

West Midland Combined Authority

Mayor's Question Time 13/02/2020

Once more the meeting was not quorate with only 8 councillors, one young person to represent the youth of the area and officers. Some members of the public attended.

The Chair started the meeting by reminding members that the meeting was about connectivity and particularly transport.

The Mayor's opening remarks referred to the ease with which young people could get to jobs and social activities. The young persons' representative disagreed with this and suggested costs were too high.

HS2 was broadly welcomed but a problem was raised that it would terminate outside London. However, whilst in 2028 it would finish at Oak Bridge by 2031 it would reach Euston. It was anticipated that the whole project would have zero emissions and Small to Medium Employers would and should make applications for their share of the contracts available.

On air quality and congestion, the Mayor commented that bus usage was up in the region as fares had been frozen with a maximum fare per day. The improved quality of the buses was also referenced. It was acknowledged that there was variation across the region but Euro level 6 buses are anticipated by 2021.

The young person representative asked what he could do about the 16/18 card that he suggested was not very useful. He was informed that there was £114M for concessionary fares that needed to cover the statutory Old People's passes as well as the apprentice relief and any other concessions.

On the use of trains, which again was increasing, Members were reminded that work was taking place on a number of stations with an increase in the availability of parking. 600 extra spaces were to be made available at Longbridge at £3 per day to help pay for the development. I asked about our station and was told that someone would get back to me.

West Midlands 5G. This is based on match funding from Local Government £1, £2 from HMG and LEAs and £3 from local businesses. Work on transport e.g. traffic lights and traffic control could be one of the first applications. Local communication companies are to be involved.