Independent review ordered into West Midlands Metro

November 22, 2021

An independent review will be launched into West Midlands Metro, which is set to scrutinise how it is run following a suspension of the services.

The services were suspended after a second series of cracks were found on the vehicles.

A subsequent visit from West Midlands mayor Andy Street, who is the chair of the West Midlands Combined Authority, has prompted the body to call for an impartial review of "the way Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) manages the delivery of new extensions and operation of metro services through a wholly owned company."

This is to ensure TfWM, which is part of the WMCA, has the right structures in place to hold both metro delivery and operations to account.

Andy Street visited the Midland Metro Ltd tram depot in Wednesbury, where he saw first-hand what the WMCA calls "the hard work of the team tasked with bringing the trams safely back to service" following their withdrawal on Saturday 13 November.

Andy Street said: "The situation with the metro is incredibly disappointing and frustrating, and so on behalf of passengers I have asked for an independent review to establish what exactly has gone wrong and what changes need to be made in how those in authority are held to account to ensure we avoid this ever happening again.

"It is such an unsatisfactory situation, but I am determined to stand up for passengers and get their questions answered and the metro back in service ASAP."

Midland Metro Limited is still aiming to resume services within four weeks – the timeline issued when the trams were first removed from service.

Cllr Ian Ward, WMCA portfolio holder for transport and leader of Birmingham City Council said: "The tram is an essential and valued part of our regional transport network. However I have had serious concerns about the metro construction for some time so welcome the independent review.

 "The passengers and businesses have been badly let down and we owe it to them to investigate this fully."