

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY
HELD REMOTELY ON FRIDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2020**

Present:

Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe (Chair)	Bradford Council
Councillor Tim Swift MBE (Deputy Chair)	Calderdale Council
Councillor Andy D'Agorne (Substitute)	York Council
Councillor Judith Blake CBE	Leeds City Council
Councillor Stewart Golton	Leeds City Council
Councillor Jack Hemingway (Substitute)	Wakefield Council
Councillor Steven Leigh MBE	Calderdale Council
Roger Marsh OBE DL	Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership
Councillor Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Council
Councillor Rebecca Poulsen	Bradford Council

In attendance:

Councillor Kim Groves	Chair, Transport Committee
Councillor Peter Harrand	Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Ben Still	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Caroline Allen	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Brian Archer	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Melanie Corcoran	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Angela Taylor	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ruth Chaplin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

55. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Aspden and Denise Jeffery.

56. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5, Devolution Implementation as she was a shortlisted Labour nominee for the role of West Yorkshire Mayor.

Councillor Stuart Golton declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5, Devolution Implementation as he was the Liberal Democrat candidate for the role of West Yorkshire Mayor.

Councillor Kim Groves declared an other interest in Agenda Item 6, Adult Education Budget Governance as she is a Director of Inspiring Positive Futures.

57. Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press and public.

58. Minutes of the Meeting of the Combined Authority held on 10 November 2020

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 10 November 2020 be approved.

59. Devolution Implementation

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Policy, Strategy and Communications on devolution implementation.

Members considered and consented in principle to the draft Order to establish a mayoral combined authority and associated changes, a copy of which was attached at Appendix 2 to the submitted report. It was noted that the draft Order had also been considered by the Executive Committee and full Council of each Local Authority and, as part of the parliamentary process, would be considered by Parliament's Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments (JCSI). It was acknowledged that the JCSI process may lead to technical amendments being made to the Order which will be non-negotiable.

It was noted that the functions relating to the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) and Strategic Infrastructure Tariff (SIT) had been part of the 'minded to' devolution deal and the Scheme. However Government have decided to remove these from the draft Order due to the ongoing national planning reforms currently underway. A letter from the Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government explaining the changes was attached at Appendix 3.

Consent to the final draft of the Order is required following consideration by JCSI. In order to facilitate this it was agreed that authority be delegated to the Combined Authority's Managing Director in consultation with the Leader and Chief Executive of each Constituent Council and the Chair of the Combined Authority, to finalise and consent to the final draft of the Order further to any technical issues which may arise.

It is intended that the Order will be laid in Parliament in early December 2020 with the devolution deal set to become law in January/February 2021.

It was agreed that the decision is exempt from call-in on the grounds of urgency as any delay caused by the call-in process would prejudice the Combined Authority's and Constituent Councils' interests and delay the consent to the draft Order. This would have a significant detrimental impact on the proposed timeline which was set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report. Members discussed the importance of ensuring the MCA had robust scrutiny arrangements and resource and this would be reflected in the budget plans and draft budget which was to be considered at the next meeting.

The Authority unanimously agreed the recommendations and welcomed the significant step taken towards establishing a mayoral combined authority and the benefits it will bring to West Yorkshire. It was acknowledged that it had taken several years to reach this point and Members thanked officers of the Combined Authority and the District Councils who had been involved in securing the deal for their work and support.

Resolved:

- (a) That the content of the report and draft Order attached at Appendix 2 be noted.
- (b) That consent be given in principle to the draft Order attached at Appendix 2, to establish a mayoral combined authority and associated changes as set out in the 'minded to' Devolution Deal.
- (c) That authority be delegated to the Managing Director of the Combined Authority, in consultation with the Leader and Chief Executive of each Constituent Council and the Chair of the Combined Authority, to finalise and consent to the final draft of the Order further to any technical issues which may arise.
- (d) That the updated timetable set out in Appendix 1 to this report and the next steps which are subject to the consent being given by the Constituent Councils and Combined Authority, to the Order that the Secretary of State will lay the Order in Parliament in December 2020 be noted.
- (e) That this decision is exempt from call-in on the grounds of urgency, for the reasons set out in paragraph 6.1 of the submitted report.

