

WEST YORKSHIRE BUSINESS BOARD (FORMERLY LEEDS CITY REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD)

**MEETING TO BE HELD AT 2.00 PM ON WEDNESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER
2023
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON
STREET, LEEDS**

A G E N D A

Please note that this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Combined Authority's internet site. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. Generally, the public seating areas will not be filmed; however, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Governance Services on 0113 251 7220.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the requirements of the LEP Board Members' Code of Conduct, members have an obligation to review their register of interests before each meeting and to declare any interests.

If an interest has not been entered onto the LEP's register, then members must disclose the interest at any meeting at which they are present and where they have a disclosable interest in any matter being considered and where the matter is not a sensitive interest.

3. EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2023

(Pages 1 - 12)

5. CHAIR'S UPDATE

(Lead Member: Mandy Ridyard)

6. MAYOR'S UPDATE

(Lead Member: Mayor Tracy Brabin)

7. STRENGTHENING PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

(Lead Member: Mandy Ridyard, Director: Felix Kumi-Ampofo)

(Pages 13 - 20)

8. ECONOMIC UPDATE

(Lead Member: Mandy Ridyard, Director: Sarah Eaton)

(Pages 21 - 40)

9. ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND DIGITAL BLUEPRINT

(Lead Member: Mandy Ridyard, Director: Felix Kumi-Ampofo)

(Pages 41 - 44)

For Information

10. MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

(Pages 45 - 46)

11. DATE OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE BUSINESS BOARD

The first meeting of the West Yorkshire Business Board will be held on Wednesday 12 June 2024.



**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.

Report to:	Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership / The West Yorkshire Business Board
Date:	29 November 2023
Subject:	Strengthening Private Sector Engagement
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director Inclusive Economy, Skills & Culture
Author:	Sarah Bowes, Interim Head of Business

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To agree a proposed way forward for the evolution of the LEP Board, with this meeting being the last formal LEP Board meeting.
- 1.2 To seek feedback on proposals to strengthen private sector engagement more broadly.
- 1.3 To nominate a representative of the LEP and a substitute to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (“the Combined Authority”).
- 1.4 To nominate private sector representatives to committees of the Combined Authority and to Deputy Chair vacancies on thematic committees.

2. Information

- 2.1 The outcome of the LEP review and the changes to statutory requirements has provided an opportunity to review how the Mayor and the Combined Authority engage with the private sector.
- 2.2 The LEP Board has provided a key convening role over the years to ensure the voice of the private sector is heard, particularly around business issues. The Combined Authority’s thematic committees also provide this strong connection with the private sector, ensuring the private sector voice is heard across a range of agendas and within the decision-making process.
- 2.3 The proposals below set out how we can strengthen and build on this engagement through improvements to both formal and informal means.

New West Yorkshire Business Board

- 2.4 Earlier this year, the LEP Board discussed its evolving role with an emphasis on ensuring that the strong partnership between the public and private sector is further strengthened.

- 2.5 Since these discussions, extensive engagement has taken place with new and existing 'LEP Board' members and business representative groups to inform and shape a new public private partnership. This engagement culminated in a private sector engagement event on 15th November in which the following recommendations were proposed:
- The LEP Board from here on in will become known as the **West Yorkshire Business Board (WYBB)**.
 - Some meetings of the Board are to be held in **private** to allow for more informal discussions and debates. Supporting notes will be prepared to support these meetings. Reports will be taken to committees and the Combined Authority on the outcome of these discussions. In line with the current requirements of Article 10 of the Constitution, the Board will hold a minimum of one meeting each year in public.
 - The WYBB will provide **thought leadership** on a range of regional issues, focusing on business and the economy.
 - Members to have **specific portfolios** and areas of expertise within which to support the Mayor and Mayor's Business Advisor including participating in events and roundtables on behalf of the Combined Authority.
 - Provide a key route for **commissioning research** to support activities, for example by the Yorkshire & Humber Policy Engagement & Research Network (Y-PERN) and the West Yorkshire Scientific Advisory Group (WYSAG).
- 2.6 It should be noted that although the Board will become known as the West Yorkshire Business Board, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Order 2014 as modified by West Yorkshire Combined Authority (Election of Mayor and Functions) Order 2021 ("the 2014 Order") still makes reference to the "Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership" for the purpose of West Yorkshire Combined Authority membership. The legal position will only change when the current legislation is amended so that reference to the LEP is no longer required.
- 2.7 To support the new arrangements, a Mayoral Business Advisor (MBA) has been appointed to provide leadership and advice on a range of business issues. Mandy Ridyard, as the MBA will also chair meetings of the West Yorkshire Business Board.
- 2.8 To further strengthen the new West Yorkshire Business Board, a number of new members have been appointed by the Mayor and Combined Authority Chief Executive:
- Annette Joseph MBE – Digital and tech
 - Jane Atkinson CBE – Energy/ Climate
 - Sherin Matthew – Digital and tech
 - Aaron Holt – Manufacturing

- Lisa Johnson- Digital and tech
- Natalie Sykes – Transport
- Nicky Chance -Thompson – Culture/Heritage (formerly co-opted member)
- Asma Iqbal – Professional Services (formerly co-opted member)
- Fara Butt – Manufacturing (formerly co-opted member)

They join the existing private sector members of the Board who are:

- Mandy Ridyard (Chair and Mayor’s Business Advisor) – Manufacturing
- Kully Thiarai – Culture
- Kamran Rashid – Third sector
- Professor Shirley Congdon – Higher Education

Public/Private Partnership Arrangements

- 2.9 The model of partnership between the public and private sector in West Yorkshire is held up at a national level as good practice. It is important that this model of deep partnership continues to evolve. The private sector will remain represented within the Mayoral Combined Authority and its committees and will continue to be a fundamental partner in decision-making and delivery. Paragraphs 2.11 to 2.16 address the arrangements for private sector representation within the Combined Authority. Nominations to the Combined Authority and its thematic committees are made annually as part of the annual meeting process which provides an opportunity for the WYBB to review nominations going forward.

Nomination of “LEP” Member to the Combined Authority

- 2.10 The 2014 Order continues to provide that the Combined Authority shall appoint a member of the LEP, nominated by the LEP, to be a Combined Authority Member. The Combined Authority must also appoint a substitute LEP Member to act in their absence.
- 2.11 The Board are asked to nominate as follows to the Combined Authority:

Member	Chair of the West Yorkshire Business Board – Mandy Ridyard
Substitute	Asma Iqbal

Nominations to Thematic Committees of the Combined Authority

- 2.12 The five thematic decision-making committees of the Combined Authority are currently chaired by a Combined Authority Member who is lead for that thematic area, with the Deputy Chair traditionally being a ‘LEP Board’ member with voting rights. There are currently three deputy chair vacancies which will be discussed at the meeting. These nominations are reviewed annually as part of the Combined Authority Annual Meeting process.

Committee	Deputy Chair
Business, Economy & Innovation Committee	Asma Iqbal
Climate, Energy & Environment Committee	To be confirmed
Place, Regeneration & Housing Committee	To be confirmed

- 2.13 The Board are asked to confirm the continuation of the following deputy chairs who, on the recommendation of the LEP Board, were appointed by the Combined Authority at its annual meeting on 22 June 2023:

Committee	Deputy Chair
Culture, Heritage & Sport Committee	Nicky Chance-Thompson
Employment & Skills Committee	Shirley Congdon

Finance, Resources & Corporate Committee and Transport Committee

- 2.14 The LEP have previously been invited by the Combined Authority to nominate members to the Finance, Resources & Corporate Committee and the Transport Committee.
- 2.15 The LEP member nominated to the Finance, Resources & Corporate Committee also previously acted as Deputy Chair. However, it is proposed that in future the Deputy Chair position be reserved for the Deputy Mayor, who is currently the Leader of Leeds City Council. The Board are asked to consider and recommend the nomination of the following member to the Finance, Resources & Corporate Committee:

Committee	Private Sector Representative
Finance, Resources & Corporate Committee	Mandy Ridyard

- 2.16 The Board are also asked to consider the nomination of a member to the Transport Committee.
- 2.17 Where nominees are still to be agreed, the Board are asked to delegate confirmation of nominations to the Mayoral Business Advisor in consultation with the Mayor for subsequent appointment by the Combined Authority.
- 2.18 All of the nominations referenced above are subject to formal appointment by the Combined Authority at its meeting on 7 December 2023.

New Mayoral Council

- 2.19 To ensure the Mayor and the Combined Authority are maximising engagement channels with a range of larger business and thought leaders, it is proposed to establish a Mayor's Council. Chaired by the Mayor, it is proposed that this will convene some of the largest and most influential businesses and stakeholders in the region to provide the voice of large business in the region:

- Support international activity including trade visits and foreign direct investment activity.
- Influence mayoral and Combined Authority policy and programmes (along with the WYBB).
- Ensure the Combined Authority understands big business challenges in the region and can utilise appropriate levers to support these employment intensive businesses.
- In time, develop a partnership of ambassadors and champions for West Yorkshire, lobbying for and promoting West Yorkshire.

A Framework for Business Engagement – Stronger Together

- 2.20 In addition to this new public private partnership to replace the LEP Board, and the new Mayoral Council, work has been taking place to develop a Business Engagement Framework to further strengthen all engagement with the private sector.
- 2.21 Whilst formal and informal business engagement does already take place, current arrangements do not always allow business views/insights to be used in a way that can support policy and programme development across the whole range of CA agendas.
- 2.22 In addition, current business engagement does not always represent the entire business population and reflect the views of a cross-section of West Yorkshire businesses.
- 2.23 More diverse business engagement not only results in better policy design and programme development aligned to the needs of all our communities, it also provide the opportunity to develop and own a shared narrative across the public and private sectors for West Yorkshire.
- 2.24 At the engagement event on 15th November, this was discussed and the following recommendations/principles proposed. These will be developed for further discussion at the first West Yorkshire Business Board meeting.

