

## Council

19 July 2016

### West Midlands Combined Authority - Update

#### Report of the Strategic Directors for Communities and for Resources

##### Recommendation

That the Council notes the progress update provided in relation to the WMCA

#### 1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016, the Council agreed that Warwickshire County Council becomes a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) with a view to negotiating the basis of an acceptable deal on which Warwickshire could become a constituent member.
- 1.2 This report provides the Council with an update on activity in relation to the WMCA since that date.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Following Council's decision in May to join the WMCA as a non constituent member, Warwickshire is now represented on the WMCA Leader's Board which comprises the Leaders of all the constituent and non-constituent members, supported by their chief officers. The WMCA at its first AGM on 29<sup>th</sup> June agreed the constituent member portfolio arrangements for the WMCA which will provide strategic direction, leadership and policy for various work streams and interdependencies operating within the Combined Authority. The constituent member portfolios as published on the WMCA website are set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Warwickshire now also has a presence on the WMCA chief officer Programme Board and also on the officer Devolution Strategy Group which is tasked with co-ordinating the local authority activity and direction in terms of negotiating the next phase of the 'devo' deal (Devo 2/3) with Central Government. A dialogue has also begun between the Strategic Directors for

Communities and Resources and the Chief Executives of the constituent members as the start of negotiations around the basis of a deal on which Warwickshire could become a constituent member and the role that Warwickshire could play in the next phase of the devolution negotiations.

- 2.3 Discussions about the potential terms of constituent membership for Warwickshire have not progressed quickly as Central Government's focus has been on other priorities during recent weeks. Warwickshire had made representations to Central Government requesting dialogue as to how Warwickshire could take forward a deeper involvement in the WMCA, with the intention of also discussing the priority investment schemes that Warwickshire would wish to see supported by Government. To date there has been no response from Government.
- 2.4 It was originally envisaged that the next phase of devolution for the WMCA would be agreed by the autumn in anticipation of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement. However, it is not yet known how the results of the EU referendum and any announcements around a future general election will impact on the timeframe for the ongoing negotiations and discussions around devolution, and in particular the next phase of devolution for the WMCA.
- 2.5 Whilst it is clear from the dialogue we have had with the constituent members that they are keen to see Warwickshire engaged in the WMCA, as a result of the above factors which are out of our control, it is unlikely that Warwickshire will be able to progress discussions about the potential terms of constituent membership for Warwickshire as quickly as might otherwise have been the case.

### **3.0 Governance Update**

- 3.1 In terms of the membership of the WMCA, Rugby Borough Council decided on 9th June 2016 to join the West Midlands Combined Authority as a non-constituent member. North Warwickshire Borough Council's Executive Board also agreed on 24<sup>th</sup> May to recommend to full Council that the Council joins the WMCA as a non constituent member. If approved, this would bring the current number of non constituent local authorities (excluding the Local Enterprise Partnerships) to 10 members as listed below;

- Warwickshire County Council
- North Warwickshire Borough Council
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Rugby Borough Council
- Stratford-on-Avon District Council
- Shropshire Council
- Cannock Chase District Council
- Redditch Borough Council

- Tamworth Borough Council
- Telford and Wrekin Council

- 3.2 The order officially creating the West Midlands Combined Authority came into force on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2016. This means that the Combined Authority is now formally established as a new authority.
- 3.3 The Mayoral (Elections) Order makes provision for there to be an elected Mayor and for the first elections to take place in May 2017, for a three year term and four years thereafter. The Order was laid before Parliament on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and requires approval by both the House of Commons and the House of Lords.
- 3.4 The Mayoral (Elections) Order only deals with the election of the Mayor. It does not deal with the functions and powers of the Mayoral WMCA. A draft Mayoral WMCA 'functions' scheme has been prepared for consideration by the Constituent Councils and the Combined Authority. This is now the subject of public consultation which commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> July and ends on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2016. The consultation documentation is available on the WMCA website and this is currently being reviewed by officers. At the end of the consultation period, the Secretary of State will produce an order (the functions order) which we anticipate will be considered by the Constituent Councils and the Combined Authority in September/October 2016, before being laid before Parliament.
- 3.5 The Mayoral WMCA current working timeline (as set out by the WMCA) is detailed in Appendix 2. The WMCA has said that it is taking stock of the referendum vote and as stated above, it is not yet known whether the outcome of the EU referendum will impact on the time scales published by the WMCA.

