

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
LEEDS CITY REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 13 JUNE 2023 AT COMMITTEE ROOM 1,  
WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS**

---

**Present:**

Mark Roberts (Interim Chair)	Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership
Mayor Tracy Brabin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Council
Councillor Jane Scullion	Calderdale Council
Councillor Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Council
Councillor James Lewis	Leeds City Council
Councillor Michael Graham	Wakefield Council
Nicky Chance-Thompson	Private Sector Representative
Asma Iqbal	Private Sector Representative (Diversity Champion)
Fatima Khan-Shah	Private Sector Representative (Inclusivity Champion)
Barney Mynott	Advisory Representative (West Yorkshire Business Groups)
Tom Riordan	Chief Executive, Leeds City Council

**In attendance:**

Ben Still (Chief Executive)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss (Chief Operating Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philip Witcherley (Interim Director)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Caroline Allen (Head of Legal & Gov)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Jo Barham (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Julie Haigh (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Myles Larrington (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Thomas Purvis (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**1. Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair opened the proceedings by welcoming Fatima Khan-Shah, West Yorkshire's Inclusivity Champion, and Barney Mynott, representative of the West Yorkshire Business Groups, to the meeting. It was noted that Mr Mynott had succeeded Beckie Hart of the CBI in this role and the Chair made a formal note of thanks to Ms Hart for the many years in which she had been a member

of the Board. The Chair also congratulated Cllr Jane Scullion on her recent appointment as leader of Calderdale Council and he welcomed her to the Board in her new capacity.

The Chair referred to his own personal announcement that he would be stepping down as Chair of the Board and from other committees of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority at the end of June. The Chair observed that it had been a privilege to be part of the LEP Board since he first joined in 2017, to be involved in shaping the growth deal and the integration of the LEP over the last year.

The Chair concluded his remarks by thanking all those who had sent him good wishes for the future.

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Claire Douglas (York City Council), private sector representatives Professor Shirley Congdon, Kamran Rashid, Mandy Ridyard, Kully Thiarai and guest attendee, Peter Mucklow (Department for Education).

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests at the meeting.

## **3. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

## **4. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2023**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board held on 8 March 2023 were approved.

## **5. Mayor's Update**

The Mayor presented her latest update to the LEP Board highlighting the following matters:

- The Mayor highlighted the West Yorkshire Plan and observed that this had represented a significant collaboration and co-operation between five local authority leaders and five important regional missions. The Mayor noted that this had put West Yorkshire in a positive position to

- achieve the missions by the target date of 2040.
- In relation to buses, the Mayor noted that the current franchising system was sub-optimal given that 80% of the public in West Yorkshire used buses and far too many people were being inconvenienced as a consequence of decision making by operators. The Mayor sighted the example of First Bus, which had announced record profits despite making cuts to bus routes. The Mayor emphasised that she would be robustly raising these concerns with First Bus during her next meeting with the operator.
  - The Mayor noted that First Group had recently lost its TransPennine Express franchise, following a decision by the Department for Transport (DfT). The company had become the operator of last resort. The Mayor had met with the route operators and held discussions on their plans and hoped the route would be stabilised. The deadline for further improvements was 21 June and the Mayor expressed a desire to see changes made to the route as soon as possible.
  - The Mayor noted that she had carried out several vital international engagements to promote the region, including meetings that were held with the Japanese Ambassador and other ambassadors. The Mayor had also scheduled a future meeting with the French Ambassador to promote greater links between West Yorkshire and Europe, especially trade and cultural exchanges.
  - The Mayor highlighted The WOW Barn Leeds 2023 festival and noted that it had been hugely successful.
  - The Mayor closed her remarks by thanking Mark Roberts for his contribution as Interim Chair of the LEP Board. The Mayor further indicated that she was excited by the prospect of a deepened relationship between her office and the private sector representatives as the LEP Board evolves into a new structure.

The Chair thanked the Mayor for her update.

## 6. LEP Evolution

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Governance Services which noted the local authority representatives and private sector members appointed to the Board for the new municipal year 2023/24. The report also noted the vacancy for the LEP Chair and Deputy Chair and the appointment of several LEP Board champions.

The Chair introduced the item and officers then presented the report, they explained that:

- For the Interim Chair and members to note the **local authority representatives**, appointed to the Board alongside;
- The process to seek **new private sector membership** of the Board and the renewal of the terms of some existing private sector members.