60. Adult Education Budget Governance

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director of Economic Services on the proposed governance arrangements for the devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) programme.

Members discussed and supported the proposed formal decision making arrangements for AEB which were outlined in the submitted report. It was considered that the AEB governance should be strategically led by the

Combined Authority, with advisory support by the Employment and Skills Panel (ESP) and operational decision making to be carried out at officer level under the Combined Authority's Officer Delegation Scheme. It was considered that approving and varying the AEB Strategy was a function specifically reserved to the Combined Authority and therefore it was agreed that any amendments to the AEB Strategy be defined as a Key Decision, under the Combined Authority's Access to Information Annex. In this respect it was agreed that authority be delegated to the Head of Legal and Governance Services to amend the definition of a key decision in the Combined Authority's Access to Information Annex to include the approval or variation of the AEB Strategy, and amend the Officer Delegation Scheme to clarify that approving or varying the AEB Strategy is not delegated to any officer under the Scheme. The proposed level at which decisions will be taken was attached at Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

It was acknowledged that the success of AEB delivery will require stakeholder and local authority engagement to advise on where the local need and gaps are that can be addressed through the funding. It was noted that all conflicts of interest will be addressed in line with the Combined Authority's AEB Conflicts of Interest Policy for adult education provision and a draft was attached at Appendix 2.

Resolved:

- (a) That the AEB governance arrangements as set out in the submitted report and appendices be approved.
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Head of Legal and Governance Services to amend the definition of a key decision in the Combined Authority's Access to Information Annex to include the approval or variation of the AEB Strategy, and amend the Officer Delegation Scheme to clarify that approving or varying the AEB Strategy is not delegated to any officer under the Scheme.

61. Initial Funding Priorities for Economic Recovery

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Policy, Strategy and Communications on initial funding priorities for economic recovery.

Members discussed the impact COVID-19 has had on businesses and employment and the gaps in provision, particularly to support people to gain and stay in work as a result of the increasing levels of unemployment.

It was noted that the creation of the Single Investment Fund (SIF) will give the MCA greater ability to prioritise investments. However, whilst noting the good progress being made in the design of the SIF, it was recognised that action is required immediately to support people and businesses to recover.

The Authority discussed and agreed the proposal to fund the following two partnership programmes from the Economic Recovery Plan, which are also in line with the priorities for the SIF:

- [Re]boot – to support people unemployed or at risk of redundancy to retrain.
- Employment Hubs – to facilitate access to advice and support across West Yorkshire

Details of the funding, which would be from the gainshare part of the SIF, were outlined in the submitted report. It was noted that this would be subject to the MCA Order being approved and the funding, including gainshare, being made available. It was agreed that approval of the required existing project change requests be delegated to the Investment Committee and these would be assessed in line with the Combined Authority's assurance process.

Members discussed the need to consider further proposals to support economic recovery and a report will be brought to a future meeting.

It was noted that it has not been possible to provide the statutory 28 days' notice of this key decision being considered due to the need to approve immediate recovery programmes to support people to gain and stay in work and help newly unemployed retrain as they are priority actions resulting from the West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Plan. However, in accordance with the Combined Authority's Access to Information Annex to Procedure Standing Orders (part 1 section 7C – General Exception), the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been notified and notification has been published on the Authority's website. Accordingly, as set out in the rules of General Exception, the Combined Authority may still make the decision.

Resolved:

- (a) That the Combined Authority indicatively approves £13.5m gainshare for COVID recovery, for the extension of the existing [Re]boot and the Employment Hub projects, with full approval to spend being granted once the project change requests have progressed through the assurance process in line with the Combined Authority's Assurance Process.
- (b) That approval of the required existing project change requests be delegated to the Investment Committee and be assessed in line with the Combined Authority's assurance process.
- (c) That the progress made in the design of the Single Investment Fund (SIF) as the transition to a Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) takes place be noted.