

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MEETING TO BE HELD AT 10.00 AM ON FRIDAY, 19 JANUARY 2024
IN CONFERENCE ROOM 1/2, WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50
WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS, LS1 2DE**

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 24 NOVEMBER 2023**
(Pages 1 - 6)
- 5. CHAIR'S COMMENTS AND UPDATE**
- 6. LEVEL 4 DEVOLUTION**
(Pages 7 - 54)
- 7. WORK PROGRAMME**
(Pages 55 - 66)
- 8. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING - 1 MARCH 2024**

Signed:



**Chief Executive
West Yorkshire Combined Authority**



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2023 IN CONFERENCE ROOMS 1/2, WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS, LS1 2DE

Present:

Councillor Alun Griffiths	Bradford Council
Councillor Ralph Berry	Bradford Council
Councillor Bob Felstead (substitute)	Bradford Council
Councillor Katie Kimber (substitute)	Calderdale Council
Councillor Brenda Monteith	Calderdale Council
Councillor Susan Lee-Richards	Kirklees Council
Councillor Jo Lawson	Kirklees Council
Councillor Barry Anderson (Chair)	Leeds City Council
Councillor Jane Dowson	Leeds City Council
Councillor Paul Wray	Leeds City Council
Councillor Samantha Harvey	Wakefield Council
Councillor Richard Forster	Wakefield Council
Councillor Andrew Waller	York City Council

In attendance:

Khaled Berroum	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Patrick Bowes	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Sarah Eaton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Angela Taylor	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Anna Woodhouse	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

12. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mike Barnes, David Nunns, Rahat Khan, Moses Crook, and Betty Rhodes.

Councillors Bob Felstead and Katie Kimber substituted for Councillors Nunns and Barnes, respectively.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate with 13 members present (out of 11 needed for quorum).

13. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

14. Possible exclusion of the press and public

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

15. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2023

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2023 be approved, following amendment to mark Cllr Waller as present.

16. Chair's comments and update

The Chair updated the committee on the meetings he, and the Deputy Chair, had held since the last meeting including a meeting with the independent Chair of the Audit Committee, Debbie Simpson, to discuss and review the CA's risk and assurance processes and appetites.

The Chair and Chief Operating Officer also provided a verbal update on the government's newly published Level 4 Devolution technical document and accompanying Scrutiny Protocol.

- Level 4 (L4) devolution was announced alongside the Autumn Statement, and WYCA is currently on L3 devolution, which is the highest except for the "trailblazer" schemes.
- The government also announced new MCAs and new non-mayoral county combined authorities ('CCAs').
- The government published a "menu" of potential new powers and funding streams and MCAs have been given until the end of January to write to government confirming they a) want new powers and b) which powers they want.
- Currently only Greater Manchester and West Midlands are on "trailblazer schemes" which include departmental style single-pot funding arrangements, which the government has released an MOU on.
- The soon to be created North East Combined Authority (NECA), currently replacing the North of the Tyne CA and including the south Tyneside authorities, will also become a "trailblazer" authority due to previously negotiated commitments between the North East and the government.
- The L4 devolution deal which WYCA can apply for is expected to move towards the single-pot funding arrangements in the near future, as has been offered to GMCA, WMCA and NECA.
- L4 deals will require demonstration of enhanced scrutiny arrangements, along the requirements in a new 'Scrutiny Protocol' (also published alongside the Autumn Statement and L4 devolution technical document).
- The Scrutiny Protocol includes around 20 "key principles" which cover a range of areas including committee structure, substitutes, allowances, pre-decision scrutiny, performance monitoring, review groups, and resources.
- Officers may be possible to identify some "quick wins" that can be employed more immediately such as Mayors Question Time with

members of the public and possible attendance of scrutiny chairs at main Combined Authority meetings.

The Chair suggested, and the Chief Operating Officer welcomed, that scrutiny should establish a working group, consisting of members across the three scrutiny committees, to review the current scrutiny function and suggest a pathway with how it can improve to be compliant with the Scrutiny Protocol.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Chair's verbal update be noted.
- (ii) That the Chief Operating Officer's verbal update on devolution be noted.
- (iii) That an item and report on Level 4 Devolution be provided at the next meeting on 19 January 2024.
- (iv) That a working group, consisting of scrutiny members from all three scrutiny committees, be established to review the government's Scrutiny Protocol and make recommendations to ensure that the Combined Authority's scrutiny function is compliant with its requirements.

17. Budgets and Finance

The Director of Finance and Commercial Services provided a report summarising the latest position of the budget, finances and spending.

Following discussion and questions, the following points and conclusions were made:

1. Transport Levy refund:

- In the past it was agreed that an element of the Transport Levy would be used annually to build up a reserve for the Transport Fund.
- Since delivery of Transport Fund schemes has been slower than anticipated due to various reasons, it became possible to release funding back to the local authorities for the time being.
- The reserve will be built back up over time in future years as the Transport Fund schemes, the funding was originally earmarked for, progress.
- York is covered by a separate legal agreement.
- The Transport Levy is paid to the Combined Authority from their resources, so the refund back to the councils can be spent on whatever the councils want to spend it on.
- This decision was taken by the Mayor, Leaders, and Combined Authority Members as one of many possible options, including possibly spending on subsidising more bus services – but other funding from government was made available for bus services.

- The transport levy couldn't be spent on other CA function areas, such as housing or skills, as it is ringfenced for transport schemes, which is something that could be communicated better to the public.
2. **Inflation tolerance and risk management:** The impact of cost inflation on schemes and the capital programme remain a risk, and the longer and more complicated a scheme, the greater the impact of inflation. There was a review of capital programme schemes last year, to reorientate various phases of delivery in light of additional costs and inflation contingencies are factored into the tolerances in the approved finances for schemes; but as inflation constantly changes, these must be kept under review. The inflation allowance for next year's budget can be outlined and explained in more detail during the budget workshop in January 2024.
 3. **Other potential risks for the capital programme:** Other than cost inflation risks, other risks include staff capacity at CA and local authority level, since the schemes are local authority schemes which are delivered by the local authorities' staff – and in addition, any separate financial and delivery risks posed to the delivering authority. There is also a risk of new capital funding being announced by government which will require bidding proposals to be put together and then delivery of schemes within a short window, usually a year, which would require redeployment of resources from other schemes to prioritise the schemes with the nearest deadlines.
 4. **Borrowing and interest:** The CA's treasury management function is done through Leeds City Council and all elements including risk management are co-designed with their treasury management team. There has been a higher-than-expected return on interest from bank deposits, which has been reallocated into some capital programme support.
 5. **Brownfield Housing Fund underspend:** The scheme had a slow start due to the constraints of the funding and complex nature of the schemes and programme design, which focus on helping unlock developments which are usually less viable and more difficult, and joint delivery with private sector partners. Despite its slow start, current projections show that it is on track to spend by Summer 2025 when the programme is due to conclude. There were also other initial issues with staff capacity, as reported at the last meeting during the corporate performance item, but the current recruitment issues are not unique to WYCA and the team in place has been successful in progressing many schemes since the date of the data presented to the last committee meeting.
 6. **Risk of unspent money returned to government:** Technically there is a risk that funds not spent in line with the required timescales may need to be returned to the government, and many of the CA's schemes are bigger complicated infrastructure schemes so there is a risk. The relationship with government and civil servants is good and

communication is frequent. So far, no money has ever had to be paid back and the departments have been understanding and flexible in understanding where there are overlaps between financial years and when delivery is expected down the line.

Resolved:

- i) That the report and the Committee's feedback be noted.
- ii) That a workshop be arranged at an appropriate item in January for the Committee to scrutinise the latest draft 2024/25 budget so that any suggestions can be reported to the 1 February CA budget meeting.

18. Gateway Review Update

The Head of Research and Intelligence presented a report providing an overview of the government's ongoing Gateway Review of the Transport Fund (2nd review) and Gainshare spending (1st review).

The discussion covered the following points:

1. **Analysis of evidence and outcomes:** The evidence being gathered is mainly focused on economic outcomes, productivity and growth – not just financial. Evidence is gathered by surveying businesses and residents near the sites of the schemes to understand the impact of the schemes on the area and whether they achieved their stated goals. There is also “counter-factual” analysis, which is far more difficult, which tries to determine what would have happened if that scheme was not built or implemented. The main conclusions are based on justifiable argumentation as to whether the scheme had a *likely* impact.
2. **Timeline:** The entire review process is very structured with clearly guided submissions and templates. An independent panel led by SQW will gather and analyse the evidence from the CA, and then submit it to the government with their own analysis and comments. The evidence evaluated by the independent panel (SQW) must be gathered by July 2024 and the final evidence must be submitted to government by August 2024.
3. **Future Scrutiny:** When the report is in the public domain, it can be circulated to scrutiny so that the Committee can analyse for itself how the process was conducted and whether the CA delivered what it promised for individual schemes and for the programme in general. This is likely to be in mid-2024, but the previous impact assessment from 2020/21 is already viewable.

Resolved:

- i) That the report and the Committee's feedback be noted.

- ii) That the final Gateway Review report return to scrutiny in the future for further analysis, and any reports put into the public domain before then, be circulated to scrutiny members.

19. Corporate Scrutiny Work Programme

The Chair provided an overview of the current work programme and the next meeting's draft agenda (19 January 2024), which was scheduled for 3 hours, more than the usual 2 hours, to accommodate both Mayors Questions – moved from the March meeting due to scheduling issues – and any additional items.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Work Programme is amended to include a report on L4 Devolution and the Scrutiny Protocol working group, as agreed during the Chair's update item.
- (ii) That the Chair be delegated the authority to draw up the running order, running time and agenda for the 19 January 2024 meeting – based on Member and officer advice – including relating to the budget scrutiny workshop.

20. Date of the next meeting – 19 January 2024

Report to:	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
Date:	19 January 2024
Subject:	Level 4 Devolution
Director:	Sarah Eaton, Director Strategy, Communications & Intelligence
Author:	Anna Crump Raiswell, Policy Officer

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the recently announced Level 4 Devolution Framework, through which the Combined Authority can apply to access new powers, functions and flexibilities.
- 1.2 To provide a summary of the new Scrutiny Protocol, published alongside the Level 4 Devolution Framework, which aims to create a sustained culture of scrutiny in devolved bodies and is a requirement for accessing further devolution.
- 1.3 To provide an update on the Combined Authority's proposed next steps to deeper devolution, via Level 4 of the Devolution Framework, which requires submission to the Secretary of State before 31 January 2024.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 On 22 November 2023, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) released a technical paper outlining the new Level 4 Devolution Framework. The Framework aims to standardise the approach to English devolution, moving away from previously agreed bespoke deals.
- 2.2 As an established Mayoral Combined Authority, West Yorkshire Combined Authority is eligible to apply for Level 4 Devolution and is working in partnership to understand both the opportunities and implications of accessing this level of the framework, and how it can help to achieve regional priorities as set out in the West Yorkshire Plan.
- 2.3 The Framework marks a step forward towards greater devolved funding and powers to eligible institutions who choose to participate and provides a stepping stone towards a single settlement through the offer of consolidated funding at the next multi-year Spending Review.

- 2.4 References to greater collaboration with Government departments and other national organisations on a broader range of policy areas marks a shift in emphasis in the relationship between national Government and the region.
- 2.5 The Framework sets out a number of policy areas where it is increasing flexibilities, granting new powers or increasing collaboration between government and regions. It also includes other hooks including the move towards a general, rather than the existing, functional power of competence and the ability to make technical adjustments to historic legislation and take on board powers that other areas have previously secured. This offers the potential for areas to further broaden the scope of proposals on offer whilst addressing historic discrepancies in power.