- Members noted the vacancy for the **LEP Chair** and noted the Mayor's appointment of a **LEP Deputy Chair**, which would be announced to the meeting.
- To confirm the following appointments:
  - LEP SME Champion – To be confirmed
  - LEP Diversity Champion – Asma Iqbal
  - LEP Trade & Investment Champion – To be confirmed
  - A co-optee member and a named substitute member to the LEP Board to represent the Business Representatives Group – Barney Mynott
- Members made several observations as follows:
  - Members commented that the roles of Diversity and Inclusion Champion should be better integrated, so both representatives could work together much easier.
  - Members expressed a collective desire to have more meetings of the LEP Board in the forthcoming municipal year, regardless of whether they were formal or informal sessions.

**Resolved:**

That the LEP Board:

- i. Noted the contents of the report.
- ii. Noted the local authority representatives and substitutes appointed to the LEP Board set out in **Appendix 1** of this report.
- iii. Confirmed the current private sector representatives on the LEP Board as set out in **Appendix 1** of the report and agreed to extend the terms of office for Professor Shirley Congdon, Kamran Rashid and Kully Thiarai, each for a further three-year term to 28 February 2026.
- iv. Noted that recruitment for new private sector LEP Board members was underway and delegated authority to the Mayor and Chief Executive to make appointments as appropriate on behalf of the Board and to update the Board accordingly.
- v. Noted the update on the vacancies for the **LEP Chair** and **LEP Deputy Chair**.
- vi. Confirmed the member of the LEP Board to represent and engage with the SME business community and chair the Business Communications Group in the role of **SME Champion**.
- vii. Confirmed a **LEP Diversity Champion**.

- viii. Noted the recommendation in relation to the member of the LEP Board who would act as **Trade and Investment Champion**.
- ix. Appointed **Barney Mynott** of the **Federation of Small Businesses** (FSB) as a **co-optee** member to the LEP Board to represent the Business Representatives Group and **Martin Hathaway** of the **Mid Yorkshire Chamber** as the named substitute for Barney Mynott for a one year period.
- x. Approved the extension of the terms of appointment of **co-optee** members Asma Iqbal and Nicky Chance-Thompson by a further year.
- xi. Provided feedback on the format and frequency of meetings during 2023/24.

## 7. Nomination to the CA and Outside Bodies

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Governance Services regarding the nomination of a LEP Member and Substitute LEP Member to the Combined Authority and nominations of other members to the thematic committees of the CA, along with nominations to the Transport for the North Partnership Board and several external outside bodies.

The Chair introduced the item and officers presented the report, they explained that:

- A **LEP Member and Substitute Member** was required to be nominated to attend Combined Authority meetings (Member and Substitute)
- LEP Board Members were required **to be nominated to thematic decision-making committees** including:
  - Business, Economy and Innovation Committee (One vacancy)
  - Climate, Energy and Environment Committee (One vacancy)
  - Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee (One Vacancy)
  - Transport Committee (Two Vacancies – One Position with Voting Rights)
- A LEP Board Member was required **to be nominated to Transport for the North**.
- A LEP Board Member was required to be nominated as the Board member on the Northern Powerhouse 11 (NP11) and on the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund Strategic Oversight Board.

### **Resolved:**

That the LEP Board:

- i. Noted the contents of the report.

- ii. Approved the proposal that the LEP Board Chair, once appointed, would be the LEP Member on the Combined Authority and that the LEP Board Deputy Chair, once appointed, was the Substitute LEP Member on the Combined Authority.
- iii. Confirmed its current nominations for private sector LEP Board membership (and roles of Deputy Chairs) on the Combined Authority's committees, as set out in Appendix 1.
- iv. Delegated authority to the Mayor and LEP Chair, once appointed, to make further nominations to the Combined Authority for private sector LEP Board membership (and roles of Deputy Chairs) on Combined Authority committees following the outcome of the current recruitment process.
- v. Nominated non LEP Board private sector representatives to committees to be appointed by the Combined Authority at its Annual Meeting, in accordance with Appendix 1, including extension of the terms where appropriate.
- vi. Noted and agreed the proposals as set out in this report as to the arrangements in relation to a LEP Board member to be a member of TfN's Partnership Board, together with a substitute, noting that TfN current practice was to co-opt the LEP's representative on the Partnership Board to the TfN Board.
- vii. Noted the LEP Board appointments to other external bodies of NP11 (Northern Powerhouse 11) and NPIF SOB (Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund Strategic Oversight Board).

## **8. Economic Update**

Members considered a report on the latest economic and business intelligence, particularly relating to the cost of living and doing business.

Officers introduced the report and explained that:

- CPI inflation had risen by 8.7% in the 12 months to April 2023.
- Core inflation had risen by 6.8%, in the year up to April, up from 6.2% in the year to March.
- The largest single price pressure on households remained food and non-alcoholic beverages, where prices had risen by 19.0% in the year to April, down from 19.1% in the year to March. Vegetables were the largest contributor to this price rise.
- On 11 May, the Bank of England increased the Bank Rate by 0.25% to 4.5%.
- Compared with the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast to accompany the Spring Budget, the latest Bank of England forecast had a more optimistic short-term outlook, but a more pessimistic medium-term rate of growth for the UK economy.

