



West  
Yorkshire  
Combined  
Authority

Tracy  
Brabin  
Mayor of  
West Yorkshire

## **ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING TO BE HELD AT 10.00 AM ON FRIDAY, 12 JANUARY 2024  
IN CONFERENCE ROOM 1/2, WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50  
WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS, LS1 2DE**

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### **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**  
To note apologies and confirm the quorum of 11 members is met.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**
- 3. POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**
- 4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 MARCH 2023**  
(Pages 1 - 8)
- 5. NOTES OF THE INQUORATE MEETING HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2023**  
(Pages 9 - 14)
- 6. NOTES OF THE INQUORATE MEETING HELD ON THE 17 NOVEMBER 2023**  
(Pages 15 - 20)
- 7. CHAIR'S COMMENTS AND UPDATE**
- 8. MAYORS QUESTION TIME - TRACY BRABIN**  
(Pages 21 - 28)

**9. WORK PROGRAMME**

(Pages 29 - 40)

**10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING - 8 MARCH 2024 (AM)**

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BAM', written over a horizontal line.

**Chief Executive  
West Yorkshire Combined Authority**



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH 2023 AT CONFERENCE ROOM  
1/2, WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS, LS1  
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**Present:**

Councillor Richard Smith (Chair)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Aneela Ahmed	Bradford Council
Councillor Bob Felstead	Bradford Council
Councillor Helen Brundell	Calderdale Council
Councillor Audrey Smith	Calderdale Council
Councillor Gwen Lowe	Kirklees Council
Councillor Gohar Almass	Leeds City Council
Councillor Colin Campbell	Leeds City Council
Councillor Ian Sanders	Wakefield Council
Councillor Tony Wallis	Wakefield Council
Councillor Paul Davies	Kirklees Council

**In attendance:**

Mayor Tracy Brabin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Khaled Berroum	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Thomas Purvis	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Hannah Scales	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philip Witcherley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Anika Gilbert	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**14. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tyler Hawkins, Zafar Iqbal, Andrew Hollyer, Isabel Owen, and Chris Pillai.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate, with 11 members present out of 11 needed for quorum.

**15. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

**16. Possible exclusion of the press and public**

There were no items requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

**17. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022 be approved.

**18. Notes of the inquorate meeting held on 18 January 2023**

Resolved: That the notes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023 be noted.

**19. Chair's comments and update**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Chair where the Chair welcomed the Mayor and reminded members of the pre-agreed topics and set out the structure of the meeting.

Resolved: That the Chair's verbal update be noted.

**20. Mayor's Question Time - Tracy Brabin**

The Chair thanked Mayor Tracy Brabin and officers for attending Economy Scrutiny to answer the Committee's questions. Officers present to support the Mayor included Philip Witcherley, Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture, Tom Purvis, Economic Analysis Manager, and Anika Gilbert, Policy Officer Employment and Skills.

The session was split into topic areas and members would be able to ask any questions under those topic areas, and any follow ups. The topic areas were: business support, engagement and investment, jobs, skills and training and funding, strategy, and projections.

**Business Support, Engagement, and Investment**

Small Businesses:

- There were 90,000 businesses in West Yorkshire, over 90% were SMEs and therefore it was an area the CA wanted to support because that was where growth could be maximised.
- Over the last year there had been numerous challenges namely Covid-19, cost of living crisis and energy crisis that had been dealt with, with some determination and at speed.
- Government had announced, prior to publishing the spring budget, that the household energy price guarantee will be extended until the end of June, however, no extensions or additional support was announced to support businesses with their energy bills.
- The manufacturing task force had made some recommendations which had made their way into our response to the cost-of-living crisis and energy crisis.
- The LEP was really reflective of SMEs and the most diverse LEP in the country. The Mayor was mindful that there were businesses not reaching out for help, the CA aimed to access these people and introduce these businesses to grants, loans and training.
- Particularly, women led start-ups were not accessing support in the way

that they should, £6million was allocated for entrepreneurs and because of devolution the Mayor was able to allocate 50% of funds to female entrepreneurs, 20% to entrepreneurs of colour and 3% of entrepreneurs with a disability.

#### City Centres:

- Leeds City Centre was one of the biggest to be hit by an economic impact by Covid-19 and the change in working patterns outside of London. Members were reminded of the Mayor's Fares which aimed to get more people travelling on buses (not helped by the reduction in routes). Rail had seen recovery of over 100% of pre-covid footfall on weekends which reiterated the need to invest in Leeds City Station and the city centre to make the city centre a family friendly activity hub.
- Innovation was a key element, for example supporting pubs to expand their offer by turning into music venues.
- There was a substitution effect where people were spending more time and money locally rather than travelling into the city centre.
- The Leeds City Centre office based footfall during the week took a substantial hit but we had seen some new office offers such as the Lloyds HQ which was re-locating within Leeds City Centre.

#### Covid-19:

- By working closely with local authorities and delivering a coordinated response through the Growth Managers the CA was able to support the business community through the Covid-19 pandemic.
- A West Yorkshire cake business pivoted from producing something in house to having an online business that resulted in being more successful during the Covid-19 period through the support the CA was able to provide.
- 100,000 payments, totalling £296m, were made via the Local Authority Grants (since November 2020).
- 13,500 payments, totalling £30m, were made via the Additional Restrictions Grant (since November 2020).
- 1,114 payments were made, totalling 2.8m, via the Covid-19 Recovery Grant.
- 400 Digital Resilience Vouchers (totalling £1.06m) were provided (via Leeds City Council).
- 1,350 businesses benefited from the Small Business Membership Scheme – allowing access to legal, HR, financial and wellbeing support (£300,000, via W&NY Chamber Mid-Yorkshire Chamber, FSB).
- 60 businesses benefitted from the Peer Learning Project (£90,000 via University of Leeds Business School)
- 160 businesses benefitted from the Cyber Security Support Scheme (£100,000, via North-East Business Resilience Centre)
- 180 businesses benefitted from the Business Resilience Webinars (£15,000, via Biskit).

#### Cost of Living and Energy Crises:

- Residents and communities have been supported directly through the Mayor's Fares, the Mayor's Cost of Living Emergency fund, which is providing £3m over 18 months to support vulnerable residents via the charitable sector, and doubling investment in retrofit projects to improve

energy efficiency for an additional 1,700 households (on top of 1,300 existing households).

- A number of webinars were delivered to 106 businesses in total which aimed to help small and medium businesses reduce their bills by being more energy efficient and sustainable.
- £1million was allocated to the Energy Price Emergency Grant scheme which provided short-term, high-impact interventions to help businesses with their energy costs. The grant scheme was aimed at businesses who had not traditionally been able to access our standard support structure, for example Business to Customer sectors such as retail, hospitality, and leisure.
- The grant scheme was in the early stages, however the number of applications getting approval was steadily increasing, and the first grant payments to businesses would be made in the next few days.
- The Excellent Relax Bed manufacturers in Kirklees was a good news story in that they had oversight from the CA on how they could 'green' their manufacturing processes and in doing so they received a fund to help them with their bills.
- 562 expressions of interest regarding the Energy Price Emergency Grant had been received to date. 337 applicants have moved to Stage 2 of the process, 106 applications sent to business and awaiting submission, 93 applications submitted and going through for approval, 31 Grants approved, and 4 businesses had submitted Grant Claims for payment, with a cumulative grant amount of £10,605.

