 comments (12%) believing better education is key/working closely with education/business to have closer links with schools and to involve all groups/partners/third sector/universities (15 comments, 3%)

62 comments (12%) were supportive/ believe this area is a good idea/citing skills and employment's importance as a focus/vital/improving lives for all.

8% of responses (43 comments) cite skills in all sectors/more diverse skills/right skills for work available and 20 comments (4%) cited maintaining/rebuilding traditional industry/manufacturing as not everyone can be highly skilled.

Concerns on the skills and employment topic were regarding:

- That the area does not need mayor/outside mayoral remit/does not need wider regional overview (38 comments, 7%)
- This area is being done already/better done by LEP/Councils (34 comments, 7%)
- Negative view of the proposals/belief that it will not work (24 comments, 4%)
- Similar schemes have failed in the past (16 comments, 3%)
- This area is a national not local issue (10 comments, 2%)

28 comments (5%) were regarding the need for apprenticeships/vocational training and 19 comments (4%) suggested the need to include all equally – young/elderly/disabled/deprived areas etc.

17 responses (3%) cited more investment needed/government funding/the area being outside of local control

17 responses (3%) cited the need to create more employment/attractive employment in the area, with 12 comments (2%) believing local understanding/knowledge is needed.

Further comments included addressing zero-hours contracts and low wages, not enough information, retaining skilled workers in the West Midlands, the importance of measurable targets, the need for more trade unions and the need to help small businesses.

Question 6

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]

Question 6 Response Summary

54% of respondents agreed that the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority should get functions related to finance. Of all functions consulted on, this was the area where fewest respondents agreed the function should be granted.

The group with the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing to the functions was businesses (68%), followed by employees (66%).

Birmingham had the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing with the finance functions (66%), followed by Wolverhampton (58%). 37% of respondents from Coventry agreed with the proposals.

Free Text Response by Key Themes

The most common theme in the free text response to this question (22%, 119 comments) was regarding respondents not wanting increases to taxation/for funds to come from existing budgets.

18% of responses (97 comments) were supportive/ citing that the region needs this funding and investment/ the region needs control over own funding/willing to pay more/ Mayor needs precept to function 97, 18%

Concerns in addition to increased taxation/fund source are regarding:

- Business rate increases/business go elsewhere/ to not interfere too much with business/protect smaller business (10%, 55 comments)
- Additional taxation adding to austerity/can people afford it/taxation needs to be fair to poorer people (29 comments, 5%)
- Financial mismanagement/accountability/transparency (16 comments, 3%)
- Local council funding/local council funding to remain (7 comments, 1%)
- Too much regulation/nothing will be done/the function is too restrictive (2 comments)
- Funding shared equally/not just beneficial to Birmingham/bigger areas (34 comments, 6%)
- The need for spending to have visibility/regulation/scrutiny/controls/transparency/limits (29 comments, 5%)

6% of responses (33 comments) were regarding disagreement that the Mayor should have the power to precept/query over the democracy.

6% of responses (31 comments) believe the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority needs to show benefit gained from precept raising/for public good/ show what the public is getting in return.

29 comments (5%) suggest the use of other funding sources/central government/external funding and 9 comments (2%) believe more investment from business/corporations is needed. 6 comments are regarding local business input/involvement/the support of business and 1 comment regarding delivery by other sector.

5% of responses (29 comments) cite the need for more detail, 5 comments were regarding transfer of services, 2 responses believe the West Midlands Combined Authority should have the power to borrow only, and not a Mayoral precept, 1 comment was regarding local council tax capping.

Question 7

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]

Question 7 Response Summary

60% of respondents agreed that a Mayoral WMCA will promote more efficient and effective governance in the West Midlands region.

The group with the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing that the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority will promote more efficient and effective governance was employees (71%), followed by businesses (70%), councillors (61%) and residents (54%).

Birmingham and Wolverhampton had the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing that the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority will promote more efficient and effective governance (68% each), followed by Sandwell (64%). 36% of respondents from Coventry agreed with the proposals.

Free Text Response by Key Themes

20% of responses (82 comments) were unsure/concerned of the effects/believe there might be issues.