Level 4 Framework

- 2.6 The Level 4 Devolution Framework, attached at **Appendix 1** to this report, set out the powers and functions available to eligible institutions, across a range of policy areas.
- 2.7 Key highlights on offer through the framework are as follows:

Policy area	Summary of offer
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding simplification with a consolidated DLUHC pot, available at the next multi-year spending review, as the first stage towards a single settlement. • Removal of Gainshare gateway reviews for eligible institutions which have passed Gateway One and meet criteria relating to local evaluation frameworks.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolved and consolidated integrated local transport settlement for eligible institutions subject to demonstration of appropriate level of fiscal sustainability and broader capacity/capability from the next multi-year Spending Review for the length of the Spending Review. • A range of other offers linked to the Key Route Network, Pavement Parking and Taxi Licensing. • <i>Access to Transport powers must be taken as a whole and are not available to pick and choose as with other powers on offer.</i>
Employment and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further commitment towards a more devolved adult skills system with increased flexibility on adult skills programmes and the ability of institutions to be central convenors of careers provision in their regions, however availability is dependent on outcome/implementation of Trailblazer deals. • <i>Employment and Skills powers and flexibilities on offer must be taken as a whole.</i>
Housing and Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local leadership of the Affordable Homes Programme from 2026. • Move towards greater collaboration between eligible institutions and DLUHC on housing quality.

Net Zero, Climate Change Natural Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government will consider devolving net zero funding, including for retrofitting buildings subject to the outcome of the trailblazer pilots and following a review of the effectiveness of the approach.
Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new concurrent power to take on the public health duty, offers no new funding but aims to create a health in all policies approach to the Combined Authority's work.

Eligibility, Application Process and Timeline

- 2.8 The Framework sets out a range of eligibility criteria such as providing confidence in the capacity, governance and culture of the eligible institution to deliver and how they are implementing the Scrutiny Protocol as outlined in **Appendix 2** to this report, published separately, which the area is currently well placed to meet.
- 2.9 Eligible institutions will decide which parts of the framework they would like to apply for and a final decision on this must be made by the mayor or directly elected leader with the agreement of all constituent members in the case of an eligible devolved institution.
- 2.10 To note, both the transport and employment and skills powers come as an all or nothing package and have to be accepted in their entirety or not at all.
- 2.11 Government must be notified of an eligible institution's intention to submit a formal application by 31 January 2024.
- 2.12 Since the Government's publication of the Level 4 Devolution Framework in November 2023, the Combined Authority and five Local Authorities have been working closely, and at pace, to understand and consider the opportunities that a Level 4 Deal presents for West Yorkshire.
- 2.13 In discussions that have taken place, the partnership has been clear that deeper devolution must align with our collective objectives and priorities for the region. It must offer greater opportunity and levers to achieve the objectives and outcomes the partnership is seeking to deliver for our communities, businesses and places, as set out in the West Yorkshire Plan.
- 2.14 On 18 January, the Combined Authority's Finance, Resources and Corporate Committee will discuss the proposed West Yorkshire submission and decide on next steps, including whether to submit an application letter to the Secretary of State.
- 2.15 It should be noted that the initial submission of a letter of application to the Secretary of State does not constitute an irrevocable step, and does not form part of the statutory process. However, it signals an intent to engage with government and

proceed with the Level 4 Framework, subject to further development work between the West Yorkshire partnership and Government. The legislative processes for the different aspects of the application would need to be worked through in progressing this as part of which all statutory requirements including the need for individual consents on whether to accept new powers would take place.

West Yorkshire Partnership Principles

- 2.16 The first West Yorkshire Devolution Deal, agreed in 2020, was underpinned by a set of partnership principles which has supported the successful development of the partnership over the last three years. Since that time, the West Yorkshire partnership has grown and strengthened, demonstrated by our successful delivery of a range of ambitious programmes and initiatives which have resulted in better outcomes for local people, business, and place.
- 2.17 The strength of the West Yorkshire partnership of the five local authorities and the Combined Authority will underpin our ability to successfully deliver deeper devolution across the region.
- 2.18 Work to develop the West Yorkshire response to the Government's Level 4 Devolution Framework has provided a useful catalyst to review and refresh these principles, to support the next stage of the Combined Authority's devolution journey.
- 2.19 Revised partnership working principles are now set out below for consideration:
- Collaboration and Co-production
 - Sovereignty
 - Subsidiarity and Devolution
 - Transparency and Accountability
 - Fairness and Equity
 - Flexibility and Funding Simplification
- 2.20 In seeking any further deepening of devolution in West Yorkshire, our approach recognises and acknowledges the parity of partnership, our strength as a collective of six and the lack of appetite for any proposal which diminishes the role or sovereignty of our constituent parts. We will work to these collectively agreed principles to ensure that moves towards deeper devolution across West Yorkshire support the achievement of our ambitions and deliver better outcomes for local people, businesses and communities across all areas of the region.

Next Steps for the Application

- 2.21 The known next steps for the Level 4 Devolution application process are as follows:
- Discussion by Finance, Resources and Corporate Committee on 18 January on whether to proceed with a West Yorkshire application.



- If the decision is to proceed with an application, further detailed work on the Scrutiny Protocol and its application to West Yorkshire will take place. A Working Group consisting of volunteers from all three of the Combined Authority's Scrutiny Committees will consider the Protocol in more detail and report their findings. More detail on this is set out in a later section of this paper.
- A broader paper on Level 4 Devolution will be considered by the Combined Authority on 1 February 2024.
- If the decision is to proceed with an application, consideration and ratification of the initial application will be carried out by each Constituent Council.
- Following any submission, consideration will be taken by the Secretary of State on whether to accept West Yorkshire's application. If accepted, further discussions will commence with Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities, and individual government departments to develop detailed proposals for each policy area. In particular, this will include consideration of whether consultation or statutory changes are required to implement individual elements of the Framework.

2.22 Corporate Scrutiny Committee will be kept up to date as this work progresses.

Scrutiny Protocol

- 2.23 The Scrutiny Protocol was developed in consultation with scrutiny officers, chairs and members nationwide as well as academic and sectoral experts (Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, the House of Commons Library, Onward and The Bennett Institute at the University of Cambridge).
- 2.24 The Government considers the Scrutiny Protocol a key factor in Mayoral Combined Authorities implementing the Level 4 Framework and single department-style funding settlements.
- 2.25 Mayoral Combined Authorities must confirm in their application that they will report on how they are implementing the Scrutiny Protocol within one year of confirmation from the Secretary of State that the Government is content to proceed with a Level 4 agreement.
- 2.26 Mayoral Combined Authorities will be expected to write to the Secretary of State to confirm they are implementing the Scrutiny Protocol by this deadline. The Government will expect to see how areas are implementing all of the key principles and additional scrutiny e.g., Mayor or directly elected leader Question Time in the Scrutiny Protocol.
- 2.27 The Scrutiny Protocol sets out the best practice for accountability and scrutiny within Combined Authorities, Mayoral Combined Authorities and Combined County Authorities.

- 2.28 Combined Authority Officers have been involved in consultation with DLUHC in the development of the protocol and are continuing to work to ensure the Combined Authority can implement the protocol.
- 2.29 The Protocol identifies 18 Key Principles:
1. A pool of members
 2. Politically balanced membership
 3. Geographically balanced membership
 4. Appointing a chair
 5. Sustained appointments made on interest and skills
 6. Well-resourced training
 7. Inviting technical expertise
 8. Remuneration and status
 9. Holding the mayor or directly elected leader and the institution to account
 10. Participation in pre-policy and pre-decision scrutiny
 11. Provision to call in
 12. Regular performance monitoring including agreed outcomes
 13. Robust work programming
 14. Focused task and finish exercises
 15. Strong relationships with stakeholders
 16. Regular self-evaluation and reflection
 17. Access to data, research, and analysis
 18. Strong relationship with audit committees
- 2.30 There are two additional principles relating to committee structure and public Mayor's Question Time. The Protocol strongly recommends – but does not mandate – a single committee scrutiny structure, citing Greater Manchester's structure as an example. It does require combined authorities to hold frequent Mayors Question Time sessions, moderated by independent local journalists or business people, which allow the public to ask the Mayor questions. This has now been implemented in West Yorkshire, with the first sessions scheduled in Wakefield on 25 January, Halifax on 5 February and Leeds on 22 February.
- 2.31 The full Scrutiny Protocol document published by the Government is attached at **Appendix 2** to this report.

Scrutiny Protocol Working Group

- 2.32 At the last Corporate Scrutiny Committee meeting on 24 November, a Scrutiny Protocol Working Group was established with volunteers from all three scrutiny committees, to review the Protocol and make recommendations on how the Combined Authority can ensure compliance with all of the Key Principles.

- 2.33 The Working Group is currently scheduled to meet on 29 January and 16 February and aims to complete its report and recommendations – following some consultation with all scrutiny members and other stakeholders – for submission to the 8 March meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and for agreement and the 14 March meeting of the Combined Authority for the final decision, as required.
- 2.34 The members of the working group cover all scrutiny committees, councils and political parties are, and are:
- (Chair) Cllr Barry Anderson (Conservative, Leeds – Corporate)
 - Cllr Kayleigh Brooks (Labour, Leeds – Transport)
 - Cllr Tony Wallis (Labour, Wakefield – Economy)
 - Cllr Susan Lee-Richards (Green, Kirklees – Corporate) sub: Cllr Andrew Cooper
 - Cllr Amanda Parsons-Hulse (Lib Dem, Calderdale – Transport)
 - Cllr Samantha Harvey (Conservative, Wakefield – Corporate)
 - Cllr Aneela Ahmed (Labour, Bradford – Economy)
 - Cllr Bob Felstead (Conservative, Bradford - Economy)
 - Cllr Richard Smith (Conservative, Kirklees – Economy)
 - [GUEST] Debbie Simpson, Independent Chair of Governance & Audit Committee
- 2.35 This review process also fulfils a commitment made in 2021, when the current scrutiny system was adopted, to review the effectiveness of the new scrutiny system within the Mayor’s first term.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report, however further flexibilities made available through accessing Level 4 Devolution will support the Combine Authorities 20238 Net-Zero goal and other climate and environment priorities.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 There are no inclusive growth implications directly arising from this report, however accessing the opportunities afforded through the Level 4 of the devolution framework will enable the Combined Authority to achieve its priorities around inclusive growth.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report, however if the Combined Authority gains the powers and functions in the Level 4, it will give us more freedom to deliver on our equality and diversity priorities.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. If the decision is taken to proceed with Level 4 devolution, this will result in financial implications for the Combined Authority, including the move towards a Department Levelling Up Housing and Communities single settlement.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Although there are no direct legal implications at this stage, statutory processes will need to be followed as appropriate to progressing different elements of the framework. This will become clearer upon advice from government as the process progresses.
- 7.2 Officers of the Combined Authority and partner councils are working collaboratively in assessing and taking forward any legal and statutory elements of this process.

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 Corporate Scrutiny Committee notes the report and provides any feedback or comments.