#### Inward Investment Strategy and Activity:

- Creating 1,000 green, well-paid jobs is a key Mayoral pledge, but it is equally important that businesses, especially the energy-intensive manufacturing sector are able to pivot towards a net-zero economy as well. This was a priority for the Mayor and the Trade and Investment Team.
- The Trade & Investment Team take a proactive and strategic approach to winning investments in the priority sectors. This involves targeted trade missions and attendance at trade shows.
- The CA was often in competition with other places for inward investment, so it was important that our region was the most attractive.
- The trade mission to India in late 2022 resulted in Indian financial services corporate, Mphasis, announcing the creation of 1,000 green jobs over three years in the region. Mphasis had created between 250 and 300 new roles so far and were currently recruiting.
- Recent attendance at Arab Health in January 2023, led to several positive investment leads with organisations in Asia, Europe, and North America. It also provided several West Yorkshire health and life sciences businesses with a platform to attract new customers and explore overseas relationships.
- The Key Account Management Team are with PEXA, a globally recognised leader in FinTech, who were looking to open an office in Leeds from Spring 2023. The digital transformation of an intrinsic part of the UK economy and financial sector would be spearheaded from West Yorkshire.
- Allied Glass are creating 25 new graduate jobs (60 in total), with £40m+ investment into the Leeds site, for a new building (making the site more

environmentally friendly), new lines and a new furnace being installed to increase capacity also resulting in a 20% reduction in energy. The investment would see the recruitment of 25 graduates in a range of disciplines, including engineers, and would upskill the current workforce.

- UK Greetings in Kirklees are creating 66 new jobs with an £11m investment funding a significant reshoring project, moving vital parts of their Chinese manufacturing activities back into Kirklees (Dewsbury).
- PEXA (Australian FinTech company) in Leeds are creating 50 new, highly skilled jobs in FinTech and 300 jobs safeguarded. The Inward Investment Team have been working with PEXA to support their move into West Yorkshire and showcasing our region's strong economy, strengths in finance and FinTech, and world-class talent pool.

#### Creative New Deal and Creative Catalyst:

- The Creative New Deal sat across the Mayor's role as Police and Crime Commissioner so intervention with the Mayor's Community Safety Fund, where over £1million of the proceeds of crime would be given back by the Mayor towards community interventions. The money had been increased to £8k per project and a number of those projects had a creative element such as Safety in Music a Kirklees project.
- For the first time ever, an active committee had been set up with practitioners from across the region with a £15million allocation to the committee.
- The committee was supporting the ongoing festivals including approvals for funding for Leeds 2023 and Kirklees Year of Music. There were applications in for Wakefield, Calderdale, and Bradford City of Culture 2025. The Mayor emphasised the caveat of the need to see the rollover of someone that starts as an intern and progresses through their career and hones their talent and stays in the region.
- The Mayor talked about social prescribing, where as a musician you could also be paid to provide music for those with dementia or helping young people through depression. Enabling creatives in the sector to remain in the sector.
- The Creative Catalyst was in place supporting emerging artists and businesses to understand how they could pivot to export, increase productivity, and develop their learnings by sharing knowledge.
- This included sport as well as the creative sector.

#### **Jobs, Skills, and Training**

##### Hospitality Sector:

- Supporting the hospitality sector had been a combination of immediate financial support and training. There were interventions through the Growth Hub and training opportunities.
- The Mayor emphasised the importance of government devolving deeper powers in relation to skills and training. The CA understood what the region needed and could deliver specific skills training. The skills gap in West Yorkshire was substantial and the Mayor reiterated the potential benefit for the whole of the UK should the government give the CA further devolved powers over skills.
- The CA was working with the careers service, 80% of schools in West

Yorkshire were now working with the CA to achieve Gatsby standards for careers advice so the CA could understand what the gaps were in West Yorkshire market and inform careers advisors so they in turn could pivot young people.

- The West Yorkshire Employment Hub supported 922 people into employment to date, 9.5% were in the hospitality sector.
- After the election period the CA would be announcing the Fair Work Charter which would be going live and bringing in businesses committed to the real living wage to ensure there was more money in people's pockets.

#### Green Job Creation Pledge:

- The CA has already received 1007 total job pledges from 63 employers from across West Yorkshire. From those jobs pledged by businesses, 256 green jobs have already been created. [As of 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023]
- Mott MacDonald was one of the CA's big green jobs creators .
- West Yorkshire had one of the only colleges of construction in the UK and they had recently taken on a new Vice-Chancellor (first woman Vice-Chancellor in the college of construction).

#### Apprenticeships:

- Businesses had provided feedback that employing an apprentice was too complicated, including aspects of working with the training organisation and releasing apprentices to go to college.
- The Mayor welcomed the CA's free apprenticeship levy share scheme. The CA was able to broker the upskilling of 10 early years workers to the next level for free, through Asda's transfer of underspend apprenticeship levy.
- The Mayor visited Pragmatic Digital during apprenticeship week, who also hired two apprentices using the levy share scheme.
- All local authorities saw growth in apprenticeship starts during 2021/22, ranging from a 3% increase in Bradford to 18% growth in Wakefield and 16% in Calderdale. The rates of growth in Kirklees (9%) and Leeds (8%) were similar to the West Yorkshire average.
- All local authorities had lower levels of apprenticeship starts in 2021/22 than pre-pandemic (2018/19). The number of higher apprenticeship starts was 28% higher than pre-pandemic for West Yorkshire.
- There had been areas of deficit in take up of apprenticeships in Business, Administration and Law (-23%), Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (-26%), Retail and Commercial Enterprise (-32%) and Health, Public Services and Care (-12%).
- However, there had been an increase in Construction (+20%) and Information Technology (+14%) which both had higher levels of starts than pre-pandemic.
- Diversity of apprentices was an enormous challenge, Produmax in Bradford had an extremely diverse cohort of apprentices which is what the Mayor wished to see across the whole of West Yorkshire.
- The CA had 25 live apprenticeships at the current time. The Apprentice salary was grade D (starting salary of £19,867 - £22,688). There was a trial underway where junior staff were shadowing the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Directors and Senior Leaders as well as facilitating student



placements.

#### Engagement with Education:

- The Mayor regularly spoke to the Heads of Further Education (FE) colleges as the CA had recently taken on the responsibility for the region's £65m annual adult education budget. The CA could work with providers to ensure they are delivering the right courses for the region.
- The Mayor stressed that it was not just about Russell Group Universities it was also about the FE colleges.
- The Mayor met with FE Vice-Chancellors to discuss the challenges they were facing with energy costs and attracting teaching talent. Recently the CA had agreed to increase the Adult Education Budget funding rate to address inflationary pressures on colleges and training providers and guarantee high quality learning.

