

**Written statement of a non-key decision**  
**Cabinet member corporate strategy and budget**

<b>Title</b>	<b>West Midlands Combined Authority</b>
Decision maker	Cabinet member corporate strategy and budget Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: <a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251</a>
Date of decision	10 August 2020
Report exemption class	Open
Purpose	To seek approval to withdraw as an observer from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and to stop paying the £25k membership fee starting this financial year 2020/21.
<b>Decision</b>	<b>That:</b> <b>(a) Herefordshire Council withdraws as an observer from the WMCA and ceases to pay the annual fee with effect from 1 April 2020; and</b>  <b>(b) Herefordshire Council works with other local and national rural authorities, and other organisations which represent such areas, to explore the implications of the Government's forthcoming English Devolution paper.</b>
Reason for the decision	As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at <a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=50033645">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=50033645</a>
Options considered	1. The council could remain as an observer in the WMCA. However, to date there has been no ascertainable benefit to the council and its administrative area in this option. WMCA's strategic investment decisions on transport, housing, planning, policing and economic development do not include Herefordshire. As an observer, the council are unable to influence WMCA's decision-making and there are no indications that future investment decisions and funding will include Herefordshire. Whilst the council could continue to remain an observer in order to influence the anticipated devolution white paper, it is anticipated that WMCA's primary interest will continue to focus on their constituent member

	<p>interests in a primarily urban area.</p> <p>2. The council could apply to become a constituent member, however this would require WMCA to approve this application and to submit a new establishment order to government. Herefordshire Council would also need to pay an annual membership fee of £500,000. WMCA is not expected to submit a parliamentary order in the near future therefore this is not a viable option</p>
Declarations of interest (see below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	14 August 2020

<p>Councillor: .....</p> <p>Cabinet member corporate strategy and budget (Councillor David Hitchiner)</p>	<p>Date 10 August 2020</p>
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- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;
- and
- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted.