

**NOTES OF A CONFERENCE CALL OF THE
LEEDS CITY REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL 2020**

Present:

Roger Marsh OBE DL (Chair)	Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership
Prof Shirley Congdon	Higher Education
Helen Featherstone	Culture
Amir Hussain	Yeme Architects
Rashik Parmar MBE	IBM Academy of Technology (Chair, Employment & Skills Panel)
Professor Simon Pringle	Project Rome
Kamran Rashid	Third Sector
Mandy Ridyard	Produmax Ltd
Mark Roberts (Deputy Chair)	Beer Hawk Ltd
Joanna Robinson	Chair, Business Communications Group
Kully Thiarai	Culture
Andrew Wright	A W Hainsworth Ltd (Chair, Business Innovation & Growth Panel)
Councillor Judith Blake CBE	Leeds City Council
Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Council
Councillor Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Council
Councillor Tim Swift MBE	Calderdale Council

In attendance:

Tom Riordan	Leeds City Council
Councillor Graham Swift	Harrogate Borough Council
Ben Still	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Caroline Allen	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Angela Taylor	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Brian Archer	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ruth Chaplin	LEP/West Yorkshire Combined Authority

1. Chair's Comments

The Chair opened the meeting which was being held as a consultation conference call via Zoom. He welcomed the new LEP Board members to their first meeting and also Mark Roberts as Deputy Chair.

The formalities of how the meeting would be managed and the decision-making items to be considered were clarified. Members would be given the opportunity to speak and their views would be sought on each item. The Chair would then take the decisions in accordance with the delegations conferred to him by the LEP Board Constitution (Section 10 – Urgent

Decisions of the LEP). Following the conclusion of the conference call, a Written Record would be completed by the Chair, clearly stating that the decisions have been made in consultation with the other members of the LEP Board. The Written Record, together with a copy of the notes of the meeting, will then be published on the website.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Kate Hainsworth.

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the requirements of the LEP Board Members' Code of Conduct, Members were reminded of their obligations to review their individual register of interests before each LEP Board meeting and to declare any interests.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2020

Recommendation: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2020 be noted and approved at the next meeting of the LEP Board.

5. Governance Arrangements

The Board considered a report of the Director, Corporate Services on governance arrangements.

The report provided an update on the process to seek new private sector members for the Combined Authority's advisory panels. Appointments panels had been held during February and March to recruit to the following:

- Business Innovation & Growth Panel
- Employment & Skills Panel
- Green Economy Panel
- Inclusive Growth & Public Policy Panel

In addition, it was noted that the terms of office for a number of existing panel members were coming to an end and it was proposed that these be extended as outlined in the submitted report.

Members noted the nominations which would be considered by the Combined Authority at their next formal meeting. Details of the proposals for both new and existing private sector membership of the advisory panels was provided in Appendix 1. Arrangements would be made to provide new members with an induction at the earliest opportunity in order to provide them with a better understanding of the LEP and the work of the panels.

It was proposed that the public sector membership of panels remains unchanged, reflecting all ten former Leeds City Region authorities, where

those authorities wish to remain involved and there is continuing mutual strategic benefit.

It was noted that that appointments made beyond the next municipal year may need to be subject to a caveat relating to any potential changes to governance arrangements following the West Yorkshire devolution deal. Further details would be provided to a future meeting.

Recommendations:

- (i) That the proposals in relation to the nomination of private sector members to advisory panels and extensions to terms of office of existing members, as set out in Appendix 1 of the submitted report be approved by the Chair of the LEP Board under his delegated powers and be recommended to the next meeting of the Combined Authority for formal approval.
- (ii) That until such time as the nominations to panels are formally approved by the Combined Authority and to ensure that new panel members are able to familiarise themselves with the work of the respective panels, they are invited to participate in any conference calls and workshops which take place in the foreseeable future.

6. COVID-19

The Board considered a report of the Directors of Economic Services and Policy, Strategy and Communications on COVID-19.

The report outlined the latest advice and business support in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and the response of the Combined Authority and Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership. It was acknowledged that health and public safety was the most important issue, but it was also an economic emergency and the full impact of COVID-19 on the Leeds City Region would not be known for some time and it was already having a serious effect on businesses and the economy.

It was reported that the Business Gateway team had been established (formerly the Business Growth Service) with additional staff to handle the high volume of enquiries being received. Support was being offered to businesses to help them access financial assistance and advice as quickly as possible including the funding and measures that have been put in place by central Government.

In this respect, the Board thanked officers and the Business Investment Panel for their swift action and support offered to Herida Healthcare in overcoming their short term funding challenge to provide the NHS with the urgently needed mattresses for the Nightingale Hospital in London.

Members discussed their concerns regarding the gaps in the Government's support package, the delays being encountered by businesses in getting

responses from the banks and the high interest rates some were charging. It was acknowledged that much of the banks' decision making was made nationally and the need to emphasise to them the cash flow problems being experienced by some businesses who will not survive the crisis was highlighted

It was noted that the Combined Authority and LEP were doing everything possible to work with central Government and other Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) to ensure there was sufficient support for businesses. A note on business support interventions had been sent to Government to influence the development of national programmes and a copy was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. Work was continuing to identify any further gaps in the Government's support package e.g. for those smaller businesses who would not qualify for one type of loan but were too big for another. Members stressed the need to highlight such examples to Government and emphasise the problems being faced by businesses.

Looking ahead, Members discussed how businesses could be helped to recover and it was considered that the devolution deal and the Northern Powerhouse could provide opportunities for the Leeds City Region and new businesses.

Recommendation: That the update be noted.

7. Devolution

The Board considered a report of the Combined Authority's Managing Director on Devolution.

Members discussed the report which provided a summary of the "minded-to" West Yorkshire Devolution Deal and update on its implementation. A timeline outlining the main decisions and estimated timescales was attached at Appendix 1.

It was reported that despite the current COVID-19 emergency, devolution remains a priority for the Government. It was however acknowledged that there are challenges for the timetable in the current climate, particularly with regard to the consultation and laying of the order.

Councillor Graham Swift congratulated the Combined Authority in securing the deal and hoped his authority would be able to continue working with the partnership in the future.

The Board welcomed and endorsed the Devolution Deal and thanked the West Yorkshire Leaders and officers for their tireless work in securing the deal.

Recommendation: That the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal be endorsed.

8. Corporate Performance

The Board considered a report of the Director, Corporate Services which provided an update on a range of corporate and governance matters.

A summary of the 2019/20 current spend to budget as at January 2020 was attached at Appendix 1.

Members noted the summary of progress against the key performance indicators for the year to date which was attached at Appendix 2. This also included a summary of the headline strategic risks. This included a new risk related to the disruption to normal business operations and service delivery as a result of the ongoing national response to COVID-19.

The Board discussed the draft LEP Annual Delivery Plan for 2020/21 which was attached at Appendix 3. It was proposed that final approval of its content be delegated to the Chair of the LEP Board and the Managing Director.

In respect of other governance matters it was noted that the annual assurance framework had been finalised and published on the LEP website in line with the required timescales.

Recommendations: That, following consultation with LEP Board members, the final design and content of the LEP Annual Delivery Plan and Review be agreed between the LEP Chair and the Managing Director.