#### Over-50's Re-entering Workforce:

- There were too many people in West Yorkshire that were economically inactive, that is partly due to ill-health, too many people were on the waiting list for operations which was having an impact on our workforce more widely.
- In West Yorkshire, there were 344,000 people of working age who were economically inactive, of which, 128,000 were aged 50-64.
- On a national level, data was available that suggested many of those older workers now inactive had retired and were unlikely to return to the workforce at all.
- The Employment Hub, our FutureGoals website and the Skills Bootcamps (short term way of upskilling with modern skills) were available for people of all ages.
- The Research and Intelligence Team created a 'State of the Region' report every year which gave focus to particular sectors and taking the data from the team had been really helpful.
- The Mayor hoped that the new Inclusivity Champion would help with the unfair economic divide between our regions which would potentially help people back into work.
- There had been an increase of between 30 and 40 thousand over-50's becoming economically inactive in the 12 months to September 2022 compared to the pre-pandemic levels. The CA was seeing an increase in the out of work claimant count which was likely linked to the cost-of-living crisis.
- The importance of knowing the reasons over-50s may have left the workforce was emphasised.
- Development of co-operatives in the region so that individuals felt they had control over their working lives without external pressure which may have played a role in some over-50s leaving the workforce. The Mayor was working with Co-op UK and Growth Hub Managers to talk to businesses that might be struggling, rather than a management buyout, receive help to become a co-operative.

#### FutureGoals:

- West Yorkshire's award nominated all-age careers platform featuring resources to support young people (as well as their educators and carers) and adults in their decision making around upskilling, retraining,

and finding available apprenticeship and employment opportunities had surpassed its targets and reached 3.2 million people in the 2021/22 financial year.

#### Childcare:

- The Mayor felt that the childcare model was not working. Women were stepping out of the workforce and couldn't return until their child was three and the Government funded 30 hours childcare was available, by which time you had slightly slipped in your skills.
- The Mayor questioned how much the rate would be, nurseries struggled because they couldn't make the economics work, the business needed to be supported as well as paying people properly to ensure high quality childcare.

### **Funding, Strategy, and Projections**

#### Impact of Inflation:

- The Mayor hoped that the challenges around inflation had not impacted the Mayoral Pledges. Some projects were being reviewed and viability tested such as road focussed projects that would have worked 10 years ago. Pipelined projects were not 'stopped', projects identified as underway that could be pipelined would be picked up again once the next funding streams came through from government. £270million of projects were identified to be pipelined. It was also hoped that pipelined projects would help ease the difficult funding deadlines set by government so that more could be delivered.

#### Housing:

- On the back of people staying local and spending locally, bringing housing into city centres was important but it was a priority that housing was affordable and of adequate standard.
- The Mayor could have substantial influence on the Brownfield Funding pot, the CA could find expensive, blighted land and invest in the clearing of the land for developers.
- The CA was also going into partnership with Homes England which would unlock more leverage.
- Within the 5000 homes Pledge there was a sustainable element, there needed to be a bus stop so that people could use public transport and benefit from cheaper fares to get to work, and do not need to own a car.

The Mayor invited Members to contact the Mayoral Office with any further queries or specific queries relating to their corresponding wards.

**Resolved:** That the Mayor be thanked for attending, and the Committee's feedback and conclusions be considered further.

## **21. Economy Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee discussed the summary Work programme for the 2022/23 municipal year.

**Resolved:** That the appended summary 2022/23 Work Programme be noted.



**NOTES OF THE INQUORATE MEETING OF THE  
ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON FRIDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT CONFERENCE ROOM 1/2,  
WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS, LS1 2DE**

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**Present:**

Councillor Richard Smith (Chair)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Aneela Ahmed	Bradford Council
Councillor Bob Felstead (Deputy Chair)	Bradford Council
Councillor Helen Brundell	Calderdale Council
Councillor Colin Campbell	Leeds City Council
Councillor Katie Kimber	Calderdale Council
Councillor David Pickersgill	Wakefield Council
Councillor Matthew Robinson	Leeds City Council
Councillor Conrad Whitcroft	City of York Council

**In attendance:**

Khaled Berroum	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Felix Kumi-Ampofo	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Hannah Scales	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**1. Apologies for absence**

The meeting was **inquorate**, with 9 members present out of 11 needed for quorum.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Iqbal, Lowe, Wallis and Almass.

**2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

*Skipped item 2 as the meeting was inquorate.*

**3. Possible exclusion of the press and public**

*One member of the public was present at the Chair's discretion as the meeting was not quorate.*

**4. Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 March 2023**

As the meeting is inquorate, the minutes must be approved at the next quorate meeting (currently scheduled for 17 November).

A member reminded officers that a request for information regarding apprenticeship data noted in the minutes was not yet fulfilled and officers responded that all apprenticeships quoted were full time jobs and 90% of them led to full time employment, and that fuller data could be circulated to members if required.

## **5. Chair's comments and update**

The Chair provided a verbal update and:

- welcomed new and returning members and suggested that new members read the minutes of the previous year's meetings and let scrutiny officers know if they had any questions or required further intros and briefings.
- brought the committee's attention to the legally set high quorum rate, with 11 of 16 members are required for a meeting to take place and that members should let scrutiny officers know if they will be absent and arrange substitutes if they can
- asked that Members read papers in advance of meetings.
- mentioned the importance of scrutiny being non-political, evidence led and objective

## **6. Scrutiny and Governance arrangements**

Clarifications were provided on a number of issues:

- Cllr Manisha Kaushik was set to replace Cllr Gwen Lowe as the Labour Kirklees member.
- Cllr John Ford had stepped down as a member of the committee and would be replaced soon.
- Cllr Richard Hunt had now become an independent member and Wakefield Council would be asked to re-confirm their appointment as political balance rules require scrutiny membership to be proportionate to the number of councillors-per-party in the region.
- Allowances are paid monthly and are not tied to attendance records

## **7. Economy Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee discussed and approved the Work programme and agenda items for the 2023/24 municipal year – subject to formal approval at the next quorate meeting. Members were reminded that the Work Programme was not set in stone and could be amended and updated as the municipal year progressed to reflect events as they develop.

## **8. LEP Board update**

The Chair welcomed Felix Kumi-Ampofo, the new Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills & Culture who presented a report which provided an update on the future of the LEP Board and private sector engagement.

Discussion covered the following points:

- The previous arrangements of separate LEPs (local enterprise

partnerships) led by private sector representatives receiving money from the government is expected to end, with LEPs being amalgamated into their accountable bodies such as combined authorities.

- Separate LEP funding (previously used for things such as the Growth Hubs) is expected to come to an end.
- However, the Government still expects private sector voices to remain part of local/regional economy policy making and services.
- New arrangements will aim to fit in with existing business voices and forums, such as the chambers of commerce, FSB, CBI etc who may be included as representatives/members in the new board arrangements in future.
- A new board like structure will be established, but its name and remit is yet to be decided, including the role/title previously known as LEP Chair.
- There was an open recruitment process, where people in business were invited to apply, and then shortlisted and interviewed by a mixed panel – which was recently concluded.
- Efforts were undertaken to ensure that the membership suitably represented all parts of the region and a range of different sectors, but the focus is on getting the best representatives and often people can live in one place and work in another. It is not policy to reject a good candidate due to their location. Details of members, their background and geographical areas can be shared.
- The Chair (and Mayoral Business Advisor) is due to be appointed in the coming weeks or months.
- Functional economic areas go beyond council/county borders and will be taken into account in ways of working and partnership efforts.
- York/North Yorkshire is expected to get its own mayoral combined authority (in May 2024), and has its own LEP, and the precise nature of partnership working will be determined by the new board when it is assembled and the new leadership in York/NY when it is elected

## 9. Economic update and next steps

### (a) Economic outlook and strategic challenges

### (b) Economic Strategy and next steps

The Economic Evidence Manager presented the report.

Discussion covered the following points:

- **Unemployment:** Different council areas have different unemployment counts with Bradford and Leeds being higher than the others, Bradford being double the national average and one of the highest in the country – linked to historical issues around the decline of the mill industry. Youth unemployment is a particular concern to Members. Unemployment in general has improved since the pandemic, when it was 10%. CA programmes aim to make an impact through jobs/skills programmes, and on the new workforce coming from the school system through colleges and Adult Education Budget and in

connecting businesses to universities. Successful programmes which reduced unemployment elsewhere required the resources to have staff go into communities and engage directly identifying 'NEETs' and linking them with existing support services.

- **Health:** One possible barrier to people getting into, or back into, work is health. Many assume health barriers mainly impact older workers, but data shows the most effected are over-60s and also the youngest cohort who struggle, especially with mental health barriers. It's possible the youngest cohort are those most comfortable in admitting to these issues compared to other age groups. CA has less influence over direct health matters, but some impact can be made on adjacent areas such as housing quality, transport/pollution etc.
- **Over 50s returning to work:** Some over-50s are happily retired/semi-retired, but many were pressured or forced out of work. Many councils around the country have set up schemes, e.g. Deliveroo work for over-50s, which don't appear to have made an impact. Others who tried to get back into work, were unable to get back in at similar salaries as before, regardless of their experience, which has been a barrier. Part of the issue is the lack of clear evidence/data as to why this is the case and still require further study e.g. the pandemic simply accelerating previous trends, such as focus on 'quality of life'. Some argue that it is more socially advantageous for older retirees to be more active in communities and families e.g. supporting younger working parents with childcare and other communal volunteering.
- **Childcare:** A major factor impacting people's decision to work, or work fulltime is childcare, and those who cannot afford it full time rely on flexible working, part time work, or older relatives to support them – who would then also need to be working flexibly or not at all. Any solution to helping enable more workers to return to work must involve support for working parents.
- **AI and digitalisation:** Pursuing AI and digitalisation for the sake of AI and digitalisation shouldn't be the strategy, as AI is only as good as the data input into it and is subject to the same biases as other systems. Digitalisation without the necessary infrastructure and connectivity will leave people behind. A study has also been commissioned to produce a deep dive into the impact of artificial intelligence as the current outlook is highly uncertain. To date, aggregate employment has not been affected by AI but the growth of the AI sector is large.
- **Green Economy:** It is estimated that the green economy would need to double in size to meet the 2038 target. 9% of the total jobs in West Yorkshire are classified as high carbon jobs. Green jobs are not just those directly working on green infrastructure like turbines or renewable energy but come in many forms, and a clear definition and categorisation is needed.

- **Investment Zones update:** South Yorkshire and Liverpool City Region CAs have already determined and announced their investment zones. There are 5 gateways, and the CA is currently working on gateway 3 (tax, investment and business rate incentives to attract business). Gateway 4 involves the interventions/policies needed to attract businesses and the benefits. It was hoped that the Combined Authority would be able to agree details/incentives with Government before the Autumn Statement and an update can be provided in future.

**10. Date of the next meeting - 17 November 2023**

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**NOTES OF THE INQUORATE MEETING OF THE ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2023 IN CONFERENCE ROOMS 1/2, WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS, LS1 2DE**

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**Present:**

Councillor Aneela Ahmed	Bradford Council
Councillor Bob Felstead	Bradford Council
Councillor Helen Brundell	Calderdale Council
Councillor Katie Kimber	Calderdale Council
Councillor Richard Smith (Chair)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Manisha Roma Kaushik	Kirklees Council
Councillor Colin Campbell	Leeds City Council
Councillor David Pickersgill	Wakefield Council
Councillor Tony Wallis	Wakefield Council
Councillor Conrad Whitcroft	York City Council

**In attendance:**

Khaled Berroum	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Michelle Burton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Felix Kumi-Ampofo	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philippa Syers	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**1. Apologies for absence**

The meeting was **inquorate**, with 10 members present out of 11 needed for quorum.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Iqbal, Almass, Robinson, Caffrey and Moore.

**2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

None.

**3. Possible exclusion of the press and public**

None.

**4. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023**

As the meeting is inquorate, the minutes must be approved at the next quorate meeting, currently scheduled for 12 January 2024.

#### 5. **Notes of the inquorate meeting held on 15 September 2023**

As the meeting is inquorate, the notes must be acknowledged at the next quorate meeting, currently scheduled for 12 January 2024.

#### 6. **Chair's comments and update**

The Chair expressed disappointment that the meeting was inquorate for the second time in a row this year and said he would write to political group leaders to suggest that members unable to attend meetings regularly due to other commitments consider be replaced.

#### 7. **Adult Education Budget (AEB) update**

An additional verbal update was provided providing some economic context, including reduction in inflation, the MPC's decision to keep interest rates the same this quarter, GDP remaining static, and 'flattening' of employment levels. In employment and pay terms, median pay was 16% higher than in May 2021 (during COVID) but had fallen by 2% since June 2023 in WY, compared to a 1% fall nationally, which could lead to stronger demand for adult learning as criteria for subsidies is based on pay.

Discussion covered the following points:

- **Measuring success:** Destination and progression data is difficult to collect, but there is an increasing focus on it. The programme asks learners what their plans are, and more effort is undertaken to follow up and find out where they ended up. Some data is clearer as the training is linked to specific vacancies and can be tracked easier.
- **Demographic, strategic focus of AEB:** Post-devolution, the strategic focus has been on the poorest communities. AEB is the largest adult learning fund, but not the only one, and there is alignment and co-working with other programmes such as "Multiply" which focuses on adult basic numeracy.
- **Reaching those most in need:** £8m of the £66m is dedicated to community learning and delivered in locations identified as being most in need and targeted at hard to reach and 'disengaged' demographics. Some areas have higher instances of 'disengaged' communities than others due to local social and cultural factors amongst certain groups related to access and trust in local government. Reaching them requires engagement with local stakeholders which is resource intensive. Creative methods are adopted to reach them e.g. parents dropping children at school and frame support as helping children with homework as a beginning point. The CA could also leverage assets such as bus stops to support further outreach in future.

- **Data discrepancy:** The disparity between two figures for 2021/22 (43k and 46k) of adult learner participation in the reports is due to differences in data accounting between different programmes and funds; the 46,000 figure includes community learning participant overlap. This explanation will be reflected in future papers. Total figures are 52,000 starts, 47,000 retained and nearly 45,000 completions.
- **Regional data breakdown and focuses:** The CA works with local council colleagues to determine which wards are in most need. Councillors will benefit from knowing the picture in their own wards, to better assess where there is most need, and help to connect AEB programmes to local 'hard to reach' communities and programmes. Officers will send a breakdown to members following the meeting.
- **ROI and wider outcomes:** A greater analysis of "return on investment" (ROI) not only the AEB programme in terms of outputs (learners etc) but also on wider economic outcomes and corporate strategic goals would be useful for members to analyse in future.
- **Reskilling needs and green jobs:** Mayor launched a Green Jobs Taskforce to determine what a green job is and what the economy's demand and need is and how to frame future jobs and education programmes to support that to both young people beginning and those already in employment.
- **"Travel to Learn":** Some students are limited by their location and means to studying only locally and not where they need to for their desired course and career path. The "Travel to Learn" programme helps to subsidise students in need so they can attend the right institution and not just the nearest one.
- **Older workers and learners:** There are schemes and marketing which is directly targeted at older learners, as education and skills should be a lifelong opportunity, and data shows that the programmes are currently engaging well with all age groups including over-50s – however, retired over-50s are harder to persuade to the benefits of adult learning.
- **"Skills ceiling":** Further work is needed to support more workers who are willing to upskill/reskill but are limited by other duties. There are many examples of a "skills ceiling" where workers who could receive good promotions, earning good money, in needed professions, e.g. Nursery Nurse / TA > Nursery Teacher / Teacher, but it requires many years and costs of further education at university and college that the worker cannot do due to cost and child/care responsibilities. The best route around university level education is an employer-supported high-level apprenticeship, but funding is required to make it free for the employee.