## Background papers

None

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**Councillor Bob Sleigh, Chair of the West Midlands Combined Authority  
(Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council)**

HS2 growth strategy, devolution deals and communications & engagement

**Councillor Pete Lowe, Vice Chair of the West Midlands Combined Authority  
(Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)**

**Health and wellbeing** – mental health, mental health commission and health devolution

**Councillor John Clancy (Birmingham City Council)**

**Economic growth** – delivery of Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), access to finance for business, Collective Investment Fund (CIF), WMCA growth company, international trade and exports, digital strategy and the arts and cultural activity

**Councillor Sean Coughlan (Walsall Council)**

**Housing and land** – land commission, Land Remediation Fund (LRF) housing delivery, one public estate

**Councillor George Duggins (Coventry City Council)**

**Skills and productivity** – skills and productivity commission (including employability), learning for the future and Further Education (FE) area reviews

**Councillor Steve Eling (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council)**

**Public service reform** – public service reform agenda, troubled families, criminal justice, welfare reform, shared services and social inclusion

**Councillor Roger Lawrence (City of Wolverhampton Council)**

**Transport** – delivery of Strategic Transport Plan, Midlands Connect, West Midlands Rail, HS2 delivery transport and Transport Delivery Committee

<b>Mayoral WMCA Timeline</b>	
<b>May 2016</b>	<p>The Constituent Councils are presented with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mayoral (elections) Order, to create the position of a Mayor and allow for the election of a Mayor.</li> <li>2. The Mayoral Combined Authority 'functions' Scheme, for approval to consult on the proposals in the Scheme.</li> </ol>
<b>June 2016</b>	<p>Subject to Parliamentary approval, the Combined Authority is vested on the [17th June] 2016. On vesting day the WMCA will be presented with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Mayoral (elections) Order - to create the position of a Mayor and allow for election of a Mayor <i>only</i>.</li> <li>2. The Mayoral Combined Authority 'functions' Scheme - for approval to consult on the proposals in the Scheme.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Constituent Councils approvals dependent, the Mayoral (elections) Order will be laid in Parliament in June 2016.</li> <li>- Constituent Councils approval dependent, the Mayoral Combined Authority, 'functions' Scheme will be published and consulted on.</li> </ul>
<b>July – Aug 2016</b>	<p>Consultation on the proposals in the Scheme takes place (4<sup>th</sup> July to 21<sup>st</sup> August 2016).</p>
<b>Sep 2016</b>	<p>The consultation responses are collated and submitted to the Secretary of State and DCLG. The Constituent Councils are not required to consider the outcome of the consultation.</p>
<b>Sept - Oct 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Mayoral Combined Authority 'functions' Order is drafted based on the Mayoral Combined Authority 'functions' Scheme.</li> <li>- The Mayoral Combined Authority 'functions' Order is presented to Constituent Councils for consent to lay the Mayoral Combined Authority 'functions' Order in Parliament.</li> </ul>
<b>Nov 2016</b>	<p>The Mayoral (elections) Order is in place at least 6 months before the election of and Mayor.</p>
<b>Nov 2016 – Feb 2017</b>	<p>Any further Orders required (Buses Bill etc.) are required to be in place by February 2017 to allow sufficient time for Mayoral candidates to be fully aware of the powers of the elected Mayor and to prepare a Manifesto.</p>
<b>May 2017</b>	<p>First Mayoral election.</p>