

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council**

**16<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 at 6.14pm  
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor Edis);  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Goult);

Councillors Akhter, Ali, Allcock, Allen, Ashman, Carmichael, Chidley, Costigan, Crompton, S Crompton, Dr T Crompton, S Davies, Dhallu, Downing, Eaves, Edwards, Eling, Gavan, E A Giles, E M Giles, L Giles, Hackett, Hadley, Hartwell, Hevican, L Horton, R Horton, D Hosell, S Hosell, P Hughes, M Hussain, M Y Hussain, Dr Jaron, Jarvis, I Jones, O Jones, S Jones, Khatun, Lewis, Lloyd, Melia, Millard, Moore, Padda, Phillips, Piper, Preece, B Price, R Price, Rollins, Rouf, Shackleton, Shaeen, Singh, Tagger, Taylor, Tranter, Trow, White and Worsey.

**Apologies:** Councillors Ahmed, Bawa, Cherrington, K Davies, P Davies, Y Davies, P M Hughes, Sandars, Underhill and Webb.

90/18 **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

91/18 **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor invited the Leader of the Council to sign the 'Time to Change' employer mental health pledge. Time to Change was a growing social movement working to change the way everyone thought and acted about mental health problems.

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The Council took the health and wellbeing of its employees very seriously and signing the pledge demonstrated the Council's commitment to changing the way it acted in relation to mental health in the workplace and ensured that employees who faced these problems felt supported. The Council was more committed than ever to ensuring that the right support was in place to help prevent mental ill health and encourage employees to utilise the services and support available to them at any time.

The Mayor also made reference to the corporate parenting display at the entrance to the Chamber and asked Members to complete the flyer that had been distributed in order to register their interest in the new corporate parenting training sessions that would take place in the New Year.

Details of Mayoral engagements since the last meeting of the Council had been circulated to members.

In particular, the Mayor made reference to the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations at Frank Chapman Centre, one of four residential centres run by the Council, and the third oldest centre in the country. Activities such as shelter building, campfire bread making and the high ropes course were available at the site, such as the pod accommodation, were on show. Sandwell's four centres provided wonderful residential settings and a range of high value outdoor and creative art experiences to all of the Borough's schools. The centres had become more financially self-contained and were increasingly the envy of other local authorities. The centres supported Sandwell's Vision 2030 and had an ambition to accommodate as many Sandwell school groups as possible. Members were encouraged to promote use of the centres to all Sandwell schools.

The Mayor also made reference to the Special Festival of Remembrance and the Christmas Carol Concert and asked Members to lend their support and attend events where possible.

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**Petitions Under Standing Order No. 5**

No petitions were received under Standing Order No. 5.

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**93/18 Questions Under Standing Order No. 6**

No questions were received under Standing Order No. 6.

**94/18 Governance Review and Scheme for the Transfer of the Police and Crime Commissioner Functions to the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority**

West Midlands Combined Authority Board requested that constituent authorities considered the report on the Governance Review and Scheme in relation to the proposed Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority Police and Crime Commissioner governance model. West Midlands Combined Authority had requested that feedback be provided by 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

West Midlands Combined Authority also wished to provide assurance to the constituent authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner over the process to develop the Governance Review and Scheme and confirm that key issues raised through the continuing development process would be fed back to the Combined Authority Board for consideration.

The second Devolution Deal for the West Midlands confirmed that, in addition to continuing the transfer of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service governance to the WMCA, the government, the Combined Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner would work together to agree a detailed governance model and a legislative timetable for incorporating the role and power of the Police and Crime Commissioner into the Mayoralty, with a view to electing the first Mayor with these powers in 2020.

When considering the Devolution Deal on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018, the West Midlands Combined Authority Board agreed that the Government, West Midlands Combined Authority and the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner would enter into discussions with the Mayor regarding a governance model for incorporating the role and powers of the Police and Crime Commissioner into the Mayor's role and powers, provided that the final governance model proposed following discussions was agreed by each of the constituent authorities, the Mayor and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

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At the West Midlands Combined Authority Board meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2018, the Board agreed to the development of a Governance Review and Scheme to enable the proposed amalgamation of the functions of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner into the Mayoralty for the elections to be held in 2020.

A further report would be submitted to the West Midlands Combined Authority Board in November 2018 detailing the outcome of the constituent councils and Police and Crime Commissioner's consideration of the content of the Governance Review and Scheme and to set out the public consultation process.