Areas of focus include:

- Providing clear reasoning as to why businesses should engage with the Combined Authority e.g. key sector strengths, economic health of the region.
- Look to existing networks and strengthen our connections rather than begin everything from scratch.
- Appreciate the value of building relationships with the third sector, academic institutions and government departments.

- Learning lessons from the successes and challenges of previous iterations of regional private sector engagement.
- Developing a clear value proposition and “elevator pitch” for the region for business leaders, ambassadors and other allies to promote West Yorkshire.
- Making sure there are workable actions for both the Combined Authority and private sector representatives.

2.25 In parallel, consideration is being given to the strategic relationship between the Combined Authority and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector, with discussion ongoing. A Memorandum of Understanding will be explored with the sector to define and agree roles and responsibilities and ways of working.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 Tackling the climate emergency will remain a key priority for the new Board.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 Inclusive growth will remain a key priority for the new Board.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 The focus on equality and diversity within the LEP constitution and EDI will remain a key priority for the new Board and Mayoral Council.

5.2 The Combined Authority intends to ensure that both the West Yorkshire Business Board and new Mayoral Council represent West Yorkshire’s diverse population and business community.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 It should be noted that core funding from Government for LEPs nationwide will go directly to MCAs in 2024. Future funding post 2024 is uncertain.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 The 2014 Order does not require the Combined Authority’s LEP Member or their substitute to be a private sector representative. However, private sector representation secures direct private sector input into the Combined Authority membership.

7.2 By law, the Combined Authority’s LEP Member must be non-voting. However, the voting Combined Authority Members may resolve that this provision does not apply.

7.3 Legal and governance implications regarding changes to the Constitution and governance model of the LEP were set out in the March LEP Board meeting.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the Board approves the proposed changes to the LEP as set out in 2.5 above.

10.2 That the Board nominates the Chair of the new West Yorkshire Business Board (Mandy Ridyard) to be the LEP Member on the Combined Authority and Asma Iqbal to be the Substitute LEP Member on the Combined Authority.

10.3 That the Board nominates deputy chairs to be appointed by the Combined Authority as set out in paragraph 2.12 above.

10.4 That the Board confirms the continuation of the deputy chairs appointed by the Combined Authority at its annual meeting on 22 June 2023 as set out in paragraph 2.13 above.

10.5 That the Board consider and nominate to the Finance, Resources & Corporate Committee as set out in paragraph 2.15 above.

10.6 That the Board consider the nomination of a member to the Transport Committee.

10.7 Where nominees are still to be agreed, that the Board delegate confirmation of nominations to the Mayoral Business Advisor in consultation with the Mayor for subsequent appointment by the Combined Authority.

11. Background Documents

11.1 There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

12.1 There are no appendices to this report.

This page is intentionally left blank

to:	The West Yorkshire Business Board
Date:	29 November 2023
Subject:	Economic Update
Director:	Sarah Eaton, Director of Strategy, Communications and Intelligence
Author:	Patrick Bowes, Head of Research and Intelligence and Peter Glover, Economic Evidence Manager

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To provide members of the LEP Board with the most up-to-date and relevant economic information.

2. Information

Macro-Economic Context

2.1 Inflation

- **The Consumer Price Index rose by 4.7% in the month to October** compared to a 6.7% increase in the 12 months to September – the headline rate fell by 2% in the month following a period where the headline measure was stuck at 6.7% through August and September.
- **This trend is echoed in the wider CPIH measure** which includes housing costs which rose by 4.7% in the 12 months to September – down 1.6pp in the month.
- **Within the headline numbers there is good news that food inflation continues to ease – food inflation was 10.1% in the 12 months to October** and follows the downward trend seen in previous months. Whilst the rate of food inflation is easing it should be noted that it is still significantly elevated although the current rate suggests that the headline measure is falling more quickly than the BoE had assumed in its last inflation report.
- **The largest contribution to the reduction came from falling housing costs** – with housing costs falling by 1.55pp in the month between September and October – this accounted for the sharp overall fall on both CPI and CPIH measures. The actual monthly rate of contraction in food inflation was more modest - at 0.25pp –

with the annual fall in inflation in part a reflection of the comparative price point in 2022 as well.

- Core CPI inflation (this excludes energy, food, tobacco and alcohol which are typically more volatile costs) – a measure tracked very closely by the Bank – **rose by 5.7% in the 12 months to October – a rate of increase below its recent high of 7.1% seen in May this year.**
- **The current headline CPI rate is comparable to headline rates in countries such as France but still somewhat higher than comparable rates in the US and Germany** – rates across the EU and most OECD countries have been falling consistently since the peaks recorded on October 2022 as well.

2.2. Interest Rates

- Following its meeting of the 02/11/23 the MPC voted 6 to 3 to keep current interest rates on hold at 5.25% – 3 members of the MPC were in favour of increasing rates to 5.5%.
- The Bank is focused on a number of key metrics – **growth in earnings, the labour market and the pattern of core inflation**. The published summary of the Bank's decision at its November meeting makes it clear that the bank is **reasonably confident that the labour market is starting to loosen and as such will start to ease the pressure on wage growth**. In its central inflation projection the bank is forecasting that CPI inflation will fall to 4.75% by the start of 2024, falling further to 3.75% by mid June next year. This view is based on a series of assumptions which have a central theme – that core inflation and its components have peaked and in some cases – such as food inflation – are falling more quickly than the bank assumed. The caveat of course is the length and duration of so called “2nd round” effects – especially with the unwinding of wage growth effects. There are also continuing upside risks to the core inflation scenario – not least continuing volatility in energy prices as well.

2.3. Economic Growth

- **The UK economy grew by 0.2% in Q2 2023** – April to June – this follows growth of 0.1% in the previous quarter. The 2nd estimate of GDP in the 2nd quarter was unrevised but did indicate that the national economy grew more strongly in Q1 2023 than previously assumed – growth of 0.3% compared to previous estimate of – 0.1%. **The recent publication of the 1st estimate of Q3 GDP showed stagnant growth in the 3 months from July to September.**

- The sectoral components of growth in the Q3 estimate show that the **services sector contracted by 0.1%**, **construction grew slightly at 0.1%** whilst **production sector output remained unchanged** from quarter 2.
- **The decline in services sector putput was mainly influenced by a fall in output in the real estate and transporation services sectors** – with the decline in the latter especially pronounced at -1.2% in the 3 months to September.
- Construction output rose by 0.1% in Quarter 3 2023, following growth of 0.3% in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2023. **The growth in Quarter 3 2023 was driven by repair and maintenance work, which grew by 0.7%**. This growth was partially offset by a fall of 0.3% in new work.
- **The production and manufacturing 1st estimate of GDP is typically the most volatile and the Q3 numbers do contain some mixed messages – what is clear is that manufacturing growth slowed into quarter 3 from quarter 2**, but the sector is still just growing, with growth in the manufacture of transport equipment being the key sectoral contribution. The performance of the sector in Q3 contrasts markedly with quarter 2 some 0.1% compared with 1.9% growth.
- The more timely but less accurate monthly estimates of GDP show **that GDP is estimated to have grown by 0.2% in September 2023**, following growth of 0.1% in August 2023 and a 0.6% contraction in GDP in July 2023.
- **In expenditure terms**, an increase in the volume of net trade was offset by falls in business investment, household spending and government consumption.

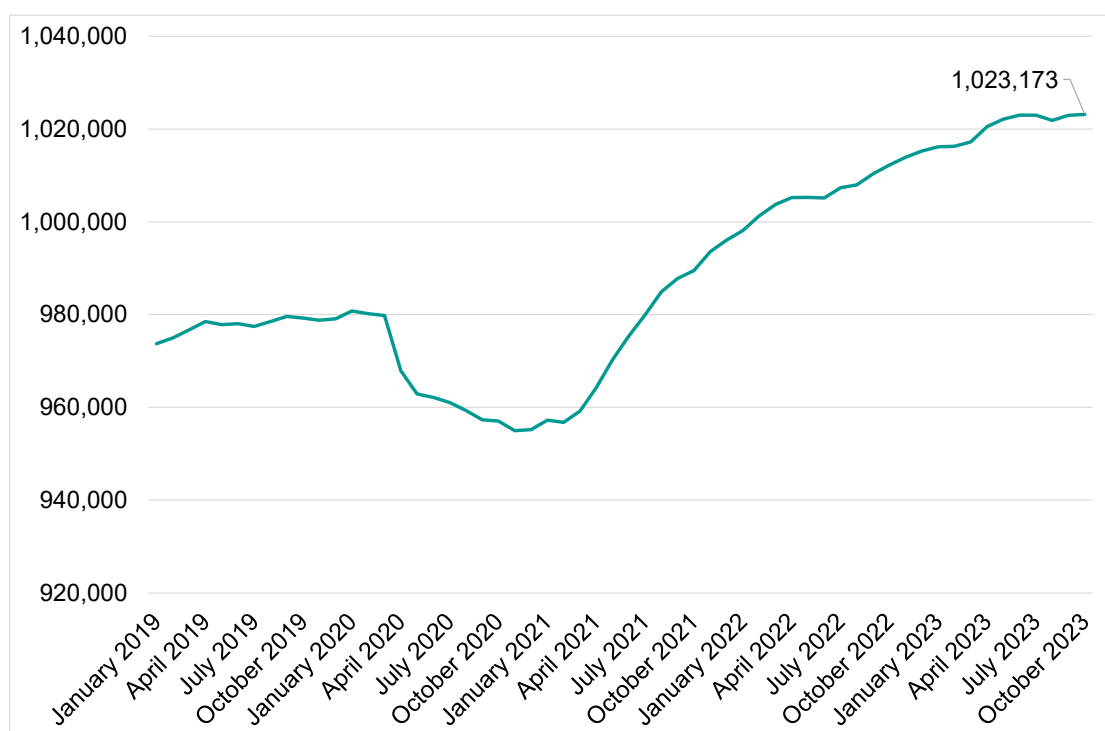
Methodological Changes to UK GDP Calculation.