## West Yorkshire - Economic Data

- April saw 1,897 business registrations in West Yorkshire, as well as 1,643 business liquidations, to give 254 net new businesses month-on-month.
- This was around 500 fewer net new businesses compared with the same month of 2022, largely due to a fall in business registrations in April 2023 against April 2022.
- Business registrations were particularly strong in April in Bradford and Kirklees. These two districts accounted for 25% and 20% of new businesses respectively, despite being home to 22% and 19% of all West Yorkshire businesses.

Members made the following observations:

- Members observed that inflation remained high which was why the economic environment in West Yorkshire was still challenging for businesses.
- Members noted that improvements to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's website would likely help to increase awareness and uptake of the Energy Emergency Grants Scheme amongst businesses.

### Resolved:

- i. That the LEP Board noted the contents of the report.
- ii. That the LEP Board noted the latest economic evidence and considered it as part of the decision making process.

## 9. Economic Strategy

The Board considered an update report on the development of the Economic Strategy for West Yorkshire, in accordance with the West Yorkshire Plan.

Officers introduced the report and explained that:

- Development of an Economic Strategy for West Yorkshire had been taking place alongside development of the West Yorkshire Plan to ensure synergy and alignment between both documents.
- The Economic Strategy would focus on the delivery of **Mission One: A Prosperous West Yorkshire: an inclusive economy with well paid jobs**. This would align the Combined Authority's existing policies and strategies on areas of economic development into a single plan.
- This would also cover actions to make West Yorkshire a net a zero region by 2038.
- Drafting of the strategy would begin later in the summer.
- A draft for discussion would be circulated to Board members later in the year.

Members made the following observations:

- Members observed that the West Yorkshire Combined Authority was already undertaking many measures to help people into work, however these needed to be communicated much better to the public.
- Members expressed a desire to see more done to improve skills and training within the region, as this would likely help to improve levels of employment, especially amongst women and BAME groups.
- Members felt that there was an opportunity with the Fair Work Charter to achieve this through a strategic forum to combine relevant expertise to address these barriers.

**Resolved:**

- i. That the LEP Board noted the contents of the report.
- ii. That the LEP Board noted the update on the work and the Economic Strategy Prospectus in Appendix 1 and provided comment on the approach.

## **10. Investment Zones**

The Board considered a report on proposals relating to Investment Zones, with feedback sought on interventions that can drive forward business growth and innovation in the West Yorkshire region.

Officers introduced the report and explained that:

- In the Spring Budget, the Chancellor announced the Government would introduce Investment Zones – a new policy instrument that was designed to help areas level-up, increase the rates of innovation and secure additional private sector investment.
- West Yorkshire was selected as one of the Mayoral Combined Authorities to progress proposals for hosting an Investment Zone.
- The Investment Zone prospectus identified five sectors which selected areas must align their proposals to, these were health and life sciences; digital and tech; advanced manufacturing, creative industries; and green industries.
- Policy programmes would be developed over the next five years with a supporting budget of £80 million to be spent on:
  - The creation of new tax-zones that provided businesses with certain exemptions.
  - Business Rates Relief on newly occupied business premises.
  - Opportunity to introduce new revenue or capital programmes which could operate on a regional geography.
- The Board would be provided with an update on the progress to date.
- Members made the following observations:



- Members observed that funding should be assessed not just from a West Yorkshire centric perspective, but also from a Northern perspective to ensure that any investments fitted into the wider work of partner authorities across the North.

**Resolved:**

- i. That the LEP Board noted the contents of the report.
- ii. That the LEP Board noted progress on Investment Zones.
- iii. That the LEP Board provided feedback on revenue-focused interventions which would support businesses in the chosen sectors to grow and scale.

## 11. Committees Update Report

The Board considered a report providing an update on the work of the six Thematic Committees as follows:

The Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture, presented an update on the proceedings of the **Business, Economy and Innovation Committee** which met on 29 March 2023. The Committee considered a range of reports on innovation finance policy alongside an overview of the Combined Authority’s decision to invest in Northern Gritstone Ltd. Members also discussed two reports on EDI Strategy and the “principles” for Business Support. A further update on inward investment was also provided to committee members.