## 8. School engagement and apprenticeships

Discussion covered the following points:

- **Measuring success with NEETs:** Success on NEETS is defined by absolute reduction in number of NEETs ('Not in Employment, Education or Training') and increase in participation levels, as they are linked. There is a need to focus beyond simply numbers in absolute terms, and also focus on the economic and social impact and picture. There is a role for local government and the CA to be 'system leaders' and 'enablers' in reducing NEET levels.
- **Gender stereotyping and progress:** Although there is more press and public attention on instances of gender-based discrimination and issues, the data shows that the picture is improving across the board thanks to various programmes. Attitudes around certain jobs and careers is still shaped by society, media and culture in both directions so it is necessary to target children at school with role models and examples so that they know any career is open to anyone. Even in areas of progress, there remain some discrepancies; there are many more women in surveying, but the trades are still male dominated. In some businesses different departments are still skewing towards particular demographics e.g. marketing is young, manufacturing was male, and textiles still female. There are also structural challenges, such as childcare duties falling disproportionately more on women and at-work creches benefiting all parents balance life and work.
- **FutureGoals participation rate:** FutureGoals is aimed at all age groups and there has been a big increase in usage due to successful marketing campaigns, with digital channels emerging as one of the most successful ways of reaching those who could benefit most from the programme, and its increasing promotion by careers facilitators in partner sectors such as college/university advisors, prisons, rehab etc. Data does not capture the ages of the users, as that would require an additional 'data capture wall' (i.e. asking for more information) which is proven to turn people off, if they have to sign up – which is currently only done by the training providers etc.
- **Local university retention rates:** The 23% rate referenced in paragraph 2.17-18 refers to those employed in the area they were educated in, as a retention rate, and not the wider post-university employment rate. The "Russell Group" universities' retention rates tend to be lower, which is normal for that level of university, e.g. Harvard University's retention rate is around 10% as most students do not stay in the immediate area. Retention is one of the areas that West Yorkshire performs better in than some other regions.
- **Type of study vs local job supply:** The graph in 2.17 shows that the "STEM" subjects of sciences, technology, engineering and maths have relatively low retention rates. This is largely due to the "Russell Group effect", since the university of Leeds is the main provider in these subject areas. It may also be due to fewer employers in those sectors in the region, compared to other regions, and also an inability of local

firms to match the salaries offered in other areas – although students don't go to London at as high levels as previously thought. It is harder to track the most recent trends affected by homeworking and new technology, as many people live in different places to their work and their location choices are motivated by personal reasons as much as economic reasons. It may take many years to track and analyse trends to understand people's habits and decisions.

- **Graduates in non-graduate work:** There is an issue with some graduates working in non-graduate jobs, especially since COVID where many took jobs in call centres, admin, and sales (from home) while waiting for other jobs. The data shows that graduates know how to apply for jobs in their sectors, but there are not enough jobs; it is a supply side issue. Current programmes aim to work with businesses to create those jobs. Although people in other regions applying for local jobs cannot be stopped, programmes can help ensure that local students and workers are sufficiently educated and skilled to compete for those jobs.
- **School engagement and link to 'real life':** School engagement is pivotal in shaping future decisions and habits. Children are influenced by non-school matters and the more their education, and engagement at schools, addresses the external issues and make a link between their studies and the real-life application of studies to work and life, the more engaged they are in their studies and more prepared when entering work.

It was noted that some of the pie charts in the report did not have legends and some of the graphs were cut off, to the right. These will be corrected and reissued.

## **9. Economy Scrutiny Work Programme**

It was agreed that:

- The Economic Strategy update be moved from the 12 January meeting to the 8 March meeting, as January is too soon for an update and is the Mayors Questions sessions.
- That a (virtual) planning session be arranged in December for members to discuss their approach to Mayor's Questions, which is taking place at the next meeting on 12 January 2024.
- Members were reminded that they should look in advance to see if they can attend a meeting and then arrange a substitute from the substitute pool if they cannot attend, as it is vital that meetings are quorate.

## **10. Date of the next meeting – 12 January 2024**

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<b>Report to:</b>	Economy Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	12 January 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Mayors Question Time – Tracy Brabin</b>
<b>Director:</b>	Alan Reiss, Chief Operating Officer
<b>Author:</b>	Khaled Berroum, Statutory Scrutiny Officer

## 1. Purpose of this report

1.1 To introduce the Mayor’s Question Time session.

## 2. Information

2.1 Every year the Mayor of West Yorkshire is invited to each of the Combined Authority’s scrutiny committees at least once to answer the Committee’s questions, on any matter related to that committee’s remit, in a public setting.

2.2 It is an opportunity for Scrutiny Members to hold the Mayor directly to account for the policies they adopt, the money they spend, the decisions they make, the services they are delivering and the outcomes they are achieving for the people of West Yorkshire.

2.3 This year the Mayor is scheduled to attend the following Mayor’s Question Times at scrutiny committees:

Date	Committee	Time	Location
1 December 2023	Transport & Infrastructure Scrutiny	10am	Wellington House, Leeds
12 January 2024	Economy Scrutiny	10am	Wellington House, Leeds
19 January 2024	Corporate Scrutiny	10am	Wellington House, Leeds

2.4 The Mayor is permitted to invite relevant senior officers of the Combined Authority – such as the Chief Executive or a relevant Director – to join them at the session.

2.5 The session is divided into sections, each with a topic heading, which members can ask related questions on; every member will have the opportunity to speak and ask follow-up questions to their original question.

2.6 The minutes of the previous Mayors Question Time session at the Economy Scrutiny Committee, which took place on 9 March 2022, is attached as **Appendix 1** for reference. The minutes of the previous Mayors Question Time session which took place on 15 March 2023 are **included elsewhere in this pack (Item 4)**

### **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 To question the Mayor of West Yorkshire, Tracy Brabin, on matters pertaining to the remit of this Scrutiny Committee.

### **11. Background Documents**

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

### **12. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Minutes: Economy Scrutiny Mayors Question Time – 9 March 2022





**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 9 MARCH 2022 AT WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-  
50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS LS1 2DE**

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**Present:**

Councillor Aneela Ahmed	Bradford Council
Councillor Stephen Baines MBE (Deputy Chair)	Calderdale Council
Councillor Jonathan Bentley	Leeds City Council
Councillor Kayleigh Brooks	Leeds City Council
Councillor Dawn Collins	Leeds City Council
Councillor Bob Felstead	Bradford Council
Councillor Tony Hames	Wakefield Council
Councillor Andrew Hollyer	City of York Council
Councillor Susan Press	Calderdale Council
Councillor Audrey Smith	Calderdale Council
Councillor Richard Smith (Chair)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Harpreet Uppal	Kirklees Council
Councillor Tony Wallis	Wakefield Council

**In attendance:**

Mayor Tracy Brabin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Brian Archer	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Khaled Berroum	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Judith Furlonger	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alison Gillespie	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Thomas Purvis	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Hannah Scales	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philip Witcherley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**10. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rowley, Kaushik and Iqbal.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate with 12 members present out of 11 needed for quorum.

