



Candidate Brief for the position of

Chair

West Midlands Growth Company

January 2026

BERWICK
PARTNERS 

Welcome Letter from the Mayor of the West Midlands

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of the West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC). As Mayor of the West Midlands, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this pivotal opportunity at a defining moment for our region.

The West Midlands is entering a new era of ambition and delivery, with WMGC at the centre of our efforts to drive sustainable, inclusive growth, attracting investment, supporting businesses, and promoting the West Midlands as a world-class destination for visitors, talent, and innovation. With the organisation transitioning into a the region's principal economic delivery vehicle, the next Chair will play a central role in embedding this transformation and ensuring the impact is felt across our seven Local Authority areas. Your leadership will be vital in driving delivery, inspiring confidence among stakeholders, and championing the region's ambitions both nationally and internationally.

Our Growth Plan sets out bold targets: growing the regional economy by £17 billion, creating 100,000 jobs, and delivering 120,000 homes over the next decade. From next year, WMGC's remit will grow to span inward investment, capital attraction for real estate & businesses, visitor economy, cluster management, business support and future workforce & talent, each critical to delivering these commitments for businesses & communities across the West Midlands. The organisation's impact is already evident, with thousands of new jobs, record visitor numbers, and a reputation for innovation and opportunity.

As Chair, you will lead a high-profile Board, ensure delivery against ambitious growth targets set by the WMCA Board, and act as a visible ambassador for the West Midlands. Fostering collaboration across public, private, and academic sectors, you will ensure our region remains globally competitive and delivers real benefits for local people and businesses. This is a hands-on role, demanding both a strategic focus on maximising impact and practical governance expertise.

I am committed to ensuring WMGC reflects the diversity, dynamism, and ambition of our region. We welcome applications from candidates of all backgrounds who share our vision for inclusive growth and can help us deliver on our promises to the people of the West Midlands.

Thank you once again for your interest. I look forward to seeing how your leadership and experience can help shape the next chapter for WMGC and our region.

Yours sincerely,
Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands



Foreword / Introduction

The driving purpose behind the West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) is to shape a thriving and inclusive West Midlands that delivers growth for everyone, now, and for generations to come. The organisation spans a wide-ranging remit; it aims to attract high quality investment, raise business productivity, create good jobs, and drive inclusive growth across every part of the West Midlands. Backed by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and the seven constituent authorities and working shoulder to shoulder with universities and the private sector, WMGC is the region's principle economic development agency and market-facing delivery body.

The new Chair will lead the Board at a defining moment. From April 2026, WMGC's expanded remit and three year Corporate Plan (2026–2029) will translate the West Midlands Local Growth Plan's pillars – Our Places, Our Businesses, Our People, Our Story – into measurable action: a stronger inward investment offer; a coherent capital attraction service for strategic sites and regeneration; an expanded business growth system (including a high-growth service and strategic account management); support for cluster development; and a dynamic, audience-led regional promotion function that builds the West Midlands' reputation in the UK and globally. WMGC also leads delivery in visitor economy and screen production (Production Central WM), maximising spillover benefits for jobs, spend and profile.

About WMGC

- **Ownership & governance:** WMGC is a company limited by guarantee, wholly owned by WMCA and constituent authorities, operating as a Teckal company to combine public accountability with market agility.
- **Mandate:** Delivery of commissioned services that advance the Local Growth Plan aligned to its pillars.
- **Funding:** WMCA has endorsed a move to multi year funding, enabling WMGC to plan and deliver at scale. Additional income is derived from universities and commercial partnerships (e.g., Partners West Midlands) and earned income (e.g., Convention Bureau).
- **Recent performance:** WMGC has demonstrated strong delivery in 2025/26 - exceeding inward investment targets, creating thousands of jobs, and achieving record visitor economy impact – with Board agreed stretch targets to sustain momentum into 2026/27.



Role Purpose

As independent Chair of the WMGC Board, you offer strategic leadership and oversight, supporting and challenging the executive to deliver in line with the WMGC corporate plan, thus helping achieve the aims of the Local Growth Plan as set out by the WMCA Board.

Under your leadership, WMGC will play an active role championing the West Midlands regionally, nationally and internationally.

You will represent the business community as an independent and non-voting member of the WMCA Board, ensuring that the business voice is heard and represented in regional decision making.

The Chair ensures:

- **Disciplined delivery** against objectives and metrics aligned to the Growth Plan.
- **Best in class governance**, risk, assurance and transparency.
- **Effective advocacy** for the West Midlands nationally and internationally.
- **Constructive support and challenge** to the Chief Executive and Executive Team.
- **Cohesive partnership working** across public, private and academic sectors.

Important: The WMCA Board **sets strategy and policy**. The WMGC Board, led by the Chair, focuses on **operational delivery and performance** of the commissioned services.

Role Context and 2026–27 Priorities

- **Our Places:** Promote and progress investor-ready strategic sites and regeneration corridors; lead regional delegations (e.g., MIPIM, UKREiiF); strengthen developer and capital markets engagement; support destination development to grow the visitor economy (business conferences, travel trade, major events) and associated accommodation pipeline.
- **Our Businesses:** Convert a high-value FDI pipeline; implement a balanced scorecard that emphasises productivity and jobs above the median wage; stand up Business Growth Capital flywheels (angels/VC, SME finance, mid-market corporate finance); deliver High Growth Service (up to ~1,500 firms) and Strategic Account Management (~250 firms) via the regional growth hub; enable cluster bodies with measurable plans and governance.
- **Our Story:** Evolve and govern the Growth Narrative & Toolkit; deliver market-oriented campaigns; maintain an optimised digital and media ecosystem; mobilise Partners West Midlands for advocacy and co-investment.