In response to comments with regard to scrutiny arrangements, the Leader confirmed that when the report had been presented to the Board the importance of scrutiny was highlighted and, as a result, referral to the Scrutiny Committee had been built into the timetable.

**Resolved** that the Council receive the Governance Review and Scheme outlining the proposed model for Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority governance of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner functions, note the timelines for incorporating the role into the WMCA mayoralty and recommend the scheme for approval by the WMCA.

95/18

**Proposal to Depart from the Local Development Plan at  
Powke Lane, Rowley Regis**

At the meeting of Planning Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018, consideration was given to planning application DC/18/62046 which sought approval for a cemetery and associated works at Powke Lane, Rowley Regis. The scheme had been submitted by Sandwell Council and the land was also Council owned.

As the Powke Lane site was allocated as community open space within the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document, it was necessary for the Council to consider whether or not to grant an exception to its policy to allow the application to proceed.

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Several objections were received from Members, in particular:-

- the area of land was highly utilised green space regularly used by young people and adults and needed by the community;
- the Local Development Plan stated that quality community space was an integral part of quality living;
- this was not just a community open space but also a wildlife corridor being home to many animals;
- the environmental impact needed to be considered;
- consideration needed to be given to future generations, if there would be no community space left in the Borough;
- there was only a four year period before burial capacity was reached in Sandwell and the situation should therefore be reassessed;
- there was a moral duty to respect the wishes of individuals who had expressed a wish to be buried in Sandwell, however, there was a need to look at the needs of the community;
- research undertaken in 2015 indicated that other councils had closed their doors to burials as they had no space. If the departure was approved, how long would it be before more land was required;
- it was recognised that more cemetery space was required, however, it was suggested that the matter be referred back to officers to look at alternatives;
- public open space was in short supply in Sandwell;
- green space was at the heart of transformation, the NHS could save £2 billion if there was more access to green space;
- as much as a cemetery was needed this need did not outweigh the loss of open space;
- consideration to be given to extending the site at Newton Road, West Bromwich.

In light of the objections received, Councillor Moore proposed that the recommendation to depart from the Local Development Plan be withdrawn and the matter to consider a suitable burial site in Sandwell be referred to the relevant Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Board, the motion was seconded by the Leader and unanimously agreed.

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**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the proposal to depart from the local development plan in respect of planning application DC/18/62046 be not proceeded with;
- (2) that the matter to consider a suitable burial site in Sandwell be referred to the relevant Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Board to investigate options.

96/18

**Appointment of Independent Member to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

At the Council meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017, as part of the 2017/18 Governance (Committee and Scrutiny Board Structure) review, it was agreed to appoint a second Independent Member to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The position was appointed to by Council at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

In view of the high calibre of applications, approval was sought from Council to consider increasing the membership of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and to allow the appointment of an additional Independent Member, Mr Heikki Doyle, for a four year period ending 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the membership of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee be increased to include one additional Independent Member (three Independent Members in total);
- (2) that Mr Heikki Doyle be appointed as an Independent Member to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee for the four year period ending 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

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**Appointments to Committees**

Consideration of this matter was deferred to a future meeting.

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**Audit and Risk Assurance Committee – Annual Report 2017-18**

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Councillor Preece, presented the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee for 2017-18.

The purpose of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was to provide independent assurance to the Council on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment providing an independent review of the governance, risk management and control frameworks and overseeing the financial reporting and annual governance processes.

The Committee also monitored the work of both the internal and external auditors, helping to ensure that efficient and effective assurance arrangements were in place. The key benefits of the Committee could be seen as:

- increasing public confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting;
- reinforcing the importance and independence of internal and external audit and similar review processes;
- providing additional assurance through a process of independent review; and
- raising awareness of the need for internal control and the implementation of audit recommendations.

The Committee had continued to play a key role in how the Council had faced challenges arising from, and following the publication of, the Gowling WLG report. In particular, the Committee had considered the outcome of the Council's referral of a number of issues to the Economic Crime Unit at the West Midlands Police. It was suggested that the current legislation be reviewed and this was set out in a letter to the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Home Secretary.

The Committee had referred a number of issues to the Monitoring Officer for consideration under the arrangements for dealing with complaints of a breach of the Member Code of Conduct and was pleased that these had progressed through the standards regime.

