

Dear Lee Neilson,

Thank you for agreeing to work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), to utilise your unspent levy funds, to support the growth of apprenticeships in SMEs across the region.

We have been working with the Department for Education (DfE) in championing the transfer of unspent levy from participating employers like you, to fund more Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM), Digital, Construction and Finance apprenticeships in SMEs across our region.

This will entail working within the current systems, familiar with those in your organisation that manage the apprenticeship levy process.

Subject to all necessary approvals, you have agreed to transfer a portion of your forecast unspent monthly levy. Levy transfer is within current government policy and that is the sole responsibility of the government, should they choose to review this policy in the future.

WMCA will provide support by identifying SMEs looking to take on STEM apprentices. We will match these to your funds, with appropriate providers, significantly reducing the administrative impact to your business.

The DfE and the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) are clear that the employer receiving a transfer from you is wholly responsible for the apprenticeship. This includes their contractual obligations to the training provider and apprentice and any subsequent Ofsted inspection. As a funding employer, you will not be party to any contracts, and the only thing you are committing to is to fund an apprenticeship to completion.

Any publicity will identify the fund as a collective contribution from businesses across the West Midlands, WMCA would ask express permission before publicising your involvement.

In making the transfer, you will be fully funding the training of an apprentice in a vital sector for the West Midlands and supporting the region's SME community, helping more people gain essential skills to further drive regional economic growth.

Yours sincerely



Andy Street
Mayor of the West Midlands
West Midlands Combined Authority