

Our Partnerships

Partnership is at the heart of everything we do. We can't meet our priorities and realise our vision for West Yorkshire on our own. The Combined Authority engages with local residents and businesses, works with other organisations in West Yorkshire and collaborates with the rest of Yorkshire and the North of England to develop, shape and deliver our policies, services and projects.

Residents and businesses

We engage with local residents and businesses to test our ideas, ensure that our policies meet the needs of communities and employers and to make certain that our work reflects the diversity of opinion and lived experience in the region.

To support this process, we have developed YourVoice, a consultation and engagement website which enables us to share information and source feedback in an open and accessible way.¹ In the first twelve months since launching, YourVoice had 83,600 page views across 22 projects with over 600 users registered to share their opinions.

A public consultation open to members of the public and businesses was undertaken throughout Spring/Summer 2020 on our devolution deal. We wanted to encourage as many people as possible across West Yorkshire to take part in the consultation and set a target of 1,000 responses to the open consultation, on the basis of responses to regional consultations undertaken elsewhere. In total 4,413 people responded to the consultation, over four times our target - making the West Yorkshire consultation the largest ever public consultation on English regional devolution.

But we're always keen to engage directly with people. For example, during the production of our Local Industrial Strategy we've held over 70 engagement events, engaging face to face with over 1000 people including senior business leaders, colleges, think-tanks, academics, cultural groups and community leaders. This included visiting local schools to engage with young people on their thoughts on the future and the changes that would like to see in the region.

We also have several advisory panels and groups that bring together experts and leaders from businesses, the public sector, community organisations and academia to advice and drive forward our work. These are:

- [Business Innovation and Growth panel](#). This panel oversees projects that strengthen our global competitiveness, encourage innovation and enterprise and unlock small business growth.
- [Employment and Skills panel](#). This panel oversees projects to address skills gaps in the region's key sectors and create local leaders that drive improvements in skills and employment.
- [Green Economy panel](#). They oversee projects that are helping to develop a cutting-edge energy infrastructure for the region that will drive innovation and contribute to business growth. Their main objective is to achieve a substantial and continued decrease in carbon emissions, while also increasing economic output and employment.

¹ We also always ensure that people can participate in consultations via post or phone to ensure that all can take part.

- [Inclusive Growth and Public Policy panel](#). This panel was established to support the LEP Board and Combined Authority's ambition to secure inclusive growth.
- [Place panel](#). This panel's aim is to develop strategic housing and regeneration policy, fulfil duty to cooperate requirements around local planning and achieve a more integrated place based approach to how public assets are used to support economic growth.
- Business Communications Group. This group is made up of spokespeople from key business representative organisations. They play an active role in supporting business growth in the region by helping to coordinate effective communications with the businesses community

Partners in West Yorkshire

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is not the only organisation that wants to see West Yorkshire recognised globally as a world-leading region. But we are the organisation best placed to bring different groups together around shared objectives across the region. We work with other organisations in West Yorkshire to consider their priorities, benefit from their expertise and to better deliver our services and projects.

At all times this includes our local authority partners of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield, all of whom are represented by local leaders on the Combined Authority board. All of our advisory panels and groups include representatives from the five local authorities as well. We also make sure that our policies and strategies reflect their local priorities, take full account of their own policies and strategies and build on the work that they are already undertaking. And just as some decisions are best taken at a regional level, we know that some decisions are best made at a local level by those even closer to those that they affect.

Key policies and strategies produced by our local authority partners include:

- [Bradford Economic Strategy 2018-2030](#)
- [Calderdale Inclusive Economy Strategy 2018-2024](#)
- [Kirklees Economic Strategy 2019-2025](#)
- [Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy 2018-2023](#)
- [Wakefield District Economic Strategy 2018-2023](#)

Further examples of how we work in partnership with other organisations in West Yorkshire include:

The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance is a voluntary partnership that brings together the Combined Authority, bus operators and representatives of passenger interests. It provides a structure for them to work together to improve bus services and deliver an affordable and reliable bus network. This includes making fares easier to understand, introducing new less polluting vehicles with better facilities such as free Wi-Fi, and providing better journey planning information.

The Place-Based Economy Network (PERN) a multi-University network of experts in local and regional economic recovery, to support the Combined Authority and the LEP (and other public bodies, such as local authorities) in the design, plan and implementation of COVID-19 recovery efforts. The offers access to academic expertise as well as practical and applied research.

Working as one Yorkshire

Working together as West Yorkshire means that we can work at a level that reflects people's everyday lives across the area that they live and work in. But we're proud of to be part of Yorkshire and there are areas where it makes sense to work together as the whole of Yorkshire, such as promoting tourism and our shared cultural heritage. The Yorkshire Leader's Board brings together representatives from 20 councils across Yorkshire to facilitate collaboration on a Yorkshire-wide basis.

Building the Northern Powerhouse

We also collaborate with the rest of the North of England to overcome the greatest challenges posed by the unbalanced nature of the UK economy and create the Northern Powerhouse. We're active members of a number of pan-Northern bodies and together we have co-produced a number of joint strategies that seek to level up the North.

We're part of [Transport for the North](#) (TfN), England's first sub-national transport body. TfN brings us together with the north's other local transport authorities, business leaders and government to enable the North to speak with one voice on the transport investment needed to drive growth and rebalance the economy.

We're also part of [the NP11](#), a business led voice for the North that brings together the 11 Local Enterprise Partnerships from across the Northern Powerhouse. NP11 works in partnership across the public and private sectors to drive economic prosperity.

In many cases working with our partners across the north helps us achieve our priorities for West Yorkshire too. This includes boosting productivity through the commissioning of the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review, tackling the climate emergency through the planting of the Northern Forest and delivering 21st century transport through the construction of Northern Powerhouse Rail.