- **Our People:** Champion the Good Work Charter; align employer demand to regional skills solutions and future talent pipelines; ensure inclusive growth outcomes are designed-in from the outset.

About You

You are an experienced Chair or senior Board leader with a track record of navigating complex, multi-stakeholder environments.

You bring:

- Strategic vision paired with strong governance expertise
- The ability to inspire confidence across public, private, and academic sectors
- Senior networks across business and government
- Sound judgment, integrity, and the ability to represent the region on national and international stages

Experience in inward investment, economic development, or visitor economy is welcome but not essential. Above all, you bring leadership, credibility, and the ability to guide an organisation through meaningful change.

WMGC is committed to building a diverse and inclusive Board that reflects the region it serves, and warmly welcomes applications from candidates of all backgrounds.

Key Responsibilities

A. Board & Strategic Leadership

- Chair Board meetings effectively; build consensus and ensure timely, high-quality decisions.
- Lead the Board's contribution to the Corporate Plan and annual delivery plans; monitor delivery against agreed KPIs/OKRs.
- Ensure the Board focuses on **operational delivery and performance**, in line with WMCA's strategic leadership role.

B. Governance, Risk & Assurance

- Uphold the highest standards of probity, transparency and fiduciary duty, aligned to the Nolan Principles and public sector codes.
- Oversee risk management, audit and assurance; ensure robust financial stewardship and value for money.



- Lead the Board's own effectiveness reviews and succession planning (working with Nominations & Remuneration and Audit & Risk Committees).

C. Support and Challenge to the Executive

- Provide constructive challenge and support to the Chief Executive; hold the Executive Team to account for delivery and organisational health.
- Conduct the Chief Executive's annual appraisal and support professional development.
- Ensure an inclusive high-performance culture, data-driven, and outcomes-focused.

D. Advocacy & Representation

- Act as a visible, credible ambassador for the West Midlands in the UK and internationally (e.g., investor missions, government engagement, media, major events).
- Champion the region's clusters and strategic assets, and WMGC's success stories, to build reputation and confidence.
- Represent the business community as an independent, non-voting member of the WMCA Board, ensuring the business voice is heard.

E. Stakeholder & System Leadership

- Build trusted relationships with WMCA, local authorities, universities, cluster bodies, investors, national government and business representative organisations.
- Encourage public-private collaboration and catalyse co-investment through Partners West Midlands and other mechanisms.
- Promote alignment and data sharing across the regional system; avoid duplication and drive collective impact.

Person Specification

Essential Experience

- Significant experience chairing Boards (or equivalent senior non-executive leadership) in complex, multi-stakeholder environments.
- A track record of governance, performance and risk oversight that improves organisational outcomes.
- Strong, current networks across business and government relevant to the West Midlands.
- Strong communicator and influencer, skilled in negotiation, politically astute engagement, and leading inclusive co-creation with diverse stakeholders and business audiences across sectors.

Desirable Experience

- Knowledge of inward investment, capital attraction, economic development, visitor economy and/or scale-up finance ecosystems.
- Experience working with foreign governments, investment promotion agencies and global investors.

Skills & Capabilities

- Strategic thinker with sound judgement, able to translate ambition into disciplined delivery.
- Inclusive leadership: builds diverse, high-performing Boards; champions equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Communication and advocacy: compelling, credible and collaborative; adept in the media and at high-profile events.

System convening: brings together public, private and academic partners to drive measurable outcomes.

Personal Qualities

- Integrity, independence, and public service ethos.
- Constructive, supportive, and action-oriented.
- Politically astute and respectful of democratic accountability.



Timetable

DATE	ACTIVITY
Wednesday 28 th January	Campaign Launched
Wednesday 18 th February	Applications Close
19 th – 21 st February	Shortlisting
3 rd March	Steering Panel Interviews
5 th March	WMCA Final Panel

Terms of Appointment

- **Tenure:** Four-year term (renewal subject to performance and governance requirements).
- **Time commitment:** c. 2–3 days per month (with flexibility for peaks around major events/missions).
- **Remuneration:** Unremunerated; reasonable expenses reimbursed.
- **Location:** Birmingham (regional travel expected; occasional UK/overseas travel aligned to role).
- **Eligibility & conflicts:** Candidates must declare any conflicts of interest. Appointment is subject to reference and other standard checks.

Our Commitment to Inclusion

WMGC is committed to building a Board and leadership community that reflects the diversity of the West Midlands - its people, places, and sectors. We welcome applications from candidates of all backgrounds and particularly encourage interest from underrepresented groups. We will provide reasonable adjustments throughout the process and on appointment.



How to Apply

To express interest, please submit a CV and a covering letter outlining your suitability and motivation for the role.

The preferred method of application is online at www.berwickpartners.co.uk/95439

If you are unable to apply online, please email your application to response.manager@berwickpartners.co.uk

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Diversity Monitoring system, which will be found at the end of the application process.

For **detailed information** on how we process your personal data, please review our privacy policy on our website <https://berwickpartners.co.uk/privacy-and-cookie-policy/>

In line with GDPR, we ask that you **do NOT send us** any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember not to mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

If you have any queries or would like more information in regard to this document, please contact:

Marek Dobrowolski
Partner, UK Lead Place, Regeneration and Housing
Berwick Partners

 0121 654 5912

 Marek.Dobrowolski@berwickpartners.co.uk



Our UK Offices

London

20 Cannon Street
London
EC4M 6XD

Birmingham

6th Floor
Cornerblock
2 Cornwall Street
Birmingham
B3 2DX

Leeds

10 South Parade
Leeds
LS1 5QS

Manchester

8th Floor
1 Marsden Street
Manchester
M2 1HW

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