**11. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

here were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

## 12. Possible exclusion of the press and public

There were no items requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

## 13. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021

**Resolved:** That the notes of the inquorate meeting held on 17 November 2021 be noted and entered as public record of what was discussed.

## 14. Notes of the informal meeting held on 19 January 2022

Members asked that the notes capture their view that social housing was an important element in achieving more affordable housing.

**Resolved:** That the notes of the informal meeting held on 19 January 2022 be noted and entered as public record of what was discussed, pending the above amendment.

## 15. Chair's comments and update

The Committee received a verbal update from the Chair. Members noted the initial proposed changes to the Committee structure and plans going forward to transfer place/environment work from the Economy Scrutiny Committee remit to Transport Scrutiny Committee, an update to follow. The Committee also heard that a wrap-up session was due to be arranged for the end of the year to discuss lessons learned, evaluate performance and forward plan for the coming year.

Considering the economic impact of the Ukraine crisis and the sanctions on Russia and freezing of assets, the Chair invited the Director of Economic Services to give a brief update. Key points from the update included:

- The challenge of significant inflationary pressures due to inflation which was 5.5% two weeks prior to the meeting and was expected to rise to 7%. An example of the impact was the cost of gas which was 20p per therm last year compared to the current price, £2.24 per therm.
- According to statistics there was 158 companies in West Yorkshire currently exporting to Russia. Members heard that a large number of businesses had grown on the back of Russian brands, and it would have an impact on some companies more than others.
- Food production - around 25% of global wheat production was from Russia and Ukraine.
- Cyber security – the crisis had significantly increased the risk of cyber-attacks and hacking, with one local firm saying they were not going public with the help they were giving Ukraine with fear of cyber-attacks.
- The long-term impact of stability was evident, investors had been moving out of public investments to gold and currency. There were increased regulatory burdens expected also.
- In-work Universal Credit claims had increased while business liquidations had stabilised in the new year.

**Resolved:** That the Chair's verbal update and the Director's update on

economic impact be noted.

## 16. **Economy Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee considered the Work programme for 2021/22. The Annual Report was due to be produced and short wrap-up sessions arranged for each Scrutiny Committee.

**Resolved:** That the report and comments be noted.

## 17. **Mayors Question Time - Tracy Brabin**

The Chair thanked the Mayor Tracy Brabin for attending Economy Scrutiny to answer the Committee's questions and outlined the format of the Mayor's Question Time. The session would be split into pre-agreed topic areas and members would be able to ask any questions under those topic areas, and any follow ups.

The topic areas were:

- Partnerships and delivery
- Skills and jobs
- Businesses
- Culture
- Housing

Following questions and supplementary questions, the following was reported to the committee:

### 1. **Partnerships and Delivery**

- **Quality of partnerships:** the Mayor felt that the Local Authorities were aligned and working well together, they all had similar challenges and agreed on solutions.
- **Delivery capacity:** Gainshare was being used to support each member authority in developing a pipeline of projects ready for bidding in new government funding announcements. The Mayor felt government didn't understand delivery capacity issues facing local government and was too demanding in the number of funding announcements and the limited time to deadlines requiring resources to be spent on bidding.
- **York:** West Yorkshire worked with York on various joint schemes, not just in transport, but also in business. Further devolution to York was supported as it would also benefit West Yorkshire.
- **Leeds-centricity & West Yorkshire levelling up:** Members had the perception of Leeds centricity. Other cities and towns felt side-lined, particularly on office space. Wakefield Council was bidding for the new Rail HQ, but it was bidding against larger areas/authorities such as Doncaster, Preston and York.

### 2. **Jobs and skills**

- **Labour shortages:** Members heard of the use of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) budget to respond to reactive labour needs such as the

HGV driver training during the recent shortage.

- **Green jobs:** There was demand for green jobs in the development of EV charging infrastructure and EV mechanics, retrofitting homes opportunities and the use of AEB funding to help. Members wished to know the definition of a 'green job'; to ensure it was not the marketing industry 'greenwashing' campaigns, but direct jobs for example as EV related workers and electric boiler fitters.
- **Parent workers:** The importance of support for parent workers, particularly women.
- **Over 50s:** The CA wanted to support people to reskill as their careers progressed. Older workers had been positively targeted through the employment Hub to help people get back into work.
- **University engagement:** The Mayor had regular meetings with Vice Chancellors encouraging positive engagement. The Mayor emphasised to importance of careers advice, working with businesses and helping young people make important choices.

### 3. Business

- **Support for small businesses:** historically economic development policy focussed on businesses with growth potential. There were various versatile initiatives to support small/medium sized businesses including integral local, community businesses such as 'corner shops' which may not be looking to grow.
- **Cost of living:** the cost-of-living crisis was affecting business costs/expenses and there were schemes in place to advise/fund businesses helping them in reducing energy costs through greater efficiency.
- **Grants vs advice;** Members felt that on occasion, businesses needed invaluable advice rather than money – which the CA did also provide in its services.
- **Late payments:** Businesses and in particular small businesses struggled with late/backdated payments which was a recognised issue. Members heard this problem was addresses as part of the 'Fair Work Charter' and other initiatives.
- **Inclusive growth:** Members felt there was a lack of clarity around the definition of 'inclusive growth' and whether the CA sought to make only the new growth element inclusive or the entire existing economy inclusive. Members heard that the goal was to grow the economy further and in an inclusive way that shared the benefits of growth. Some work such as the 'Fair Work Charter' sought to make the existing economy fairer and more inclusive.
- **Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA):** LBA was considered an example of the tension and conflict between economic growth and the climate emergency action. Expanding the airport would lead to increased carbon emissions but the Mayor felt that the region couldn't remain competitive with other regions without its own modern airport.

### 4. Housing

- **House production rate:** The rate of housing development hadn't increased in 10 years, which had contributed to the rising house prices.
- **MCA housing powers:** Members understood that the CA/Mayor can't

build houses, but the CA could help Local Authorities deal with issues such as land-banking through Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) or develop less viable land through devolved funding.

- **Viability of land:** The majority of land especially in districts such as Calderdale was harder to develop due to the area's terrain. The Brownfield Fund was designed to help councils develop such difficult land, that requires a lot more funding to make viable.
- **Social/council housing:** 5000 'affordable' homes target did not include a specific proportion as social housing. Members of the public often viewed affordable housing as social housing for rent. Members thought the affordable housing definitions were too subjective – what was affordable for one, may not be affordable for another.
- **Developers:** Members discussed that far too often developers agreed to develop affordable housing, then under technicalities renege on their agreements by citing lack of profitability due to 'unforeseen' viability costs after the fact. Members heard that an area in Horsforth gave up greenbelt land for a development of affordable housing and did not get any in the end. Members discussed the possibility of Mayoral soft power being utilised by identifying good and bad developers who adhere to agreements.
- **'Wellness' and 'place':** Price was not the only factor for good housing; also access and connectivity to amenities such as food and transport were equally as desirable. It was not just about houses, it was also about the area and place, an example being those fortunate to have garden space during the pandemic compared to people who didn't.

