

# West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Levy Expenditure

2021 - 2022



**West Midlands  
Combined Authority**



**Transport for  
West Midlands**

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# Introduction

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The costs of running Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) form part of the spend of the West Midlands Combined Authority. TfWM is funded by a specific transport levy of £114.7 million. This levy is paid by each of the seven Metropolitan Councils of the West Midlands based on their published population figures.

The councils must take account of the levy in setting their council tax levels, after allowing for grants which they receive towards this cost. More than half of the levy funds the National Travel Concessionary Scheme for free or half priced bus, train and tram travel for those who qualify, as well as funding subsidised bus services.

## Our journey never ends

TfWM continues its mission to develop and manage an integrated transport system for the West Midlands that is reliable, affordable and accessible for all.

The recovery of our transport system following the Covid-19 pandemic is essential for our customers, supporting both businesses and the regional economic recovery. We will be seizing the opportunities brought by the pandemic as millions of people changed their travel behaviour and spent more time staying local and being active. Some of these changes are essential to reducing congestion and improving air quality over the long term. Cycling is also a big part of a green recovery and, with our local authority partners, we will be improving the 500 mile Starley Network and introducing the West Midlands Bike Share Scheme.

We continue to develop and deliver new infrastructure, such as the West Midlands Metro network, and we are building new rail stations and refurbishing others which are at capacity. Delivering bus priority schemes and improving bus interchanges will ensure passengers can make reliable journeys that are faster than the car, with world-class facilities at interchanges.

Throughout 2021 we will be working with our partners at HS2, Highways England and Network Rail to support their delivery of other road, rail and high-speed rail improvements which will increase capacity, improve desirability and create more jobs. While these works take place, we will showcase the benefits to residents and provide support through the short-term disruption to their journeys.

Whilst we improve the network, we will continue to maintain world-class facilities and provide information and ticketing solutions that support informed travel choices. This will enable people to access jobs and services more easily while driving down the time they spend commuting.

Transport has a huge role to play in tackling the climate emergency and meeting the needs of our own WMCA 2041 action plan. We want to ensure our long-term strategic focus continues to enable inclusive growth through better connectivity.

Critical to this is collaboration on future mobility projects and embracing new technologies so we can understand the future of transport and the things our residents need to do embrace this revolution in mobility.

At Transport for West Midlands our journey never ends.



# Response to Covid-19

## March - April

In March 2020, the Local Resilience Forum was mobilised in the West Midlands and our teams were quickly embedded in regional strategic, tactical and communication groups alongside NHS trusts, emergency services and local authorities.

The focus of TfWM during this crisis was defined quickly by our leadership team with our main aim **to keep safe, clean and functioning transport available for those that need it.**

This was critical to ensuring that the region's key workers, and those who relied or chose to take public transport were still able to reach jobs as well as health, community and educational facilities.



Our five-point plan was introduced across the organisation with teams asked to deliver:

1. **An Operational plan** – looked at how we would plan services with our providers to ensure that any reduced services were serving priority corridors and were integrated multi-modally, so that maximum coverage could be maintained, if at reduced frequency. This included our Ring and Ride service, and how it could support the community needs in the coming weeks;
2. **A People plan** – ensured we could support our outward facing staff, including the West Midlands Metro staff, who were dealing with the public on a day by day basis (in addition to the core work of our office-based staff);
3. **A Financial plan** – looked at implications for our transport providers (including Midland Metro Limited) on loss of revenue which needed to be addressed via Government;
4. **A Capital Projects Plan** – reviewed all our schemes to consider the impact on delivery due to skills and supply chain shortages; and
5. **A Recovery Plan** – looked at what the new normal would look like and what behaviour change we would like to see as we eventually move past this crisis.