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The focus of the Committee going forward would now be in helping to ensure that the Council continued to develop a strong governance and internal control framework in which to operate in.

The Annual Governance Statement operated throughout the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, and up to the date of the approval of the annual report and accounts. Based on the Council's established risk management approach, the following issues were assessed as being significant for the purpose of the Annual Governance Statement.

Over the coming year appropriate steps to address these matters and further enhance governance arrangements would be taken:-

- Children's Services
- Resilience of the Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Land Sales and Other Matters
- Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and Allocation of Grants
- Business Continuity
- General Data Protection Regulations
- Cyber Security.

The Committee regularly received and reviewed the Council's Strategic Risk Register, and assessed the assurance provided in order to demonstrate how risks were being mitigated. It may also, where required, call in individual risks for a more detailed review.

The Committee's key achievements during the year were:

- helping the Council continue to deal with the issues arising from the publication of the Gowling WLG report and other associated areas, in particular consideration of the Police response to the issues referred to them, culminating in the issue of a letter to the Home Secretary and Director of Public Prosecutions;
- maintaining a good working relationship with the Council's internal and external auditors;

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- maintaining an awareness of the changes to the appointment of external auditors through the Local Audit and Accountability Act which had seen the appointment of new external auditors for the Council from 2018-19 onwards;
- reviewing the Committee's terms of reference in order to ensure they remained fit for purpose;
- providing additional assurance through a process of on-going independent review;
- raising the profile of internal control issues across the Council and of the need to ensure that audit recommendations were implemented;
- regular consideration and review of the Council's strategic risk register and accompanying assurance map;
- maintaining a detailed focus on the actions being taken to combat fraud;
- building the skills and knowledge of the new and extended Committee members through regular technical updates and the consideration of related guidance issued by CIPFA;
- the continued presence of an Independent Member as Vice Chair in order to broaden the Committee's experience and independent viewpoint and putting in place a process to recruit two additional independent members onto the Committee;
- reviewing the Internal Audit Charter in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

The Chair wished to place on record how pleased and proud he was of the work of the Committee and also wished to mention the hard work of the Counter Fraud Team.

Council commended the good work of the Committee.

In response to a question regarding the letter to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Chair confirmed that a response had been received, however, it was unsatisfactory. The matter would be referred back to the Committee to seek advice and to take further action.

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99/18      **West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority**

Councillor Edwards, the Member nominated pursuant to Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985 to report on the activities of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority, presented an update on the work of the Fire Authority.

Particular reference was made to:-

-      **Revenue finances**

Core funding provided by the Government to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority had been reduced by around 50% (£38m) since the cuts began in 2011.

A four year settlement for 2016/17 – 2019/20 was secured from government by the provision of an efficiency plan. This produced the following front-loaded core funding reductions during this period:

- 2016/17   £3.278m
- 2017/18   £3.985m
- 2018/19   £1.691m
- 2019/20   £0.690m

These reductions were in addition to the £28m cuts in core funding between 2011/12 and 2015/16.

In February this year, the Fire and Rescue Authority set a revenue budget for 2018/19 of £95.468m supported by Council Tax income of £41.296m and a Band D property precept increase of 2.99%. Even taking into account this increase, the Fire and Rescue Authority still set the lowest Council Tax level in England compared to all other fire and rescue services.

The use of general balances of £1.5m was agreed and this was to support the costs of service transformation which included working with our partners in councils and the NHS on the delivery of services to reduce vulnerability.

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A capital programme for 2018/19 of £13.322m funded by earmarked reserves had been agreed.

- **Capital spending**

The government provided no capital funding and no access to any transformational funding for the fire and rescue sector at a time when they were expecting transformation in the way in which the fire and rescue sector delivered its services.

The Fire and Rescue Authority anticipated that following the constant attacks on revenue funding, the government would do the same with capital spending and had been earmarking reserves to support the capital programme and the transformation of the service.

Using earmarked reserves, Coventry and Aston fire stations were being replaced with modern, efficient, cost-effective and environmentally-friendly buildings. Reserves were also being used to fund an essential vehicle replacement programme which included front line fire appliances. Various other items of essential capital expenditure included extensive IT upgrades to equipment which was vital to the joint West Midlands/Staffordshire fire control room which mobilised emergency responses for both services.

