

WMCA Research Evidence Base Library

Report Title	Category	Industrial Strategy "foundation"	Date	Link	Brief Description
West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) devolution agreement	Devolution	Places	17/11/15	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1375/westmidlandsdealdocument.pdf	The first devolution deal document sets out the terms of an agreement between the West Midlands Combined Authority Shadow Board and the government to move forward with a radical devolution of funding, powers and responsibilities. The formal deal allows the Combined Authority to create an investment fund of over £1 billion through a 30 year revenue stream and locally raised finance.
West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) devolution agreement (2)	Devolution	Places	23/11/17	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662138/A_Second_Devolution_Deal_for_the_West_Midlands.pdf	The second WMCA devolution agreement government strengthens the West Midlands' devolution arrangements. These newer proposals support the ambitious plans of the WMCA for additional growth and improved wellbeing and demonstrates government's continued commitment to devolution and the future of the West Midlands. This agreement reflected a changing context and recognises the need for the WMCA to develop a local industrial strategy to shape the long-term vision for growth in the area.
A Science & Innovation Audit (SIA) for the West Midlands	Economy	Ideas	June 2017	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1682/west-midlands-sia-final-for-publication-21617.pdf	The SIA report, supplementary to the Midlands Engine SIA and in partnership with Birmingham Science City, provides a detailed picture of the WMCA area's strengths and opportunities in science and innovation and considers the ecosystem factors that LEPs and the WMCA, along with innovation partners, need to address to enable us to realise the potential of our local economy. An WM SIA 'framework' underpins and summarises the content of the report, identifying four key 'market strengths' which are complemented by key aspects of 'enabling competencies' and the region's innovation ecosystem. The market strengths are outlined as 'next generation transport, 'sustainable construction, 'energy storage & systems'
West Midlands Functional Economic Market Area Study (FEMA)	Economy	Places	26/06/15	https://democracy.stratford.gov.uk/documents/s34932/WestMidlandsFEMAStudy26June2015.pdf	For each of the three study topics (travel to work, migration and industrial specialisation) the study examines the relationships and similarity between all of the 19 authorities and between the 7 unitaries. FEMA established where the strongest travel to work relationships existed and the size of the self-containment percentage of a number of functional market areas. The WMCA 3-LEP area was found to have a self-containment rate of 90%.
West Midlands Land Commission (WMLC) Report	Economy	Infrastructure	February 2017	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1412/wmlc-final-report.pdf	The WMLC was set up in Spring 2016. In the view of the Commission, there are six 'game changers' for the land market of the WM; transformative actions which is believed are needed. These are outlined as: a Single Agreed Vision; the designation of Action Zones; development of a Unity of Purpose; further steps on Transforming Brownfield Land; a Strategic Review of the Green Belt; and Clarified Governance and Responsibility The Land Commission heard from 141 individuals from 89 organisations
WMCA Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)	Economy	Places	June 2016	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1382/full-sep-document.pdf	The WMCA is home to a family of SEP's with three local SEP's which informed the development of the overall WMCA SEP (the 'super SEP') The WMCA SEP sets out the vision, objectives, strategy and actions to improve the quality of life for the people of the West Midlands and was developed and agreed by a wide partnership of people, organisations and businesses. The SEP sets out a bold, ambitious and robust programme, developed by a unique collaboration of businesses, public sector organisations, universities and others who share a passion for, and pride in, the West Midlands. Eight priority actions are identified: new manufacturing economy; creative and digital; environmental technologies; medical and life sciences; HS2 growth;