### Our priority had to be our customers.

From very early on we knew, to make the most informed choices to protect staff and our customers, we needed to understand our network in detail. We knew the historical figures, models and averages were not going to suffice. Daily or even real time data was key to ensure we understood what was happening on the network and our Data Insight team certainly stepped up to that challenge. We accelerated work that was planned for the Regional Transport Coordination Centre (RTCC), and the team within days had collected millions of points of data from local authorities, operators and the NHS. Over time this tool developed, evolved and grew and continues to be updated daily in a web portal format which is accessible to all our partners.

This data and intelligence has enabled us to make informed decisions that have supported the most vulnerable in our communities, supported our key workers, our staff, and brought the whole transport community and our local authorities together to coordinate a safe, clean and functioning transport network.

As operators reduced services and government advice was changing daily, our TfWM communications team maintained a high level of information to our stakeholders and kept our customers updated with the latest information through a variety of channels.

The Customer Service and Ticketing teams, with the support of Digital & Data, worked remotely for the first time ever, while experiencing some of the highest demand they had ever seen as customers cancelled tickets and needed support.

Our front-line staff at bus stations and on the Metro kept our facilities and services running alongside the wider transport

community of bus drivers, train drivers, Metro drivers, conductors, cleaners and security teams to make sure even our heavily reduced network was available every single day.

Our Travel Choices team contacted every local NHS trust and sourced employee and postcode data that enabled us to map key worker journeys using the tools our Data Insight team created. This allowed us to plan a bare minimum network that would best serve our key workers and maintain access to hospitals. This was shared with operators and local authorities, creating simple but effective models in days that previously could have taken us months.

Ring & Ride vehicles were re-purposed from their usual role of carrying the elderly and vulnerable, and put to work providing a dedicated shuttle service for NHS key workers based on that intelligence. To date over 35,467 journeys have been made on the service.

Bus Operations followed by the Metro were the first to offer free travel to NHS key workers even when patronage was at its lowest ever levels and profit was non-existent.

With supermarkets opening early for OAPs, we supported them by removing the pre 9.30am concessionary travel restrictions so they could travel for free and not have to go later in the day at greater risk.

The Safety, Security and Emergency Planning team not only led our initial response and embedded us in the Local Resilience Forum but ensured that the Nightingale Hospital had an accessible transport plan. They coordinated the testing of transport frontline workers with our operators, the first region in the UK to bring this in.

## May - July

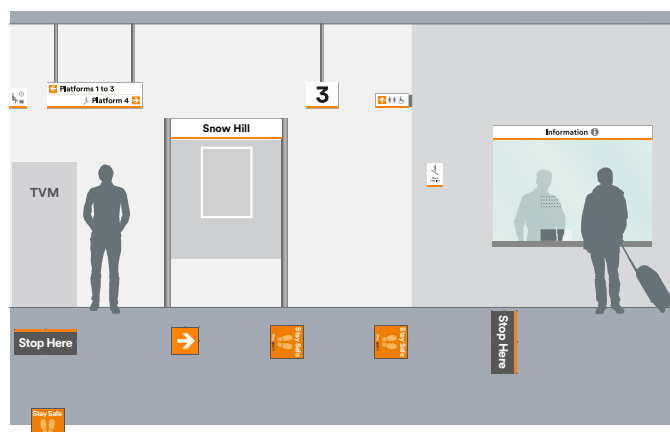
As the lifting of lockdown began to look like a reality, our attention turned back to our customers. We understood that our Customer Service and Ticketing teams would need to process thousands of people back onto direct debit. This was a huge challenge for our digital design team working on the West Midlands Network website to create a simple user-friendly online application that captured all of the right data in one form for the ticketing team to process in a matter of weeks.

New government guidelines were issued, and social distancing rules were in place. Our operators had to plan how they could carry passengers with a 2m distance, and we had to look at how we would keep customers at stops and interchanges 2m apart; our Bus Stations team and Integrated Network teams alongside our Health and Safety team spent hours developing Covid risk assessments to keep our services open.

We set up a Transport Recovery Cell, which brought together transport leaders from TfWM, operators, local authorities, Highways England, Network Rail and others. This group has been able to work through problems, share knowledge and ideas and use our data sources to coordinate and agree our operational response.