20% of responses (81 comments) believe the regional scope will be beneficial / is sensible.

11% of responses (59 comments) thought that the functions proposed in the Scheme may disadvantage smaller/better performing Councils.

11% of responses (45 comments) believe there will need to be close ties and cooperation between the mayor and Councils.

3% of responses (13 comments) cited that the 'one size fits all' approach won't work on the local issues that the individual Councils need to address.

3% queried how the proposals in the Scheme will be funded.

6 comments were regarding the belief that the ability for the functions proposed to secure effective and convenient local government depends on the Mayor.

7 responses cited the support for the Mayor to be elected every so many years.

Question 8

Impact on identity and interests of local communities

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]

Question 8 Response summary

The majority of respondents (51%) felt the impact would be positive. 19% felt there would be a negative impact, 16% thought there would be no impact and 15% were unsure of the impact.

The group with the greatest proportion of respondents expecting a positive impact was businesses (67%), followed by employees (59%). The group with the lowest proportion of respondents considering the Mayoral WMCA to be positive was residents (46%).

Birmingham had the greatest proportion of respondents considering a Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority to have a positive impact (62%), followed by Wolverhampton (58%). Coventry had the greatest proportion of respondents claiming it to have a negative impact (36%).

Free Text Response by Key Themes

The most common comments (96, 20%) in the free text response was regarding the need to protect local identity/concern that the proposals could dilute the local voice/moving powers away from people/ unable to represent all/ the West Midlands Combined Authority being too big.

Other areas of concern were:

- The risk that some areas will benefit over others/ the Mayor will be Birmingham centred. (52 comments)
- Environmental issues (3 comments)
- Lack of accountability/ corruption (4 comments)
- Potential for proposals to lead to confusion (1 comment)

12% cited the impact of the proposals on local identity/interests would be positive, examples include:

- Investment in local area/more investment/will attract investment (13 comments)
- More jobs/improved economy/growth (8 comments)

- Will lead to more housing (6 comments)
- Greater accountability/one person in control/less infighting (7 comments)
- Will lead to better transport (5 comments)
- Will make long term planning easier/strategic view (3 comments)
- Will lead to improved skills/education (2 comments)
- Will lead to better air quality (1 comment)

9% of responses (45 comments) supported devolution and more powers to the regions and local people, better representation of local needs

8% of comments (40) were supportive of all areas working together/ a regional overview /shared interests/shared best practice.

8% of comments (38 comments) received believed that the functions proposed will have limited effect on the identity and interests of local communities/ won't change how people see themselves.

6% of respondents (30 comments) felt that they needed more information/were unsure/believed that it was too early to say.

28 comments (6%) were regarding the proposals/West Midlands Combined Authority raising the profile/pride in the area/regional identity/West Midlands brand.

4% of Q8 free text respondents (20 comments) believed that the impact on local identity and interests is dependent on the right powers/person/funding.

4% of Q8 free text respondents (18 comments) believe that the proposals need better communication/public consultation/getting the public on board.

3% had a mixed view and believed it was positive in some ways and negative in others (13 comments)

2% of responses cite not wanting to pay more tax/believe it will be too costly.

5 comments were negative with no further detail.

Question 9

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

[please tell us why below]

Question 9 Response summary

84% of respondents agreed that the Combined Authority should have the same duty to consider equality as other local authorities do. Businesses and employees were most in support of this with 91% of respondents from each group agreeing. Proportions in agreement were high in other groups too (councillors 82% and residents 80%).

Wolverhampton and Sandwell had the greatest proportion of respondents agreeing that the West Midlands Combined Authority should have the same duty to consider equality as other local authorities do (89% each). Although Coventry had fewer responses agreeing with this, they were still relatively high at 76%.

Free Text Response by Key Themes

49% (177 comments) of free text responses cited the importance of equality/respecting all.

12% of respondents (42 comments) believe that this is a common sense/obvious area that the West Midlands Combined Authority should cover and 9% (34 comments) that it should be a legal obligation/duty.

7% of respondents (26 comments) were against positive discrimination/cited a dislike of political correctness, or supported if not too extreme. 5 comments cited that there is no such thing as equality.

