

Action Plan for consideration by West of England Combined Authority Committee

| Recommendation | Accepted | Issues to be addressed | Response | Action | Measure of outcomes | Timescale |
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| SR1 <i>The Mayor and members of the Combined Authority represented by the Council Leaders, must commit to improving their working relationship and demonstrate that significant progress has been made within a reasonable timeframe to be determined by the Mayor and Combined Authority. This should include a role for independent mediation and the constructive consideration of advice arising from this process (SR1)</i> | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture & behaviour Mediation & Relationships Communication Internal Decision making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We recognise there have been strained relationships. Work is ongoing to promote greater understanding among West of England partners. This is part of a longer-term ongoing conversation which will require engagement at all levels between the Combined Authority and Unitary Authorities and LEP as we develop, improve and embed new working practices to adapt and reflect changing circumstances. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders will continue to regularly meet with the Combined Authority Mayor as required to both address any concerns early and to identify opportunities. A programme of activities to agree regional priorities will take place in 2023. This will involve free and frank discussion regarding the allocation of existing resources in the context of new and emerging challenges, such as inflationary pressures, to primarily focus on the delivery of projects. A Regional Priorities workshop which leaders have all agreed to attend is scheduled for January. Board members will be involved at an earlier stage in setting a strategic regional direction Consideration of appropriate attendees (wider than Mayors, Leaders and CEOs) to attend the regional prioritisation workshop will be made (including regional finance officers (S.151) officers, Directors for Infrastructure, and independent voice(s)), to ensure the workshops results in meaningful outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a programme of activities to discuss regional priorities with leaders, senior officers and board members Regional priorities paper to be considered by Combined Authority Committee in March 2023. Timely Committee meetings to be held To allow for maximum participation leaders & senior leaders will be given advance notice of meetings. Agendas and Papers will be issued in good time in advance of meetings taking place. | March 2023, and Ongoing |
| SR2 - <i>A formal protocol should be agreed between member organisations within the Combined Authority to commit to consultation on key proposals, that they should</i> | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working practices Culture & solution development Communication Internal decision making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior officers in the Combined Authority and Unitary Authorities play a key role in finding solutions to contentious problems all year round. We value this important work, and we will | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Officers will meet collectively and individually with their counterparts as policies and projects progress, from conception to delivery and evaluation. The Combined Authority will ensure that Cabinet Members from the Unitary Authorities can request briefings with senior CA officers as required. Any existing regular meetings will continue in line with agreed arrangements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a programme of activities to discuss regional priorities with leaders, senior officers and board members Regional priorities paper to be considered by Combined Authority Committee in March 2023. Timely Committee meetings to be held To allow for maximum participation Mayors, Leaders & Senior Officers will be given advance notice of all meetings. Agendas and Papers will be issued in good time in advance of all meetings taking place | March 2023 and ongoing |

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| <p><i>define, at an earlier stage. Combined Authority members should engage effectively in this process, to help mitigate points of contention before they are published and debated in public. This should include a commitment to deliver proposals on a reasonable timetable</i></p> | | | <p>ensure this is standard practice as a move forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We recognise that constructive relationships are as important as processes. All West of England partners will commit to meaningful consultation when developing solutions and proposals to help leaders to mitigate points of contention where possible ahead of Combined Authority Committee meetings. Further work to find solutions to operational matters will continue with a view to embedding new working practices which will be developed with all partners. Meaningful engagement with Combined Authority Scrutiny and Audit Committees will continue ahead of CA committee meetings to | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An officer delivery board has been established and meets twice a month to review progress on agreed projects and to provide challenge and support to ensure more timely delivery on all projects where relevant. These boards will continue and will report directly to regular joint CEO meetings. This process will be reviewed to further strengthen the board if necessary. To help support driving delivery of key projects, proposals will include a commitment to deliver on a reasonable timetable (agreed by the Committee), which will be included in relevant papers going forward. | <p>(public and private) to enable proper consideration and informed debate to take place in the meeting.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Papers detailing proposals will contain agreed timetables for delivery. A forward plan of decision making for public meetings will be maintained and published. | |

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| | | | <p>ensure constructive feedback on key proposals.</p> | | | |
| <p>SR3 - <i>In future, in all circumstances, including where there is a potential conflict of interest affecting individual statutory officers adequate steps must be taken to ensure the statutory duties of these officers is effectively discharged.</i></p> | YES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VfM Communication Transparency Working practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A protocol has been prepared and shared earlier this year with the Auditor and Chair of Audit, which has been designed to manage the rare cases of conflict of interest by statutory officers. This is designed to reflect the unusual circumstances that in a small authority there may not always be another employee able to discharge the role of deputy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The protocol will be shared with UA Leaders, Chairs of Audit and Scrutiny for comment before being adopted and published. The protocol will be published on the Combined Authority's website and shared with Combined Authority officers. The Combined Authority Monitoring Officer will brief senior officers regarding the implications of the protocol. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the unlikely situation that a similar circumstance arises, the Mayor and Unitary Authority Leaders will be briefed by the Chief Executive on a confidential basis. | January 2023 |
| <p>KR1 - <i>The future management structure of the Combined Authority should be reviewed in order to ensure it is fit for purpose in the context of new funding awards and strategic priorities and this must include appropriate consultation and</i></p> | YES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Organisation Culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising that several senior leadership posts are currently vacant and interims are in post, there is an opportunity to develop a new Senior Leadership Structure of the Combined Authority which will be developed in 2023. This structure will reflect the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new Senior Leadership Structure of the Combined Authority will be developed in 2023. The Combined Authority will use expert support to determine necessary skills and appropriate structures are in place so as to recruit suitably skilled permanent staff at pace. It will be agreed in line with the Constitution by the West of England Combined Authority Committee Process regarding Senior Officer appointments to be guided by external expert support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new senior leadership structure will be developed by Combined Authority Officers in consultation with expert support (a third party) A new senior leadership structure will be implemented by October 2023 following engagement and consultation with the Constituent member organisations. All Senior Officer roles will have permanent appointments as soon as practicable. | New senior structure to be implemented by October 2023. |