- 2.4 The UK is changing the way it calculates GDP to implement a new international accounting approach – other countries have adopted this revised approach – the US and France have already published updating GDP numbers using this new approach. It is important to note that the data presented above does not yet incorporate these changes in ONS quarterly GDP estimates – these changes will be implemented next year.
- 2.5 In broad terms the main economic headline from the application of this new approach is that UK growth in 2020 and 2021 was considerably stronger than previously assumed using the current Blue Book methodology – the upshot of which is that it is now believed that UK GDP recovered its pre-health crisis level of output in Q3 2021 rather than the current assumption using the existing methodology that UK was still below its 2019 peak.

Regional data

- 2.6 Labour market conditions in West Yorkshire are showing signs of softening, reflecting the national position and the impact of interest rate rises and slow growth in the economy. Employment growth has levelled-off in recent months, whilst growth in average pay has also come to a halt. The claimant count has been growing since late 2022, albeit at a modest rate.
- 2.7 Real-time information on the count of payrolled employees in West Yorkshire shows that the level of employment in the region has remained largely unchanged between June and October 2023, following a period of sustained growth from early 2021 onwards.

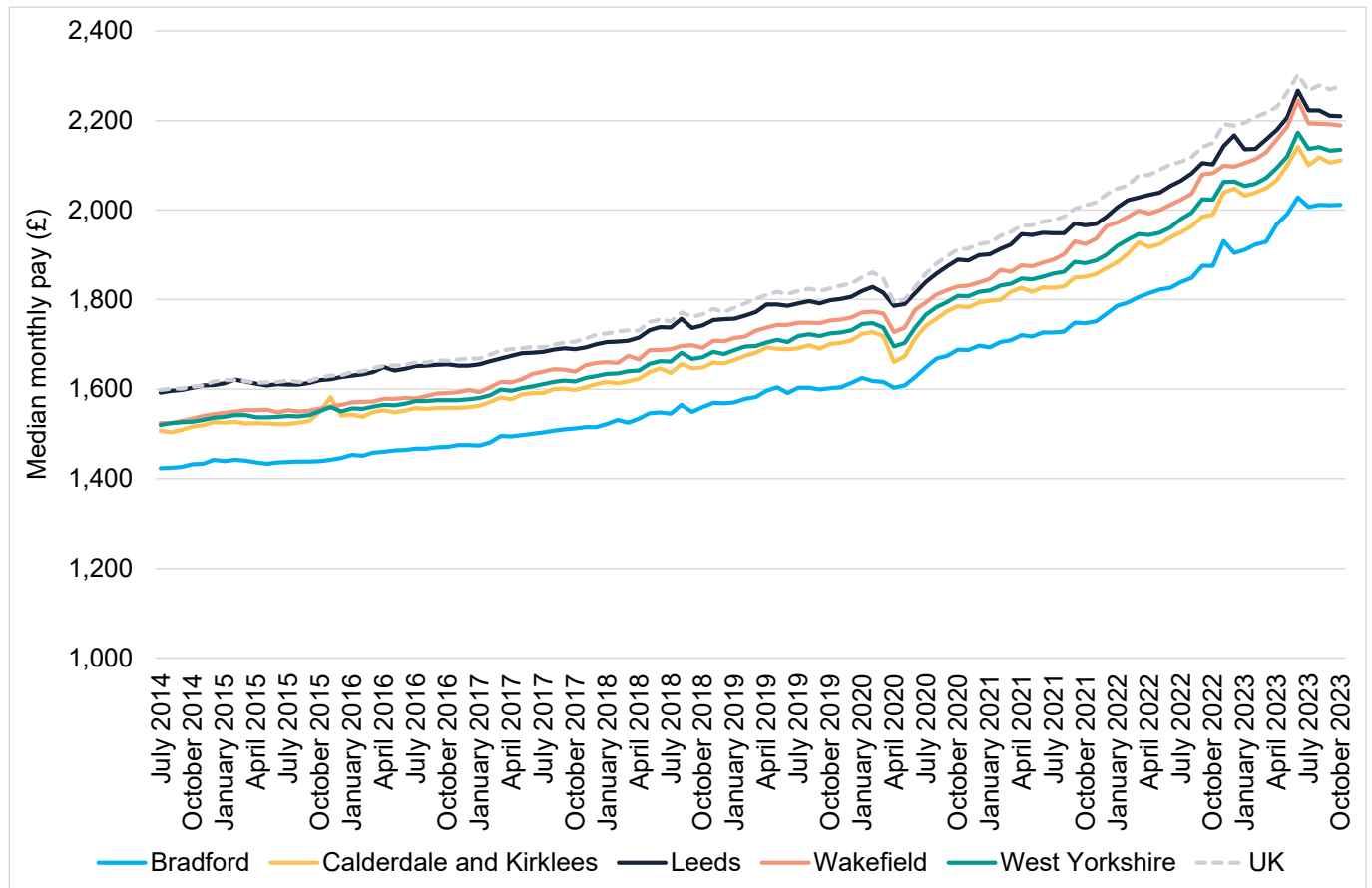
Figure: Count of payroll employees from PAYE Real-time information (seasonally adjusted)



Source: HMRC

- 2.8 As of August 2023, median monthly pay for employees in West Yorkshire was £2,135, 94% of the UK average of £2,276 based on HMRC real-time data. The equivalent figure for Bradford is only 88%, whereas it rises to 97% in Leeds and 96% in Wakefield. Until recently, pay (unadjusted for inflation) had been growing strongly in West Yorkshire and was 16% higher in October 2023 than in May 2021, the point in time at which the economy re-opened. However, median pay has fallen slightly between its June peak and October of this year – by 2% in West Yorkshire and 1% nationally.

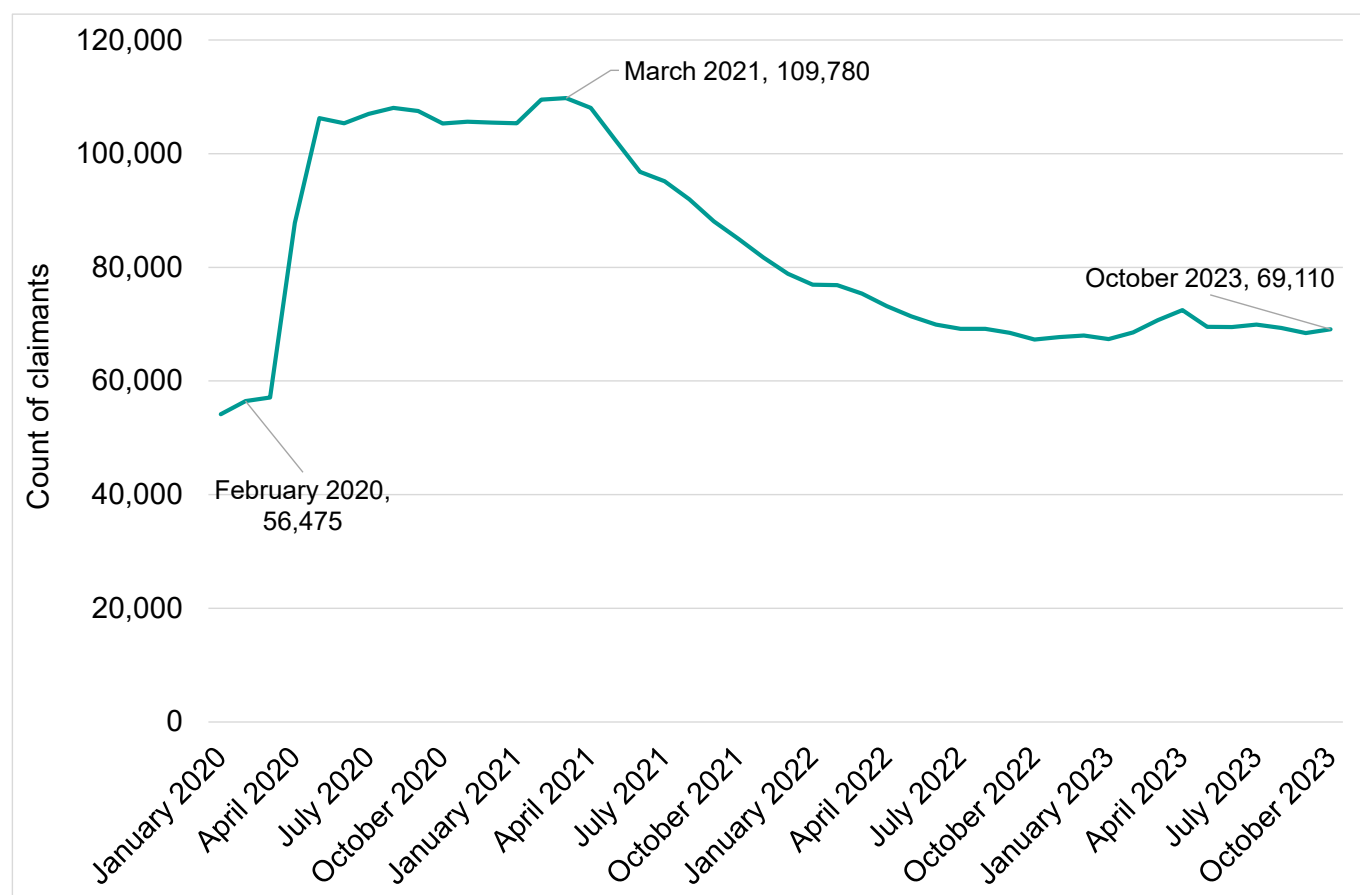
Figure: Trend in median monthly pay for employee jobs (£)



Source: HMRC

- 2.9 The claimant count – the official count of people who are claiming benefits primarily because they are unemployed - has been on a slight upward trend in West Yorkshire and nationally since October 2022; although it has also been subject to fluctuations during this period. West Yorkshire’s count has grown by 3% or around 1,800 in the 12 months to October 2023. This follows a long period of steady decline starting in early 2021 coinciding with the lifting of lockdown restrictions. The level of claimant unemployment in West Yorkshire is now (as of October 2023) 69,110, 22% higher than pre-pandemic level (February 2020). The claimant rate (claimant count as a percentage of the working age population) is higher in West Yorkshire than nationally, at 4.7% versus 3.8%. At local authority level the rate ranges from 3.4% in Wakefield to 6.5% in Bradford.

