

West Midland Combined Authority

6th October 2020

This meeting was held on Teams and was not quorate.

It was one of several question and answer sessions with Mayor Andy Street who started the meeting with a state of the West Midlands report.

He explained that thanks to Covid the major work has been on developing an economic recovery programme. He had kept transport active with free travel for the NHS workers. More was being done on capital schemes such as University Station and HS2 and on private brown field sites, Birmingham Life Sciences Park being just one.

He reminded us that we had received the document “Recharge the West Midland investment case” and that “Community Recovery prospectus” was in the pipe line. Both these publications were designed to show the way forward.

During the 2-hour meeting the chair raised the need for a job task force similar that developed for the fall of the Longbridge Factory and help for retraining, the self-employed and for areas under level 2 virus restrictions.

The Mayor replied with details of good news for the motor industry and lower than national figures for job losses and considerable fund from HMG. He was also working on SMEs leading with help on redundancies and new jobs.

On the issue of women in the work force and the lack of child care it was explained that there was a programme of reskilling. On the response to Covid he made it clear that there was a weekly press conference emphasising the government’s rules and what the WMCA was doing, such as investing in Solihull and HS2 with 818 SMEs attended a meeting on the possibilities of the supply chain.

The Mayor went on to state that 23% of the 16,900 homes built by or with the help of WMCA were classed as affordable.

Concerns were raised by some Members about levels of poverty. The mayor explained the current situation and the results of action taken by WMCA.