

Media Release

Gleeds to support West Midlands Combined Authority in tackling the region's industry skills gap

On Friday the Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street, launched the West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA) new £5m Regional Construction Training Fund, which aims to recruit local people to help fill the 2,800 additional jobs created each year by the region's booming construction pipeline.

Following the Mayor's announcement at the Construction Futures conference in Wolverhampton, the WMCA is looking to collaborate with businesses to inform the region's approach to addressing the skills gap in the construction industry.

Research by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) has found that the West Midlands will have around 215,000 people employed in the sector by 2020 – an increase of more than 10,000 jobs since 2015.

The CITB's research has led to five key disciplines being identified as a priority for action, each of these disciplines will undergo assessment through a dedicated 'WMCA Construction Skills Work Group' headed by a relevant lead from industry. The five key disciplines are:

- Professional services and technical personnel
- Wood trades/ interior fit out
- Plant operatives/ fitters and ground works
- Form work steel fixers and concrete
- Bricklayers

The Professional Services and Technical Personnel Work Group will be led by Gleeds' Associate Director, Michael Parker who will be inviting experts from across the region to participate in helping to shape the WMCA's approach.



From left to right: Andy Street (Mayor of the West Midlands), Michael Parker (Associate Director, Gleeds), Julie Nugent (WMCA Director of Productivity and Skills) and Gareth Bradford (WMCA Director of Housing and Regeneration)

Speaking after the announcement, Michael Parker said:

“Tackling the industry skills gap is critical if we are to deliver and capitalise on the huge investment coming into the region over the next decade. Collaboration between the WMCA and the private sector is crucial to ensure our ambitions as a region are realised, therefore the Mayor's announcement comes at a pivotal time. I hope the organisations invited to participate in these

Work Groups will create the foundation for a long-term and constructive relationship based on shared investment of time and expertise."

Michael was the 2017 winner of the Birmingham Young Professional of the Year (BYPY) award and has dedicated his time to help develop and nurture talent within the West Midlands in his ambassadorial role.

Notes for editors