## 5. Culture

- **Networking and inclusivity:** Creative industries are centred around networking, contacts and relationship building. This could put people from various social classes at a disadvantage. It was suggested that peer networking opportunities should be part of the Creative Catalyst and Channel 4 programmes.
- **Culture and wider regeneration:** This could create a wide range of jobs in acting, producing, writing, digital, marketing, building, logistics and hospitality to contribute to wider economic growth.

**Resolved:** That the Mayor be thanked for attending and the Committee's feedback and conclusions be considered further.

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<b>Report to:</b>	Economy Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	12 January 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Work Programme 2023/24</b>
<b>Director:</b>	Alan Reiss, Chief Operating Officer
<b>Author:</b>	Katie Wright, Scrutiny Support Officer

## 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To note the current Work Programme.
- 1.2 To consider any additional agenda items, formal referrals to scrutiny, reviews, call in, and any other tasks, issues or matters the Committee resolves to undertake or consider further.

## 2. Information

### Work Programme 2023/24

- 2.1 The Work Programme is set at the beginning of the year and considered at each meeting where it can be amended and changed as the year progresses. It outlines the work the Committee has agreed to undertake, investigate, and focus on in the municipal year (June 2023 – June 2024) within the resources, remit, and powers available.
- 2.2 The Work Programme was decided over the summer following an initial work planning meeting between Members in July, and subsequent discussions between the Scrutiny Chairs, Scrutiny Members, scrutiny officers and the lead directors and officers for each committee. During discussions, amongst other things, they considered:
  - The Committee's remit and terms of reference
  - Combined Authority's main strategic priorities and the Mayors Pledges
  - The committee's work last year and what should be rolled over
  - Major ongoing and upcoming challenges for West Yorkshire residents
  - Members' areas of expertise and interests
  - The number of meetings: three, excluding Mayors Question Time, each being two hours long
- 2.3 The joint work programme (as of the date of publication), including the other two scrutiny committees, is attached as **Appendix 1**.

### **Referrals to scrutiny**

- 2.4 Under Scrutiny Standing Order 7, any CA Scrutiny Member, any Combined Authority Member, or any elected Member of a West Yorkshire council (or the City of York Council) may formally refer a matter to a scrutiny committee for consideration. The referral must be in writing to the Statutory Scrutiny Officer. The relevant scrutiny committee must then consider and discuss the referral and respond to the referrer explaining whether or not it will consider the matter further and why.
- 2.5 There are no formal referrals for this committee to consider at this meeting.

### **Key decisions and call in**

- 2.6 Scrutiny members may call in any decision of the Mayor, Combined Authority, a decision-making committee, and any key decisions taken by an officer (with the exception of urgent decisions). Key decisions are defined as any decision incurring a financial cost or saving of £1 million or more, or a decision likely to have a significant effect on two or more wards.
- 2.7 Decision-makers (both committees and officers) have two days to publish notice of a decision, at which point scrutiny members have five working days to decide whether to call in the decision, delaying its implementation, and formally requiring the decision maker to reconsider. The call-in process is outlined Section 14 of the Scrutiny Standing Orders.
- 2.8 Any five members of a scrutiny Committee – including at least one member from two different constituent councils (West Yorkshire) – may call-in a decision by notifying the Statutory Scrutiny Officer in writing by 4.00 pm on the fifth working day following publication of a decision notice. The relevant scrutiny chair must then decide whether to approve the call-in and delay the implementation of the decision, after which the committee has 14 days to meet, scrutinise the decision and make any recommendations. Further information is set out in Scrutiny Standing Order 14.
- 2.9 The latest key decisions and forward plans of key decisions are published and available for viewing on the [key decisions section of the Combined Authority's website](#).

### **Changes in membership**

- 2.10 Since the last meeting, no changes to memberships have occurred.
- 2.11 There remains one vacancy (Wakefield, Labour) which is in the process of being filled.

### **Actions for the Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

- 2.11 As outlined in Scrutiny Standing Order 17, the statutory scrutiny officer provides support to a scrutiny committee's work programme and all scrutiny members in exercising their scrutiny duties and fulfilling their objectives.



### **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 Committee notes or amends the Work Programme and forward plan.

### **11. Background Documents**

[Scrutiny Standing Orders](#)

[Key Decisions Forward Plan \(as of this month\)](#)

### **12. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Joint Scrutiny Work Programme (as of the date of publication)

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## Scrutiny Work Programmes 2023/24

### Summary of main topics and meeting dates

Committee	Main topic areas	Meetings
<b>Corporate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate performance monitoring</li> <li>Budget, finances and resources (incl staff capacity)</li> <li>'Deeper devolution'</li> <li>Decision making and governance</li> <li>Projects: ICS, Wellington House refurbishment, MCA Digital Programme, Procurement and social value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22 September 2023</li> <li>24 November 2023</li> <li>19 January 2024 (Mayors Questions)</li> <li>8 March 2024 (PM)</li> </ul>
<b>Transport &amp; Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus franchising and service improvement (incl BSIP+)</li> <li>Mass Transit</li> <li>Strategy, policy and Local Transport Plan 4 pre-scrutiny</li> <li>Performance monitoring of transport network, bus services, passenger experience and transport projects</li> <li>Housing (achievement of mayoral pledge)</li> <li>Projects: Flexi Bus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29 September 2023</li> <li>1 December 2023 (Mayors Question)</li> <li>26 January 2024</li> <li>15 March 2024</li> </ul>
<b>Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic outlook/data</li> <li>Economic strategy development: strategic challenges, current / future challenges</li> <li>Adult Education Budget and adult learning</li> <li>School engagement, apprenticeships and youth learning</li> <li>Approach to business support and investment, including culture / creative industries</li> <li>Economics services performance/outputs monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 September 2023</li> <li>17 November 2023</li> <li>12 January 2024 (Mayors Questions)</li> <li>8 March 2024 (AM)</li> </ul>

