

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
LEEDS CITY REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2021**

Present:

Sir Roger Marsh OBE DL (Chair)	Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership
Mayor Tracy Brabin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Prof Shirley Congdon	Higher Education
Helen Featherstone	Culture
Kate Hainsworth	Leeds Community Foundation
Rashik Parmar MBE	IBM EMEA (Chair, Employment & Skills Panel)
Kamran Rashid	Third Sector
Mandy Ridyard	Produmax Ltd
Andrew Wright	A W Hainsworth Ltd (Chair, Business Innovation & Growth Panel)
Sandy Needham	Chamber of Commerce
Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Council
Councillor James Lewis	Leeds City Council
Councillor Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Council

In attendance:

Ben Still	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Angela Taylor	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Liz Hunter	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Smyth	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Julie Haigh	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
James Young	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority

31. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Professor Simon Pringle, Mark Roberts, Kully Thiarai, Peter Mucklow and Councillors Denise Jeffery, Tim Swift and Richard Cooper.

32. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the requirements of the LEP Board Members' Code of Conduct, Members were reminded of their obligations to review their individual register of interests before each LEP Board meeting and to declare any interests.

33. Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no items on the agenda that required the exclusion of the press and public.

34. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2021

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2021 be approved.

35. Governance Arrangements

The Board considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services which provided an update on the process to seek new private sector members for the Culture, Arts and Creative Industries Committee.

From early August 2021 to 30 August 2021, a recruitment campaign was conducted to attract new private sector Members to join the Culture, Arts and Creative Industries Committee. The response to the campaign was very encouraging, with applicants from a range of sectors, backgrounds, geography and experience being considered. A list of proposed private sector Members was tabled for the Board to review. The Chair thanked officers for their guidance through the recruitment process.

Mayor Tracy Brabin added that although she was very happy with the proposed private sector membership of the Culture, Arts and Creative Industries Committee she would like to see more representation from Calderdale and Wakefield so a further recruitment campaign shall be conducted in the future. The Mayor thanked officers for their work in helping to create the new committee so quickly.

Following the dissolution of the Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panel and embedding consideration of inclusive growth into all committees, Members were asked to appoint members of the former panel onto new committees to further support that process.

Further to the appointment of Sandy Needham as a co-optee Board Member at the

LEP Board meeting on 8 June 2021, it was proposed that Beckie Hart of the Confederation of British Industry be the named substitute Co-optee Board Member.

Resolved: That the LEP Board:

- (i) Note the contents of the report.
- (ii) Recommend the private sector membership of the Culture, Arts and Creative Industries Committee as at Appendix 1.
- (iii) Recommend the appointment of Sam Keighley as a private sector member of the Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee.
- (iv) Recommend the appointment of Karl Oxford as a private sector member of the Business, Economy and Innovation Committee.
- (v) Propose the above appointments to the Combined Authority at their 21 October 2021 meeting.
- (vi) Approve the recommendation and nominate Beckie Hart of the CBI as the named substitute member for the co-optee Board member role, currently held by Sandy Needham of the West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce.

36. Economic Reporting

The Board considered a report of the Director of Strategy, Communications and Policing which provided an update on the latest activity and intelligence around understanding the impact of COVID-19 and EU Exit.

The report highlighted the increase in activity in urban centres across West Yorkshire's town and city centres and shows it remains at a higher level than at almost any point since the start of the pandemic. The employment situation in the region continues to improve with an increase of around 7000 payrolled employees between June and July 2021. This measure of employment is now slightly higher than its pre-pandemic level in February 2020 and 31,000 higher than at its lowest point during the crisis in February 2021.

The number of jobs furloughed on the Job Retention Scheme was 57,000 at the end of June 2021. This equates to 6% of eligible jobs in the region. Members were concerned that with the scheme ending in September the unemployment figure could rise in the next quarter.