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| <i>agreement by the CA Committee.</i> | | | <p>changing funding landscape which has emerged in recent years and will meet the requirements of our strategic priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We recognise the need for senior leadership stability and will aim to complete this process by Autumn 2023. | | | |
| <i>KR2 - The Constitution of the Combined Authority should be revised to define the conditions under which it is acceptable for other officers and members to seek independent legal advice, without reference to the Monitoring Officer and/or Head of Legal Services.</i> | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working practices Internal decision making VfM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution of the Combined Authority will be revised to define the conditions under which it is acceptable for other officers and members to seek independent legal advice, without reference to the Monitoring Officer and/or Head of Legal Services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The West of England CA Monitoring Officer will provide wording for the constitution at the next suitable meeting of the Combined Authority Committee (no later than March) in consultation with the Monitoring Officers of the Unitary Authorities. Such a change would require unanimous support of the Mayor and Leaders at a West of England Combined Authority Committee meeting. | Constitution updated to reflect new protocol. | March 2023 or as soon as is practically possible |
| <i>IR1 That consideration of relationships with the Chief Executive Group should be incorporated into any relationship development and mediation work undertaken.</i> | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture & behaviour Mediation & Relationships Communication Internal Decision making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is underway to establish longer term working practices among all senior officers which embed a culture of mutual understanding and constructive working. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Officers will continue to meet collectively and on a 1:1 basis going forward. All Senior officers will work collaboratively and engage in meaningful consultation when developing solutions and proposals to help leaders to mitigate points of contention where possible ahead of Combined Authority Committee meetings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Officers and CEOs will continue to meet regularly at a regional level. Areas of contention will be shared with partners in good time to enable solutions to be developed where possible. Agendas and Papers will be issued in good time in advance of meetings taking place. | March 2023 |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We recognise that constructive relationships are as important as processes. Staff survey results to be reported back to committee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where possible, matters of contention will be flagged with all senior officers in good time to allow for solutions to be developed ahead of Combined Authority meetings. All Senior Leaders will commit to promote a culture of respect and understanding at all times. Where relationships require support, Senior Leaders will seek mediation at an early stage to ensure good working practice continue and solutions can be developed. A forward plan of decisions and activities to help with planning / resourcing / engagement for CEOs meeting will be developed. | | |
| <p>IR2 <i>That the constitution be reviewed, as previously considered by Combined Authority Members. This should incorporate the new Monitoring Officer protocol but also focuses on the specific ambiguities raised in the recent legal advice including the definition of statutory roles, delegated powers, managing conflicts of interest, decisions on all senior staffing matters including</i></p> | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitution Working practices Internal decision making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution will be revised to include the new Monitoring Officer protocol MO will discuss this and any further changes to the document in consultation with the Unitary Authority MOs, which would require unanimous support of the Mayor and Leaders at a West of England Combined Authority Committee meeting. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution will be revised to include the new Monitoring Officer protocol. Regional MOs to meet regularly to discuss any matters regarding the constitution that need addressing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution will be revised to include the new Monitoring Officer protocol and wider issues identified in IR2. | March 2023 |

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| <p><i>restructure and severance. The results should be reported to committee and used alongside the points we have raise basis for revision. There may be value in reviewing other Combined Authority constitutions to optimise the opportunity to improve the document in these areas.</i></p> | | | | | | |
| <p>IR3 <i>That the performance reviews of the senior officers be formally recorded, including reasonable steps taken to manage issues and provide access to resources to enable skills development as appropriate.</i></p> | <p>Yes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance • Working practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual performance reviews of all senior officers will be formally recorded, including reasonable steps to manage issue and provide access to support and resources to enable skills to develop as appropriate. • Reviewing GT 'Auditing Culture' Report: <u>Auditing Culture</u> and to consider how best practice can be implemented in the Combined Authority. • Organisational Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal actions put in place to ensure Performance reviews are formally recorded. • Consideration of the GT Auditing Culture report made by the Head of HR in consultation with UA HR leads (and others as relevant), and recommendations for improvement made for consideration by the constituent member CEO group • Process agreed by March 2023 for the recording and sharing of key organisation performance indicators and information with member organisations relating to organisational culture and health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance reviews to be formally recorded. Head of HR to provide confirmation process has been implemented by January. Process for managing senior management performance shared with UA partners. • Positive staff survey results and feedback at all levels of the organisation. Results shared with CA lead members and CEOs on a regular basis. | <p>January and March 2023 respectively</p> |

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| | | | <p>Reports to be developed and shared with all CA partners, which would include staff survey results, turnover, KPIs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for managing senior officer performance to be shared with UA partners. | | | |
| <p>IR4 – <i>That the Monitoring Officer role retains its current seniority at Director level in any future restructure or that sufficient safeguards are implemented to protect the authority and influence of the role.</i></p> | <p>Yes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Organisation structure • Culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Monitoring Officer will remain as a Director role in any future senior leadership structure which will be considered by the Combined Authority Committee. Any change would require a vote of the West of England Combined Authority Committee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Officer to be confirmed at Director Level in any future leadership structure. Any change would require a vote of the West of England Combined Authority Committee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Officer role retains its current seniority at Director level in any future restructure. Any change would require a vote of the West of England Combined Authority Committee. | <p>Ongoing</p> |