

West Midlands Combined Authority

Scrutiny Update

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for Everyone**

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communities and
making travel
easier, safer

Scrutiny In The WMCA

Both Committees play an active role in ensuring that decisions are effectively scrutinised before they are made so that they are fit for purpose.

Pre Decision Scrutiny

A key role in ensuring that when a decision is made it is implemented properly and any implications are monitored.

Post Decision Scrutiny

Occasionally scrutiny plays a role in developing policies – for example recently they supported the Ring and Ride team in ensuring the service improved value for money whilst meeting the needs of residents.

Policy Development

Twice a year the scrutiny function holds Q&A sessions with the Mayor to ensure that he is held to account.

Mayoral Accountability

How does it differ?

Scale

- By nature, scrutiny at a CA level covers a larger geographical area.
- We are often operating at a much larger system level bringing in multiple partners from different geographical areas.

Scope

- Whereas at a LA level scrutiny can often feel very close to delivery, we often deliver through an extensive range of partners and instead of focussing on direct service delivery we focus on longer term strategies and priorities.

Guidance

- Scrutiny at a Mayoral Combined Authority level is shaped and guided by HM Government's Scrutiny Protocol and the English Devolution and Accountability Framework
- We are required, by law, to have Scrutiny Committees chaired by a Member of an opposing party to the Mayor.

Independent Review of Transport Scrutiny & LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

At the WMCA Board meeting in June, members commissioned an independent review of the WMCA's transport scrutiny arrangements to provide assurance that effective scrutiny arrangements were in place, and to make any recommendations considered necessary to strengthen these existing arrangements. That independent review has now been completed and shared.

Some recommendations suggested have been:

- Maintaining a specific Transport Committee, but with a small name change.
- Recruiting an independent Chair and Councils appoint the relevant Transport Chair from their Authority and another Member with Transport experience.
- Reducing Membership and maintaining a pool of substitute Members.

In November the WMCA undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC), carried out by the LGA. This is a sector-led review commissioned by WMCA to test its strategic direction, governance, partnership working, and delivery readiness at a key moment in its development.

The review covered our scrutiny arrangements, and the Independent Review formed part of our evidence submission.

The initial feedback has been shared with the WMCA and LA Chief Executives, with Leaders due to receive the feedback in January. The review will be published by February 2026, with an action plan to follow by April 2026.

WMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee



The committee consists of 14 members, 10 seats for constituent councils (1 member from each of the seven local authorities, with a further 2 members to be appointed from Birmingham CC, 1 ABCA rep and 4 seats for non-constituent councils). The arrangement for the allocation of Constituent members on the committee mirrors those in place for the Police and Crime Panel.

Work Programme

Current Work

- **Strategic Planning & Regional Development**
 - West Midlands Growth Plan
- **Skills, Employment & Inclusion**
 - Job Rotation Pilot
- **Environment & Natural Capital**
 - Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Local Investment in Natural Capital Programme
- **Housing & Infrastructure**
 - Housing Delivery Performance across the Region
 - Social & Affordable Homes Programme Prospectus

Planned Work

- **Review of the West Midlands Regional Performance**
 - State of the Region Report
- **Skills, Employment and Inclusion**
 - Tackling youth unemployment through trailblazer scheme
 - Review of education and skills outcomes
- **West Midlands Net Zero**
 - Five Year Plan 2026-31, Air Quality Initiatives
- **Integrated Settlement**
 - Delivery Outcomes
- **Mayoral Q&A Sessions**
 - WMCA Policies, Draft Proposed Budget

Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee



The committee consists of 24 members. Constituent Members hold 20 seats which are allocated appointed on a proportionality basis relating to how much the Authority pays into the Transport Levy. There has been an independent review into the role of Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee, commissioned by the WMCA board, to ensure it is as effective as possible. The findings will be reported back to Board for consideration.

Work Programme

Current Work

- **Transport & Connectivity**
 - Key Route Network (KRN) Review
- **Micromobility Schemes**
 - The future of e-scooters and bike hire across the region
- **Transport Spending Review**
 - The government investment plans through to 2029/30
- **Bus Depot Strategy**
 - Acquisition of Bus Depots
- **Performance**
 - Capital & Operational Performance

Planned Work

- WMCA's strategic approach to Park & Ride
- The Spatial Development Strategy and how transport is being considered.
- Local Transport Plan
- Sprint Purchase of Vehicles
- Zero-Emission Bus Regional Areas
- Scrutiny of Bus Franchising

Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee



Work Programme

Current Work

- **Financial Monitoring and Treasury Management**
 - Oversight of WMCA's financial performance and treasury activity, including end-of-year outturns.
- **Internal Audit Oversight**
 - Oversight of the Internal Audit Plan, and regular update reports to ensure robust internal controls.
- **External Audit Plan 2024/25**
 - Review and approval of the external audit approach and scope for the current financial year.
- **Assurance Performance Monitoring**
 - Updates and monitoring of WMCA assurance activity

Planned Work

- **External Audit and Accounts for 2024/25**
 - Review of WMCA's annual accounts and findings from the external audit process.
- **Governance Annual Review**
 - Review of the Annual Governance Statement to ensure effective oversight.
- **Internal Audit Planning for 2026/27**
 - Approval of the Internal Audit Plan for the next financial year.
- **WMCA Business Continuity**
 - Continued monitoring of WMCA business continuity work.

Annual Scrutiny Report

This annual report provides an introduction to the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview & Scrutiny and Audit, Risk and Assurance functions.

It is an essential resource designed to keep the WMCA, local authority councillors, and West Midlands residents well-informed about the purpose and impact of these functions. Additionally, it highlights their key activities, achievements and outcomes resulting from their engagement and investigations.

We have responded to your previous feedback and made the presentation today more about the in-year activity but you are still able to access the Annual Report via our website.



How you can get involved...

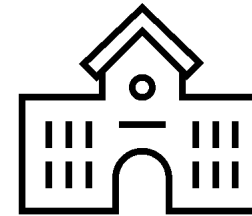
Understand the role you can play: We welcome suggestions for joint sessions, shared work programmes, or coordinated scrutiny reviews.

Reflect on whether you feel there is anything missing from our work programme.

Consider how you work with Members you appoint to the WMCA to hold the WMCA to account.

Each organisation's role is different...

WMCA Scrutiny
scrutinises the Mayor,
WMCA Decisions,
Delivery and WMCA
Officers.



Local Authority scrutinises
LA Decisions, Delivery and
Local Authority Officers

But just as important to help us connect the dots and ensure value for money and effective delivery.