



Cultural
Leadership
Board



West Midlands
Combined Authority

Cultural Leadership Board

Information Pack

Version: July 2021

Thank you very much for your interest in the WMCA Cultural Leadership Board (CLB). This document provides some information about the purpose, membership and activities of the CLB.

1. Introduction & background

The WMCA Cultural Leadership Board is essentially an **advisory board** which will advise the WMCA in policy and programmes concerning the cultural sector.

It has been established to maximise the contribution of culture to delivering clean and inclusive growth in the region and to enhance quality of life of its citizens. It will help support a sustainable, entrepreneurial and diverse cultural sector which is accessible to all residents across the region.

This follows the recognition of the role of the creative sector in the economic growth for the region, as well as the establishment of representative bodies for tourism and creative industries. These link to developments around the previous Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and current Plan for Growth, which will also impact the cultural sector, and thus require new approaches to ensure appropriate support and alignment with existing and future initiatives. The CLB was initiated as a sector-led approach to develop this work, and it also builds on the civic role of local authorities in delivering cultural objectives.

Furthermore, major events such as Coventry City of Culture 2021 and Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games are likely to provide opportunities to unlock investments and productivity improvements in arts, culture, and visitor economy across the wider region. Deeper coordination is however needed to fully unlock the potential of these major events and it was considered that the Cultural Leadership Board representing the WMCA area would be best placed to advise this work.

The concept of the board was approved by WMCA in January 2019, followed by a public call-out for board members in late summer 2019. A total of 73 expressions of interest were submitted. The applications were reviewed by panel members from the WMCA and cultural sector to ensure wide representation from different WMCA geographical areas, as well as representation in terms of diversity. A separate consultation session with key cultural anchor institutions in the WMCA area was also held in November 2019 to establish fair art form and key institution representation, while ensuring a balanced membership from other parts of the sector. A second recruitment process to fulfil identified art form and skills gaps was completed in 2021.

2. Vision & Mission

Vision statement

“The WMCA Cultural Leadership Board (CLB) places culture at the heart of sustainable growth in the region, enhancing quality of life for its diverse communities.”

Mission statement

The Board will look for strategic opportunities to test the transformative role of culture across WMCA’s policy areas, including transport and housing, skills, digital, the environment, wellbeing and inclusive communities.

It is committed to building an innovative and entrepreneurial cultural sector, with leadership that reflects the diversity of our region, and supporting a world-class cultural offer that is accessible to all.”

3. Who is on the board?

The Board Members are selected as individuals, representation is not linked to the organisations they work for. The current membership of the board is outlined below:

	LEP Area ¹	Local Authority	Name	Role	Organisation/affiliation
1	BCLEP	Wolverhampton	Pamela Cole-Hudson	CEO/Artistic Director	Gazebo
2	BCLEP	Sandwell (West Bromwich)	Parminder Dosanjh	Creative Director	Creative Black Country (CPP)
3	BCLEP	Wolverhampton	Adrian Jackson	CEO	Grand Theatre
4	BCLEP	Sandwell	Jerrel Jackson	CEO	Creative Academies Network
5	BCLEP	Dudley	Andrew Lovett	CEO	Black Country Living Museum
6	BCLEP	Sandwell	Gina Patel	Board Member	WMCA Young Combined Authority
7	CWLEP	Coventry	Doreen Foster	CEO	Warwick Arts Centre
8	CWLEP	Coventry	Julia Negus	Producer/ Artist	Theatre Absolute
9	CWLEP	Coventry	Laura Nyahuye	Artist, Founder	Maokwo
10	CWLEP	Coventry	Martin Sutherland	CEO, CLB Chair	Coventry City of Culture Trust
11	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Nikki Bi	Head of Programming	Civic Square
12	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Raidene Carter	Executive Producer	Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games
13	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Indi Deol	Director	DESIblitz
14	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Ian Francis	Director	Flatpack Film Festival
15	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Cheryl Jones	CEO	Grand Union
16	GBSLEP	Solihull	Ayub Khan	Head of Libraries, Communities, Museums, Culture and Registration	Warwickshire County Council
17	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Timothy Maycock	Finance Director	Birmingham Hippodrome
18	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Karen Newman	Director	Birmingham Open Media
19	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Aftab Rahman	Director	Legacy WM
20	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Simeon Shtebunae	Committee Member	Birmingham Architectural Association
21	GBSLEP	Birmingham	Ammo Talwar	CEO	PUNCH Records

¹ Local Enterprise Partnership

4. What is the West Midlands Combined Authority?

A Combined Authority is a legal body set up using national legislation that enables a group of two or more councils to collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) was established in 2016 by the seven metropolitan councils in the region (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton). The WMCA was created to build a strong partnership, based on voluntary collaboration, ready to take on key powers devolved from central Government and enable collective decision making at a regional level.

