
Cabinet
Council

10 June, 2025
24 June, 2025

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership – Councillor G Duggins

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Law and Governance

Ward(s) affected:

Not Applicable

Title:

Proposal for Conferral of General Functions to the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

At the meeting of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Board on the 9th May 2025 a recommendation was made to the Board that a period of statutory consultation be undertaken that would consider the transfer of transports functions currently exercised by the WMCA to be functions exercisable only by the West Midlands Mayor.

The transfer of these functions to the Mayor would allow additional funding for transport to be raised by way of a Mayoral precept.

The voting requirement to agree that a consultation period commence is a unanimous vote in favour by all Members of the Constituent Authorities present and voting.

The Leader of Coventry City Council, Councillor G Duggins, as a member of the WMCA Board, strongly indicated that he would not support the recommendation given the consequences of a Mayoral precept on the residents of Coventry and the wider West Midlands region. On this basis the matter did not proceed, and the statutory public consultation will not commence.

Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to support the position of the Leader of the Council in preventing the commencement of a process that could lead to the raising of a Mayoral precept and to recommended that Council supports the position.

Council is recommended to support the position of the Leader of the Council in preventing the commencement of a process that could lead to the raising of a Mayoral precept.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 - Public report of WMCA - Public consultation in relation to the Conferral of General Functions on the Mayor.

Other useful background papers:

N/A

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Report title: **Proposal for Conferral of General Functions to the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority.**

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 Article 7 of the West Midlands Combined Authority Order 2016 transferred transport functions from the Integrated Transport Authority to the WMCA
- 1.2 The Secretary of State may make provision for any functions of the WMCA to become functions only exercisable by the Mayor. There is a statutory process that must take place before this can happen and the first stage of that process is a public consultation.
- 1.3 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 prohibits the WMCA from raising a precept for any of its functions. The transfer of these functions to the Mayor would however allow a Mayoral precept to be raised.
- 1.4 At the WMCA Board meeting on the 9th May 2025, the Leader of Coventry City Council, Councillor G Duggins, as a member of the WMCA Board, was clear that he would oppose any process that could ultimately result in a Mayoral precept being raised. As a result, the matter did not proceed and the consultation that was due to commence on the 19 May 2025 is not taking place.
- 1.5 The timing of the proposed consultation was important as the consultation would need to have started on the 19 May, 2025 to enable any Mayoral precept to be included in the draft Mayoral budget to be considered in February 2026.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal - Not applicable

3. Results of consultation undertaken - Not applicable

4. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

4.1 Financial implications

The WMCA is forecasting a relatively significant gap in its transport budget over the medium term. The introduction of a Mayoral precept could have been one way in which part of this future gap was mitigated. In the absence of this source of funding, the WMCA will need to identify other income opportunities or ways in which costs can be reduced to balance the budget in the short to medium term.

4.2 Legal implications

The transfer of any WMCA powers to the Mayor requires the Secretary of State to make an Order under s.107D of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The WMCA can submit a proposal to the Secretary of State to transfer the powers, but this can only be done following a public consultation and the results of the consultation being given due regard in any proposal being made.

The transfer of powers to the Mayor would enable a Mayoral precept to be raised for a wider range of functions than is currently allowed under the West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendments) Order 2017.

5. Other implications- Not applicable

Report author(s): Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Law and Governance Directorate

Contact 02476 976891

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Suzanne Bennett		Law and Governance	20/05/25	20/05/25
Approvers:				
Dr Julie Nugent	Chief Executive		21/05/25	21/05/25
Barry Hastie	Director of Finance and Resources	Finance and Resources	20/05/25	21/05/25
Councillor G Duggins	Leader of the Council		21/05/25	21/05/25