

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

Fifth Delegated Legislation Committee

DRAFT WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED
AUTHORITY (BUSINESS RATE SUPPLEMENTS
FUNCTIONS AND AMENDMENT) ORDER 2018

Tuesday 3 July 2018

No proofs can be supplied. Corrections that Members suggest for the final version of the report should be clearly marked in a copy of the report—not telephoned—and must be received in the Editor’s Room, House of Commons,

not later than

Saturday 7 July 2018

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2018

This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament licence, which is published at www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/.

The Committee consisted of the following Members:

Chair: IAN PAISLEY

Afriyie, Adam (<i>Windsor</i>) (Con)	† Morgan, Stephen (<i>Portsmouth South</i>) (Lab)
Ali, Rushanara (<i>Bethnal Green and Bow</i>) (Lab)	Russell-Moyle, Lloyd (<i>Brighton, Kemptown</i>) (Lab/Co-op)
† Allan, Lucy (<i>Telford</i>) (Con)	Sharma, Mr Virendra (<i>Ealing, Southall</i>) (Lab)
† Berry, Jake (<i>Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government</i>)	Skidmore, Chris (<i>Kingswood</i>) (Con)
† Crabb, Stephen (<i>Preseli Pembrokeshire</i>) (Con)	Smith, Angela (<i>Penistone and Stocksbridge</i>) (Lab)
† Elmore, Chris (<i>Ogmore</i>) (Lab)	† Thomas, Derek (<i>St Ives</i>) (Con)
† Hughes, Eddie (<i>Walsall North</i>) (Con)	Timms, Stephen (<i>East Ham</i>) (Lab)
† Jones, Mr David (<i>Clwyd West</i>) (Con)	† Tolhurst, Kelly (<i>Rochester and Strood</i>) (Con)
† McMahon, Jim (<i>Oldham West and Royton</i>) (Lab/Co-op)	Peter Stam, <i>Committee Clerk</i>
Moon, Mrs Madeleine (<i>Bridgend</i>) (Lab)	† attended the Committee

Fifth Delegated Legislation Committee

Tuesday 3 July 2018

[IAN PAISLEY *in the Chair*]

Draft West Midlands Combined Authority (Business Rate Supplements Functions and Amendment) Order 2018

2.30 pm

The Chair: If Members wish to remove their jackets, they may do so, because it is very warm in the Committee Room today.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Jake Berry): I beg to move,

That the Committee has considered the draft West Midlands Combined Authority (Business Rate Supplements Functions and Amendment) Order 2018.

The draft order, which was laid before the House on 7 June, will confer on the West Midlands combined authority the power to raise a business rates supplement, to be exercised by the Mayor. The draft order also amends the list of roads comprising the West Midlands combined authority key route network. As the draft order was laid before the House on 7 June and Members have had ample time to scrutinise its contents, I commend it to the Committee.

The Chair: I call the shadow Minister. I almost said the Leader of the Opposition—the hon. Gentleman is soon to be promoted, no doubt.

2.31 pm

Jim McMahon (Oldham West and Royton) (Lab/Co-op): I was going to say that it was a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Paisley, but I think you might have just got me the sack.

The draft order is not contentious. The same thing has been done in other areas, and we know that other combined authorities want to work towards this approach. It would, however, be remiss of me not to place on the record the Opposition's concern. It is all very well investing in infrastructure—that is something that we support, particularly outside London and the south-east, where there have been regional imbalances for decades—but we cannot take our eye off the ball when it comes to the revenue cuts that have been made to the component local authorities, which will feed through to the combined authority.

By way of example, we have seen transport cuts of 43% in Coventry and 27% in Wolverhampton. In one year alone, £20 million has been taken away from bus routes in England. If we are genuine about delivering a powerhouse or an engine, or even just making sure that every region can thrive, we have to build on the best possible foundations, and critical to that is revenue spending. I urge the Minister to speak to No. 11 and make the case for local government. For far too long, it has borne the brunt of austerity, while the civil service in Whitehall has grown. Let us fight collectively for the sector and do the best for our local authorities.

Question put and agreed to.

2.33 pm

Committee rose.