Figure: Claimant unemployment trend, West Yorkshire



Source: NOMIS

West Yorkshire Business Survey

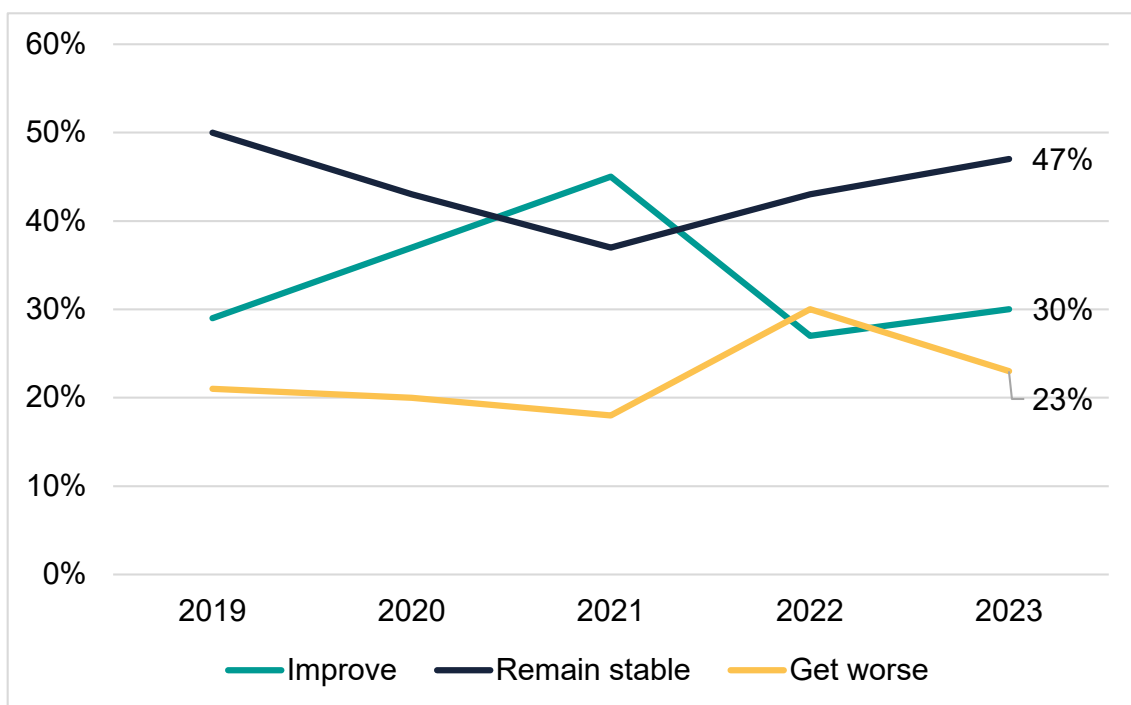
2.10 Results have recently become available from the West Yorkshire Business Survey (the survey was formally known as the LCR Business Survey) 2023 and a selection of headline results is presented below. The survey is commissioned annually by the Combined Authority and is a B2B leading indicator survey which covers all sectors – the survey is designed to provide:

- A snapshot view of business confidence, investment experiences and intentions
- A detailed understanding of the issues currently facing business.
- A picture of progress against key monitoring indicators.

2.11 Just over 1,000 interviews were conducted, primarily by telephone, among organisations with at least one employee, across the private, public and voluntary/community sectors. Interviews were conducted during summer 2023.

2.12 The survey results point to greater stability in the outlook for the local economy, although the changes are modest. An increased proportion of respondents to the Business Survey said they expect to see an improvement in the climate in which they operate over the next 12 months, compared with 2022 (increase from 27% to 30%). The proportion expecting a stable environment also increased (43% to 47%) whilst there was a fall in the share who expect worsening conditions (30% to 23%).

Figure: Over the next 12 months do you expect the climate in which your business/organisation operates to generally improve, remain stable, or get worse?

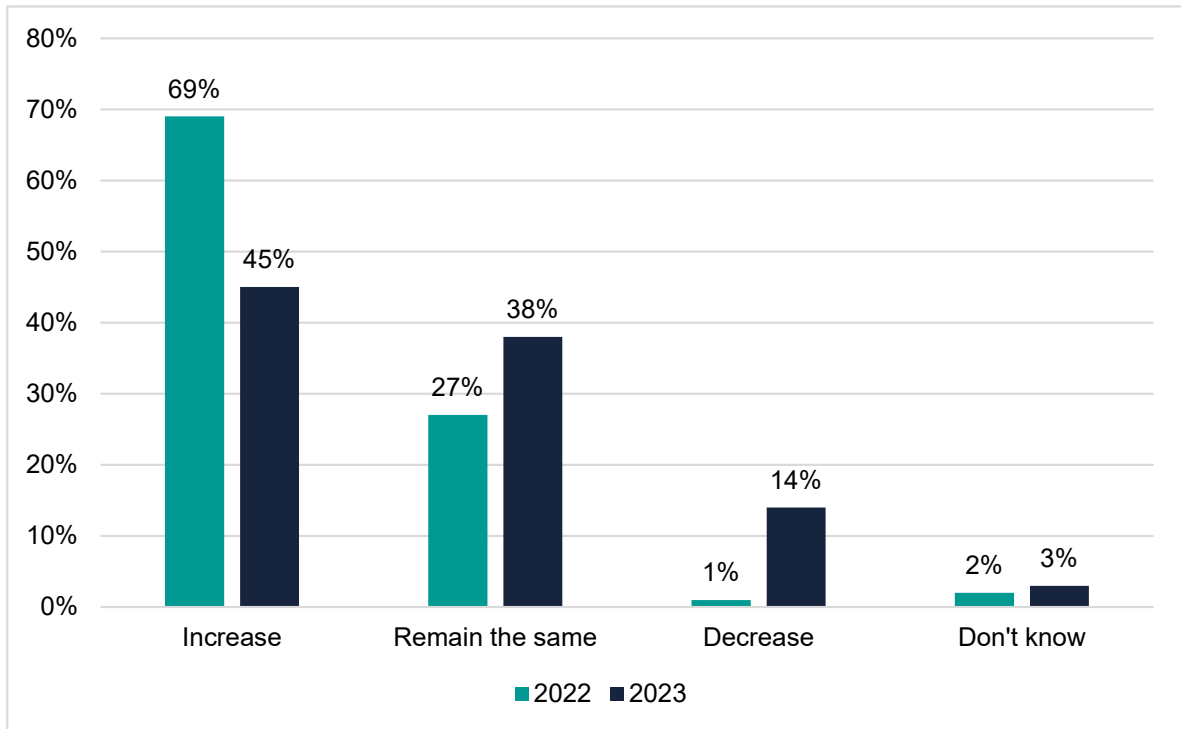


Source: West Yorkshire Business Survey

2.13 Despite falls in recent months, inflation remains at elevated levels, as noted in the macro-economic section. Data from the business survey points to an improving outlook in terms of prices. The proportion of businesses who expect to increase their prices to customers in the coming 12 months has fallen by 24 percentage points since last year, although nearly half still expect to increase them and only 14% believe their prices will fall. Nonetheless, this provides a positive signal around prospects for inflation.



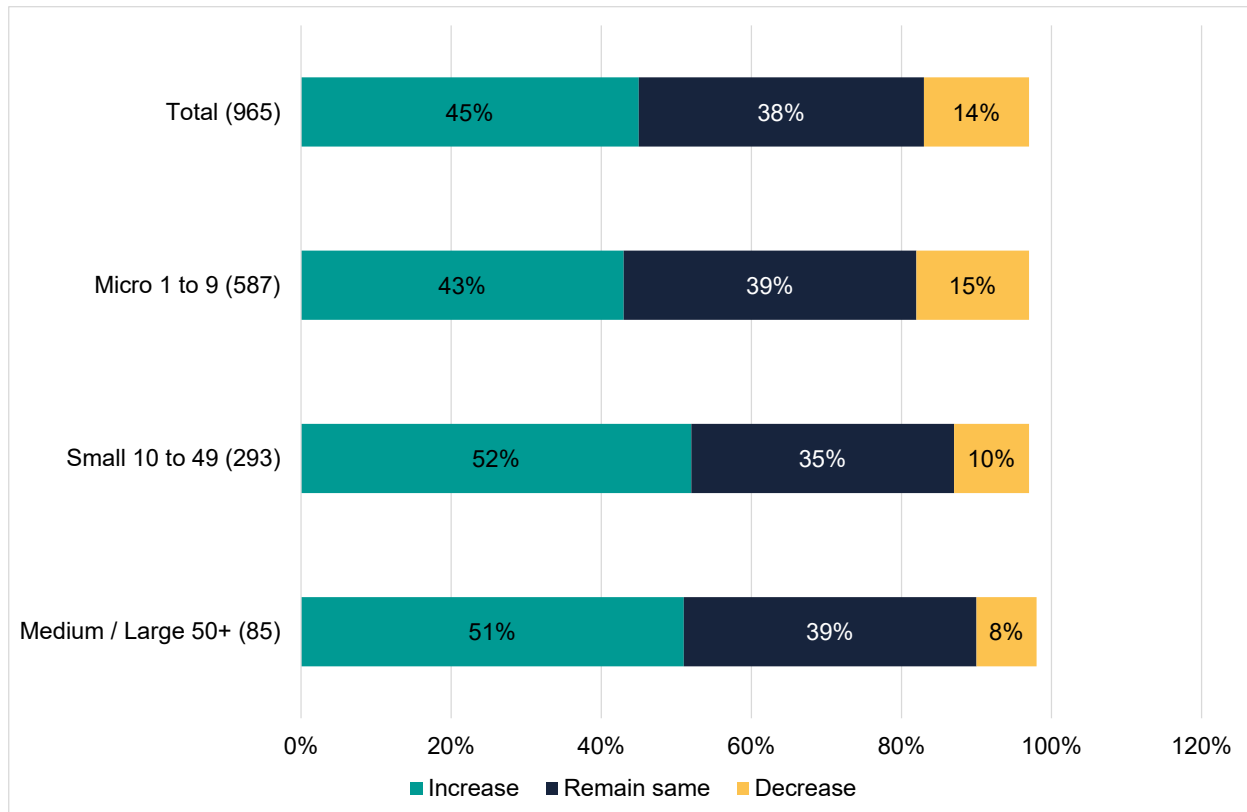
Figure: Over the next 12 months do you expect the price(s) you charge to your customers to increase, decrease or remain the same?