- **Services to meet vulnerability**

For a long period, West Midlands Fire Service had worked with Coventry, Dudley and Wolverhampton Councils to deliver a response to their non-emergency calls from people who had fallen in their homes. In Coventry, the Fire Service also worked in collaboration with the NHS to provide a pilot home safe and well service for people who were being discharged from hospital.

These services were supporting the declared aim of keeping West Midlands safer, stronger and healthier. They brought the service into direct contact with frail and vulnerable citizens who were at high risk of being involved in a fire or other serious incident. By working with them upstream, they could be kept safer into the future.

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Although secondary to the key aim of supporting vulnerability, these were commissioned services which were on track to provide projected income of £2m over four years to help deal with the four year budgets cuts and also help maintain the service delivery model and emergency response to life threatening incidents in high risk areas which remained the fastest in the country.

These services were initially delivered through National Joint Council pilots and when that process was withdrawn, delivery continued through local arrangements with Fire Service volunteers whilst a local agreement was sought with trade unions. Unfortunately, no local agreement was reached and a trade dispute and strike days were notified to the Fire and Rescue Authority by the Fire Brigades Union.

At this point the Authority ended its attempts to provide this service and were now in the process of a planned withdrawal in agreement with three local authorities.

The Fire Authority had considered how to deal with the current budget deficit caused by a shortfall in commissioned income and the need to eliminate use of balances and reach a balanced budget. This would necessitate reducing the use of voluntary additional shifts carried out by firefighters. This in turn would reduce the availability of fire appliances.

- **Future governance of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority**

The seven local authorities in the West Midlands and the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority, with the support of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority, had agreed a move in governance from the current arrangements to a model of WMCA/Mayoral governance.

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Following public consultation a scheme agreed by WMCA was submitted to government. It included key red-line areas agreed by all stakeholders concerning the details of the Mayoral Fire Advisory Committee, ring fencing of the WMFRA budget and reserves and responsibilities of the Chief Fire Officer. Agreement was reached on the first of these but the Home Office was unable to accept the other two. Discussion had now taken place to secure these protections through local agreements and WMCA constitutional changes.

Should final approval be reached, the change in governance arrangements for West Midlands Fire Service was expected to be made in April 2019.

In response to questions, Councillor Edwards advised that:-

- local agreements had been on the agenda for the past eighteen months, however, agreement had not been reached yet;
- there was less prevention work undertaken, less firefighters and lower budgets – there was a need for the Government to reinvest in the service;
- following the comment in relation to Brian Pearce and his presentation regarding the prevent role undertaken by the service, Councillor Edwards would pass on comments raised by members who had found his discussion helpful and highlighted the risks to be aware of.

100/18      **Transport for West Midlands**

Councillor R Horton, the member nominated pursuant to Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985 to report on the activities of the transport authority (Transport for West Midlands), presented an update on the work of the Authority.

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Particular reference was made to:-

- **Commonwealth Games**

Following discussions with Birmingham City Council, the host city of the Commonwealth Games, it had been agreed from a governance perspective that the transport plan for both games time transport operations and delivery of the infrastructure projects would be led by Laura Shoaf, Transport for West Midlands. The transport team would report into the Commonwealth Games Strategic Board and work with the Organising Committee, to ensure that transport met the needs of the Games and ensured that the region could operate without too much impact.

As part of the governance, the Joint Transport Group had been established, which included officers from Sandwell, and work was progressing on developing the transport plan, the games route network and undertaking the modelling and forecasting.

- **M5 Oldbury Viaduct works**

The project was about to achieve a key milestone with the switch-over of traffic from the southbound to northbound carriageway. This would subsequently see work commencing on the northbound carriageway over the course of the Autumn and throughout 2019.

A number of additional repairs were required to the viaduct and, in addition, the hot weather had posed an issue for the application of the waterproofing.

Highways England now predicted that completion of the work would be in Autumn 2019.

- **Bus Network**

The West Midlands Bus Alliance has been in place since November 2015 and had delivered some significant improvements for passengers across the region.

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Transport for West Midlands had liaised with the Council to propose a timeline of delivery for the Network Development Plans. It was anticipated that the work to develop the Sandwell Plan would be completed by the end of 2018, for approval by the Bus Alliance and Sandwell MBC. The Plans sought to enhance what was already in place, rather than specifically change the routes.

Bus passenger satisfaction was at a record high, with nearly nine in ten bus passengers happy with their service and record numbers seeing it as good value for money.