WMCA IN A NUTSHELL
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 Constituent authorities (Birmingham City Council, City of Wolverhampton, Coventry City Council, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Walsall Council)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 Non-constituent authorities (Cannock Chase District Council, North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council, Redditch Borough Council, Rugby Borough Council, Shropshire Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Tamworth Borough Council, Telford & Wrekin Council, Warwickshire County Council)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 LEP's (Black Country, Coventry & Warwickshire, Greater Birmingham & Solihull)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 observer organisations (Herefordshire Council, the Marches LEP, West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority, West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner)

WMCA is a politically led organisation and its leadership comes from the Mayor and the leaders of the seven constituent local authorities, which have full voting rights. The leadership also includes the chairs of the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

which are business-led organisations that help build relationships between businesses and local authorities. Non-constituent authorities, which include the LEPs and ten local councils from across the wider West Midlands region, have reduced voting rights but play a crucial role at board level, helping to inform policy and drive forward the WMCA agenda. There are also observer organisations who include other councils, LEPs and bodies awaiting non-constituent membership, as well as non-voting observers

The current portfolio areas include:

- Deputy Mayor and Finance Portfolio
- Transport
- Housing & Land
- Productivity & Skills
- Economy & Innovation
- Environment & Energy, HS2
- Public Service Reform & Social Economy
- Culture & Digital
- Wellbeing
- Inclusive Communities

Elected members and officers lead on key policy portfolio areas, working in partnership with LEP colleagues.

The key workstreams & strategies for the WMCA can be found [here](#).

To view the WMCA Constitution please click [here](#).

To view the WMCA Assurance Framework, please click [here](#).

5. What does the Cultural Leadership Board do?

The board has advisory role in the development of high-level strategies to ensure that the whole cultural sector in the West Midlands is better placed to take advantage of opportunities, particularly in relation to the development and implementation of WMCA strategies.

This means that the board can provide advice to develop strategies to:

- Improve cultural provision and inclusive growth of the sector through West Midlands cultural strategy
- Ensure region benefits from landmark events & opportunities
- Increase cultural engagement in the region with specific focus on representation, especially young people
- Develop representative cultural sector leadership
- Help the sector to become more entrepreneurial
- Maximise funding opportunities for the sector
- Identify proposals for the Spending Review
- Aid collaborations, networks and cross-sector alignment

The role of the WMCA in relation to the board is an enabling one: supporting the development of cultural leadership in the region and helping to align the suggestions and recommendations of the board to existing programmes and strategies.

While 2020-21 was a difficult year due to the pandemic, some of the board activities and initiatives included:

- Initiating a comprehensive regional research and mapping study on the cultural sector to provide the evidence base needed for future developments, including a digital cultural infrastructure map
- Initiating the pilot programme to support diverse-led [cultural & creative social enterprises](#)
- Signing up in principle to the 'More than a Moment' initiative and doing work to ensure the principle is reflected in CLB governance and activities
- Feeding into other WMCA work such as the [Regional Digital Roadmap](#)
- Input into the ['Recharge West Midlands'](#) and WMCA Spending Review submission in 2020, as well as responding to Government consultations such as the Planning White Paper in 2020

6. How is the CLB governed?

The Governance arrangements for the CLB are outlined in the Terms of Reference. A direct appointment has been made by WMCA for Martin Sutherland to be the inaugural Chair of the Board. As an advisory board, the board members do not have any legal responsibilities as Trustees or Directors, but must adhere to codes of conduct, confidentiality rules and data protection legislation as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

The Board Members will be expected to work together to represent the sector and not the interests of their own organisations, art forms or localities. The Board Members will however use their specific knowledge to inform these wider conversations.

7. Who will the CLB engage with and report to?

At the moment, culture as a policy area sits with the Economy and Strategy Directorate of the WMCA. This policy team also supports the administration of the Cultural Leadership Board.

As an advisory board, the Cultural Leadership Board reports to the WMCA Portfolio Holder for Digital & Culture. He in turn reports to the WMCA Strategic Economic Development Board (SED), which then reports back to the main WMCA Board.

The CLB works closely together with other relevant bodies such as the WMCA Culture Officers Group, which has representation from Local Authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's).

8. How can I find out more?

Updates on the activities of the CLB will be posted on the WMCA website:

<https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/culture-and-creative-economy/cultural-leadership-board/> including any call outs, board documents or events.

If you have any specific questions then please fill in the enquiries box at the website:

<https://www.wmca.org.uk/contact-us> with a reference to the Cultural Leadership Board.