Source: West Yorkshire Business Survey

- 2.14 There is also a degree of optimism regarding prospects for turnover and employment growth among West Yorkshire organisations. A net positive balance of organisations expect that their organisation will see an increase in turnover over the next 12 months, with around a half of businesses with 10 or more employees anticipating growth compared with a tenth who forecast a decrease.

Figure: Over the next 12 months do you expect your turnover to increase, decrease or remain the same? Analysis by size of business/organisation (unweighted base in brackets)

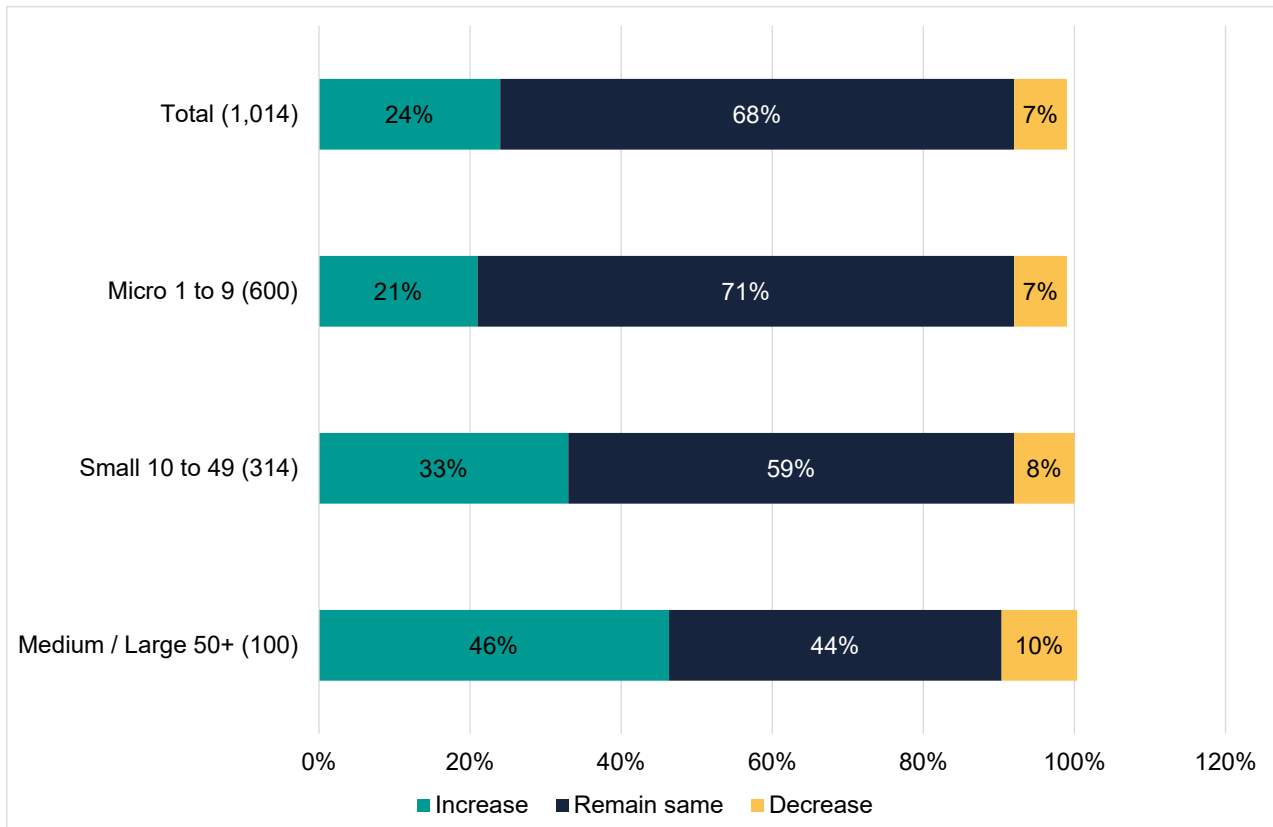


Source: West Yorkshire Business Survey

2.15 The proportion of organisations who expect their staffing to increase over the next 12 months (see figure below) is smaller, at 24%, but still represents a net positive balance, as compared with the 7% who expect a decline in the number of people they employ. Medium and larger sized businesses (50+ employees) are twice as likely as the overall average to anticipate employment growth.



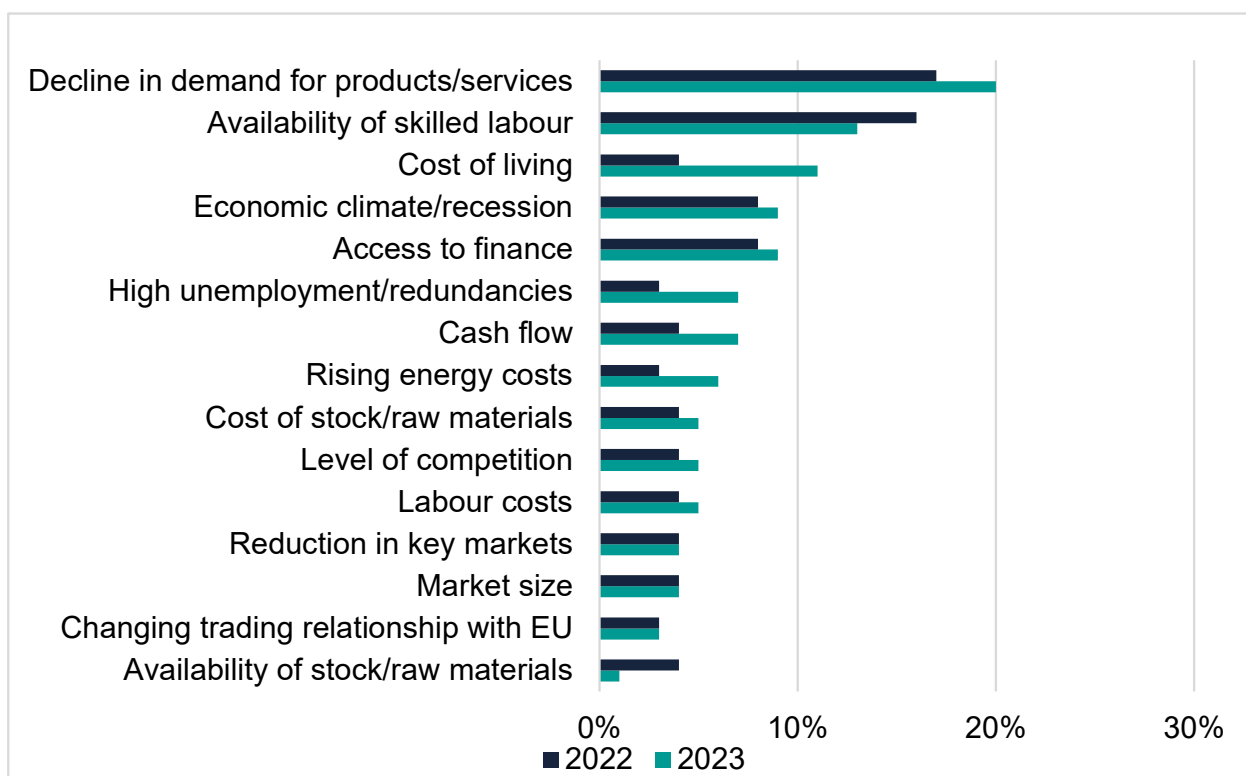
Figure: Over the next 12 months do you expect the number of people you employ to increase, decrease or remain the same? Analysis by size of business/organisation (unweighted base in brackets)



Source: West Yorkshire Business Survey

2.16 The business survey provides an insight into the barriers to growth faced by local organisations. Since last year there has been an increase in the salience of a range of issues including cost of living, energy costs, unemployment and cash flow. The prospect of decline in demand for products and services is also identified by a greater proportion of respondents than in 2022. Availability of skilled labour is the second most widespread barrier, but its prevalence has fallen slightly since 2022, as has the issue of access to stock and raw materials.

Figure: What do you consider to be the main barriers to the growth of your business/organisation in the next three years?