Utilising the West Midlands Network brand family, we achieved one clear and easy to understand message across the whole public transport network including across our commercial operators. The West Midlands Combined Authority's Design Team with TfWM's Communications team turned around hundreds of pieces of artwork and printed thousands of stickers and posters, updated websites and created simple animations in a matter of days to ensure the public knew what they had to do to stay safe and stay apart.

Following the announcement of the mandatory use of face masks on vehicles, TfWM worked with operators and partners to ensure a high level of compliance was adhered to across the network. While most do comply, we have mobilised a task force in conjunction with our Safer Travel Police team to patrol key interchanges and educate customers and enforce through directions to leave and fixed penalty notices for repeat offenders.

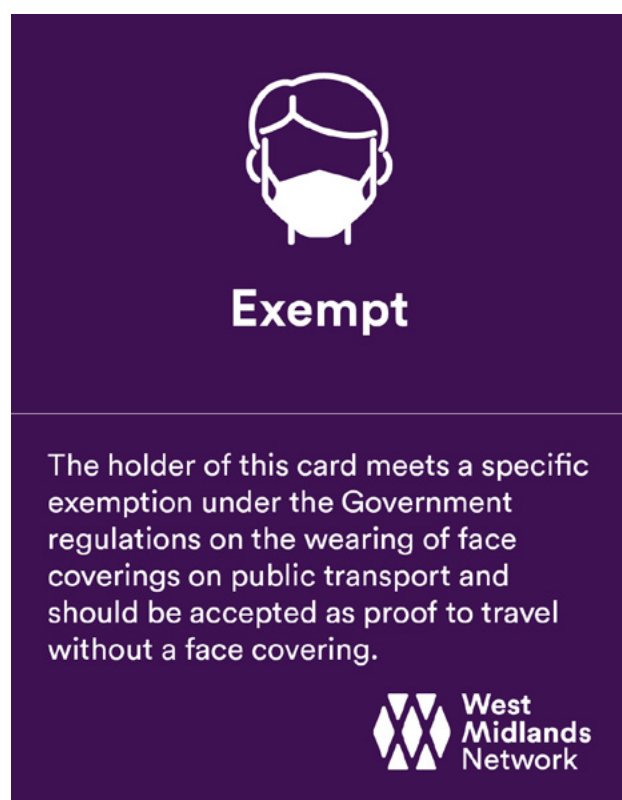




We ensured:

- Free masks were made available and handed out across bus stations, Travel & Information Centres, transport hubs as well as on the Metro;
- We were one of the first in the country to issue exemption cards and badges to support those people who feared being refused travel.

To ensure we had a safe, clean network, we introduced enhanced cleaning regimes across all modes and infrastructure, and our work through the West Midlands Bus Alliance and Transport Recovery Cell has ensured this is consistent across operators. New technologies such as Thermo fogging and e-sprayers were also used.



The teams undertook the task of refreshing roadside information on 9,807 posters and 1,345 flags. This represented the biggest update to information since the scheme began in 2005.

Once we had implemented government guidelines on the public transport network, our next challenge was getting 100,000 school children to school safely.

Bus, train and tram teams and operators developed plans to support the increase in demand and manage social distancing, with daily calls and buses on standby in hot spot locations ready to react.

The Travel Choices team contacted key schools, colleges and universities. We embedded support officers in local authorities' education teams. Our Communications team issued a public campaign to inform and educate those across the network and produced an informative toolkit for all 1,500 schools to push information and advice to parents and young people. We also produced this in six different languages to ensure our information was accessible to all members of the diverse communities we have across the region.

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Stay Safe  Stay Apart



## Important Information

# Back to School Travel



Valid from August 2020

 **West Midlands Network**

Stay Safe  Stay Apart



## Travelling to School or College

- There have been changes made to the way you now use public transport
- Buses, trains and trams are running but capacity has been reduced to support social distancing



- Services may be busier so plan ahead and allow more time for your journey

- Face coverings must be worn by anyone over 11 years old, except those who are exempt



- Consider cycling or walking to allow more space for those who have no other option or are travelling further



When travelling, be kind, be patient and stay safe.  
We are doing everything we can to keep you moving.