5% (18 comments) of responses were unclear of the meaning of equality/ the question being asked.

Further responses were that equality is not the prime purpose of CA/irrelevant/local councils job, responses were unsure, comments for things to go further and protect the more vulnerable

15% of comments (54) were not related to the public sector equality duty.

Repeated Feedback

Throughout questions 1-9 free text feedback, there were often comments submitted that were not relevant to the question and/or those answers were repeated throughout the free text feedback, these have been grouped below.

- General disagreement with a Mayoral WMCA/benefit of a Mayor/co-operation doesn't need a Mayor/WMCA
- General support for a Mayor
- Feeling ill-informed
- Viewed as an extra layer of bureaucracy
- Disagreement with the Scheme will not make a difference
- The WMCA needs to cover wider area than just the Metropolitan area
- Concern that Birmingham will dominate the agenda
- The view that an elected assembly is needed
- A general mistrust of Government

Questions 1 – 9: 'Don't know' responses received

The highest area of 'don't know' responses received were in relation to the Secretary of State's tests regarding securing effective and convenient local government and impact of the proposed functions on the identity and interests of local communities (question 7 and 8).

Question 7 received the highest 'don't know' responses at 18%. This is in the context of 60% of question 7 respondents selecting that they agreed or strongly agreed that the functions in the Scheme will secure effective and convenient local government in the West Midlands region and 22% disagreeing.

Question 8 received the second highest 'don't know' responses, at 15%. This is in the context of 51% of question 8 respondents selecting that the functions proposed in the Scheme will have a positive impact on the identity and interests of local communities, with 16% of respondents selecting that there would be no impact.

Questions 1 (transport), 5 (skills and employment) and 9 (public sector equality duty) received the least 'don't know' responses, with 4%, 5% and 6% respectively. They were also the questions which received the most 'strongly agree' responses across the consultation.

Responding to feedback

Both positive and negative feedback received will be addressed in various ways, including sharing information/feedback with the appropriate subject area lead/s, adapting frequently asked questions and incorporating feedback into communications plans to ensure continuous development, improvement and engagement.

Respondent Type

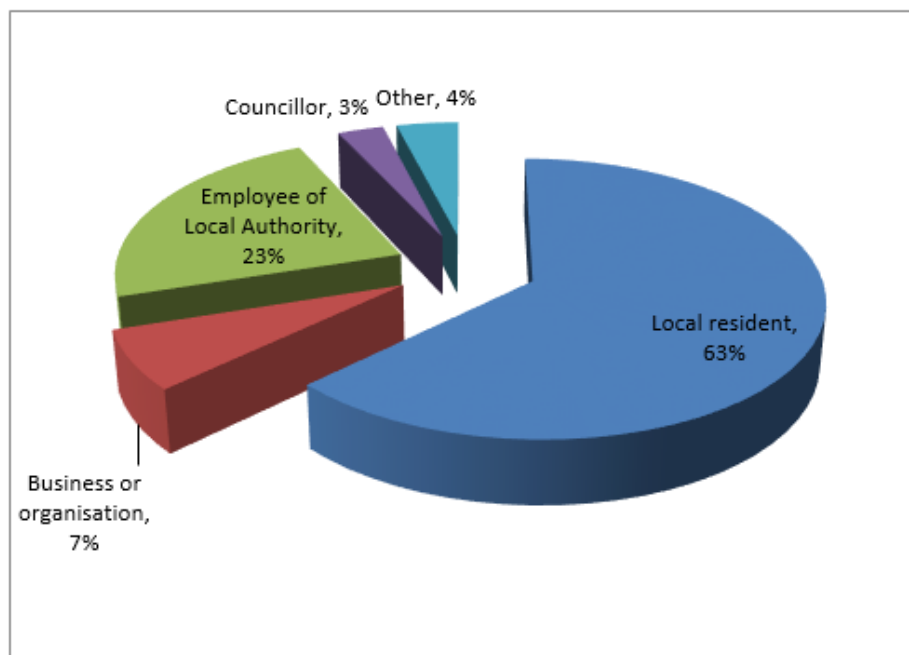
Question 10

Respondents were asked:

Are you responding to this survey as...?