11. Background Document

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Technical Guidance Level 4 Devolution Framework
Appendix 2 – Scrutiny Protocol

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> [Technical paper on Level 4 devolution framework](#)

[Department for
Levelling Up,
Housing &
Communities](#)

Policy paper

Technical paper on Level 4 devolution framework

Published 22 November 2023

Applies to England

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Chapter 1: Policy and conditions

Introduction

This document sets out the devolution framework Level 4 policies that are on offer to existing Level 3 institutions by application to the government. This is subject to access procedures, see chapter 2. This document describes the offer of powers from the government and any requirements that institutions will need to satisfy. The Level 4 offer, and its constituent parts, are optional; institutions do not need to implement the package as a whole, unless otherwise specified. Any powers available at Level 1-3 of the framework may also be granted at Level 4.

The framework continues to be designed to be dynamic so that it can evolve and be informed by devolution deal discussions and future policy development over the coming years. The updated version, alongside Level 4 powers and functions can be found at Annex 1.

Institutions refers to eligible institutions, which are mayoral combined authorities, mayoral combined county authorities and single local authorities.

We will keep the devolution framework, including Level 4, under review; including considering any further powers as part of further deepening of devolution.

Finance

Funding simplification

As set out at Spring Budget 2023, the government's ambition is to roll the single department style settlement model out to all areas in England with a devolution deal and a directly elected leader over time. We are working with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to develop further detail on the single settlements. To ensure these settlements stand the test of time, we are focusing on working with the trailblazers to design the first of these settlements before rolling out further.

As a precursor, we will offer Level 4 MCAs a DLUHC-only 'consolidated pot' at the next multi-year SR, covering two investment themes – local growth and place; and housing and regeneration – which will act as a steppingstone to the full trailblazer-style single settlement. The DLUHC consolidated pot will allow for

better planning over the longer term, provide MCAs with greater freedom and reduce administrative burden.

Following successful delivery of the consolidated pot, and learning from the trailblazers, Level 4 institutions will then become eligible to receive a single department style settlement covering all devolved spending areas from the subsequent multi-year Spending Review.

Gainshare Gateway Reviews

In due course, we will remove gateway reviews for eligible institutions which have passed Gateway One and meet the criteria relating to local evaluation frameworks, local transparency, and accountability. Further details on this will be shared shortly.

General Power of Competence

Eligible institutions, concurrently with the mayor, will be given the local authority general power of competence where they currently possess a functional power of competence. The government expects the institutions and their mayors to be leaders for their communities in reacting to crises and promoting social, economic and institutional innovation and to be close partners for the government in a wide range of future initiatives. To that end, the government offers a General Power of Competence to any area that feels this would help them in delivering that role.

Skills and employment

This offer sets out further commitments towards a more devolved adult skills system. The offer provides increased flexibility on adult skills programmes and establishes devolved institutions as the central convenors of careers provision in their respective regions. The offer is subject to these conditions:

- a. An eligible institution must have demonstrated effective management of its devolved adult education budget for a minimum of 2 years in addition to the specific conditions relating to the Free Courses for Jobs and Skills Bootcamps offers.
- b. An eligible institution must implement the Level 4 skills offer in its entirety. Eligible institutions cannot pick which skills elements to request; they must request all of them or none of them.

Adult education

The government will devolve non-apprenticeship adult skills functions and grant funding to eligible institutions. This is subject to the implementation of the

trailblazer deals in GMCA and WMCA and the institution satisfying readiness criteria.

There may be specific instances when the government needs to direct the design of adult skills provision or allocation of adult skills funding. However, this will be the exception rather than the rule, in circumstances where the scale or urgency are such that a national response is judged to be required to deliver the required outcomes or where there are national skills priorities that the government believes are not being met sufficiently by the skills system.

Free courses for jobs

The government will fully devolve and remove all ringfences for Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) funding. To access this part of the framework, the following condition must be satisfied:

The eligible institution demonstrates spending 80% of its available funding for the FCFJs offer on delivering high value Level 3 qualifications across an academic year and has a track record of delivering the current 'core offer' criteria or using the agreed 50% flexibility to address needs in the local labour market to eligible learners, addressing any barriers to Level 3 learning where necessary.

Skills Bootcamps

The Department for Education (DfE) will provide eligible institutions with sector flexibility over 100% of its allocation of Skills Bootcamps funding from financial year 2025/26, subject to eligible institutions satisfying agreed performance indicators. The DfE will share with the institution relevant commissioning activity, performance information and other data on Skills Bootcamps provision that will, or is likely to, include delivery to local residents or employers. In turn, the institution commits to share relevant commissioning activity, performance information and data about local delivery.

An eligible institution must satisfy the following conditions to access this part of the framework:

- The eligible institutions must retain the core purpose, policy intent and branding of Skills Bootcamps, consistent with the national model and maintaining this model integrity including while using sector flex.
- The eligible institutions must meet performance thresholds and achieve 80% starts and 60% outcomes, to be agreed in a side agreement with local areas.
- The eligible institutions must have delivered Skills Bootcamps for at least a full year, and the DfE will need to have confidence in their assurance process.
- The eligible institutions must maintain regular engagement with DfE and fellow eligible institutions.

Careers

With a mandate from the Secretary of State for Education, the DfE will work with eligible institutions to take forward the recommendations of the Holman review of careers education by offering a more place-based approach to careers education. This will enable the institution to act as the central convenor of careers provision in the region, creating strategic partnerships with local stakeholders to ensure that services for adults and young people align and respond to the skills needs of the local economy and with local skills planning. For adults this will include shaping and agreeing local KPIs with prime contractors of the National Careers Service and for young people this will include building on the current role of Careers Hubs and the support they provide for schools and colleges. The convening role will need to continue to align with, and respond to, the national funding and delivery of careers services.

Eligible institutions will strengthen delivery of the National Careers Service by reviewing and, where necessary, strengthening, collaborative activities and agreement of local KPIs, using existing national contractual mechanisms.

Eligible institutions will play a greater role in shaping the future national specification of an all-age careers system with the opportunity to feed into policy development for how the nationally funded careers offer evolves in the future, alongside continued engagement with the National Careers Service through locally agreed key performance indicators with regional prime contractors. This collaborative approach, including dialogue with DfE officials, will help to shape future service provision and contract specifications.

This is contingent on eligible institutions continuing to work with Careers Hubs and engaging with them at the local level.

Local skills improvement plans (LSIPs)

The DfE will consider the future role of eligible institutions in the delivery of LSIPs and the Local Skills Improvement Fund, drawing on the lessons learned from the trailblazer deals. In particular, the government will consider aligning the boundaries for LSIPs with those of eligible authorities where they exist.

Labour market governance

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Secretary of State will ask eligible institutions to convene a new Regional Labour Market Partnership Board, which builds on the current collaborative structure that is already in place. The new board will be made up of senior officers from the eligible institution and from DWP (such as the area's Strategic Partnership Manager, Service Leader, or other appropriate HMG officials) with the authority to consider evidence, make advisory recommendations and engage in discussions proactively, to ensure that DWP, Jobcentre Plus (JCP) activity and eligible institution activity works together to improve client outcomes.

Outside this Board, discussions between the eligible institutions and JCP will take place between a single point of contact either through the area's Strategic Partnership Manager or Service Leader. Through these discussions, the new Regional Labour Market Partnership Board, and continued engagement with regional Jobcentre Plus teams, the DWP and the eligible institution will work closely to generate and/or identify, and test where feasible, approaches and initiatives that promote, and address priority needs in the area.

By taking this approach, the eligible institutions and DWP will work together to ensure value for money, better use of public funding and to achieve the best possible outcomes for clients locally and nationally.

Employment programmes

DWP will consider development of new contracted employment programmes, when necessary, in response to labour market conditions. Local stakeholders have a role to play to maximise outcomes in each area. As and when the specifics of any new contracted employment programme are determined, DWP will consider the appropriate role that eligible institutions would have in the design and delivery of the programme.

Data sharing

Alongside these new levers, which will ensure a stronger link between skills and jobs in the local labour market, the government and eligible institutions will work together to develop an appropriate data sharing framework that promotes information and lawful data sharing between national government and eligible institutions to aid the effectiveness of skills planning and delivery.

DWP and eligible institutions will work together to explore feasibility and potential for proportionate data sharing arrangements for programmes and services operating in the region to reduce duplication and facilitate better targeting and efficiency of an integrated employment and skills offer. This will be dependent on the work set out in the trailblazer devolution deals with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the West Midlands Combined Authority to establish principles for the legal, safe and secure sharing of data between the government and combined authorities.

Housing and land

Affordable Homes Programme

Eligible institutions, in partnership with Homes England, will be able to set the overall strategic direction, objectives and local leadership for the deployment of the Affordable Homes Programme in their respective regions from 2026.

Operational management and administration will remain with Homes England

and hence a strong partnership, such as through a Strategic Place Partnership, will be essential from the outset.

Decisions on how this will function will be taken as part of the development of the new programme over the coming year, with final decisions taken as part of the Business Case. This is subject to any relevant successor programme being agreed in the next Spending Review.

The following conditions must be satisfied for eligible institutions to access this part of the framework:

- The institution has developed a pipeline of affordable housing schemes that are deliverable within the programme's timeframes, represent good value for money and are aligned with the government's objectives for the new Programme.
- The institution has a strong track record of working effectively with both Homes England and Housing Associations
- The institution is able to provide assurance that it is able to operate effectively in the local market.
- The institution is able to demonstrate strong internal political cohesiveness and common housing aims across its geography and various planning authorities.

Housing quality

DLUHC and the eligible institutions are committed to tackling poor quality housing in their area. As part of this, DLUHC will collaborate with eligible institutions to understand specific local housing quality issues in their areas and the potential solutions across the private and social rented sector. Specifically, DLUHC will facilitate the sharing of best practice and information from across the country, including from enforcement pathfinder and pilot programmes already underway.

As part of DLUHC's commitment to tackling poor quality housing, the local housing authorities within the area will be given support and powers to help manage areas of private rented accommodation in line with previous devolution deals.

Mayoral development orders

Eligible institutions will be granted the power to make Mayoral Development Orders so that they can proactively grant permission for strategic development opportunities, with the local planning authority's consent.

Compulsory purchase powers

The eligible institution will be given land assembly and compulsory purchase powers for housing, regeneration and economic development purposes subject

to the agreement of the local authority constituent member where the relevant land is located, and to the consent of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Public sector land

DLUHC will support the eligible institution to establish its own public sector land commission. This support could provide relevant contacts, establish initial engagement with relevant partners, departments and stakeholders across government and support on initial launch of any land commission. This approach could give the institution the opportunity to engage with the UK government on specific barriers, opportunities and sites within their area. A direct contact in government could also be sought from the Cabinet Office to support in the long-term but the main functionality would be maintained and operated by the institution.

Access to this offer is conditional on the eligible institution having an existing connection to One Public Estate at a local level.

Resilience and contingency planning

The UK government will work to significantly strengthen Local Resilience Forums by 2030, as described in the UK government Resilience Framework. This will include a clear role for eligible institutions and their directly elected leaders in local resilience and civil contingency planning, preparation and delivery.

This is subject to the conclusion and full consideration of the Stronger Local Resilience Forums pilot programme in 2025/26, and eligible institutions having a strong working relationship with the relevant LRF.

Transport

The transport offer is made available as a package of measures that eligible institutions, wishing to deepen their transport devolution settlement will be expected to draw down in its entirety.