Source: West Yorkshire Business Survey

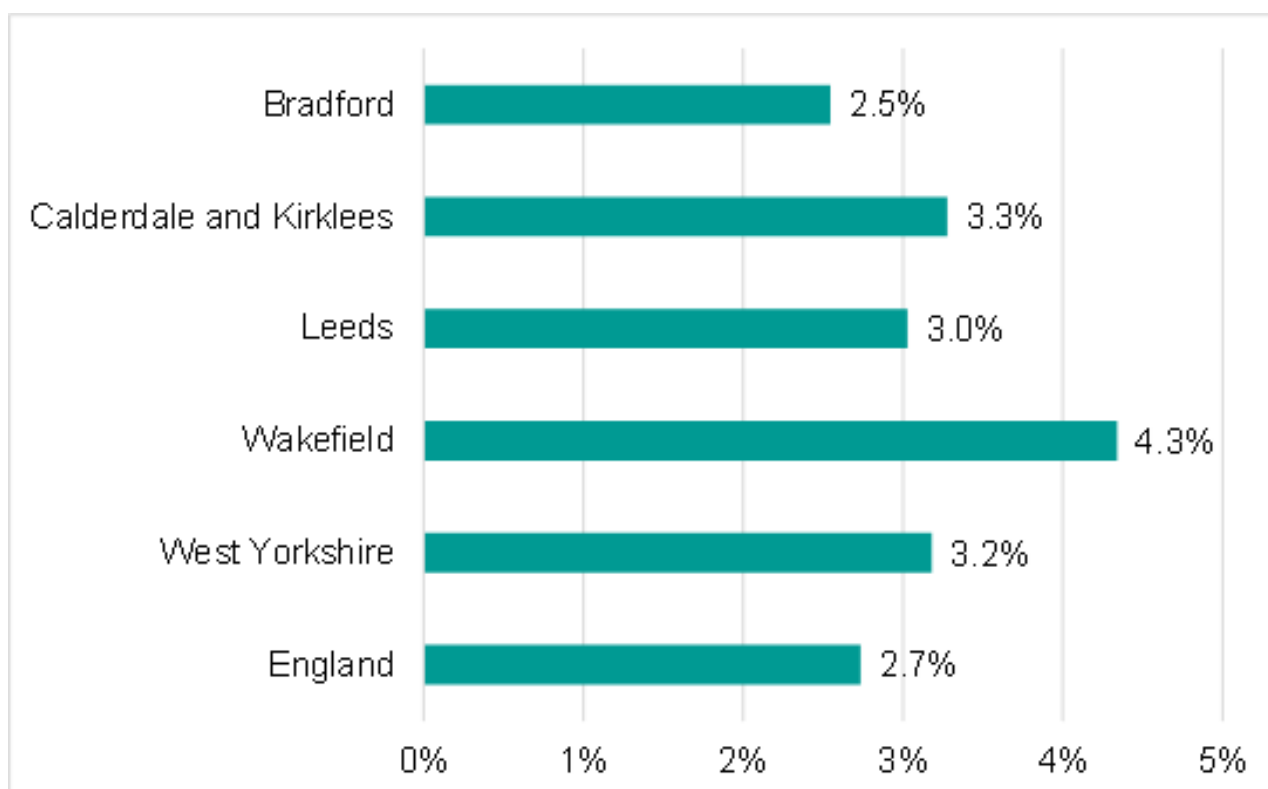
- 2.17 A detailed analysis of the full range of indicators contained in the Business Survey will be published in the coming weeks with results available for a range of thematic areas, including trade and innovation.

State of the Region Indicators

- 2.18 State of the Region is an annual stock-take of West Yorkshire’s progress against key economic, social, transport and environmental indicators produced by the Combined Authority. The indicators reflect the outcomes and impact we want to achieve to improve the lives of people in West Yorkshire. State of the Region will be published later in 2023.
- 2.19 In 2023, the State of the Region indicators have been structured around the content of the five Missions set out in the West Yorkshire Plan. State of the Region will provide the mechanism by which progress against the Missions will be reviewed. Additional indicators put forward in the West Yorkshire Plan have been incorporated into State of the Region 2023. Performance against selected indicators that are of specific relevance to the Committee is briefly examined below.

2.20 **Gross value added (GVA)** is the most commonly used measure of economic output at the local level. GVA is a measure of the increase in value of the economy through the production of goods and services in a given area and time. West Yorkshire’s economic output (gross value-added) grew faster than the national average in the five-year period between 2016 and 2021 in current price terms. This partly due to a stronger recovery from the pandemic than was seen nationally. Three out of four West Yorkshire ITL3 regions also outperformed the England average during this period.

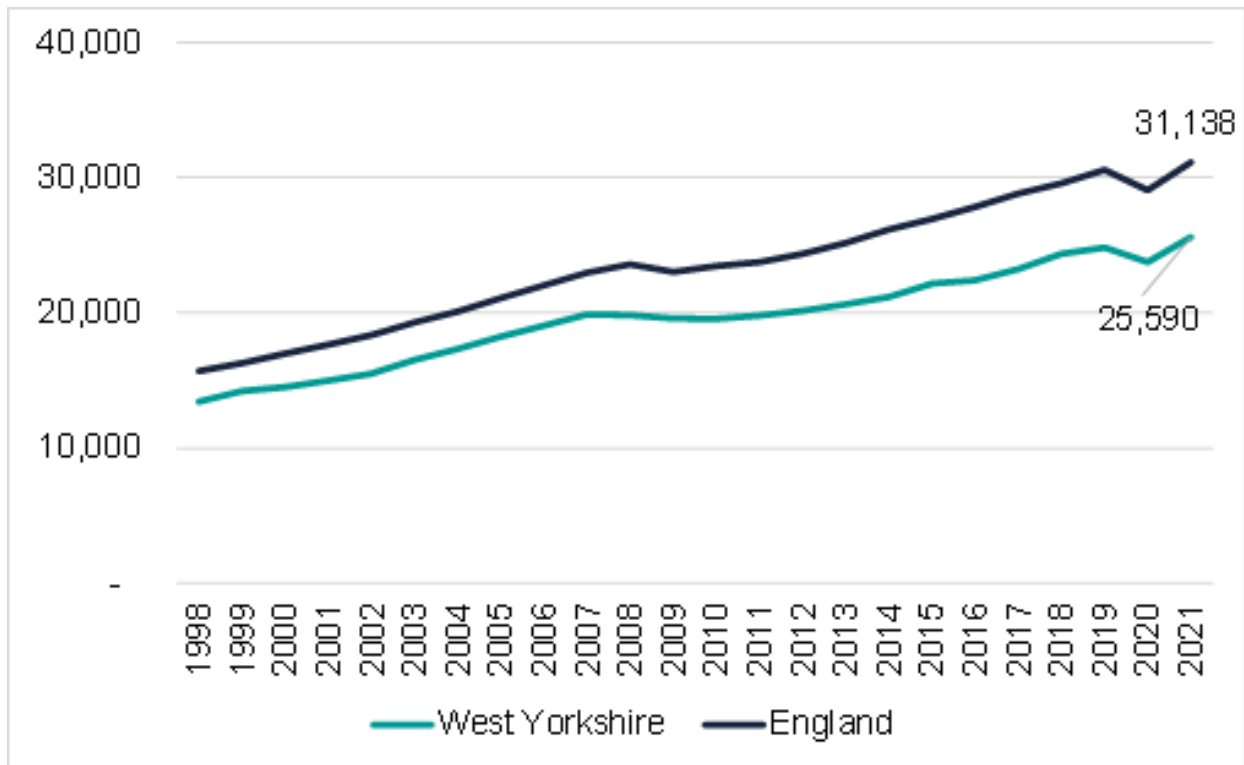
Figure: Gross value added (balanced) at current basic prices – average annual growth rate (%), 2016-21



Source: ONS, Sub-regional GVA data

2.21 Output (GVA) per head is a key measure of local prosperity. Output per head fell in West Yorkshire in 2020, reflecting the pandemic-related lockdown in the economy. However, it recovered between 2020 and 2021, as the West Yorkshire economy rebounded stronger than the England average. Nonetheless, West Yorkshire still faces a significant deficit against the national average in terms of its level of output per head.

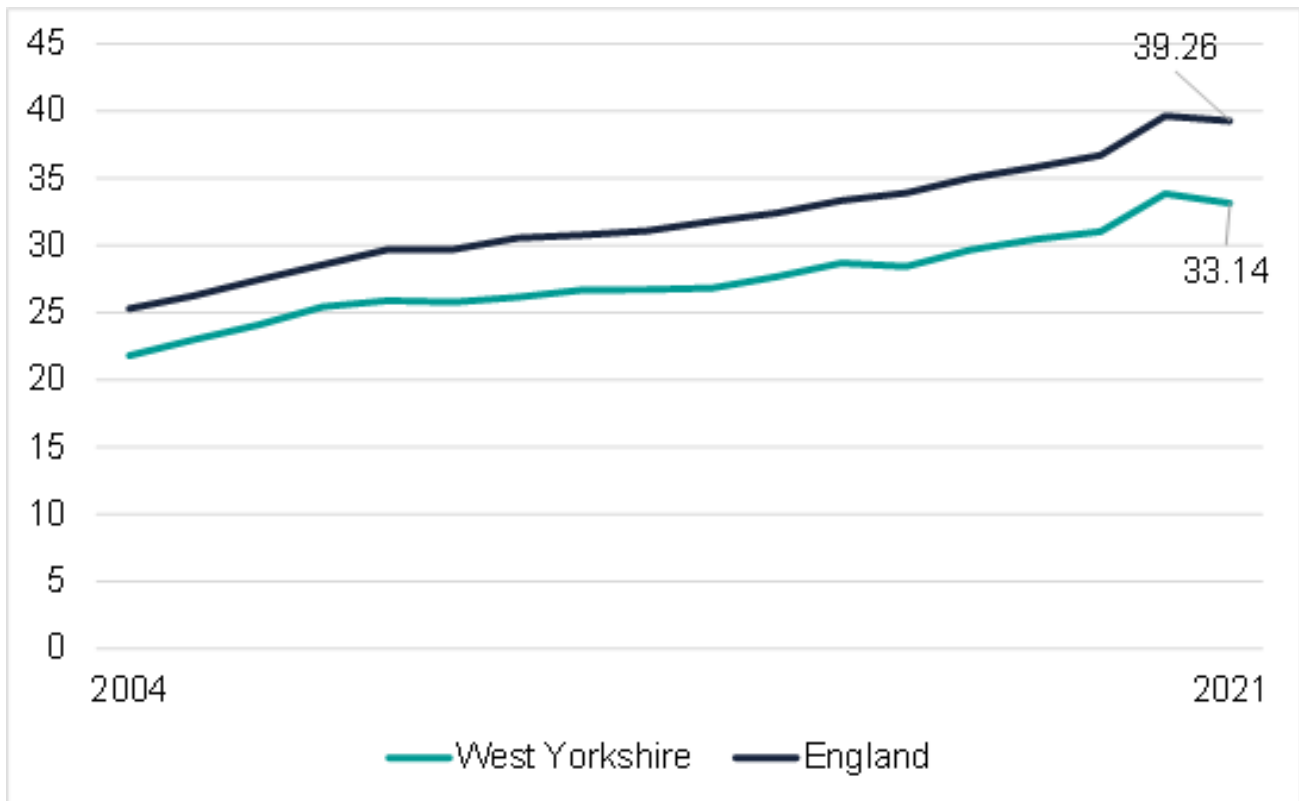
Figure: Gross value added per head (balanced) at current basic prices (£)



Source: ONS, Sub-regional GVA data

- 2.22 Increased **productivity** is the main engine of local economic growth and improved living standards. During 2020 productivity increased both for West Yorkshire and at national level due to temporary compositional factors as lower productivity sectors were worse affected by the pandemic than high productivity sectors but this effect was reversed as restrictions were lifted in 2021. Nonetheless, the key message is that underlying structural factors mean that West Yorkshire's productivity deficit persists. The Combined Authority and its partners are seeking to address this issue through a range of business support measures, including the Business Productivity Service, but also thematic interventions which focus on drivers of productivity, such as the SME Investment Fund and innovation support service (see Item 12, Development and Delivery Update). Overall, the Combined Authority's target, set out in its Corporate Plan, is to support 3,000 businesses to grow and become more resilient.

