

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 18 JANUARY 2019 AT COMMITTEE
ROOM A, WELLINGTON HOUSE, LEEDS**

Present:

Councillor Elizabeth Smaje (Chair)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Stephen Baines MBE	Calderdale Council
Councillor James Baker	Calderdale Council
Councillor Glenn Burton	Wakefield Council
Councillor Ian Cuthbertson	City of York Council
Councillor Dot Foster	Calderdale Council
Councillor Peter Harrand	Leeds City Council
Councillor Graham Isherwood	Wakefield Council
Councillor David Jenkins	Leeds City Council
Councillor Paul Kane	Kirklees Council
Councillor Manisha Kaushik (Substitute)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Sarfraz Nazir	Bradford Council
Councillor Mike Pollard	Bradford Council
Councillor Denise Ragan	Leeds City Council
Councillor Elizabeth Rhodes	Wakefield Council

In attendance:

Khaled Berroum	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Angela Taylor	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Michelle Burton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Joanne Grigg	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Catherine Lunn	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
James Flanagan	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Smyth	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Dave Haskins	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Rachel Jones	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Jonathan Skinner	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jenny Brooks, Marielle O'Neill, Tina Funnell, and Rosie Watson.

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

3. Possible exclusion of the press and public

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

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2018

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2018 be approved.

5. Chair's update

The Chair informed the committee of a series of introductory briefings with key officers, an initial discussion with the Chair of the Combined Authority and that further meetings were planned with Chairs of other key committees such as Transport, Governance & Audit and the LEP Board.

Resolved: That the Chair's update be noted.

6. Governance changes

The Committee received a report of the Scrutiny Officer providing confirmation of membership changes since the last meeting and information about the implications for scrutiny arising from the Combined Authority delegating new decision making functions to the Investment Committee.

The Committee was also informed of a change in membership arrangements since the publication of the agenda.

- Councillor Jenny Brooks stepped down from the Committee. A replacement must be appointed at a meeting of the Combined Authority when a nomination from York is confirmed.
- Councillor Steve Tulley replaced Councillor Albert Manifold as substitute to Councillor Betty Rhodes.

The Committee recorded its thanks to departing members.

Members discussed call-in procedures and expressed concern that the power of call-in was not strong enough as it only allowed decisions to be delayed momentarily while decision-makers reconsidered the decision.

The Committee agreed that this highlighted the need to strengthen pre-decision scrutiny and awareness, such as ensuring key decision notices are published as early as possible for Members to scrutinise – not just at the 28 day statutory deadline – and to allow Members to raise concerns as early as possible and discuss them with decision-makers in good time.

Resolved: That the governance changes pertaining to overview and scrutiny since the last meeting be noted.

7. Scrutiny Work Programme

The Committee received a report of the Scrutiny Officer outlining the Scrutiny

Work Programme for the 2018/19 municipal year.

The Committee was informed that the government has not yet published new statutory scrutiny guidance and supported a proposal to arrange Member workshops to consider reform to current scrutiny arrangements and compliance with guidance and best practice more closely once the guidance is published.

The Committee was updated on the response from Northern to a query raised by the Director of Transport Services on the Committee's behalf, confirming that they do not currently allow mobility scooters on their trains, but are in the process of securing new trains which will accommodate them in 2019/20. Members expressed dissatisfaction with the length of time it would take while people with mobility scooters wait for implementation. The Committee asked that the Transport Committee and Transport Scrutiny Working Group consider what can be done to help people in the interim.

Members proposed that the Committee consider the energy strategy pre-decision and that the Transport scrutiny working group revisit accessibility in view of the mobility scooter / Northern issue and consider looking at air quality if possible.

Resolved:

- i) That the agenda forward plan and scrutiny work programme for the 2018/19 municipal year as outlined in **Appendix 1** be approved.
- ii) That, following the publication of statutory scrutiny guidance by the government, a report detailing proposals for improving current scrutiny arrangements and ensuring the Combined Authority is compliant is submitted to the 22 March 2019 meeting.
- iii) That, following the publication of statutory scrutiny guidance by the government, a series of workshops involving all interested Members be arranged between January and March 2019 to consider and discuss the changes to scrutiny arrangements and ensuring compliance with new statutory scrutiny guidance.