Single transport funding settlement

Subject to demonstrating an appropriate level of fiscal sustainability and broader institutional capacity/capability within the eligible institution, the directly elected leader will be responsible for a devolved and consolidated integrated local transport settlement for the eligible institution which the Government will provide the eligible institution from the next multi-year Spending Review for the length of the Spending Review period. The ambition is for the consolidated local transport budget to include all funding allocation to the eligible institution for

Local Transport. The assurance framework will build on the existing City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) assurance framework and will include outputs, outcomes and circumstances where a project becomes a retained scheme and as such is subject to approval from the Government. The eligible institution should note that this may mean that they could be ineligible for some local transport funding competitions run by the central Government.

Bus Service Operators Grant

In line with the commitment in the National Bus Strategy, the government is working on the reform of the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG). This reform activity will include public consultation that all Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) will be able to respond to. The government will devolve powers for the payment of BSOG to eligible institutions. Eligible institutions will provide support to identify the funding for bus services entirely within their boundary that is paid to commercial operators and would be suitable to be devolved both currently and following future national reform.

Zero Emission Buses

Eligible institutions may wish to consider a range of mechanisms to drive increased Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) uptake. This can include procurement and the adoption of local ZEB strategies. The Department for Transport (DfT) is committed to working with the eligible institution in considering these mechanisms to help them decarbonise their bus fleets.

DfT expects that eligible institutions will publish and implement strategies to decarbonise their local bus fleet, in line with the relevant government strategies and guidance. This would include setting dates for when they expect to no longer purchase non-zero emission buses and to achieve an all zero-emission bus fleet.

Rail

The government is committed to supporting eligible institutions in seeking a new rail partnership with Great British Railways (GBR), once established. Partnerships will support further integration with other transport modes. They will also ensure the priorities of the eligible institution, where these are coordinated and compatible with surrounding areas and the needs of the national network, can be taken into consideration in future.

Building on this partnership, the government:

a. Encourages eligible institutions to join the Rail Data Marketplace, providing greater access to local rail data and improving local scrutiny of performance. By adopting an 'open by default' approach, the Rail Data Marketplace will remove barriers and make it easier for partners to work with the railway industry.

b. Commits to ongoing engagement with eligible institutions on the Long-Term Strategy for Rail. Once established, Regional teams in GBR will work with local partners to consider local priorities and strategies as part of long-term, strategic, planning.

c. Supports identification of worthwhile opportunities for regeneration, commercial and housing development in and around rail stations. The establishment of GBR creates an opportunity to increase commercial income and the local responsibilities of the eligible institutions will help to realise this. The Government will support discussions between the eligible institution and other relevant organisations, including Network Rail, Great British Railways Transition Team and London & Continental Railways, to explore land use option.

National Highways

National Highways will review the working relationship between eligible institutions and National Highways to identify opportunities for improved engagement and closer working on issues of common interest to support the delivery of eligible institutions' local transport plans.

Integrated ticketing

The government is committed to delivering on the Levelling Up Transport Mission, that by 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.

The government recognises the wider benefits of integrated ticketing and fares capping, especially for passengers. The government acknowledges the desire of eligible institutions to make progress in this area and give passengers the confidence of paying the best value fare regardless of which transport mode they use, and without having to decide in advance which type of ticket to buy.

The ownership, operation and funding arrangements in place for different modes of transport around the country mean that delivering fully integrated ticketing is a complex and resource-intensive endeavour, with significant funding and commercial challenges. Previous experience suggests an incremental approach is likely to be the most effective in delivering benefit to passengers in the near term, while driving progress against longer-term goals.

On rail, the government's current priority is to agree rail 'Pay As You Go' (PAYG) pilots in Greater Manchester and West Midlands by the end of 2023, with a view to implementing these pilots by 2025.

- These pilots will enable the government to test key aspects of PAYG, including fares principles (such as the approach to capping), the customer proposition, technical solutions and other considerations in the delivery of a PAYG scheme.

- The proposed pilot in the West Midlands will use well understood, and deliverable, ITSO (Integrated Transport Smartcard Organisation) smartcard technology and require passengers to obtain a card and create an account.
- The proposed pilot in Greater Manchester will use contactless EMV (Europay Mastercard Visa - a payment method based on a technical standard for smart payment cards) technology, which will enable passengers to use their own phone or credit/debit card for 'tap in tap out' payments as in London, but is less developed and will be more complex to overlay on existing rail systems.
- Testing 2 different technical approaches in 2 different areas will allow the government to better understand which approach is more successful and brings the best value for money enabling easier and quicker wider roll-out to other areas.

The government will build on these pilots to inform and support further regional ambitions in this space. The government will discuss the early findings and any lessons learned from the pilots in Greater Manchester and the West Midlands with other places. This could enable other places to explore a rail ticketing solution from 2026 onwards, alongside the bus/light rail solution referenced below.

On bus, the government's 2021 guidance on Bus Service Improvement Plans sets out that Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and bus operators should assume that a technical back-office solution for full bus multi-operator contactless ticketing will be made available and therefore should not seek to develop this independently. The government has asked Project Coral (a consortium of bus operators), West Midlands Combined Authority and Midlands Connect to develop a multi-operator contactless ticketing solution for bus and light rail, to be made available to all LTAs across England.

- Building on the £2 bus fare the government has funded across England through to December 2024, this will enable multi-operator fares capping on bus and light rail outside of London, using cEMV contactless payment methods.
- It is expected that the ticketing solution will be procured by summer 2024, and following successful development and testing will then be made available to all LTAs in England (outside of London).
- Once the solution is made available, eligible institutions will (subject to funding) be able to take it up in line with local needs.
- Our initial focus is on developing and implementing a multi-modal solution across bus and light rail. In the longer-term we expect the solution to include rail and (where relevant) other transport modes and we have ensured this will be factored into the development of the solution.

Ahead of providing any further place-specific support, the government would expect eligible institutions to have used their existing powers and functions to full effect to drive integration in their areas based on their local needs, including:

- The Advanced Ticketing Scheme powers under the Transport Act 2000 to establish multi-operator and multi-modal (including rail or light rail services by agreement) ticketing schemes, which require bus operators to sell and accept any ticket on a particular technology e.g. smartcard.
- LTAs with Enhanced Partnership (EP) schemes in place or pursuing franchising can also require bus operators to provide a suite of tickets based on a standard set of ‘zones’; and to apply consistent rules to tickets e.g., eligibility for concessions; and set a price for a multi-operator ticket. Franchising gives LTAs full control over fares and ticketing.
- LTAs with responsibility for setting fares on light rail networks or other modes in their area can use the bus powers above to integrate some aspects of bus and light rail ticketing.

In October 2023, the government committed £100 million across the North and Midlands to support the development and rollout of contactless and smart ticketing. Further details will be provided in due course.

Key Route Network

Where the eligible institution and its directly elected leader does not have a Key Route Network (KRN), the directly elected leader and institution will set up and coordinate a KRN on behalf of the directly elected leader. This will allow the most important local roads to be managed in a strategic way across the area to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion. This will also allow for the introduction of traffic management measures to, for example, improve public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure, improve bus journey times and to introduce lane rental schemes to minimise disruption and smooth traffic flow for all road users. The constituent councils will remain the highway authority for their area, responsible for the management and operation of the local highway network in line with their statutory duties and taking account of the needs of all road users, including drivers.

The directly elected leader will take on a power of direction allowing them to direct member highway and traffic authorities in the exercise of their powers with regard to the KRN. The power of direction will ensure the mayor has the full range of levers available to deliver their Local Transport Plan and the priorities of the institution and realise the full benefit of the government-funded local transport investment.

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

In partnership with constituent councils, the eligible institutions will develop a single set of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing standards, incorporating the government’s Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards and Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance, which all constituent councils will then apply. The eligible institutions will lead work to create a single shared service for processing taxi and private hire vehicle licence applications in the area.

Eligible institutions will lead work to ensure enforcement and compliance action can be taken against any licence issued by a licensing authority in the area by either all licensing authorities in the area or the single shared service. These commitments will be implemented within 18 months of the Level 4 agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the Department for Transport.

The government is exploring transferring taxi and PHV licensing to both combined authorities and upper-tier authorities and will be engaging stakeholders on this in due course. Moving licensing would enable eligible institutions to benefit from the efficiency savings of bringing licensing under one authority. If following engagement this policy was taken forward, primary legislation would be needed. If the government decided not to move licensing on a national level, the government would still be prepared to consider seeking a legislative slot to enable the Secretary for State to transfer licensing in areas where there was agreement of all the lower-tier or unitary authorities.

Pavement parking

In partnership with constituent councils, the eligible institution will work to identify pavement parking problems across the area and, in cooperation with constituent councils, will seek to develop a consistent approach to the restriction and enforcement of pavement parking, using available powers as appropriate. This will provide consistency to drivers, whilst also helping to provide a consistent level of service for people using the pavement and increasing accessibility for disabled users and those with children. The government is currently considering its response to the national pavement parking consultation.

Active travel

To ensure consistency in the quality and safety of schemes, Active Travel England (ATE) will provide support to ensure walking and cycling schemes are designed and delivered to high standards, including compliance with Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20). The eligible institutions will work with ATE and all partner/constituent authorities to boost capability and improve the design quality of all active travel schemes funded by the government and those that are locally funded, including for cross-modal schemes that have active travel elements, such as a corridor or transport interchange scheme. All cycling and walking schemes funded by the government must be approved by ATE as complying with LTN 1/20. ATE will prioritise larger, more complex schemes for specific ATE design review. In many cases, eligible institutions with smaller, less complex schemes will receive standing guidance, which will avoid delaying schemes unduly. ATE capability ratings will continue to be considered when allocating consolidated funding that includes active travel infrastructure.

Devolution of net zero funding pilot including buildings retrofit

The government will consider devolving net zero funding, including for retrofitting buildings, to the eligible institution. This is subject to the outcome of the trailblazing pilots committed to in the deeper devolution deals with the GMCA and WMCA. After the pilots, the government, GMCA and WMCA will undertake a review of the effectiveness of this approach to consider and agree whether to continue it, if so in what form. The government will then consider whether to extend this arrangement to the eligible institution.

Clean heat

The government has confirmed its intention to establish heat network zoning in England. Under the zoning proposals, zoning coordinators within local government will be able to designate areas as heat network zones where heat networks are going to be the most cost-effective way to decarbonise heating and hot water within the zone. This will enable the appropriate level of local government to assume the role of heat network zoning coordinator and play a key role in the delivery of heat decarbonisation infrastructure. This includes requiring certain buildings to connect to heat networks within the zones. Government is committed to have heat network zoning in place by 2025.

Strategic energy system planning

The government recognises the strategic role institutions can play in planning our future energy system for net zero, with its ability to convene local authorities, the strategic transport authority, energy infrastructure providers and other key stakeholders, and is committed to ensuring that devolved regional institutions such as Combined Authorities have a meaningful role in planning our future energy system for net zero.

The government is considering the role of local area energy planning in delivering net zero and supporting efficient network planning, working closely with Ofgem and its review of local energy institutions and governance. As part of their ongoing work, the government and Ofgem will explore how local area energy plans can support local action, investment and delivery by energy system stakeholders.

As outlined in Ofgem's review - of local energy institutions and governance, there is a need to look further at roles and responsibilities at a sub-national level, particularly to address known issues around coordination and accountability. The eligible institutions are encouraged to engage both with this discussion and the future systems and network regulation workstream, which looks specifically at network investment.