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					skills for growth and employment for all; housing; exploiting the economic geography.
WMCA Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) Technical Appendices	Economy	Places	Autumn 2015-2016	https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/strategy	These underpin the WMCA's strategy and are the detailed foundations of the SEP, in terms of both quantitative and qualitative analysis/research. Each appendix is made available online, they include: vision setting (economic modelling), fiscal impact, sector analysis/definition, WMCA Performance Management Framework, and skills analysis
WMCA State of the Region 2018	Economy	All	29/08/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2435/state-of-the-region-2018.pdf	This summary, and the technical report that sits behind it, provide a consistent reference point back to the headline goals set out in the WMCA Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), using the performance indicators it developed to ensure we are pursuing economic success in balanced economic and social terms that feel real to the people living and working in the region.
WMCA Mental Health Commission Report/Action Plan: 'Thrive West Midlands'	Health and wellbeing	People	January 2017	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1420/wmca-mental-health-commission-thrive-full-doc.pdf	Chaired by Norman Lamb MP and working in partnership with a wide range of organisations, the Commission sets out how the region will seek to reduce the impact of mental ill health. The WMCA's ambition within this is to build happy, thriving communities and to support those who experience mental ill health. A Concordat for Action statement is included, demonstrating the commitment of key organisations from across the WM to improving the mental health and wellbeing of people within our region. It's committed that "we will work together to improve mental health", "we will ensure services meet the people with mental ill health", and "we will work together to develop and deliver the action plan's actions."
WMCA Leadership Commission	Leadership	People	2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2218/leadership-diversity-in-the-west-midlands_-002.pdf	A wide-ranging academic piece of work has taken place to scrutinise and improve diversity in the leadership of the region, recommending a number of actions. The Leadership Commission makes a number of recommendations for the WMCA and its partner organisations under five key themes: Inclusive leadership to drive inclusive growth; Working in partnership with business to develop inclusive leadership; A step change in recruitment and HR development; Combatting the evaluation and learning deficit; A route map for the next generation.
Greater Birmingham Life Sciences Commission	Life Sciences & Healthcare	All	July 2015	https://gbslep.co.uk/resources/reports/greater-birmingham-life-sciences-commission	The independent Greater Birmingham Life Sciences Commission published The Silk Report in 2015. Chaired by Birmingham businessman Graham Silk, who is also co-founder of the Cure Leukaemia charity and Patients4Data, the Commission has looked at how Greater Birmingham can draw on its particular strengths to grow the life sciences sector for the benefit of patients and the economy.
Business Environment in the WMCA Region	Productivity	Business environment	14/06/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2233/business-environment.pdf	The aim of this briefing note is to provide an overview of the key headline metrics on business dynamism in the region, benchmark them against other regions and the UK, and set out some recommendations. The paper finds a clear connection between business dynamism and growth in productivity in the WMCA, and that there are challenges to be addresses within the business environment, particularly around the growth of start-ups and established businesses.
Business Innovation, Diffusion and Productivity in the West Midlands	Productivity	Ideas	14/06/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2229/business-innovation.pdf	This report reviews the data and literature on innovation measures across the 3-LEP areas, finding that innovation in LEP areas across the West Midlands lags that in the best performing English LEPs. Recommendations to reverse this include boosting levels of new-to-the-firm innovation activity and increasing B2B and U2B collaboration.

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Infrastructure and Productivity: A Review	Productivity	Infrastructure	14/06/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2230/infrastructure.pdf	The purpose of this report is to review the current understanding about how infrastructure impacts on productivity and growth, in the context of the UK and the West Midlands, so as to identify the key issues in the existing infrastructure and in turn offer recommendations. It concludes that the WM enjoys overall good physical and digital connectivity, but also has weaknesses in the infrastructure system. s. The key challenges include the limited air transport capacity, high energy cost and inflexible energy supply regime, less than satisfactory digital connection and an industrial structure that is prone to changes in technological advancements.
Inward Investment and Productivity	Productivity	Places	14/06/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2232/inward-investment-productivity-across-sectors.pdf	Academic piece of work including analysis of a sector-based approach to attracting inward investment, and the contribution that inward investment can make to productivity and economic development more generally in the region. The paper's recommendations include the WMCA developing an inward investment strategy, focusing inward investment efforts on sectors where free trade with the EU is less important and maximising the returns on inward investment.
Report of the West Midlands Productivity & Skills Commission	Productivity	All	14/06/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2227/productivity-and-skills-commission_full-report.pdf	This is the annual report of the Productivity and Skills Commission, providing a summary of key sector deep dives (automotive, construction and BPFs) as well as the foundation reports. Whilst the Commission is ongoing from this point, some initial recommendations are put forward by the Leadership group, including developing a more holistic approach to measuring the economy, establishing sector partnerships and exploring the opportunity of setting up a West Midlands Productivity Taskforce.
West Midlands Productivity & Skills Commission	Productivity	Business environment	Launched April 2017	https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/productivity-skills-commission/	This Commission has the task of understanding the true extent of the productivity challenge in the West Midlands, identifying the component causes and making recommendations to address the issues identified. The Commission was initially launched through a call for evidence, and since then has begun 'deep-dive' research into key sectors through a private sector leadership group and validated by an academic technical group. An annual report with much of this content is to be produced in June 2018, with the Commission continuing beyond this.
An Investigation into the Foundations of Productivity for Business, Professional and Financial Services in WMCA Area	Sector - Business, Professional and Financial Services (BPFs)	All	June 2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2236/business-professional-and-financial-services.pdf	The aim of this research was to create an evidence-based strategy to set future industry and regional strategy to grow the BPS Sector. The research aims to investigate the limiting factors to inclusive growth locally, and ways in which providers of professional and business services can potentially help address these. The report concludes that the West Midlands has a clear opportunity to compete on a global stage in its own right as a full-service offering, but recommends 'shifting the dial' for BPFs through pursuing skills and innovation activities.
Construction skills gap analysis for the West Midlands Combined Authority area	Sector - Construction	People	June 2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2235/construction-skills-gap-analysis.pdf	In conjunction with CITB, this offers analysis of supply and demand for construction skills across the West Midlands Combined Authority area and recommendations for action. The report finds that the WMCA can expect sustained spending on new construction projects of over £3.8bn per year for at least 5 years. To ensure the skills required are available, the WMCA and CITB have agreed a way forward through specific actions> These include new strategic collaborations, developing the WM construction skills offer, developing future skills and promoting high quality careers within the sector.