A new partnership route between Diamond and National Express West Midlands had been introduced covering West Bromwich to Tipton and Bilston, the new joint timetable arrangement meant that passengers could catch the first bus that came, as both operators accepted each other's tickets.

- **Metro Programme and Operations**

Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension – the Government announced a £250m grant fund from which West Midlands Combined Authority had allocated £207m to this scheme in December 2017. Preliminary design, schedule and cost review would be completed in the Autumn which would inform the delivery strategy for which the release of funds ahead of Final Business Case approval would be required to facilitate the earliest practicable opening of the extension.

In response to questions, Councillor R Horton advised:-

- in relation to a petition regarding the cancellation of a bus service, as they were a private company there was little control. The Combined Authority and Transport for West Midlands had a budget for subsidised services, however, the law did not allow services to be put in place in direct competition to a commercial service and it would therefore be difficult to replace the service where it did not compete with a commercial service. The Ring and Ride Service was available for pensioners and the service was doing exceptionally well. The Ring and Ride Service did provide shopping trips – the only service it could not provide was taking people to hospitals.

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This was a very good avenue for pensioners and it was recommended that they be encouraged to use the service;

- with regard to use of the bus passes prior to 9.30am, there was an option to pay £1 to use buses prior to this and this was considered to be good value.

101/18      **West Midlands Police and Crime Panel**

The Council's representative on the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel, Councillor Costigan, provided members with an update on the work undertaken by the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel.

The Panel had met three times since February 2018:-

- in February 2018, the Panel reviewed the Police and Crime Commissioner's policing precept and budget for 2018/19;
- in March 2018, the Panel questioned the Police and Crime Commissioner on the Force's Estate Strategy which proposed closure of 24 buildings and renovations of others. The Commissioner clarified closure decisions rested with the Chief Constable, however, would not sign the release any building without assurance that the local policing requirement and local police presence was met in each area;
- in July 2018 a number of new members from across the Region were appointed to the Panel and the Panel elected its Chair and Vice Chair for 2018/19. Members examined the Police and Crime Commissioner's provisional revenue and capital budget outturn for 2017/18.

In addition, the Panel had considered progress on the West Midlands Combined Authority Public Sector Reform research programme to drive reform of the local youth justice system. The Panel had also considered the eight West Midlands Drugs Policy recommendations that aimed to bring services together and introduce new ways to reduce crime and harm of drug addiction on the public and addicts.

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Other topics raised with the Police and Crime Commissioner included traveller encampments, theft of vehicles and the Force's capacity to handle 101 and 999 calls – members were visiting the Contact Centre in October.

In response to members seeking assurance for residents due to increased crime, Councillor Costigan proposed that the Police and Crime Commissioner should be invited to a meeting at Sandwell.

102/18      **West Midlands Combined Authority**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Eling, provided an update in relation to West Midlands Combined Authority.

**Cohesion and Integration and Public Service Reform**

Sandwell had a lead role in taking forward the agenda relating to Cohesion and Integration and Public Service Reform as the Leader, Councillor Eling, was the portfolio lead for this area. Headline activity in the portfolio included the adoption of the Inclusive Growth Framework.

The WMCA wanted to “link cranes with communities,” to ensure that investment into transport, homes and business premises benefited all citizens, across the region. As a means of tracking progress to achieve this, the framework had been developed in order that the impact of deliverables could be understood and used to inform future plans.

When the Framework was taken forward for the approval at the WMCA Board in September 2018, the work being done in Sandwell to develop the Vision 2030 Journey Tracker was acknowledged. The tracker, although still in developmental stages, was founded in the principals of inclusive growth. A full report on the Journey Tracker would be presented to Council in 2019 and would be the result of six months of collaborative working with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, WMCA, the Black Country Consortium, Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board, Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board, the Safer Sandwell Partnership and the Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board.

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The Inclusive Growth Unit had been officially launched as the country's first unit within a combined authority dedicated to building the case for inclusive economic growth.

The Social Economy Taskforce had met twice. Social Economy UK was providing baseline data, research and expertise. External funding had been secured through Power to Change. Initially work was focused on four areas with a view to building recommendations:

- i) Commissioning and Procurement;
- ii) Start Up, Sustain and Scale Up;
- iii) Social Funding and Finance;
- iv) Cross pollination across sectors

The WMCA had been asked to explore regional pilot status for the Cabinet Office's new Public Service Leadership Academy. This would be a vehicle to support collaborative leadership and cross-sector working across the WMCA – building on the principles set by the PSR board around 'enabling not leading'.