Networks

To overcome the energy crisis and meet our future needs, it is more important than ever that we rapidly develop a smarter, more integrated, low carbon

energy system. Investment by network operators is central to achieving this, as is having the right input from stakeholders to inform it.

As part of the current electricity distribution price control framework which started in April 2023, Ofgem required DNO Electricity Distribution to engage with the eligible institution and other local stakeholders to inform its business plans. Where additional allowances are granted during the period, Ofgem expects DNO electricity distribution to engage with the eligible institution and other local stakeholders to provide them with confidence that their proposed investment will meet local needs and enable the delivery of net zero and green growth objectives.

Climate change and natural capital

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) will work towards the appointment of the eligible institutions as the responsible authorities for the local nature recovery strategy (LNRS) for their area, where they are not already the responsible authority.

Defra will work closely with eligible institutions to ensure they are supported as the LNRS responsible authority in the future, including by making available Defra group expertise and data, and working together on delivery of the LNRS.

Innovation, trade and investment

Trade and investment

The Department for Business and Trade (DBT) will work with local partners including eligible institutions to gain a holistic view of the UK's business environment's competitiveness vis-à-vis its peers specific to our ability to attract regional investment. Eligible institutions will provide referrals for potential DBT Investment Champions from the local area. DBT will agree to make appointments based on intake capacity and selection criteria.

Eligible institutions will have support from the Office for Investment at the regional level. This will concentrate around two core elements – capital investment and traditional foreign direct investment (FDI). Both parties will work together with the aim of maximising large-scale inward investment (>£100 million) – utilising the eligible institution's knowledge of capital investment propositions and opportunities, priority sites, innovation, and sector/clustering opportunities. The eligible institution will provide/signpost to public support to help land inward investment; and the Office for Investment will engage with high-value projects and provide a cross-Whitehall convening role working together to increase the profile of the eligible institution's area internationally as an investment destination.

DBT will jointly support investor relationships with access to information, local support and facilitation as needed to retain and attract high-profile companies in the UK. This includes partnering on external investor propositions, content for events and digital marketing material.

DBT will support the development of a specific investment plan. This includes helping develop the 'investability' for key local assets such as Freeports, Investment Zones and economic clusters, and presenting these to the international business community. Alongside this, DBT will create a more formal network of local investment promotion agencies and will seek to improve access to its network of Investment Champions to help inform city region investment priorities and provide peer support to future investors.

Business support

DBT will establish a Strategic Productivity Forum - a collective arrangement with several eligible institutions as a forum to discuss closer working and co-operation regarding the delivery of local and national business support interventions.

Eligible institutions will have the opportunity to raise local priorities for future business support and advisory services to inform and influence government's future development of business support. DBT will also work in partnership to help increase the take up in their areas of national business support interventions.

Where there is a British Business Bank Nations and Regions Investment Fund that includes their area, eligible institutions will have the opportunity to discuss this. The referral network between the institutions, commercial lenders and the British Business Bank UK funds will be strengthened to make it easier for more local businesses to access the finance they need.

Partnership working and collaboration between eligible institutions and the British Business Bank's UK network representatives for the relevant area will be strengthened to stimulate informed demand for finance among businesses. This may involve joint events and initiatives, as well as knowledge sharing.

Export

DBT will support the development and implementation of institution-specific export plans / international strategy and seek to develop institution-specific events and other activity based on local priorities.

Partnership working

Further to any wider established principles for the legal, safe and secure sharing of data between the eligible institution and the government, we will work to share more of the intelligence and data owned by each party, to better inform

mutual planning and strategy, within the requirements of UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) or other data protection obligations.

DBT will jointly seek to maximise the engagement of appropriate businesses and stakeholders in global trade opportunities and activity created and identified as a result of this deeper devolution agreement and maximise the opportunity for regional businesses and stakeholders to contribute to national policy consultations, including the development of new Free Trade Agreements, for example by responding to Calls for Input that inform the mandate for Free Trade Agreements.

Innovation

This part of the offer is only accessible to MCAs.

Local government plays an important role in building regional innovation capabilities, working in partnership with local researchers and industry and the government is committed to strengthening their voice in the national research and innovation ecosystem. We need to support research and development clusters to attract private investment harnessing the innovation economy to deliver benefits to all.

To achieve this the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) will periodically invite the eligible MCAs to articulate their research and development priorities to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). These eligible MCAs should demonstrate that their priorities are informed by inclusive and well governed engagement with stakeholders from their local research and innovation ecosystem.

DSIT and UKRI will consult elected mayoral authorities on the development of relevant future research and innovation strategies. UKRI will help eligible MCAs to identify regional comparative innovation advantages and relevant funding opportunities, including through co-developed regional action plans with Innovate UK. UKRI will publish regional data on its investments through its Gateway to Research portal to enable eligible MCAs to identify relevant opportunities.

Culture and tourism

A subset of DCMS arms-length bodies (ALBs) will scope the potential for a collaborative partnership with eligible institutions, subject to factors such as institutions' ambitions across relevant DCMS ALB priorities (e.g. culture, heritage, communities, the visitor economy and sports); priority of the place for ALBs; and sufficiency of ALB resourcing.

If taken forwards, the partnership, supported by DCMS, would share expertise and insight across (some or all of) culture, heritage, sport, communities and the visitor economy (as applicable), in order to maximise the impact of funding and policy decisions taken within the eligible institution's area by members of the partnership.

A key area of focus for the partnership would be for eligible institutions and ALBs to share information on their priorities and plans across the relevant policy areas. This would facilitate a shared understanding among the partnership of potential opportunities for alignment, recognising that culture, heritage, sport and the visitor economy all play a strong role in supporting places and communities to thrive - and that this effect is maximised when individual decisions take into account the wider context of other plans and decisions being made for an area.

All partnership members would retain their autonomy for individual decision-making. The partnership would not prejudice ALB decisions around national grant funding processes or their national priorities. ALBs would also seek to use the partnership to deliver their national priorities, which will remain paramount. The scale of each ALB's involvement in the partnership would be dependent on the specific context and degree of alignment identified between individual priorities. DCMS would be involved in discussions as appropriate.

The partnership would be reviewed annually, and subject to future capacity and appetite could be renewed up to a five-year period.

Public health

Health services

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) encourages eligible institutions to work in partnership with their local Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) as well as regional Directors of Public Health from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities to improve population health outcomes.

Eligible institutions will be supported to take on a health improvement duty which will require them to take steps they consider appropriate to improve the health of their residents, concurrent with the existing duty of their constituent upper-tier councils. This duty will complement the health improvement role of local authorities and their Directors of Public Health, making it easier for eligible institutions to participate alongside local authorities in initiatives that can improve health and to consider health proactively as part of key strategies and investment decisions.

Technical adjustments to historic statutes or guidance

The government invites eligible institutions to advise on, as they may identify them, changes to statutory guidance or legislation they would like to see to support them in meeting their objectives. This could consist of disapplying or removing local legislation which they consider restrictive to delivering their designated functions.

The motivation for this change is to widen the scope of policy action at the local level to include delivery of their defined functions in ways which are currently constrained by provisions which may have been introduced in the past, but have accumulated over the years without specific attention and without being essential to the government's policy, and the effect of which is to cumulatively restrict the ability of local areas to pursue their functions.

The scope of this invitation would be narrow, as it is a streamlined process for only a narrowly defined set of asks. Proposals that will be considered are limited to ones which:

- a. Help unblock a particular initiative within the broad scope of the functions set out in the areas' deal and the devolution framework.
- b. Are not on a contentious issue or contradict stated government policy.
- c. Would not have a net negative fiscal impact for central government.

Requests would not be considered as a route outside of the devolution framework to take on additional powers or reopen deal negotiations.

The government's commitment to such proposals is to invite them on a standing basis, for areas with 'Level 4' devolution; review any requests within the context of the government's priorities, available resources and Parliamentary time, and act as such constraints permit. No guarantees can be given on the prospect of any particular change.

The types of change the government might consider could include:

- a. Changes to secondary legislation, such as orders applying to specific geographic areas or local authorities; or lists of bodies to which specific legislation is applicable to.
- b. Legislative reform orders, if the change required is appropriate for that vehicle.
- c. Changes to statutory guidance, if it met the rest of the above limitations.

Access to powers previously devolved elsewhere

The government will also welcome proposals from eligible institutions for devolution to them of any other power previously devolved to another MCA, MCCA, or Local Authority within England, including powers offered in Levels 1-3 of the devolution framework.

Chapter 2: Eligibility and access

Eligibility criteria

Eligibility test

Level 4 of the devolution framework will be available to combined authorities, combined county authorities and local authorities with an implemented Level 3 deal including a directly elected leader in post, unless specifically indicated otherwise.

Level 4 will be offered once areas can provide confidence in the capacity, governance and culture of the institution to manage its activities effectively and take on further powers. Ministerial decisions on this test will be taken in the round. The government will engage with individual areas before making decisions on this test.

Institutions accessing the Level 4 offer that are subject to investigation, notice or intervention by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with regards to concerns about the institution's finances, operation, and administration of local government services are also unlikely to meet this test.

Once new mayors and other directly elected leaders are elected, institutions with newly agreed 'Level 3' deals will be eligible to apply for access, so long as they can meet the tests set out. Completion of the transfer of powers is contingent on areas maintaining compliance with the criteria and requirements set out here.

Accountability requirement

Areas must confirm in their application that they will report on how they are implementing the Scrutiny Protocol, ([further detail on this here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scrutiny-protocol-for-english-institutions-with-devolved-powers) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scrutiny-protocol-for-english-institutions-with-devolved-powers>)), as set out in the English Devolution Accountability

Framework (EDAF), within 1 year of confirmation from the Secretary of State that the Government is content to proceed with a Level 4 agreement.

Areas will be expected to write to the Secretary of State to confirm they are implementing the Scrutiny Protocol by this deadline. The government will expect to see how areas are implementing all of the key principles and additional scrutiny e.g., Mayor or directly elected leader Question Time in the Scrutiny Protocol.

In the future, the government will expect areas to adopt MP sessions to further enhance scrutiny, similar to those arrangements being established in GMCA and WMCA and any lessons learned from application there. This will be considered when institutions receive single departmental-style funding settlements.

Readiness conditions

Final transfer of each policy area will be subject to areas demonstrating compliance with specific readiness conditions for each policy. These are set out alongside the corresponding policy area.

Access arrangements

Operation of Level 4 of the devolution framework

In line with the above eligibility test, where an area meets the eligibility criteria and accountability, it can apply at any time to access further powers from the devolution framework from that level.

The powers and functions in this framework have been collectively agreed by the government and are agreed policy. So long as an area can demonstrate that they meet the relevant eligibility criteria and readiness conditions, and subject to any required legislation, the government will transfer the function/power to that area in co-operation with them.

Any subset or combination of powers, unless otherwise specified, may be applied for – there is no obligation to take all the powers on offer.

Level 4 areas are also invited to discuss with the government, should they wish to take on any power previously devolved to another area in a Level 2 or 3 devolution deal but not currently available to them, the possibility of accessing that power.

No further powers will be offered via the deeper devolution route here other than those set out in this document. Any further deepening of devolution will take place via a separate process to review and deepen Level 4 as a whole.

Applying for Level 4 devolution – step-by-step guide

The institution will decide which parts of the framework it would like to apply for (note that the readiness conditions for certain powers within the framework may include a requirement to take certain powers all at once in a ‘basket’ for policy alignment purposes). A final decision on this must be made by the mayor or directly elected leader with the agreement of all constituent members in the case of an eligible devolved institution or with the agreement of Cabinet in a single local authority (SLA).