- ☐ A local resident
- ☐ A business or organisation
- ☐ An employee of a local authority within the West Midlands
- ☐ A councillor within the West Midlands
- ☐ Other

Responses are illustrated below:



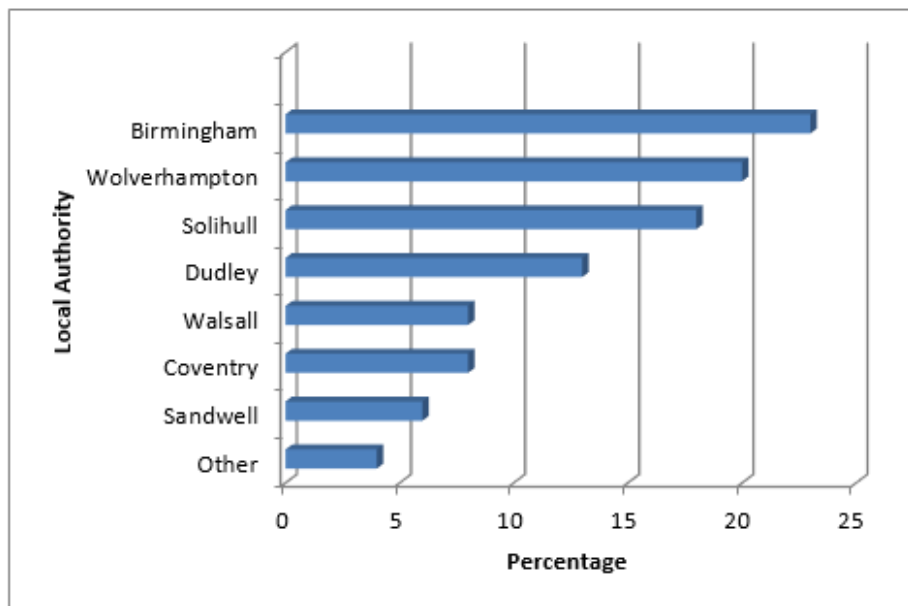
Local Authority Affiliation

Question 11

Respondents were asked:

Which local authority are you and your organisation most closely associated with?

Responses are illustrated below:



Responses outside of the Combined Authority area

As required the Consultation was carried out by the Constituent Councils across the seven metropolitan Council area of the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Additionally, several respondents from other areas of the West Midlands have provided feedback in relation to proposals in the Scheme, including Lichfield, Nuneaton & Bedworth, Redditch, Rugby, Shropshire, South Staffordshire, Staffordshire, Stratford, Tamworth, Telford & Wrekin and Warwickshire.

6. Open text feedback by theme

The Consultation contained an open text feedback option at the end, as below:

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

446 comments were submitted under this free text option. The comments varied in tone, theme and relevance. Some of the responses may not be directly on the proposals in the Scheme itself, but are still relevant to the consideration of the respondent's views when summarising the consultation in relation to proposals in the Scheme.

Some themes are similar to the question 1-9 'repeated feedback' section above due to repeat entries in the final open text feedback option. The free text responses by theme are summarised below:

103 comments (23% of final open text feedback) cited the proposals (or associated proposals such as a Mayor) being forced/that they are not needed/calling for a referendum.

66 comments (15% of final open text feedback) were regarding the West Midlands Combined Authority being a good idea for strategic planning/a collaborative overview/positive for the West Midlands/the way forward.

42 comments (9% of final open text feedback) were regarding the West Midlands Combined Authority being another layer of bureaucracy/wasteful/a waste of money.

37 comments (8% of final open text feedback) cited concern that Birmingham will dominate the agenda.

35 comments (8% of final open text feedback) were negative towards the consultation itself/the view it is not for the lay person/difficult to understand.

29 comments (7% of final open text feedback) suggested a need for focus on improvements to transport / HS2.

26 comments (6% of final open text feedback) were regarding the need to have suitable powers to conduct role/more powers/accountability.

25 comments (6% of final open text feedback) cited supporting the West Midlands Combined Authority/devolution/more power to regions/working for local area/give local area a voice.