For updates and more information visit our dedicated web page:  
[wmnetwork.co.uk/schooltravel](http://wmnetwork.co.uk/schooltravel)

 **West Midlands Network**



## Get ready to travel back to school this September

 **West Midlands Network**

Stay Safe  Stay Apart



## Drop off Differently this September

### Planning to drive to school this September?

Consider parking or dropping off a few streets away from the school gates and walk the short distance.

- Great form of exercise suitable for all ages
- Saves you being stuck in traffic
- Keeps the roads safer around school
- Reduces the chance of collisions or injuries



For updates and more information on Back to School Travel, visit our dedicated web page:  
[wmnetwork.co.uk/schooltravel](http://wmnetwork.co.uk/schooltravel)

 **West Midlands Network**

As schools opened, daily monitoring through the RTCC to our partners and our staff allowed us to analyse how things were working and ensured we were reacting to developing issues which enabled us to implement solutions efficiently and effectively.

Just before the schools returned, the bus team lost one of its long-established operators, DeCourcy Travel in Coventry, who sadly went into administration. Supporting Coventry City Council, the bus team re-tendered the school contract within days to ensure school buses were ready for the start of term.

With such a huge shift in travel behaviour and more local journeys being made, seizing the opportunity to embed more active travel solutions has been a huge priority for us and will help towards our greener future.

The Active Travel team has successfully delivered over 50 infrastructure schemes costing £3.8m across the region with all seven local authorities getting more people rolling and strolling over the summer. To build on this, the West Midlands will benefit from a £13 million government active travel grant that will go towards the delivery of the 500 mile Starley Network.





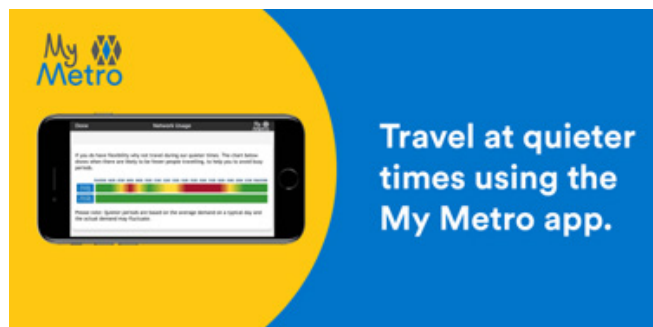


Active travel is no longer just cycling and walking, our Transport Innovation team created the e-scooter trial in just three months. Uptake has been impressive with the scooters totalling enough kilometres to go twice around the world since being introduced.



Over the year, our operators have all created additional functionality on their websites that passengers can use to see the busiest times allowing them to make informed decisions on the times they choose to travel.

In response to the changing working patterns of commuters, Metro introduced a 3-day and 4-day season ticket which were fulfilled through the My Metro app to improve choice for customer.



West Midlands Bus Alliance has been working hard to manage the national message through the pandemic back to government and worked to ensure bus operators can be supported through these times as a critical community service.

## October - December

Throughout the second lockdown, we continued monitoring the network with operators and our Communications team has kept people updated. We continued to monitor Christmas shopping, looking for increases in demand, and through the RTCC were ready to respond should any social distancing or congestion issues develop.

The insight and analysis continued, especially with the introduction of the tier system, working with data that the DfT analysed to help try to understand the change in the movement around the region.





# Delivering our priorities

Despite Covid-19 shifting and changing things, we have still managed to complete and achieve so much this year.

## Integrated Services team

Have kept buses moving through major works and navigated various enhancements of bus services across the network.

The Bus Infrastructure team has generated best practice relationships with local authority partners to navigate the needs of bus operators, town centre managers, pedestrians and many other stakeholders. The completion of the Longbridge Park & Ride site will provide a huge boost in capacity in the area.