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## Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Sub-topics/focuses	Date
Strategic focus and performance monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is performance monitored – how does the process work? (Who monitors it? What data is collected and how is it presented?)</li> <li>Logic and assumptions behind deciding the actual KPI/target/objective numbers; evidence based, need based, capacity based? Is it 'arbitrary'?</li> <li>Focus on long term progression 'journey of delivery' for greater context – past KPIs, current, future.</li> <li>What impact is the CA actually making? What 'levers' does it actually have? Is there proof of 'additionality'?</li> <li>Strategic alignments: Region-first thinking, avoiding local parochialism; Levelling up within WY vs Leeds centricity (inclusion in KPIs and performance monitoring of it?); Competition between districts and in district priorities (especially in bidding)?</li> </ul>	<p>22 September 2023</p> <p>8 March 2024 (possibly return of item)</p>
Budget and resources (including staff capacity)	<p><u>Budget and finances:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usual budget monitoring and pre-scrutiny.</li> <li>Gainshare spending + Gateway Review 2023/2024.</li> <li>Reserves policy/level – Audit's view of risks and viability.</li> <li>Corporate borrowing – possibility, rules, amount.</li> <li>Revenue raising and additional sources of funding.</li> <li>Use of past data to contextualise current budget against past budgets and future projected budgets.</li> </ul> <p><u>Staff capacity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the organisation have the staff to deliver? Pressures between efficiency savings (e.g. vacancy management, lower pay awards in competitive market) and delivery capacity.</li> <li>Recruitment and retention challenges in local government – what are the areas of concern, what can be done, where can the five authorities work together (e.g. pooling resources).</li> <li>Progress and changes since the last staff survey analysis (and historic context).</li> </ul>	<p>24 November 2023 (+ Gateway Review as separate item)</p> <p>19 January 2024 (workshop after committee meeting)</p> <p>8 March (budget/business planning update + focus on staff issues)</p>
Deeper devolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current status of promised powers that have not yet been devolved e.g. planning. (Autumn update?)</li> <li>Future expected further devolution, including 'single settlement' funding model.</li> </ul>	19 January 2024
Decision making and governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance rules and structure etc.</li> <li>How are decisions made – from the origin point (inception) of an idea (or need) to policy/service development, to scrutiny/discussion, to decision, to monitoring delivery, to evaluation.</li> </ul>	<p>22 September 2023</p> <p>(Assurance Framework)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of members and level of control and influence over process.</li> <li>• Role of officers and internal decision-making structures – when do officers decide, when do members decide.</li> <li>• How each stage is communicated to stakeholders (members, public) and how they are involved.</li> <li>• The Assurance Framework and role of PAT in project decisions/management/scrutiny/evaluation etc.</li> <li>• Scrutiny system.</li> </ul>	<p>element and project decision-making)</p> <p>TBC – other elements, possibly after/alongside deeper devolution item.</p>
Project: Integrated Corporate System (ICS)	Update on progress since last year.	8 March 2024
Project: Wellington House refurbishment	Post-project Evaluations report.	TBC – when evaluations report is complete. Chair to advise.
Project: MCA Digital Programme	Briefing on project and progress.	TBC – Chair to receive briefing and suggest way forward
Project: Procurement and social value	Update from last year: methodology, risks, real value.	TBC – Chair to receive briefing and suggest way forward
Scrutiny Protocol	Review of government's newly published Scrutiny Protocol, which WYCA must be compliant with to receive additional powers and funding through Level 4 Devolution. Review will assess WYCA's current compliance level and recommend changes to a) be compliant and b) improve scrutiny in general.	Working Group established 29 January 2024 February meeting TBC

## Transport & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Sub-topics/focuses	Date
Bus reform and improvement	<p>Overview of long-term bus reform plans (Franchising) and short-term efforts to improve bus services in the meantime (BSIP, etc)</p> <p>Long term reforms – Bus franchising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background and update on bus franchising and upcoming consultation (<i>to be approved at 28 Sept CA meeting, held the day before TSC</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Short term improvements – BSIP update and performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update/changes in BSIP since 2021/22 (<i>when the committee last looked at it</i>)</li> <li>• Most updated quarterly report and KPIs – including update on RTI accuracy (<i>considered by committee last Sept</i>).</li> <li>• Bus network performance and passenger experience data</li> </ul> <p>Areas of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current bus service / operator performance issues</li> <li>- Effects of service cuts and possible solutions</li> <li>- Public engagement, customer service quality re complaints, consultations and service changes</li> </ul>	<p>22 September 2023 – Overview, background and update (ahead of bus franchising consultation)</p> <p>26 January 2024 – Further update on franchising consultation and BSIP</p> <p>TBC – look at consultation report and results before March 2024 final approval</p>
Mass Transit	<p>Overview of the background to the Mass Transit scheme, level of funding, short term and long-term timelines, main challenges and risk assessment, legal questions, type of transit systems being considered and how future proof it is, public consultation, and multi-modal connectivity.</p>	<p>26 January 2024</p> <p>Any further update based on timelines</p>
Overview and Monitoring – transport services and projects/schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPI, projects, objectives – performance and achievement.</li> <li>• Understand transport schemes, funding/bidding, strategic and ROI criteria, impact assessments on non-transport areas.</li> </ul>	<p>29 September 2023 – buses/passenger experience</p>
Strategy/policy and Local Transport Plan 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decarbonisation (and government assessment toolkit)</li> <li>• Behaviour Change and Active Travel (including bikes, e-bikes/e-scooters, and motorbikes)</li> <li>• Freight and waterways as a resource</li> <li>• Current and future transport trends; the pandemic and beyond (bus/rail footfall, homeworking positives vs rise in deliveries)</li> <li>• Infrastructure, energy and sustainability challenges and opportunities of future proof transport system (electricity demand vs sources, lithium dependency and mining, effect on other industries and sectors)]</li> <li>• Pollution, health and clean air zones</li> </ul>	<p>15 March 2024</p> <p>(LTP4 consultation in Summer 2024, for adoption in 2025)</p>

Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Achievement of 'affordable' and 'sustainable' targets</li><li>• Challenges and solutions (target vs need in region)</li><li>• Available funding and what it is being spent on</li></ul>	1 December 2023, at MQT
Projects: Flexi Bus	Review July Transport Cttee report and reason for non-viability and early termination, and circumstances of decision	Workshop for working group, 26 January 2024 (PM)

## Economy Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Sub-topics/focuses	Dates
Economic outlook and strategic challenges	<p><u>Current situation/data:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latest data and economic outlook since last year e.g. economic figures, inflation, cost of living effects</li> <li>• Any comparisons with neighbouring regions with overlapping economic footprints e.g. NY and GM.</li> </ul> <p><u>Current/persistent challenges:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing post-pandemic challenges: effects on town centres / hospitality businesses and plans to deal with this (e.g. shopfront grants, cultural exhibitions, IT/study areas); changes in work habits and effects of people being able to work remotely on local economies and other areas.</li> <li>• Persistent economic challenges: NEETs, people 'missing' from data, part time work trends, over-50s/retirees returning to work, green sector/skills growth and preparation, manufacturing in need of support, inter-regional imbalances in economic growth/jobs within WY, and retention of talent within WY.</li> </ul> <p><u>New/Future challenges:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AI, automation, green/decarbonisation (+ any other disruptions?) which have accelerated recently and their potential consequences on the regional economy, businesses and jobs.</li> <li>• Are we prepared for these challenges? Can we get ahead of other MCAs/areas and position ourselves as leaders in these emerging markets?</li> <li>• Potential conflict between productivity/growth/tech advancement vs job creation/community/place/diversity considerations.</li> </ul> <p><u>Economic Strategy update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How we are addressing the above challenges through the economic strategy + current thinking/progress + timeline for finalisation and adoption</li> </ul>	<p>15 September 2023 – intro and main discussion</p> <p>8 March 2024 – update on economic strategy</p>
Adult Education Budget, Schools and Training Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on last year's AEB performance and this year's spending and outputs.</li> <li>• School engagement and young people opportunities and apprenticeships</li> <li>• Apprenticeships and non-university career routes</li> </ul>	17 November 2023
Business investment and outcomes (including culture + creative industries) and	<p><u>Business investment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How we are investing in businesses and generating outcomes</li> </ul> <p><u>Culture and creative industries:</u></p>	8 March 2024



<p>performance monitoring/outputs/funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A mayoral objective, an increasing percentage of the region's economy and upcoming/recent city of culture events (in Bradford and Leeds)</li></ul> <p><u>Performance monitoring and KPIs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring achievement of economy targets/KPIs from the corporate plan.</li><li>• "Follow the money": where is funding coming from, how is it spent, what are the revenue opportunities.</li><li>• Inter-regional levelling up, avoidance of Leeds-centricity, ensuring certain areas/towns are not forgotten, place-based element of targets/KPIs e.g. number of jobs/houses/businesses supported in different districts</li></ul>	
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