The Chair, Mark Roberts, presented an update on the proceedings of the **Climate, Energy and Environment Committee**, which met on 21 March 2023. The Committee considered a paper on the monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the Climate and Environment Plan (CEP), approved £2,060,000 of funding for the Better Neighbourhoods programme, along with £366,310 of funding for the Combined Authority Assets Solar Project. Committee members were also updated on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The Mayor, Tracy Brabin, presented an update on the proceedings of the **Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee** which had met for a private workshop on 28 March 2023. Committee members received an update on progress against the Culture, Heritage and Sport Framework. Members also shared their successes and discussed how this could be mapped against the Framework. They were also asked for feedback on what a West Yorkshire Trailblazer deal should include from a culture, heritage and sport perspective.

The Chair, Mark Roberts, presented an update on the proceedings of the **Employment and Skills Committee**, which met on 23 March 2023. The Committee discussed reports on Adult Skills, Green Jobs Taskforce and

Future Funding Priorities. Members received a verbal update on the Spring Budget Statement and from the Chambers of Commerce on the Local Skills Improvement Plans work.

Cllr Jane Scullion presented an update on the proceedings of **the Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee**, which met on 2 March 2023. Committee members considered reports on Strategic Place Partnership, Creating Places and Accelerating Infrastructure Programme Development, the Dementia Task Force and the West Yorkshire Digital Blueprint and Local Digital Partnership.

Members also received an update on relevant monitoring indicators from the State of the Region report and endorsed the Strategic Place Partnership Business Plan. There was also an update on the ongoing work of the Dementia Ready Task Force and proposals to refresh the 2019 Digital Framework and creation of a Local Digital Partnership. Several delivery schemes were also given additional approvals.

The Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee had also met on 1 June 2023 and considered a number of reports. Members were presented with a report which provided an update on the relevant monitoring indicators and set out their performance to support the work of the Committee. The Committee received an update on the workstreams relating to the Combined Authority's activity to support the housing growth activity across the region, including an update on the Mayoral pledge to deliver 5000 affordable and sustainable homes and a summary of West Yorkshire's revenue and capital programmes supporting delivery of housing in the region. Members received an update on activity related to Strategic Sites. The projects and programmes referenced in the report were being managed concurrently by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, ensuring that links were drawn between them, to add value and to make sure that they collectively supported the organisational objectives and those of the CA's partners.

Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Chair of the **Transport Committee**, presented an update on the proceedings of the committee which met on 10 March. Members considered reports on the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), passenger experience and a project approval for a scheme at Bradford Interchange.

Members also discussed a draft Passenger Charter, an update on bus infrastructure funding, a quarterly report on the performance of the transport network in West Yorkshire and a report on the progression of several investment initiatives.

The Transport Committee also met on 26 May 2023 and considered a number of reports. Approval from members was sought to commence the public consultation of the emerging Rail Strategy in summer 2023. Members discussed the establishment of arrangements for the Local Transport Forums in 2023/24. Members received a quarterly update on relevant transport developments within West Yorkshire.

The Committee received an update on the state of the local bus network and the ongoing delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan revenue programme. Members were also provided with an update on the performance of the transport network in West Yorkshire, including an update on the Combined Authority's passenger facing activity. Members received a report outlining the actions taken following a review of the operation of school bus services provided to primary schools ahead of the 2023/24 academic year. The Committee also considered several project approvals.

**Resolved:**

- i. That the LEP Board noted the contents of the report.
- ii. That the updates from the Thematic Committees were noted.

**12. West Yorkshire Plan**

The Board considered a report in which members were asked to endorse the adoption of the West Yorkshire Plan by the Combined Authority.

Officers presented the report and explained that:

- Work had been ongoing over a number of months to develop a West Yorkshire Plan.
- This would provide an overarching strategic framework for the region and set the trajectory for the long-term up to 2040.
- The plan included five missions that were aspirational and represented long term ambitions for West Yorkshire. State of the Region reporting would continue to provide the monitoring framework underpinning the West Yorkshire Plan targets and wider policies and strategies for the Combined Authority.
- A draft of the West Yorkshire Plan was approved at the Combined Authority meeting on 25 May. Activity was therefore now focused on bringing key messages from the plan to life through videos, infographics, and other means.
- A launch event is being planned for 16 June bringing together political leaders, the Mayor and key stakeholders.

**Resolved:**

- i. That the LEP Board noted the contents of the report.
- ii. That LEP Board Members endorsed the adoption of the West Yorkshire Plan.

**13. Draft Minutes of the Combined Authority held on 16 March 2023**

The Chair asked members of the Board to note that the draft Minutes of the

Combined Authority held on 16 March 2023 were included in the pack of papers for information.

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the LEP Board was scheduled to be held on 29 November 2023. This was subject to the approval of the proposed Calendar of Meetings 2023-24 at the Combined Authority's Annual Meeting in June.