The Board asked for further information on the 96,600 people who are claiming out-of-work benefits in West Yorkshire and whether that figure includes recipients of Job Seekers Allowance, Universal Credit and other benefits. Members wanted to understand if the planned reduction in Universal Credit would impact these recipients. It was stated that the majority of people claiming out-of-work benefits in West Yorkshire are people who are receiving Universal Credit and will be impacted by the planned reduction from central government.

Members highlighted the continued challenges of recruiting into the digital sector of the economy, with a high level of vacancies noted, and the sector was showing great appetite to diversify its workforce. The Board were advised that digital professionals are in short supply in the region and this was an issue before the pandemic. A report from Leeds City Council has been commissioned on diversity in the digital and technology sectors and that report is expected to produce recommendations to help address the shortage in the future.

Resolved: That the Board note the latest intelligence around the economic impacts of COVID-19 and EU Exit and consider how this relates to their work and future work plans.

37. Economic Recovery

The Board considered a report of the Director of Policy and Development which provided an update on the developments around the COVID-19 crisis, and to seek the Board's views and endorsement for the draft refreshed West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Plan and the connected Business Productivity and Resilience Plan.

The Economic Recovery Board agreed to refresh the Economic Recovery Plan in June 2021. This report reflects the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions and builds on the existing plan's themes on reimagining and resilience. The Economic Recovery Board also discussed how the West Yorkshire Mayoral Pledges should be put to the centre of delivery of the plan.

Members were pleased to see productivity as a key metric within the Economic Recovery Plan but should not deflect from the Authority deliver on its inclusive growth agenda. To this end, the Third Sector was highlighted as being key to helping deliver inclusive growth throughout the region as they have the trust of those communities and individuals that others organisation do not.

The Board noted the continued impact the culture and creative industries are making in the economic recovery of West Yorkshire as highlighted in the report. Industry professionals have passed on their gratitude to the Authority as the culture sector is recognised, not only in its contribution towards jobs and growth, but also for engaging communities, empowering individuals and creating regional pride.

Resolved: That the LEP Board:

- (i) Note the update on COVID-19 support in West Yorkshire.
- (ii) Endorse the connected Business Productivity and Resilience Plan.

38. Corporate Performance

The Board considered a report of the Director, Corporate Services which provided an update on a range of corporate and governance matters.

External audit work on the 2020/21 final accounts is almost concluded and work is now underway to develop the budget for 2022/23 and refresh the medium term financial strategy. The Board will keep informed of this through regular reports and it was noted that the LEP Chair is a member of the Finance, Resources and Corporate Committee that is overseeing the development of the budget.

The preparation of the LEP Annual Delivery Plan has been on hold following advice from Development for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy earlier in the year. However, in mid-August the Cities and Local Growth Unit requested that the 2021/22 Annual Delivery Plans are prepared and submitted by 21 September 2021. In view of the relatively short notice that has been given, the LEP Board was asked to delegate responsibility for the content of the plan.

Resolved: That the LEP Board

- (i) Note the corporate performance information provided.
- (ii) Delegate final sign off to the 2021/22 Annual Delivery Plan to the Chair of the LEP Board and the Managing Director.

39. LEP Review

The Board considered a report from the Director of Strategy, Communications and Policing which provided an update on the progress of the national review of LEPs.

The government's original plan was to report before the summer 2021 parliamentary recess but this has been delayed due to the review being intertwined with the Levelling Up agenda. A new date for the publication has not been announced although the expectation is that it will be in October or November 2021.

It was stated that the integration of the LEP and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the synergy and efficiencies that result from this have given some resilience to any impact from the review but withdrawal of LEP funding will still be a challenge for the Authority. This integration and further embedding has been reinforced by the new governance structures at the Authority and members of the Board being members of decision making committees. It was highlighted that the core message is that the relationship between the public and private sector is paramount and one that the Authority will seek to protect and enhance going forward.

Resolved: That the LEP Board note the report.

40. Draft Minutes of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Held 29 July 2021

That the draft minutes of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 29 July 2021 be noted.

41. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 30 November 2021.