22 comments (5% of final open text feedback) cite the need to ensure suitable candidate/non-political candidate/democratically elected.

19 comments (4% of final open text feedback) were regarding individual local authority powers/local interests needing protection.

19 comments (4% of final open text feedback) referenced not using the West Midlands Combined Authority/Mayoral position to increase taxes/opposed to precept.

18 comments (4% of final open text feedback) were regarding the need for more information/respondents being unsure.

18 comments (4% of final open text feedback) cite the need for good communication/need to convince public/need to take public along.

16 comments (4% of final open text feedback) disagreed with the West Midlands Combined Authority name.

10 comments (2% of final open text feedback) cite a need for focus on health care/integrated health care/social care.

10 comments (2% of final open text feedback) were regarding the need for a focus on green issues/the environment.

10 comments (2% of final open text feedback) cited concerns that the West Midlands Combined Authority/Mayor is/could be too powerful/not accountable/transparency is needed.

9 comments (2% of final open text feedback) would like to see a focus on the West Midlands needs for better jobs/training/skills.

7 comments (2% of final open text feedback) cite concerns the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority will be underfunded/more investment is needed.

7 comments (2% of final open text feedback) cite a need to focus on housing/planning permission/land use.

Further comments were received on each of the following: The need to help the wider 'travel to work area', the Mayor for the Metropolitan area only, need a focus on the Arts, opposition to HS2, concerns about policing being part of the West Midlands Combined Authority, the need for a focus on communities, that the Combined Authority needs to cover emergency services, that more innovation is needed, for more diversity, that one council is more cost effective, and for the West Midlands Combined Authority to consider immigration.

Additional feedback themes received

Through the stakeholder representations and media interest there have been various topics raised, summarised below:

The Mayor's powers

Concerns have been raised regarding the Mayor's powers being limited. It is important to note that Schemes put in place governance arrangements required to deliver devolution deals, therefore the current mayoral powers match this particular deal. Discussions on further devolution for the West Midlands continue and it is anticipated that Government would want to negotiate further powers as that process continues.

HCA/CPO powers

A collaborative approach with the HCA has been adopted and is key to success going forwards in the development of the 'more and better homes' ambitions of the West Midlands Combined Authority.

The West Midlands Combined Authority geography

The geography of the West Midlands Combined Authority and the collaboration across borders and sectors has developed significantly throughout the development of the West Midlands Combined Authority. The development of the Strategic Economic Plan highlights the importance of the three LEP geography but recognises the crucial role economically linked authorities provide within the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Continued engagement and consultation

A key theme of the representations and support given is the importance of continued and on-going engagement across all sectors and with the public to successfully deliver the ambition of the West Midlands Combined Authority.



7. Stakeholder Representations

As well as formal consultation responses via online or paper methods, stakeholder representations were made via letter to the Constituent Councils/West Midlands Combined Authority regarding the proposals in connection with the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority Scheme from the following:

- Joint three Chambers of Commerce: Greater Birmingham, Coventry & Warwickshire and the Black Country Chambers
- The Homes and Community Agency
- Business Professional Services (BPS) Birmingham
- The Police and Crime Commissioner
- West Midlands Civic Society Forum
- Chair of CWLEP Finance & Governance Board
- The University of Warwick (including the 2012 Warwick Commission report on Elected Mayors and City Leadership, for reference.)
- Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations
- Wolverhampton University
- Sustainability West Midlands

Representations were also made from the following stakeholder representatives via email:

- Solihull Tourism Forum
- Touchwood Shopping Centre
- Solihull College & University Centre
- LEP and Government Partnerships, Aston University
- Birmingham Office, for Pinsent Masons LLP
- Birmingham City University
- Birmingham Metropolitan College, Matthew Boulton Campus
- Birmingham City Council Conservative Group
- NHS Birmingham South Central CCG
- West Bromwich African Caribbean Resource Centre
- Sutton Coldfield MP
- Partnerships Care and Communities, Longhurst Group

All stakeholder representations have been included in the summary of consultation responses sent to the Secretary for Communities and Local Government as supporting information.