West Midlands Bus Alliance has sought ways to continue to tackle climate change and improve air quality in our region and has launched the first large scale electric bus rollout in Birmingham and Coventry with National Express West Midlands. They continue to lobby government for devolved funding to continue to support services and get the Alliance firmly recognised as national best practice.

Customer Service and Ticketing teams introduced Net Promoter Score in July which is an industry standard for measuring customer satisfaction. The team's score is 'Great' which I think you will agree is an incredible start to measuring how our customers rated the service they received from TfWM.

## West Midlands Rail Executive



We continued to push forward the delivery of Perry Barr rail station and outlined planning permission for the bus interchange.

University Station business case was completed and approved by Department for Transport (DfT) and construction is due to begin shortly.

The wider West Midlands Rail Programme has moved forward by building relationships with the DfT and partners, which is crucial to securing funding, pushing regional devolution and embedding Grand Rail Collaboration across the industry.

Collaboratively with the rail industry, the team has developed an initial view of timetable possibilities for the Commonwealth Games and developed a rail service timetable for the new Camp Hill stations.

West Midlands Stations Alliance governance has been improved to provide better outputs for passengers and communities and excellent progress is being made on Stations as Places. Worcestershire Community Rail Partnership accreditation has been secured and will bring exciting new things to the area.

The Rail team are the proud owner of two new CAF built Class 196 trains for West Midlands Railway services. 80 trains are being built in Spain and Newport and will start entering service very soon.

## West Midlands Metro and Midland Metro Alliance

We received approval and the powers needed to deliver the Eastside Extension through to Digbeth.

Works on Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension commenced. Utility works have begun and various old bridges have been demolished.

Major construction work took place along Broad Street as part of the Westside Extension by seizing the opportunity to advance works whilst everyone was in lockdown. In June a total area of 220m of concrete was poured along Broad Street, all in one go, which was a significant engineering feat and took 14 hours to complete.

West Midlands Metro has been working on a proof of concept project led by WM5G, to deliver the first 5G tram in the UK which went into service in September.





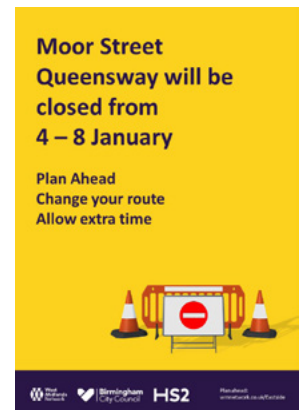
## Network Resilience and the Regional Transport Coordination Centre

Continued their partnership work with HS2 and Highways England around the Interchange Station site in Solihull and at Curzon Street in Birmingham city centre with integrated travel demand management, mitigations and communications campaigns. Alongside supporting the upgrade of junction 10 of the M6 in Walsall and the £1 billion regeneration of Dudley town centre.

As part of the RTCC's vision to improve information on disruptions, an SMS trial went live at the beginning of November as well as a new disruptions area being launched on West Midlands Network website, with thanks to the Website Improvement team.

The Safer Travel Police team and CCTV control centre have continued keeping our network safe with the great work they do every day supporting partners and the police.

The Key Route Network team has been supporting local authorities with the KRN Action plans and highway investment schemes including the installation of 31 new cameras across Sandwell. They are also improving Road Safety, setting up a strategic partnership, chaired by an independent road safety charity to hold us and local authorities to account as we aim to reduce killed or seriously injured people by 40 percent.



Director of Network Resilience Anne Shaw with Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps.



## Policy, Strategy and Innovation

Has worked with partners through our Connected and Autonomous Vehicle projects, to secure a major upgrade to the sensor network across the Key Route Network, using ANPR, and cutting edge 5G sensors.

The Data Insight team has continued to deliver critical services to our local highway authorities.

Our Transport Innovation team has forged ahead with the UK's pathfinder Future Transport Zone, designing and creating innovative bus services, mobility credit schemes, and improved back office functions which are now ready to go live in the new year. They have delivered a step change in our Electric Vehicle re-fuelling strategy and have been able to continue various international projects.