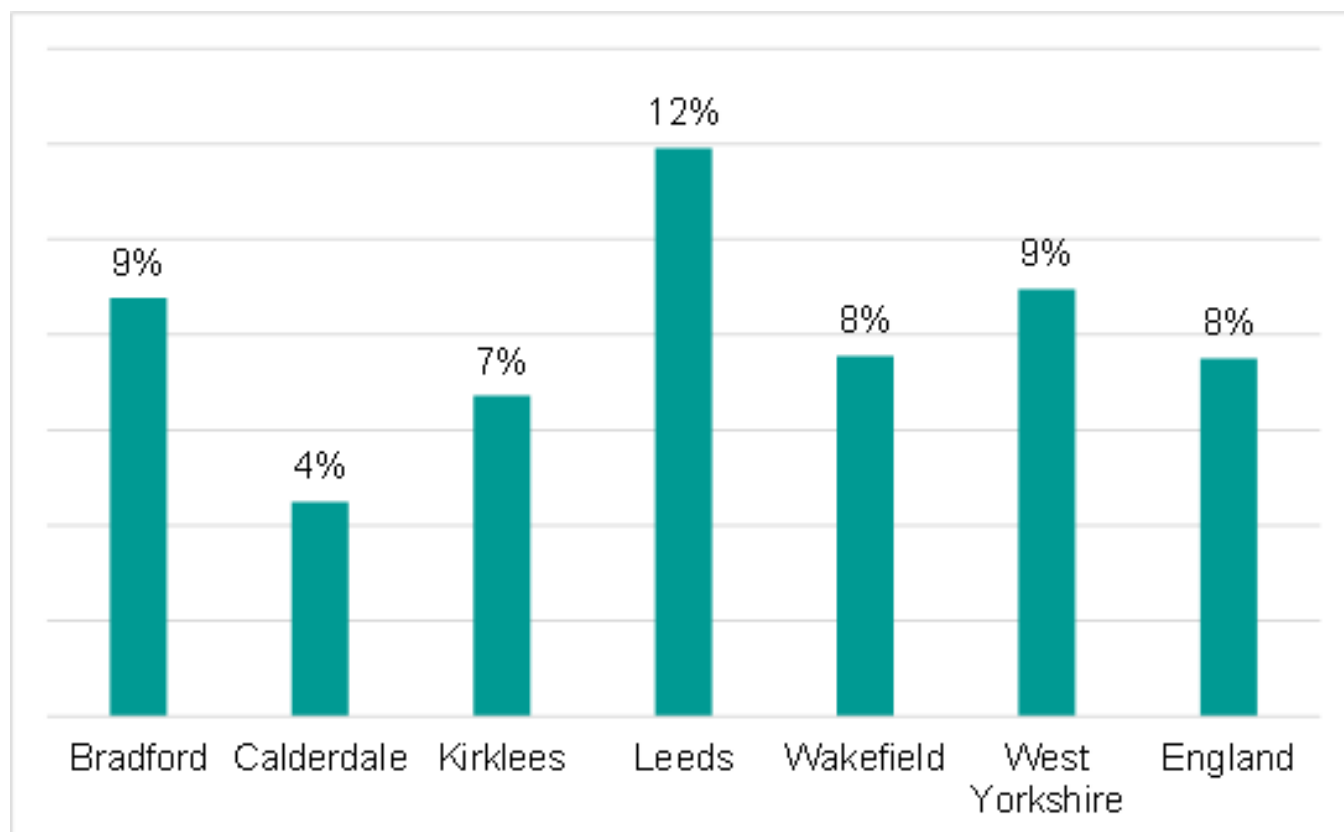
Figure: Productivity: current price unsmoothed GVA per hour worked (£)



Source: ONS, Sub-regional productivity data

- 2.23 West Yorkshire has a relatively low business density relative to its population but its **number of private sector businesses is growing faster than the national average rate**. Over the last 5 years Leeds has seen the biggest net growth in business stock among the West Yorkshire local authorities. The Combined Authority and its partners are pursuing a number of interventions to promote enterprise and entrepreneurship and grow West Yorkshire’s business base, including the £6m Enterprise West Yorkshire programme. A target to support 500 start-up / early stage enterprises is set out in the Combined Authority’s Corporate Plan for 2023/24.

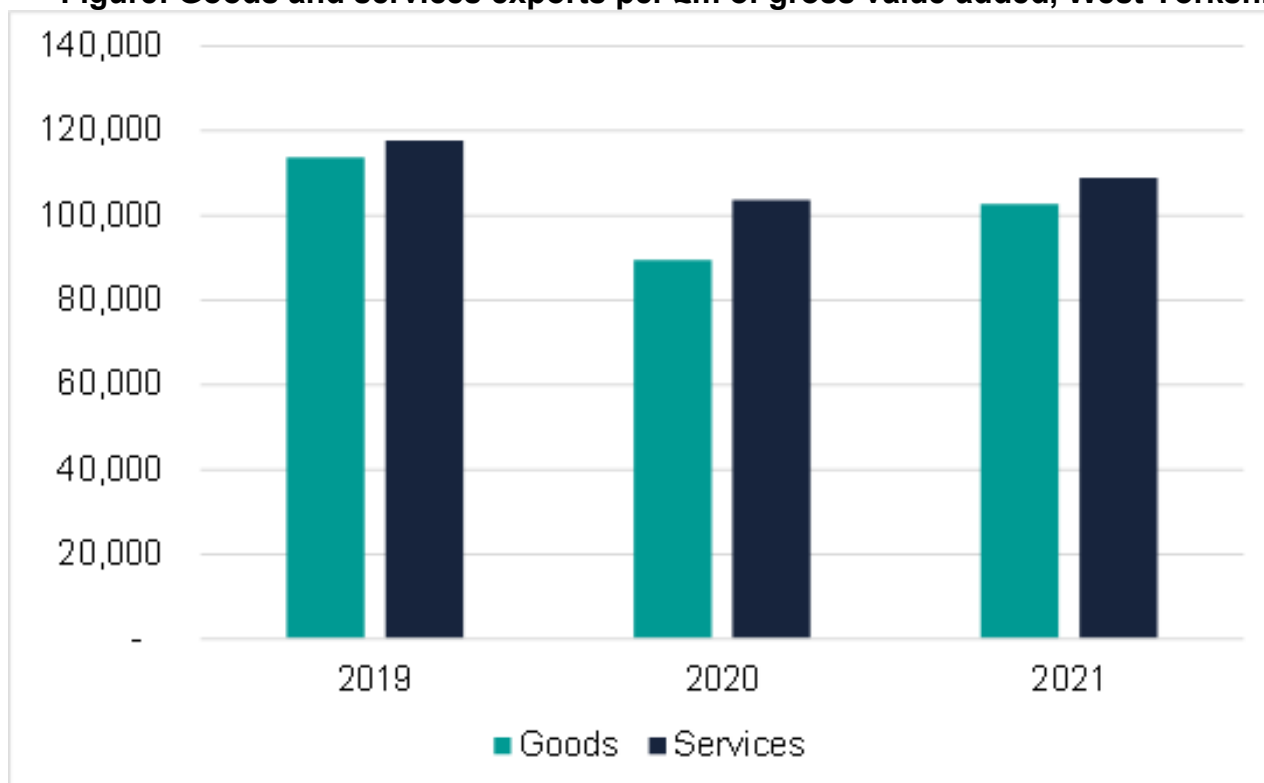
Figure: % net change in count of private sector businesses, 2016-22



Source: ONS, *Business activity, size and location, 2022*

2.24 **Exporting** is key to the local economy: internationally trading businesses often experience higher growth and are often more productive than their domestically-focused counterparts. Exports of goods and services both recovered in 2021 following declines in 2020; however, both remain below their pre-pandemic (2019) level. The value of West Yorkshire's service exports continues to exceed that of goods. However, the ratio of export values to the overall value of the economy is lower in West Yorkshire than nationally for both goods and services.