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GBSLEP Creative Economy Mapping Study	Sector - Creative	All	December 2017	https://gbslep.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Creative-Economy-Mapping-GBSLEP-Dec17-full-report.pdf	GBSLEP commissioned BOP Consulting to map the scale and output of the Creative Economy across the LEP area and surrounding areas. Discoveries include an unfulfilled potential to add 30,000 creative jobs and 3,600 more creative businesses across the geography. The Creative economy is worth £4.1billion across the LEP, the creative services value chain £1.9billion and creative content £1.4b. There is growth potential, around film, TV, games, VR, AR and other innovative content production as well as huge scope for cross-sectoral growth.
Tech and Digital Deep Dive	Sector - Digital	All	July 2017	http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/digitalbirmingham/resources/Tech-Digital-Deep-Dive-Report-West-Midlands.pdf	Carried out by the Regional Observatory and Birmingham City University, this provides a deep dive of tech & digital activity in the West Midlands across and within the sector. The report suggests that the WMCA area is a key national centre for tech and digital with local hot spots including Birmingham, Coventry and Warwick.
Energy as an Enabler: Linkages Between Local Energy Strategy, Productivity and Growth	Sector - Energy & Environment	Infrastructure	March 2018	https://www.blackcountrylep.co.uk/upload/files/NewFolder/Energy%20as%20an%20Enabler%20report%20Final.pdf	Energy is a major driver of productivity, but currently acts as a considerable hindrance to many of our businesses due to unsustainably high prices impacting business costs. This report is a vital piece of evidence to inform a growing set of work in the West Midlands to improve the local energy market for the benefit of our key sectors and the overall regional economy. It recommends that a place-based clean growth sector deal be sought with industrial partners around a compelling vision. This deal should convert the linkages between energy strategy and industrial strategy, using locally governed Energy Innovation Zones (EIZs).
Powering West Midlands Growth: A Regional Approach to Clean Energy Innovation	Sector - Energy & Environment	Infrastructure	March 2018	https://www.energycapital.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/powering-west-midlands-growth-regional-energy-policy-commission-report-2018.pdf	This report makes the case for the creation of a small number of Energy Innovation Zones (EIZs) across the region, acting as pathfinders for an approach that might subsequently be adopted across the country as a whole. EIZs enable barriers – such as powerful institutional silos separating transport, digital, planning and energy – to be overcome within designated geographies.
West Midlands Freight Strategy	Sector - Logistics & Transport	Infrastructure	December 2016	https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/1207/west-midlands-freight-strategy.pdf	This strategy provides the WMCA with the tools to work together with businesses, and a programme to deliver a West Midlands that shines as a beacon for best practice in urban logistics management. It aims to provide improved access, new ways of managing deliveries, a range of techniques to reduce emissions etc, safer vehicles and a commitment to deliver improvements.
WMCA Regional Skills Plan	Skill	All	22/06/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2274/regional-skills-plan.pdf	This Regional Skills Plan details how the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), working with key partners, will prioritise actions to deliver on that ambition over the next three years. Our focus is on securing stronger and more inclusive regional growth. Put simply, we want to deliver a better match between the skills of the people in our region and the current and future needs of our businesses, to accelerate productivity and deliver economic growth.
Skills	Skills	People	14/06/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2231/skills.pdf	The focus here is skills. Workforce skills – at all levels, and whether associated with formal qualifications or uncertified - are crucial for firms’ ability to put innovative ideas into practice and to increase productivity. This paper confirms that The West Midlands performs relatively poorly on several key skills indicators (and the employment rate is lower than the national average. It states that if growth in the West Midlands is to be inclusive policy attention needs to focus on achieving more and better quality jobs and addressing skills deficiencies faced by employers.

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Movement for Growth: The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan	Transport	Infrastructure	June 2016	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1372/2016-06-01-mfg-full-document_wmca.pdf	The Strategic Transport Plan sets out our vision, our priorities, our approach and our commitment to building a world class, sustainable, infrastructure system: one which is proudly comparable to our European counterparts. It is the transport plan for our emerging Combined Authority, one which we will vociferously support, lobby for, and deliver in line with. It is a plan which benefits the people who live and work here and our world class businesses. It is now time for its delivery.
Measuring Success – Review of Indicators and Recommendations	WMCA	Places	14/06/2018	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2237/measuring-success.pdf	This review is designed to support the development of clear thinking about the indicators the WMCA use to measure the impact of the Skills and Productivity Commission's recommendations; to posit a logic chain from intervention to outcome which will help inform activities going forward. The use of indicators in terms of inclusive growth are also reviewed in this paper. It recommends that two new core outcome indicators (business survival rates & median wage levels) and a new multi-dashboard approach to indicators including heightened use of inclusivity measures.
WMCA Launch Statement	WMCA	Places	06/07/15	https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1380/launch-statement.pdf	Outlines proposals which aim to show how the (then new) WMCA can strengthen relationships and focus on the issues that really matter to people and businesses in the West Midlands. The document has a foreword from the 7 then council leader and a statement of intent signed off by the 3 LEP chairs. The wider document makes the case for the WMCA, explains how the WMCA will work and its early priorities.