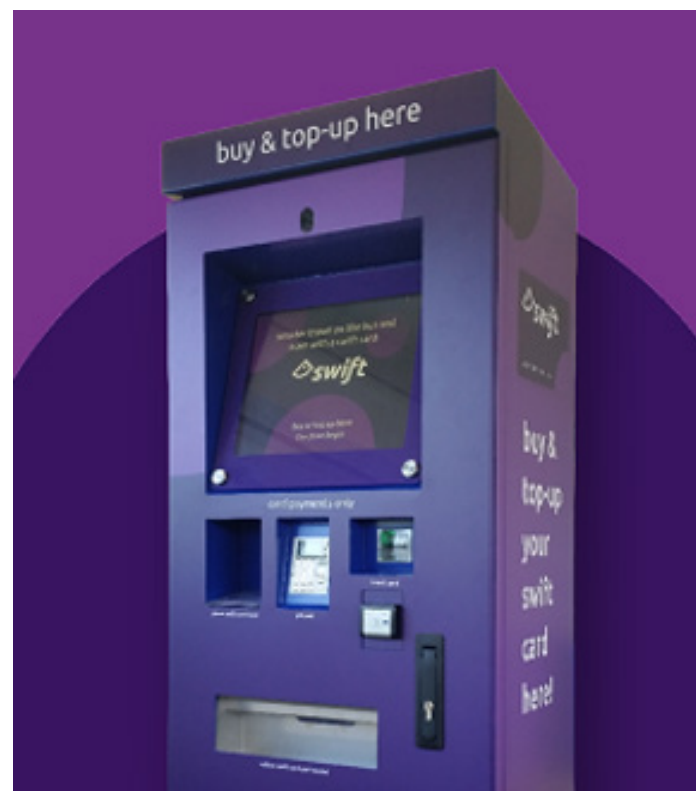
The Human Intelligence team has created a new powerful public engagement tool set, working with partners to have a level of understanding of every household across the region and develop an online citizens community for deeper conversations.



Swift launched 'SwiftGo' which has been rolled out on buses and trams, which is the first multi-modal best value cap anywhere in the UK outside of London.

80 percent of Swift users remain either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' following this year's satisfaction survey with more and more people moving into the 'very satisfied' category.

A fully functional Swift vending machine is now in place in the arrivals area at Birmingham Airport, so international visitors can purchase their public transport ticket on Swift before they have even left the airport.



# The year ahead

## Key Milestones

Opening of  
Wolverhampton City  
Centre Metro extension in  
September 2021


Construction of University  
train station and work to  
refresh Perry Barr train  
station will begin

Work begins connecting  
Birmingham's Eastside to the  
tram network

Opening of the  
Edgbaston section  
of Westside Metro  
extension in December  
2021

We will be moving  
forward with plans to  
reopen the Camp Hill line  
and the train stations at  
Willenhall and Darlaston

Major works will begin  
between Wednesbury and  
Brierley Hill



The launch of the new West Midlands Network Travel Planner and Swift Pay App, which will replace the various travel apps we have to create a single mobile solution

The first two Sprint routes will move into construction on the A45 and the A34

Rollout of the £24m cross city bus service between the 50 and 82/87 routes connecting south Birmingham with North Birmingham / Sandwell

The 'Swiftification' of the rail network, we should see the rollout of Swift platform validators and ticket vending machines

Our Swift team will be cementing and promoting Swift Go on bus and tram which will make it easier than ever to access public transport

We will be delivering a UK first to make Coventry an all electric bus city

Works will begin at Dudley Interchange and deliver a multi modal transport interchange that Black Country residents will be proud of



## Key Milestones

Delivery of the schemes set out in the £13m funding from Government to support the increased demand in cycling

Finalising the 2022 Games Transport Plan to support 12,500 athletes and 1.2 million spectators move alongside the 4 million residents and commuters in the region