The institution will then submit their application in a form of a letter to the Levelling Up Secretary. This letter will have to confirm:

- a. The institution meets the eligibility criteria
- b. A commitment to reporting on the implementation of the Scrutiny Protocol within 12 months of the Levelling Up Secretary confirming HMG’s agreement to proceed.
- c. The elements of the framework for which the institution is applying. This must be set out verbatim from the framework and cannot include additional asks or amendments of the government.
- d. Where that element of the framework requires new powers and functions, the institution will follow the procedure as set out in legislation for conferring these to a combined authority/combined county authority or local authority. For combined and combined county authorities this includes the requirement for public consultation. For a local authority whilst this is not required by legislation, we do expect a consultation to be carried out.
- e. The institution understands that the speed at which commitments are implemented will depend on their ability to demonstrate it has met the readiness conditions HMG has specified for each policy.
- f. The mayor or directly elected leader has the agreement of all constituent members in the case of an MCA/MCCA and the agreement of their Cabinet in an SLA.

The Levelling Up Secretary will then consider the application and respond via correspondence.

If the Levelling Up Secretary is content to proceed, officials from the relevant government departments will work with the institution to implement the commitments.

The institution will undertake, where appropriate, the public consultation as committed.

The conferral of functions will be subject to the Levelling Up Secretary being satisfied that the relevant statutory tests have been met including having required consents, and parliamentary approval of the secondary legislation.

If the Levelling Up Secretary considered that the area does not meet the eligibility criteria, they would respond via correspondence setting out the reasons why.

Devolution framework

As part of the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper (LUWP) the government released a ‘devolution framework’. This detailed the types of powers and functions that would be considered as part of a devolution deal. Some powers may only be available to certain authorities or geographies. Alongside Level 4 powers, we have amended the devolution framework to reflect progress in devolving decisions and functions. The framework continues to be designed to be dynamic so that it can evolve and be informed by devolution deal discussions over the coming years. The updated version, alongside Level 4 powers and functions can be found below.

We will keep the devolution framework, including level 4, under review; including considering any further powers provided as part of the North-East trailblazer devolution deal.

Level 4 – Deeper devolution for an established single institution or county council with a directly elected leader (DEL) in post who can meet specific eligibility and accountability criteria.

Level 3 – A single institution or county council with a DEL, across a FEA or whole county area

Level 2 – A single institution or county council without a DEL, across a FEA or whole county area

Level 1 – Local authorities working together across a FEA or whole county area e.g., through a joint committee.

Strategic role in delivering services

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
Host for government functions best delivered at a strategic level involving more than one local authority e.g. Local Nature Recovery Strategies	✓	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to pool services at a strategic level	✓	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to adopt innovative local proposals to deliver action on climate change	✓	✓	✓	✓
A strategic role on net zero in collaboration with government		✓	✓	✓
Opportunity for devolution of retrofit funding subject to the outcome of the existing pilots in Greater Manchester and				✓

Strategic role in delivering services

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
the West Midlands				

Supporting local businesses

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
LEP functions including hosting strategic business voice	✓	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to access a Strategic Productivity Partnership to support local business growth				✓
Opportunity to articulate research and development priorities [^]				✓

([^]) refers to functions which are only applicable to mayoral combined authorities

Transport

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
Become the strategic transport body for the area and take on all associated Local Transport Authority and public transport functions. This includes responsibility for an area-wide local transport plan, bus Enhanced Partnerships, support for public transport services, and concessionary fares*		✓	✓	✓
Defined and coordinated, Key Route Network, with a mayoral power of direction over the exercise of local highway and traffic authority powers on the Key Route Network*			✓	✓
Priority for new rail partnerships with Great British Railways – influencing local rail offer, e.g. services and stations			✓	✓
Have automatic access to franchising powers to independently introduce bus franchising in line with current guidance*			✓	✓
Consolidation of local transport funding settlement in line with the principles set out in the Levelling Up White Paper			✓	

Transport

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
and Funding Simplification Doctrine. The quantum of funding and the number/remit of individual funding lines will be agreed through the next Spending Review Process				
Single local transport funding settlement in line with the principles set out in the Levelling Up White Paper and Funding Simplification Doctrine. The quantum of funding and the number/remit of individual funding lines will be agreed through the next Spending Review Process				✓
Responsibility for administering payment of Bus Service Operators Grant			✓	✓
Leadership in improving consistency and efficiency in taxi and private hire vehicle licensing				✓
Government commitment, subject to delivery of the Pay As You Go rail ticketing pilots in Greater Manchester and West Midlands, to build on these pilots to inform and support regional ambitions for integrated multi-modal ticketing				✓
Leadership in developing a consistent approach to pavement parking in the area				✓

(*) refers to functions which are only applicable to combined authorities as opposed to county councils

Investment spending

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
UKSPF planning and delivery at a strategic level		✓	✓	✓
Long-term investment fund, with an agreed annual allocation			✓	✓
Consolidation and simplification of local growth & place and housing & regeneration funding, including a pathway to a single department-style financial settlement.				✓
Removal of gateway review, subject to meeting certain criteria				✓

Giving adults the skills for the labour market

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
Devolution of Adult Education functions and the core Adult Education Budget		✓	✓	✓
Providing support and refinement for Local Skills Improvement Plans		✓	✓	✓
Role in designing and delivering future contracted employment programmes			✓	✓
Ringfenced funding for Free Courses for Jobs		✓	✓	✓
Ability to work with DfE to commission a local programme of Skills Bootcamps, to be informed by future spending agreements	✓	✓	✓	✓
Work with local stakeholders to align careers provision with devolved AEB activities		✓	✓	✓
Full devolution of Free Courses for Jobs funding				✓
Full flexibility over Skills Bootcamps funding				✓
Central convening of careers provision				✓
New regional Labour Market Partnership Board				✓

Housing and infrastructure

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
Ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations (with consent of host local planning authority)			✓	✓
Devolution of locally-led brownfield funding			✓	✓
Homes England compulsory purchase powers (held concurrently)		✓	✓	✓
Strategic control in any future Affordable Homes Programme (from 2026)				✓

Keeping the public safe and healthy

Detail	L1	L2	L3	L4
Mayoral control of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) functions where boundaries align^			✓	✓
Mayoral control of Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) functions where boundaries align^			✓	✓
Clear defined role in local resilience*		✓	✓	✓
Where desired, offer MCAs a duty for improving the public's health (concurrently with local authorities)		✓	✓	✓

(*) refers to functions which are only applicable to combined authorities as opposed to county councils

(^) refers to functions which are only applicable to mayoral combined authorities

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Scrutiny Protocol

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Levelling Up White Paper set out a mission that by 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.
- 1.2. In providing areas with more powers and funding flexibility, these powers need to be used appropriately to support local and national priorities. This means having local leaders and institutions that are transparent and accountable, seek the best value for taxpayer's money and maintain strong ethical standards.
- 1.3. Strong and accountable local leaders are a fundamental part of thriving local democracies. The English Devolution Accountability Framework (EDAF) sets out how these institutions with devolved powers are accountable to local people and the UK Government, and how their decisions will be scrutinised and made transparent for local politicians, business leaders, and local communities of their area. This Scrutiny Protocol is a key part of making sure that institutions' overview and scrutiny arrangements are of the highest possible standards for holding them to account for delivery as well as for playing a critical role in policy and strategy development. This is particularly important when scrutinising devolved powers.
- 1.4. Effective scrutiny is critical for ensuring there is appropriate accountability for the decisions made by local decision makers. When done well, local scrutiny should drive understanding, enhance the performance of services and improve the outcomes for those people affected by those decisions.
- 1.5. This Scrutiny Protocol sets out the relationship between mayors and directly elected leaders, and the combined authority, combined county authority, county council or unitary authority they lead. It also sets out how the overview and scrutiny and audit Committees hold these institutions with devolved powers and their mayor or directly elected leader to account.
- 1.6. In adopting the key principles and provisions of this Scrutiny Protocol, each institution will ensure it has a focus on a sustained culture of scrutiny. Membership on committees should be prized and competed for. Retention of members for several years should be common. Members must be able to devote the time to the role. Committees should have the profile and cachet to ensure that their findings are brought to the attention of the public wherever necessary through strong communications.
- 1.7. The Government considers the Scrutiny Protocol a key factor in implementing Level 4 and single department-style funding settlements. Institutions with devolved powers should utilise the principles of the Scrutiny Protocol and requirements of the EDAF (including Local Assurance Frameworks) to ensure transparent and accountable decision-making and delivery of value for money on devolved funds.
- 1.8. In the future, the Government will expect areas to adopt MP sessions to further enhance scrutiny, similar to those arrangements being established in GMCA and WMCA and any lessons learned from the application there. This will be considered when institutions receive single department-style funding settlements.

Who the Scrutiny Protocol is for

- 1.9. This Scrutiny Protocol (“the Protocol”) applies to the arrangements of overview and scrutiny committees (“committees”) in all English institutions with devolved powers, including combined authorities (mayoral and non-mayoral), combined county authorities (mayoral or non-mayoral) and, with regard to their devolved powers, county councils and unitary authorities that have agreed devolution deals.
- 1.10. The Protocol provides guidance for chairs and members of overview and scrutiny committees as well as scrutiny officers to help them carry out their roles effectively. The Protocol also provides guidance for those responsible for making appointments to overview and scrutiny committees.
- 1.11. Overview and scrutiny committees have statutory powers to scrutinise the decisions of the executive, the combined authority or the combined county authority. Members and officers should recognise that recommendations following scrutiny enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented.
- 1.12. London has different arrangements. The Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended) sets out the arrangements for the Greater London Authority and Assembly. Where applicable, the GLA and Assembly should look to implement the guidance identified in this Protocol.

How to use this Protocol

- 1.13. This Protocol is non-statutory guidance but should be seen as supplementary to statutory guidance and relevant legislation.
- 1.14. This Protocol primarily refers to “shoulds” – good practice, and key principles and additional scrutiny that Government considers a key factor in implementing Level 4 and single department-style funding settlements.
- 1.15. This Protocol also refers to requirements arising from legislation and statutory guidance that must be adhered to¹.

2. Key principles for Good Scrutiny

- 2.1. Scrutiny is most effective when it is highly focussed and seeks to achieve a clear outcome. There should be a commitment to focussing scrutiny activity through developing a clear, outcome-driven, and member-led work programme which is delivered through a committee

¹ Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

The Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017

Schedule 1 to the The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (the 2023 Act) and regulations made under the 2023 Act

The Overview and Scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils and combined authorities (which will be updated to include CCAs once the secondary legislation is made, subject to the will of parliament).

Sections 9F – 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000

Combined Authorities must also have regard to any such provision in its statutory constitutional provisions.

structure that can enhance the delivery of that work programme to best effect. This could be a single committee or multi-committee model.