Figure: Goods and services exports per £m of gross value added, West Yorkshire



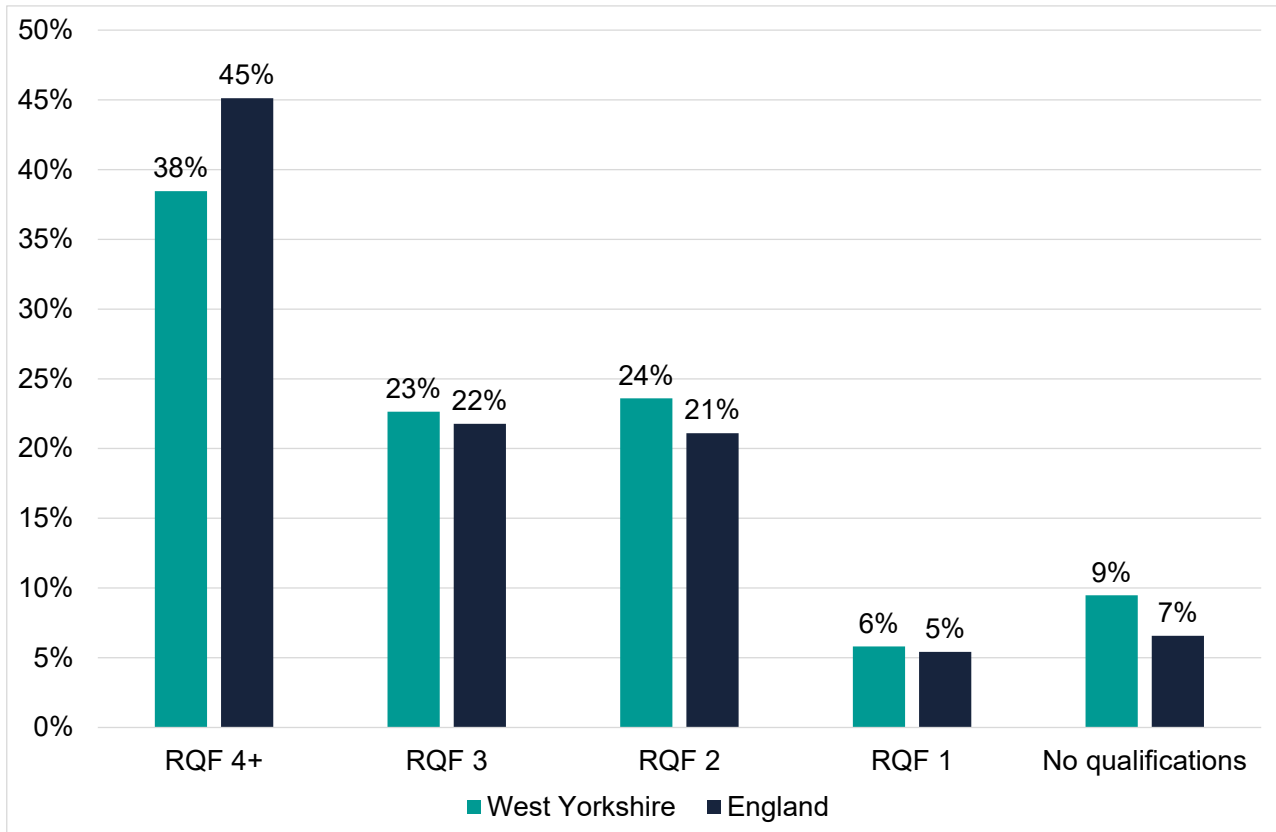
Source: ONS, International exports of services from subnational areas of the UK

2.25 The Combined Authority and its partners offer a range of trade and export support services to enable West Yorkshire businesses to expand into overseas markets. This support is linked into several targets contained in the Combined Authority's Corporate Plan:

- To achieve 1,000 hits per month through the International trade portal
- To assist 350 businesses with overseas trade initiatives.

2.26 **Innovation** is central to productivity growth through the development and application of new products / services, processes and technologies. Sixty-four per cent of businesses in the region are engaged in innovation-related activities according to the West Yorkshire Business Survey 2023. This is slightly lower than the proportion recorded in earlier iterations of the survey (e.g. 71% in 2017). National statistics indicate that spending on research and development is below that national average in West Yorkshire compared to the UK, whilst the value of R&D Tax Credit claims is relatively small, at £176 per worker compared with the UK average of £252. Total qualifying expenditure is worth £851 per worker in West Yorkshire compared with £1,473 UK average.

Figure: Profile of working age population by highest level of qualification held (Regulated Qualification Framework Level), 2022



Source: Annual Population Survey

- 2.27 One of the key challenges facing West Yorkshire is a deficit in its skills base relative to other parts of the UK. This is closely associated with the area's underperformance on productivity and innovation. For example, according to one study, higher skill levels among London's workforce explain about two-thirds of the productivity gap between the capital and the rest of the country¹. The proportion of working age people in West Yorkshire with higher level (Level 4 and above) qualifications has steadily increased over the last two decades, but the latest figures show a continuing deficit with the national average for West Yorkshire. Meanwhile 15% of people in West Yorkshire (over 200,000 in absolute terms) currently have no qualifications or are qualified to a low level (below Level 2) compared with the England average of 12%. This has a significant negative impact on the employability and career prospects of the people concerned.
- 2.28 The Combined Authority's Corporate Plan sets out commitments to support 53,900 adults to upskill, re-train or access employment and for 45,000 people to achieve formal qualifications through its adults skills and employment support programmes. Alongside

¹ Industrial Strategy Council, [UK Skills Mismatch in 2030](#) (2020)

this, there is a target to engage 198 businesses through employment and skills programmes.

2.29 West Yorkshire's underperformance on productivity is directly reflected in its relatively low of prosperity as measured through GVA per head of population. Linked to this, the region faces challenges in respect of key dimensions that are known to drive productivity growth

- A small business base relative to the size of the region's population.
- A low intensity of exporting activity in terms of both goods and services, with trade values below pre-pandemic levels according to the latest data available.
- Low investment in innovation as reflected in the level of R&D expenditure and engagement in innovative activities.
- A weak skills base, with a relatively small number of people with the higher level qualifications needed to drive productivity growth.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 Recent increases in claimant unemployment, although modest have been concentrated in the most acutely deprived neighbourhoods, exacerbating existing inequalities. Continued high levels of inflation have had the most severe effect on the poorest households.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 People from ethnic minority groups are disproportionately represented in the most deprived communities in West Yorkshire that are most adversely affected by inflation and rising unemployment.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the Board notes the content of this report.

11. Background Documents

None.

12. Appendices

None.

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to:	The West Yorkshire Business Board
Date:	29 November 2023
Subject:	Economic Strategy and Digital Blueprint
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture
Author:	Jo Barham, Policy Manager

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To provide members of the Business Board with an overview and update on the development of the West Yorkshire Economic Strategy.

2. Information

Objectives

- 2.1 Members are asked to feedback on the approach, and comment on emerging themes in advance of a more detailed set of priorities being developed.

Background

- 2.2 Proposals for a new Economic Strategy to reflect the vision and missions of the [West Yorkshire Plan](#) were discussed at the June meeting of the LEP Board. Since that meeting the following actions have been undertaken:

- Commissioned external research on emerging opportunities for high growth clusters in West Yorkshire aligned to existing areas of strength with a focus on net-zero.
- Published a consultation questionnaire on regional strengths and opportunities. A total of 170 responses were received and analysis of the qualitative data is being undertaken.
- Published a call for evidence through the Yorkshire Policy and Engagement Network (Y-PERN) on childcare, the informal economy, and the future of work. Wide ranging research responses were received and are being analysed by Y-PERN academics and discussed with local authority officers. During a workshop with private sector Committee Members, thematic areas of the Call for Evidence were discussed to support interpretation and application of the evidence as it emerges.
- Updated key West Yorkshire economic indicators and begun development of a economic narrative.

- 2.3 A programme of stakeholder engagement is being undertaken to ensure that a wide perspective of voices contribute to the development of the Economic Strategy. Key events since the last committee include:
- A session led by Asma Iqbal, BEIC member and LEP Board Diversity Champion. During an insightful and wide-ranging discussion, contributions were welcomed on ways of deepening engagement with communities across the region, reflecting and celebrating the full range of sector strengths in West Yorkshire, and maximising the use of the existing evidence base.
 - A session considering the needs and opportunities of rural communities and effective engagement channels for these issues considered the role of place in the Economic Strategy and the impact that rural communities can make.
 - Ongoing discussions and meetings with local authority colleagues to align regional and local priorities.
 - A session to explore the relationship between the Combined Authority and Business Representative bodies and good practice models.
 - A focus group with Yorkshire Sport on physical activity and the economic benefits of improved health.
- 2.4 Further engagement sessions are planned building on the emerging evidence and thematic discussions. This includes events with universities and voluntary and community groups.
- 2.5 The Mayor along with Professor John Wright (Bradford Institute for Health Research) recently launched the West Yorkshire Scientific Advisory Group (WYSAG). The WYSAG will support joint working between the Combined Authority and the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership to highlight the best evidence on health inequalities and how this impacts upon the West Yorkshire Economy. Emerging lessons from this group will be used to inform the development and implementation of the Economic Strategy.

Next Steps

- 2.6 Once the evidence has been collected and initial consultation is complete a series of workshops will be undertaken to shape priorities. This will form the basis of a draft document to be shared for further engagement. The use of external facilitators to support this approach is being explored. Input from members of the Committee would be welcome on prioritisation workshops approach.
- 2.7 Building on previous good practice of the development of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), an expert panel is being convened to scrutinise evidence and peer review the application of evidence into policy priorities.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority has made a bold and ambitious target to reach Net Zero by 2038. This will be a key theme of the Economic Strategy setting out opportunities for net zero in West Yorkshire, alongside actions to support businesses and people to adapt.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 Mission one of the West Yorkshire Plan is for an inclusive economy which will be a guiding principle of the Economic Strategy.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded across each of the missions of the West Yorkshire Plan and will be a guiding principle of the strategy. This is reflected in the approach to consultation which is seeking to work with a diverse range of stakeholders.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1 A programme of consultation is being developed with stakeholders across the region.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That Board members note progress and framing of the Economic Strategy and provide feedback on the proposed approach and further opportunities for engagement.

11. Background Documents

None.

12. Appendices

None.

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to:	The West Yorkshire Business Board
Date:	29 November 2023
Subject:	Minutes for Information
Director:	Alan Reiss, Chief Operating Officer
Author:	Myles Larrington, Committee Services Officer

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with details of the minutes of meetings of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, that have been published on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's website since the last meeting of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board (LEP Board).

2. Information

- 2.1 The following minutes and notes have been published on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's website and can be accessed here:
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 25 May 2023. Available [here](#).
 - West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 22 June 2023. Available [here](#).
 - West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 27 July 2023. Available [here](#).
 - West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 7 September 2023. Available [here](#).
 - West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 28 September 2023. Available [here](#).

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 There are no inclusive growth implications directly arising from this report.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the minutes and notes of meetings of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority be noted.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

None.