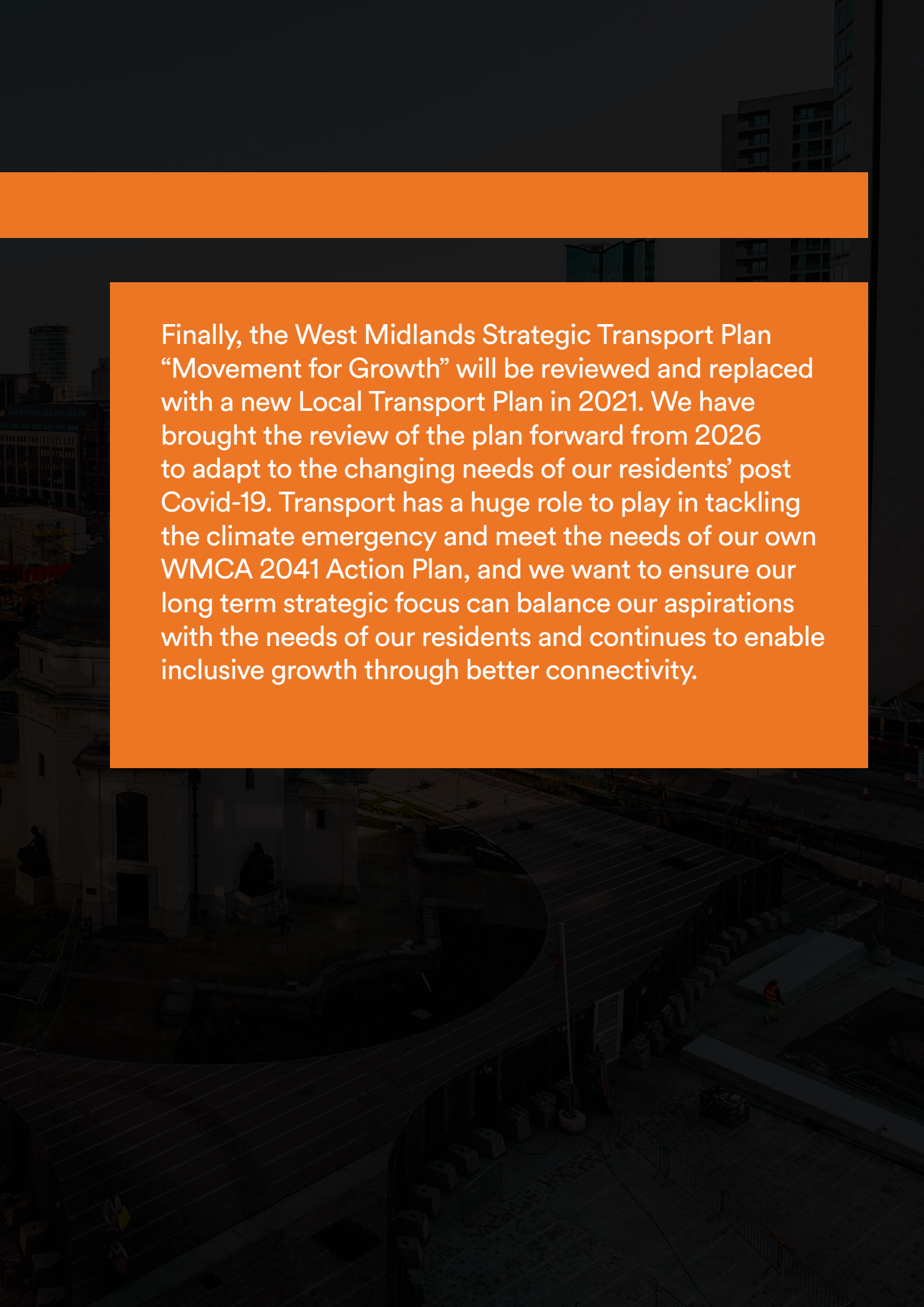
We will be keeping people moving through travel demand management alongside our partners at HS2, Highways England, Network Rail, Midland Metro Alliance and local authorities to improve our roads, rail and Metro service

Launch of the cycle hire scheme which will revolutionise people's access to cycling

The transport innovation programme will conclude one of the most ambitious connected and autonomous vehicle programmes in the country

The Regional Transport Coordination Centre will continue supporting people's journeys and working with our operators on major disruptions

Our Transport Planning team will be prepare for a business case for a slice of over £4bn of transport investment which the Government has committed from 2022 onwards.