8. Apprenticeships

The Committee considered a joint-report of the Director of Resources and Executive Head of Economic Services providing an update on internal and external apprenticeship activity and programmes being delivered, or part funded, by the Combined Authority.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Joanne Grigg, Head of HR
- Michelle Burton, Head of Employment and Skills
- Catherine Lunn, Skills Funding Manager

After questions and discussion, the Committee **concluded** that:

- It is essential that the Combined Authority leads by example by recruiting and strongly supporting apprenticeships internally, as it cannot credibly promote externally what is not being achieved internally. The Combined Authority's role as an enabler and promoter is weakened if it does not meet internal targets.
- The ongoing development of an internal staff development strategy and framework where apprenticeships feature as a key element was welcomed and progress is expected in the near future.
- More financial data about how Combined Authority's apprenticeship levy has been spent and the cost and quality of apprenticeship schemes the Combined Authority has enrolled apprentices on, would be useful context for Members in a future report.
- While it is understood that European Union regulations make too much flexibility in procurement challenging and that the Combined Authority is currently bound by existing contracts and funding agreements, in the future, stronger consideration should be given to a more being more selective in which suppliers and partners it procures and enters into contracts. Current work being undertaken within the Combined Authority to revise procurement policies is a good opportunity to support apprenticeships through a more selective approach.
- It is vital that businesses take ownership of their role in, and impact on, communities – particularly those businesses who are in receipt of Combined Authority funding and support. Funding and support should come with stronger conditions and 'strings attached' that aim to enable better practices and outcomes.
- The regional and national picture regarding apprenticeships appears bleak. Members expected an upswing of apprenticeships, at larger organisations in particular, following the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy.
- The report's appendices are not clear on what action can be taken to mitigate the downturn. Statistics and data presented in reports in future should include further analysis alongside a greater insight into what actions the Combined Authority could take to help mitigate the downturn and bridge the gap.
- While the Combined Authority cannot access much data from the private sector, it should seek to gain a greater insight into the current picture and data from partner organisations and other public sector organisations regionally which make up around 35% of the economy – such as the NHS, local councils and other agencies.
- Feedback to Members indicate that there appear to be too many barriers to young people being able to take on and complete apprenticeships including cost, quality of training provider's provision, quality of placement, awareness and access to opportunities, and when

completed, not enough progress from an apprenticeship to a long term, meaningful job.

- To encourage apprenticeship starts, the Combined Authority supports businesses through the bureaucracy involved in taking on apprentices through the Employment Hub and incentivises small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) to take on apprentices for the first time through the Apprenticeship Grants for Employers (AGE) programme – however, the Combined Authority does not fund apprenticeship training directly, does not monitor the quality of apprenticeships (currently OFSTED's remit), and is not funded to perform follow-up checks on apprentices (funded through AGE grants) while they are in training or after their apprenticeships are completed. Although, a survey of businesses funded through Phase 1 of the AGE programme was undertaken.
- Both nationally and locally, there appears to be a greater focus on apprenticeship starts than on completion of apprenticeships and outcomes arising from apprenticeship-related activity. Increasing the number of *completed* apprenticeships should be a key priority in the long term – not just increasing the number of starts. The difficulties of gathering this data was also noted.
- Apprenticeships must lead to long-term meaningful jobs and monitoring and enabling that ultimate outcome should be a priority for all apprenticeship activity.
- Responsibility for the success of apprenticeships should not be left solely with the training providers and employers. The Combined Authority should consider what it can do to help through existing service delivery and in future service / programme development to 'fill the gaps' and support apprenticeships more broadly.
- The Combined Authority should consider whether it is in a position to monitor the quality of what training providers are delivering and engage with apprentices directly to influence and enable higher completion rates – particularly in respect of programmes and businesses it is involved with.
- Where the Combined Authority provides funding or support to apprenticeship, the Committee expects that the outcomes and impact of spending / support is being monitored and evaluated and future policy and delivery models are being developed with those outcomes and conclusions in mind.
- Further information on how the first phase of the AGE programme was evaluated and how the conclusions from that evaluation informed the development of the second phase would be useful information in a future report. Information on how apprenticeship activity more broadly has impacted on the regional picture was also requested.
- The Committee was alarmed by reports that many schools and sixth

forms are not receptive to approaches from education and training providers to promote apprenticeships amongst students and that when schools do engage, they often direct apprenticeships to a regressively stereotypical cohort of students.