The West Midlands Industrial Strategy had been drafted in partnership with the region's LEPs, business communities, universities, local authorities and other key stakeholders. The strategy set the blueprint for industrial development within the region, including the high growth sectors which offered the greatest potential for the regional economy. It would become a conduit for future funding and engagement with Government. Work was taking place to ensure that inclusive growth principles were embedded within the Industrial Strategy, and that PSR underpinned considerations around future human capital and social infrastructure within the region.

### **Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

At its meeting held in July, the Committee approved the continuation of five working groups for 2018/19. Whilst each group would make arrangements to meet and consider appropriate matters, they did not have delegated decision-making authority and would provide regular reports together with recommendations to meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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The Scrutiny Committee had put forward a recommendation to the WMCA Board to request that all future reports the WMCA or its committees considered included a specific reference within them to any implications regarding inclusive growth.

**Combined Authority Wellbeing Board**

The Health and Wellbeing Programme had a focus on keeping the people of the West Midlands healthy so that they were able to contribute to and benefit from the economic growth at the heart of the WMCA's strategy.

103/18      **Minutes and Policy/Strategic Recommendations of the Cabinet**

The Council received the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 25<sup>th</sup> July and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

In response to concerns regarding nuisance parking issues (Minute No. 102/18, taken on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018), the Leader confirmed that a further report would come back to Cabinet within three months of operation, which would be in the New Year. The Leader was unsure as to why London should have different laws and gave assurance that he would look into the bylaws and this would be an opportunity to review what powers the authority actually had.

Members highlighted that concerns had been raised by numerous blind and disabled people about drivers automatically parking on the pavement. On a daily basis people were put at risk by considerate parking. In London this had been illegal since 1974 and it was also clear in the Highway Code. The Council was called to look at the introduction of traffic regulation orders to restrict parking on pavements where roads were wide enough. Reference was also made to by-laws that were already in existence.

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Councillor Costigan advised that the Public Spaces Protection Order provided additional powers. The Police had launched Operation Parksafes whereby a photo could be taken of a vehicle and a form completed in order for action to be taken by way of a fine.

The Leader welcomed Councillor P Hughes' offer that the relevant Scrutiny Board looked at the issue and brought recommendations back to Cabinet.

104/18      **Minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Councillor Preece, presented the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks to both Audit and Finance staff for their hard work in preparing the accounts.

No questions were asked of the Chair.

105/18      **Minutes of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee**

The Chair of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee, Councillor Lewis, presented the minutes of the meeting of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks to Members of the Committee, the Monitoring Officer, the Deputy Monitoring Officer, Independent Persons, investigating officers, barristers/solicitors, legal officers and democratic services officers for their help over the past two years. Sandwell had a good track record, however, one or two members had brought this Council into disrepute. Most of the cases had now been concluded, with the exception of two.

No questions were asked of the Chair.

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**106/18 Minutes of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee**

The Chair of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee, Councillor Dhallu, presented the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

The Council had considered the recommendations from the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee for the positions of Honorary Alderman and Honorary Freeman at the extraordinary meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 (see Minute Nos. 88/18 and 89/18).

No questions were asked of the Chair.

**107/18 Chief Officers Terms and Conditions**

The Chief Officers Terms and Conditions Committee met on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018 and interviewed two candidates for the position of Director – Public Health.

The Committee appointed Dr Lisa McNally, currently Director of Public Health at Bracknell Forest Council, to the post of Director – Public Health.

No questions were asked of the Leader.

**108/18 Response received in relation to the Notice of Motion regarding Midland Metropolitan Hospital**

At its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018, the Council supported a motion calling upon the Government to commit the money necessary and get work started again on the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital as soon as possible to avoid the further dilapidation of the existing building, following the collapse of Carillion and the substantial financial shortfall to enable the opening of the hospital by 2022 (see Minute No. 87/18).

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Council welcomed the positive response that had been received from Steve Barclay MP confirming that, in August 2018, the Government had announced that it would fund the completion of the Midland Metropolitan Hospital.

(The meeting ended at 8.21pm)

This meeting was webcast live and is available to view on the Council's website (<http://sandwell.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>).

<p>Contact Officer: Trisha Newton Democratic Services Unit 0121 569 3193</p>
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