The background image shows a city street scene. In the foreground, there is a large, curved, grey structure, possibly a bridge or a large overpass, with a worker visible on it. To the left, there is a white building with a statue on top. In the background, there are several tall buildings, including a modern glass skyscraper. A large orange rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

Finally, the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan “Movement for Growth” will be reviewed and replaced with a new Local Transport Plan in 2021. We have brought the review of the plan forward from 2026 to adapt to the changing needs of our residents’ post Covid-19. Transport has a huge role to play in tackling the climate emergency and meet the needs of our own WMCA 2041 Action Plan, and we want to ensure our long term strategic focus can balance our aspirations with the needs of our residents and continues to enable inclusive growth through better connectivity.

## How we spend the levy money

Capital Expenditure and Funding	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m
Transport	363.4	402.6	225.2
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>363.4</b>	<b>402.6</b>	<b>225.2</b>
Grants	296.7	178.4	45.9
Borrowing	66.7	224.2	179.3
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>363.4</b>	<b>402.6</b>	<b>225.2</b>



<b>TfWM Budget Spending</b>	<b>2020/21 £m</b>	<b>2021/22 £m</b>
Concessions for elderly and disabled people	51.0	50.6
Child Concessions	7.8	7.0
Rail and Metro Concessions	4.6	4.6
Accessible Transport	6.6	6.6
Subsidised Bus Services	10.4	11.5
Bus Services and Infrastructure	4.5	4.9
Integration (incl. Safety & Security and Passenger Information)	7.6	7.5
Rail and Metro Services	5.4	5.4
Network Resilience	3.1	3.0
Commonwealth Games	2.2	3.9
Strategic Development	3.1	3.4
Business Support and Transport Governance	4.0	3.9
Financing Costs	10.2	10.2
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>120.5</b>	<b>122.5</b>
Use of Reserves	3.6	3.9
Commonwealth Games	2.2	3.9
<b>District Levy</b>	<b>114.7</b>	<b>114.7</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>120.5</b>	<b>122.5</b>

Council	Population	2021/22 Levy £m	%
Birmingham	1,141,816	44.7	39.0%
Coventry	371,521	14.5	12.7%
Dudley	321,596	12.6	11.0%
Sandwell	328,450	12.9	11.2%
Solihull	216,374	8.5	7.4%
Walsall	285,478	11.2	9.7%
Wolverhampton	263,357	10.3	9.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,928,592</b>	<b>114.7</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The cost of the levy is equivalent to £39.17 per resident of the West Midlands (£39.34 in 20/21).

The net cost per resident is not the same as the cost funded by council tax which will be lower and will vary depending on how each Council determines the funding of their overall expenditure.



## Glossary

Multi-operator passenger information – combined information for all operators

Multi-modally - all modes of transport

Demand Responsive Transport – door to door service for people with mobility needs

Key Route Network (KRN) – The KRN is mainly made up on A-roads and some B-roads with the remainder consisting of a small section of the A38 (M) Aston Expressway

## Alternative format

If you would like this leaflet in a format more suited to your needs, please call 0345 303 6760 or email [customerservices@tfwm.org.uk](mailto:customerservices@tfwm.org.uk)

West Midlands Combined Authority produces this leaflet to give you a summary of the work it does to improve all aspects of public transport.

To find out more about the work West Midlands Combined Authority does, including new projects and public consultations, please visit our website: [wmca.org.uk](http://wmca.org.uk).



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