2.2. In combined authorities and combined county authorities, a single committee model should be considered to provide a shared platform from which all committee members can develop a strategic overview across all portfolio areas and an understanding of the interconnection of key policies to effectively scrutinise cross cutting issues. If another model is used it should be clear how this model is able to meet the key principles identified in this Protocol. These are:

- a pool of members
- politically balanced membership
- geographically balanced membership
- appointing a chair
- sustained appointments made on interest and skills
- well-resourced training
- inviting technical expertise
- remuneration and status
- holding the mayor or directly elected leader and the institution to account
- participation in pre-policy and pre-decision scrutiny
- provision to call in
- regular performance monitoring including agreed outcomes
- robust work programming
- focused task and finish exercises
- strong relationships with stakeholders
- regular self-evaluation and reflection
- access to data, research, and analysis
- strong relationship with audit committees

Case Study – Greater Manchester Mayoral Combined Authority (GMCA)

GMCA have been successful in implementing a single committee model with 20 members and 20 additional members in a substitute pool. This single committee model has been implemented to provide the flexibility and resilience for scrutiny to work effectively whilst being well-attuned to the cross-cutting nature of Combined Authority business.

2.3. County councils and unitary authorities with devolution deals should look to incorporate the scrutiny of any new activity arising from their devolution deal into their existing scrutiny arrangements. As there could be multiple committees looking at specific service areas, members are encouraged to maintain and develop a strategic overview of the service areas within their remit and work collaboratively with other committees where appropriate if issues involve more than one service area. It may also be worthwhile to undertake a review of current scrutiny arrangements as part of implementing their devolution deal to ensure that they will be suitable for the new activity.

Key Principle 1 – a pool of members

2.4. Enabling the interconnection of policies across a number of portfolio areas requires members to have an advanced level of knowledge across a range of subjects. To achieve this, all committee members whether appointed to a committee or acting as substitutes should be

treated as a single body and have access to the same induction and training opportunities as well as regular subject briefings. In doing so, members will feel suitably well-informed to engage effectively at meetings and take part in task and finish exercises (where required).

- 2.5. Well informed and active substitute members also provide a greater pool of membership to ensure that meetings are quorate and enable wider engagement of members across the authority area.

Key Principle 2 – politically balanced membership

- 2.6. Membership must be politically balanced in line with the proportionality across the institution as far as reasonably possible.

Key Principle 3 – geographically balanced membership

- 2.7. Due to the increased geographical size of a combined authority or combined county authority committee membership should also be geographically balanced as far as possible to ensure that the committee draws on a whole area perspective at meetings. Nonetheless, institutions with devolved powers are strategic organisations delivering across a functional economic geography and as part of their role members should be able to pivot between their local understanding and the need to take a wider strategic/functional view when considering issues applying to the whole institution and the geography it represents. This will aid effective scrutiny of priorities, performance, and delivery.

Key Principle 4 – appointing a chair

- 2.8. In combined authorities and combined county authorities, the chair of the committee must be seen as an independent voice. They must either be an independent person or an appropriate person (as defined by legislation). This ensures a healthy degree of separation to allow a greater level of objectivity in the committee's scrutiny activity. Such practice should be considered for county councils and unitary authorities for the scrutiny of any new activity arising from the devolution deal that is being brought into their existing scrutiny arrangements.
- 2.9. It is the responsibility of the chair to be 'apolitical' to ensure the committee remains in line with its terms of reference and is the voice of the committee at combined authority, combined county authority or cabinet meetings.

Key Principle 5 – sustained appointments made on interest and skills

- 2.10. Scrutiny requires a certain set of skills and it is therefore imperative that those who are appointed to the committee are done so based on their experience, interests, and skill set while also considering geographical and political balance. When seeking appointments, a clear role description should be used to inform interested parties of the key skills required as well as the demands of the role (an example of a role description is attached at Annex A).
- 2.11. Where possible members should also be appointed for more than one year to enable them to provide continuity to the work of the committee and ensure that the shared level of knowledge remains high. Working from the foundation of an informed committee allows members to be more confident in their challenge and ultimately more effective in their scrutiny.

Key Principle 6 – well-resourced training

- 2.12. All institutions should provide and adequately fund training for all members including knowledge briefings, peer to peer groups, and training on key functions including finance, commercial and data interrogation. This training should include an induction for the chair and members on the institution, its powers, roles, and responsibilities should be required at the beginning of every municipal year.
- 2.13. All members should be offered additional knowledge briefings outside of the formal meeting structure and ahead of reports being presented, where they can have access to further information to assist them in their scrutiny activity. These briefings should be informal and provide a safe space where members feel able to ask those questions that they may not feel able to in a committee meeting. Further briefings should also be organised at members request on any other subject matter where they feel this will strengthen their knowledge base, and offered to all members and substitutes where needed.

Key Principle 7 – inviting technical expertise

- 2.14. Committees should invite technical expertise to meetings to enhance scrutiny of decisions. Technical experts can provide a different perspective on the issues being discussed at meetings and help members with their line of questioning leading to enhanced scrutiny.
- 2.15. Technical expertise should also be commissioned to provide training and briefings to the chair and members of the committee to support them in their roles and ensure they have access to technical and independent knowledge, and information to enhance their scrutiny of the institutions' priorities, performance, and delivery.

Case Study – West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA)

WYCA's scrutiny has invited external experts to scrutiny committee meetings (and working groups) and made good use of the professional expertise of existing scrutiny members. A local academic who had independently tested the accuracy of the Real Time Bus Information system managed by WYCA was invited to answer technical questions alongside officers, which resulted in the committee recommending that officers partner with the academic and the university to iron out the technical issues. Councillors with an expertise and background in psychology have also led presentations and discussions, based on their own research and experience, on the topic of how behaviour change techniques and principles could be employed to encourage people to change how they travel to support decarbonisation goals.

Key Principle 8 – remuneration and status

- 2.16. Combined authorities and combined county authorities should remunerate committee members directly, reflecting the responsibility and status of the role. This must be done transparently through the use of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) who recommend an allowance level for approval by the combined authority or combined county authority (to be provided for in forthcoming secondary legislation, subject to the will of Parliament). Combined authorities and combined county authorities should pay the maximum recommended by the IRP to ensure that members commit the time required to the role. Substitute members should also be remunerated, but their payment should also reflect the number of meetings that they have attended. The chair should receive an additional level of remuneration in recognition of their specific role.

- 2.17. County councils and unitary authorities can make provision for the payment of special responsibility allowances for those councillors who have either assumed significant responsibilities following agreement of their devolution deal or want to reconsider other policies in light of it.
- 2.18. Scrutiny should be seen as central to the good governance of the authority. Committees and chairs should receive some dedicated resource with support provided across a range of areas such as research, policy, and administration. Clear processes should be in place for their recommendations to be received and responded to as appropriate and they should have the visible support of senior officers and members of the institution. Committees and chairs should have access to information including matters of commercial sensitivity, matters awaiting government approval and other confidential matters (in line with Access to Information Procedure Rules).

Key Principle 9 – holding the Mayor or directly elected leader and the institution to account

- 2.19. One of the key roles of the committee is to hold the Mayor or directly elected leader (and where necessary other members and officers of the institution and its partners) to account for their performance.
- 2.20. The Mayor or directly elected leader and institution should commit to engage regularly with the committee both informally and formally, and must attend the committee when requested.
- 2.21. Members who are portfolio leads (or equivalent) should also commit to engaging regularly with the committee and attend when requested. Even if members of the institution have assigned or delegated areas of responsibility to others, it should be standard practice for them to attend to present any reports within their portfolio alongside the appropriate officers.
- 2.22. There should be a standing invitation for the chairs of committees to attend the combined authority, combined county authority or relevant cabinet meetings to create an opportunity for the committee's comments on particular proposed decisions or issues to be shared directly.

Key Principle 10 – participation in pre-policy and pre-decision scrutiny

- 2.23. The practice of bringing decisions for scrutiny shortly before they are taken should be avoided (whilst recognising the need for urgent exceptions). Instead, members should be engaged early in the development stage of a policy so that they can help shape its design and add real value.
- 2.24. A Forward Plan of key decisions is essential. Having regular opportunities to consider this also enables the committee to have a breadth of sight across all the work of the institution and determine those areas for further scrutiny. Moreover, institutions should ensure that there is a culture of the Forward Plan being used appropriately with decisions being placed on the plan well in advance of them being taken.
- 2.25. The committee should also contribute to all policy and strategy development in respect of high-profile complex issues affecting the whole geographical area. As a result, when a report is taken for a decision, the committee's comments and amendments can be highlighted. This may include matters of commercial sensitivity, matters awaiting government approval and

other confidential matters (in line with Access to Information Procedure Rules), that need careful handling and might involve the exclusion of the public.

Case Study – West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)

Ahead of the WMCA submitting its deeper devolution deal offer to DLUHC, its overview and scrutiny committee held a series of workshops that undertook a deep dive into each of the offer's key proposals, testing the scope and ambition of each 'ask', and challenging whether the ambition of these proposals were sufficient to address the region's needs. This work resulted in the strengthening of the deal document ahead of its formal adoption by the CA and its constituent authorities.

2.26. To inform their scrutiny of policies and decisions, and using all available evidence or assessments, members should consider the viability of funding sources, financial propriety, and the extent to which the policy or decision being scrutinised is likely to provide value for money.

Key Principle 11 – provision to call in

2.27. The committee should use their power to 'call in' decisions to ensure that any decisions receive further scrutiny where the committee thinks it is necessary. However, good scrutiny should focus on uncovering potential issues with decisions before they need to be called in.

Key Principle 12 – regular performance monitoring

2.28. An initial focus on the institutions' key strategies will enable the committee to understand its priorities, and begin to monitor performance against delivery and ultimately recommend where action is needed, including improvement activity, more quickly. This should be supported by regular reports highlighting the evidential challenges and where further scrutiny could support delivery against a target, including any outcomes that may have been agreed as part of devolution deals.

2.29. However, it is important that performance monitoring does not monopolise the work programme of the committee, but that it is used as a tool to highlight those areas where further scrutiny would be most effective.

Key Principle 13 – robust work programming

2.30. Areas highlighted through the performance monitoring of the institutions' key strategies should formulate the skeleton of the committee's work programme, from which members can then select other areas of interest through a formal report or task and finish exercise where they feel scrutiny could add further value.

2.31. It is important that the work programme remains robust and flexible enough to cope with a dynamic devolution environment where the priorities of the institution change so that scrutiny can be undertaken on policy development as it evolves. A combination of long-term pre-policy scrutiny interspersed with more immediate performance scrutiny will ensure the work programme remains appropriate and can dovetail with the work of the institution.

2.32. Committees should have a clear process by which it develops its work programme, who it will engage as part of its work programme and how it will prioritise what it should undertake further inquiry on. It is expected that committees will take in a wide range of views from the institution itself (officers, the executive or the combined authority or combined county authority), constituent members, partner organisations and residents.

Key Principle 14 – focused task and finish exercises

2.33. The chair and members should consider when it is relevant to focus on an area of the work programme through task and finish activities which can provide the opportunity for ‘deep dive’ scrutiny that a committee meeting setting often does not allow. This approach is often most valuable when it brings together stakeholders to discuss and debate complex topics but should be member-led and have tangible outcomes that will benefit the work of the institution.

2.34. Determining the scope of the task and finish exercise alongside an agreed timeframe is imperative, as the realm of the topics can often be immense but the decision process to influence is fast paced.

2.35. The number of task and finish reviews should be determined by the strategic priorities highlighted by members and the capacity of the scrutiny function. Task and finish review meetings can be held virtually but their work should be transparent and their final reports and recommendations (at least) must be made publicly available.

2.36. The institution should formally receive task and finish reports following endorsement from the committee and must respond to their clear set of recommendations within two months. The committee should be responsible for monitoring the progress against these recommendations at agreed periods.