- Members suggested officers speak to STEM coordinators that many schools have, who may be more receptive, and Members also expressed a desire to assist officers in any way they could either through formal correspondence or through their positions as school governors.
- There may be a need to develop a broader engagement strategy aimed at reaching young people and students directly and cross-selling opportunities through other services areas, such as transport services, as well as targeting the 80% of businesses in the region that have never taken on an apprentice. The Combined Authority currently aims to build apprenticeship messaging into all of its 'Enterprise in Education' activity in order to reach as many people as possible.
- The current gender disparity across apprenticeship types and sectors is disappointing and Members would support a piece of work focused on unpicking the reasons for the disparity and discussing potential solutions.
- Future reports to Overview and Scrutiny on apprenticeship activity should aim to include:
 - more information and focus on the impact of, and outcomes arising from, apprenticeship activity and money spent by the Combined Authority
 - more detailed information about financial, legal, and staffing implications for the Combined Authority
 - greater evidencing of the planned timescales of major areas of work, such as phase 2 of the AGE programme and the Skills Commission, to enable Members to understand targets and better determine when to scrutinise developments
 - Further information about engagement strategy and performance
 - Further information on long term sustainability and achievement in apprenticeship activity and delivery
 - and take into account and reference feedback and suggestions that Members have provided and focused on at previous meetings

Resolved: That the report be noted and the Committee's feedback and conclusions be considered further.

9. Inclusive Growth

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Policy, Strategy & Communications providing an overview of how delivering inclusive growth has progressed since it last came before the committee and the emerging work and priorities of the newly established Inclusive Growth and Public Policy

Panel.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Ian Smyth, Head of Economic Policy
- James Flanagan, Lead Policy Manager (Public Sector Reform)

In response to questions, the Committee **learned** that:

- The Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panel is still in the early stages of coordinating and determining the regional picture with regards to inclusive growth activity and identifying areas of focus and cooperation.
- The Panel's current working principle is to avoid duplication and instead identify good local programmes to assess the possibility of upscaling them for adoption across the region.
- Another working principle of the Panel is in fostering cooperation and focusing on cross-cutting policy work streams. The Panel was given a particular mandate by the LEP and Combined Authority to consider, and work across, all policy areas with the hope of embedding inclusive growth in the policy framework and appraisal.
- One particular priority the Panel identified early on is the correlation between deprivation and air quality and has sought to approach it as a 'joined up' cross-cutting area of work through the 'Healthy Streets' project which aims to create more accessible streets for pedestrians, promote air quality and health and reduce the number of cars.
- Another example of a cross-cutting, cross-regional community focused area of work is the 'Inclusive Growth Corridors' project, which aims to connect deprived areas to growth opportunities that will emerge as a consequence of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail. Further information on inclusive growth corridors can be circulated to interested Members.
- Panel members and Combined Authority officers are approaching inclusive growth activity with the principle that they are programmes / projects being delivered *with* communities and not as actions being done *to* communities.

After discussion, the Committee **concluded** that:

- The holistic approach in focusing on cross-cutting policy areas and including many organisations and partners regionally was a welcome and necessary principle.
- Inclusive growth policy and project activity should itself be inclusive and cooperative to avoid duplication and inter-regional competition. The Combined Authority should take care to ensure current emerging policy and activities link with the inclusive growth activity in local councils and with the work of other local partners e.g. any health inequality related

policies should take into account current work by West Yorkshire Health Partnership.