Key Principle 15 – strong relationships with stakeholders

2.37. Committees should use their power to invite stakeholders to meetings. These could include members and officers of constituent local authorities, and, in county council areas, their district councils and other local stakeholders should be invited to the committee meeting where the organisation delivering services and utilities is being scrutinised.

2.38. To allow scrutiny to be effective it is crucial that the public can easily understand the work and performance of committees. With this in mind, local journalism plays an invaluable role in the fabric of our society, in supporting communities and in ensuring the provision of reliable, high-quality information. Local news publishers remain uniquely placed to undertake the investigative journalism and scrutiny of public institutions at a local level that is vital to helping ensure a healthy local democracy. Local press and media must therefore continue to be able to play a key role in facilitating public accountability, with opportunities created for them to engage with the committees, its members, and their work and findings.

2.39. As well as building relationships with local press and media, institutions should consider how they use their communications function to publicise the committee, and its members, work, and findings while remaining mindful of the recommended code of practice for local authority publicity.

2.40. For combined authorities and combined county authorities, the work of their committees should complement that of their constituent local authority scrutiny committees rather than

create duplication. It is likely that one set of scrutiny activities will raise points that equally apply or are relevant to the other. Strong relationships, including with other key local stakeholders, should therefore be formed to enable work programmes to be shared and reports presented to the most appropriate committee. There is also a role for members of the committee in ensuring effective links with constituent local authority scrutiny committees through appropriate information sharing and ensuring the interconnection of work programmes.

Key Principle 16 – regular self-evaluation and reflection

- 2.41. Members should come together regularly to reflect and direct their own work programme. This could take place in public during a meeting or informally following a meeting, however space should be created for members to be open and honest about the direction of the work of the committee and to provide an opportunity for regular self-evaluation.
- 2.42. Reflecting on the work of the committee and the resulting outcomes of scrutiny activity should also be undertaken through other methods, including regular round-up bulletins, annual reports, or other publications.
- 2.43. An annual report should be published to broadcast the work of the committee, demonstrating how the committee's work influences and benefits the outcomes of the institution and its strategic goals and priorities. For combined authorities and combined county authorities, this should be formally considered by its constituent members. For county councils or unitary authorities, this should be considered at cabinet and full council.
- 2.44. The institution should welcome the continual self-evaluation of the committee but also commit to undertaking its own evaluation exercises, as often as required, to ensure the function remains effective, including seeking feedback from key partners.

Key Principle 17 – access to data, research, and analysis

- 2.45. Committees should use data to improve their knowledge and understanding of their institution's performance, as well as how other institutions are performing to learn lessons and share best practice.
- 2.46. The Office for Local Government (Oflog) will support the improvement of local government performance by fostering accountability through increased transparency. It will provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about the performance of local government and will publish key data for institutions with devolved powers. This should be considered as part of committee business.

Key Principle 18 – strong relationship with audit committees

- 2.47. Combined authorities and combined county authorities must have an audit committee. Local authorities with a devolution deal should have an audit committee to ensure they maintain robust financial management and controls for accountability to local stakeholders.
- 2.48. Overview and scrutiny committees should work in tandem with the Audit Committee and should be agreeing how to manage shared areas of interest and responsibility. The Audit Committee having responsibility to support and monitor governance, risk management, external and internal audit, financial reporting, control and assurance arrangements. The overview and

scrutiny committee having responsibility for scrutinising decisions the executive, the combined authority or the combined county authority is planning and how they will be implemented.

- 2.49. Although the focus of the overview and scrutiny committee, is different from the audit committee, there are opportunities for the committees to work collaboratively. Work programmes of each committee should be informed by each other's work and recommendations shared where appropriate. Regular meetings should be organised between the chair of audit and the chair of overview and scrutiny to support a better understanding of the committees' outputs, helping to avoid duplication and ensure important areas are not missed.
- 2.50. Audit committees should receive dedicated resource and there should be clear processes in place for their recommendations to be received and responded to as appropriate.
- 2.51. Audit committees should also publish an annual report to broadcast the work of the committee and how its work influences and benefits the outcomes of the institution and its strategic goals and priorities. For combined authorities and combined county authorities, this should be formally considered by its constituent members. For county councils or unitary authorities, this should be considered at cabinet and full Council.
- 2.52. The institution should welcome the continual self-evaluation of the Audit Committee but also commit to undertaking its own evaluation exercises, as often as required, to ensure the function remains effective.

3. Additional Scrutiny – Mayor or directly elected leader's Question Time

- 3.1. Mayors and directly elected leaders provide greater democratic accountability by having a single visible leader directly accountable to the public at the ballot box for their performance and the decisions they make.
- 3.2. Mayor's or directly elected leaders' question time should also be organised where the Mayor or directly elected leader takes questions from the public, chaired by an independent person – a local journalist or businessperson for example. These should be held at least every three months.

Annex A – example member role description

Local scrutiny is critical for increasing the accountability of decision makers. It should drive understanding, enhance the performance of services and the outcomes for those people affected by those decisions. It is crucial that members of local overview and scrutiny committees in areas with devolution deals set new standards for holding their institutions to account for delivery as well as playing a critical role in policy and strategy development.

This description provides information about the role and responsibilities of an overview and scrutiny committee member. It should be used when deciding which members to nominate to the committee. The information should also be used by overview and scrutiny committee members to understand their role and the responsibilities that they hold as members of the committee.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Overview and scrutiny committee members and substitute (pool) members should be able to:

- Understand the whole geographical area strategic priorities as set out in the strategy for the combined authority/local authority.
- Think critically about the combined authority/combined county authority/local authority's proposed policies and its performance across a variety of measures.
- Work constructively with public and/or private sector partners to drive improvement of both policy and performance.
- Confidently scrutinise combined authority/combined county authority/local authority members, officers, and the mayor/directly elected leader.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

Overview and scrutiny committee members and substitute (pool) members are expected to:

- Attend any appropriate induction and training sessions for the role, which will develop members' knowledge of the area's ambitions as well as the challenges that the area faces.
- Attend formal scrutiny meetings regularly. There is also an expectation that members will take part in the work of task and finish groups.
- Use their knowledge and experience to constructively scrutinise issues that come before the committee.
- Collaborate with other members to effectively scrutinise important matters in appropriate depth, including convening task and finish groups to investigate specific areas in more depth.
- In combined authority and combined county authority areas, engage with their respective constituent local authorities to ensure that information is circulated between the local authorities and the combined authority or combined county authority.
- Carry out their duties in accordance with the scrutiny rules of procedure and the members code of conduct as set out in their constitution.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR

The chair of the committee is expected to take on additional responsibilities, which include:

- Working with officers to develop the work programme on behalf of the committee, taking into account the upcoming work of the combined authority/combined county authority/local authority and areas where scrutiny must be carried out.
- Chairing committee meetings effectively so that members can carry out their roles efficiently.
- Facilitating strong team-working between committee members during formal meetings, informal meetings, and task group meetings.
- Monitoring the progression of task and finish groups established by the committee.
- Attendance of combined authority, combined county authority or local authority cabinet meetings in order to feedback recommendations and comments of the overview and scrutiny committee.

Report to:	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
Date:	19 January 2024
Subject:	Work Programme 2023/24
Director:	Alan Reiss, Chief Operating Officer
Author:	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.

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

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Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Sub-topics/focuses	Date
Strategic focus and performance monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is performance monitored – how does the process work? (Who monitors it? What data is collected and how is it presented?) Logic and assumptions behind deciding the actual KPI/target/objective numbers; evidence based, need based, capacity based? Is it 'arbitrary'? Focus on long term progression 'journey of delivery' for greater context – past KPIs, current, future. What impact is the CA actually making? What 'levers' does it actually have? Is there proof of 'additionality'? 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)? 	<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"> Usual budget monitoring and pre-scrutiny. Gainshare spending + Gateway Review 2023/2024. Reserves policy/level – Audit's view of risks and viability. Corporate borrowing – possibility, rules, amount. Revenue raising and additional sources of funding. Use of past data to contextualise current budget against past budgets and future projected budgets. <p><u>Staff capacity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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). Progress and changes since the last staff survey analysis (and historic context). 	<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"> Current status of promised powers that have not yet been devolved e.g. planning. (Autumn update?) Future expected further devolution, including 'single settlement' funding model. 	19 January 2024
Decision making and governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance rules and structure etc. 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. 	<p>22 September 2023</p> <p>(Assurance Framework)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of members and level of control and influence over process. • Role of officers and internal decision-making structures – when do officers decide, when do members decide. • How each stage is communicated to stakeholders (members, public) and how they are involved. • The Assurance Framework and role of PAT in project decisions/management/scrutiny/evaluation etc. • Scrutiny system. 	<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"> Background and update on bus franchising and upcoming consultation (<i>to be approved at 28 Sept CA meeting, held the day before TSC</i>) <p>Short term improvements – BSIP update and performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update/changes in BSIP since 2021/22 (<i>when the committee last looked at it</i>) Most updated quarterly report and KPIs – including update on RTI accuracy (<i>considered by committee last Sept</i>). Bus network performance and passenger experience data <p>Areas of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current bus service / operator performance issues Effects of service cuts and possible solutions Public engagement, customer service quality re complaints, consultations and service changes 	<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"> KPI, projects, objectives – performance and achievement. Understand transport schemes, funding/bidding, strategic and ROI criteria, impact assessments on non-transport areas. 	<p>29 September 2023 – buses/passenger experience</p>
Strategy/policy and Local Transport Plan 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decarbonisation (and government assessment toolkit) Behaviour Change and Active Travel (including bikes, e-bikes/e-scooters, and motorbikes) Freight and waterways as a resource Current and future transport trends; the pandemic and beyond (bus/rail footfall, homeworking positives vs rise in deliveries) 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)] Pollution, health and clean air zones 	<p>15 March 2024</p> <p>(LTP4 consultation in Summer 2024, for adoption in 2025)</p>

Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achievement of 'affordable' and 'sustainable' targets• Challenges and solutions (target vs need in region)• Available funding and what it is being spent on	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"> • Latest data and economic outlook since last year e.g. economic figures, inflation, cost of living effects • Any comparisons with neighbouring regions with overlapping economic footprints e.g. NY and GM. <p><u>Current/persistent challenges:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. <p><u>New/Future challenges:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI, automation, green/decarbonisation (+ any other disruptions?) which have accelerated recently and their potential consequences on the regional economy, businesses and jobs. • Are we prepared for these challenges? Can we get ahead of other MCAs/areas and position ourselves as leaders in these emerging markets? • Potential conflict between productivity/growth/tech advancement vs job creation/community/place/diversity considerations. <p><u>Economic Strategy update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we are addressing the above challenges through the economic strategy + current thinking/progress + timeline for finalisation and adoption 	<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"> • Update on last year's AEB performance and this year's spending and outputs. • School engagement and young people opportunities and apprenticeships • Apprenticeships and non-university career routes 	17 November 2023
Business investment and outcomes (including culture + creative industries) and	<p><u>Business investment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we are investing in businesses and generating outcomes <p><u>Culture and creative industries:</u></p>	8 March 2024

performance monitoring/outputs/funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A mayoral objective, an increasing percentage of the region's economy and upcoming/recent city of culture events (in Bradford and Leeds) <p><u>Performance monitoring and KPIs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring achievement of economy targets/KPIs from the corporate plan.• "Follow the money": where is funding coming from, how is it spent, what are the revenue opportunities.• 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	
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