- It is important to define inclusive growth in order to clearly identify and measure outcomes through the policy framework. The policy framework should also take into account secondary outcomes such as a reduction in asthma levels – not just in the number of deaths.
- There is an opportunity through the cross-cutting 'joined up' inclusive growth policy work to more strongly link together policies which have been disjointed in the past, for instance linking planning and development to environmental impact, air quality, health and accessibility.
- The holistic approach could also be extended to and embedded within service delivery, not just policy development. Members suggested that service delivery teams could seek to 'cross-sell' services and support across Combined Authority / LEP activity e.g. 'Enterprise in Education' Coordinators who network within local schools could help introduce young people to other inclusive projects in due course and support that are not only skills / education focused.
- While it noted the complexities around attaining inclusive growth and that the Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panel's ambition to see early progress and impact, inclusive growth activity should take care to avoid overlooking certain areas and communities and maintain a focus on sustainable, long term outcomes.

Resolved:

- i) That the report be noted and the Committee's feedback and conclusions be considered further.
- ii) That more information about the 'inclusive growth corridors' project be circulated to interested Members and be considered in more detail at a future meeting.

10. Assurance Framework Review

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Delivery providing an update on changes proposed to the Assurance Framework with regard to ensuring compliance with new national local growth assurance framework guidance published by the government in January 2019.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Dave Haskins, Head of Feasibility & Assurance
- Rachel Jones, Programme Development Manager

The Committee **concluded** that:

- While the current Assurance Framework is considered to be relatively

ahead of other LEP areas and already largely compliant with many of the newer requirements, the new national assurance framework guidance published by government had some stronger references to scrutiny and would have to be re-considered carefully by scrutiny with that in mind.

- It is key that the LEP scrutiny working group has the opportunity to feed in and make any recommendations before the final Assurance Framework document is submitted to the LEP Board and signed off by the end of March 2019 deadline.
- The LEP scrutiny working group should re-convene as soon as a final draft is ready to scrutinise, with particular attention to the changes with regards to scrutiny and the Committee's desire to strengthen pre-decision scrutiny arrangements and processes.
- If timescales prove difficult, any decisions on recommendations be delegated to the Chair – in conjunction with LEP scrutiny working group members – on the Committee's behalf and reported back to a future committee meeting as appropriate.

Resolved:

- i) That the report be noted.
- ii) That the LEP scrutiny working group continues to scrutinise the development of the updated Assurance Framework and report back any recommendations agreed in conjunction with the Chair to a future committee meeting.
- iii) Any final decision on recommendations be delegated to the Chair to act on the Committee's behalf.

11. LEP Review

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications providing an update on how the LEP, Combined Authority and partners are addressing the requirements following the government's review of LEPs.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Jonathan Skinner, Lead Policy Manager (Private Sector Growth)

The Committee was **informed** that:

- The first meeting of the Transition Subgroup was taking place that same afternoon (18 January 2019).
- That financial matters are included and are being considered by the Transition Subgroup under the 'Transition and Leadership' work stream (bullet point a) in section 2.11 of the report).
- The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny is currently in discussion with the Chairs of the LEP and Combined Authority on the LEP Review going

forward.

- The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny would continue to be briefed on outcomes arising from Transition Subgroup meetings and the LEP Review implementation more widely.

Resolved: That the update be noted and the committee, LEP scrutiny working group and Chair be kept informed of developments as they arise.

12. Draft Budget 2019/20

The Committee considered a report for of the Director of Resources providing an update on work underway to progress the budget for 2019/20.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Angela Taylor, Director of Resources

The Committee **concluded** that:

- A comparison to budgets from previous years being presented alongside the proposed budget for this year would be a useful indicator for Members to track trends and changes over time.
- The breakdown of spending currently filed under 'miscellaneous' could be broken down further.
- The impact of the LEP review outcome and implementation on Enterprise Zones and other budget consideration is likely and requires careful monitoring.
- The attached business plan detailed many directorate / service area objectives without a connection to how each department / service area objective fulfilled wider corporate / organisational strategy. A separate report on the corporate plan would be brought to a future committee meeting.
- Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken as and when required by a major policy change.
- Leaving posts vacant to save costs, although necessary at present, was not a strong long term strategy and could be resolved through a further organisational design process. Long term staffing matters were currently being reviewed.

Resolved: That the report be noted and the Committee's feedback and conclusions be considered.

13. Date of the next meeting - 22 March 2019