

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY
HELD REMOTELY ON THURSDAY, 10 DECEMBER 2020**

Present:

Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe (Chair)	Bradford Council
Councillor Tim Swift MBE (Deputy Chair)	Calderdale Council
Councillor Andy D'Agorne (Substitute)	York Council
Councillor James Lewis (Substitute)	Leeds City Council
Councillor Stewart Golton	Leeds City Council
Councillor Denise Jeffery	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
Dave Pearson	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Angela Taylor	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Smyth	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Liz Hunter	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Patrick Bowes	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Matthew Page	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ruth Chaplin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

62. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Aspden and Judith Blake.

63. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no pecuniary interests declared by Members at the meeting.

64. Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

65. Minutes of the Meeting of the Combined Authority held on 27 November 2020

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 27 November 2020 be approved.

66. Covid-19 Update

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director of Economic Services on COVID-19.

Members were given an update on progress with the delivery and development of products and services in response to the crisis through the implementation of the West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) and discussed the current economic position.

In respect of transport, it was reported that there had been a significant drop in both rail and bus patronage. Members discussed the funding of bus services and the importance of retaining the current levels of service. Any reduction in service levels would have serious consequences for the key workers and students in West Yorkshire and would impact on the Leeds City Region's carbon emission targets. Whilst the Covid-19 Bus Services Subsidy Grant was to continue until the end of the financial year and some additional funding had been announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review, there was still uncertainty and it was considered that there was an urgent need to seek clarity on future funding for buses. It was agreed that a letter be sent to Government and all MPs on behalf of the West Yorkshire Leaders.

It was noted that at the last meeting, the Authority had approved the provision of financial support to the extension of the Employment Hub and [re]boot programmes as priority measures to begin to address some of the economic impacts of the pandemic. It was noted that further work to prioritise employment growth elements of the recovery plan for urgent funding decisions was being undertaken and a report would be prepared for the next meeting.

Resolved: That progress on the delivery and development of the response to the COVID-19 crisis be noted.

67. Capital Spending & Project Approvals

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Delivery on the progress and funding for the following schemes through the Combined Authority's assurance process:

- Strategic Inward Investment Fund (SIIF) Pipeline

- Strategic Inward Investment Fund (SIIF) Project 7 – SIIF 012 – Advanced Manufacturing Company
- A58 Corridor, Leeds
- Mytholmroyd Flood Alleviation

In addition, it was noted that the following decision points and change requests had been assessed and approved through the agreed delegation process:

- Transforming Travel Centres, Bradford, Huddersfield & Leeds
- Local Transport Plan (LTP): Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Rail Accessibility Package
- Wakefield Warm Homes
- Holbeck Phase 2, Victorian Terrace Retrofit
- Wakefield Business Gigabit Voucher Scheme

Details of all the schemes were provided in the submitted report. However, in respect of the Strategic Inward Investment Fund, it was noted that the detail of the projects was highly confidential and the Combined Authority has Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) in place with the applicants. The information published on the website will include only headline information to retain the commercial integrity of the projects.

Resolved:

- (a) In respect of the Strategic Inward Investment Fund (SIIF) –

That approval of the Strategic Outline Case (decision point 2) be delegated to the Investment Committee.

- (b) In respect of Project 7 – SIIF 012 – Advanced Manufacturing Company

That delegated authority is given to the Combined Authority's Managing Director to approve, subject to the successful appraisal of the application by the Business Investment Panel (BIP) and Programme Appraisal Team (PAT):

- (i) The applicant's full business case with finalised costs (decision point 5) and that work commences on activity 6 (delivery)
- (ii) Approval for the Combined Authority's contribution of £0.779 million to be given from the Local Growth Fund.
- (iii) The scheme's Assurance Framework pathway and approvals.

- (c) In respect of the A58 Corridor –

That following a recommendation from the Investment Committee, the Combined Authority approves:

- (i) That the A58 Corridor scheme proceeds through decision point 3 (outline business case) and work commences on activity 4 (full business case).
 - (ii) That an indicative approval to the total project value of £9.530 million is granted from the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund, with full approval to spend being granted once the scheme has progressed through the assurance process to decision point 5 (full business case with finalised costs).
 - (iii) That development costs of £1.259 million from the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund are approved to cover costs to date to progress the scheme to outline business case and in order to progress the scheme to decision point 4 (full business case with finalised costs) and 5 (full business case with finalised costs).
 - (iv) That the Combined Authority enters into a funding agreement with Leeds City Council for up to £1.259 million from the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund.
 - (v) That future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in the submitted report subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in the report.
- (d) In respect of Mytholmroyd Flood Alleviation –
- That following a recommendation from the Investment Committee, the Combined Authority approves:
- (i) That the change request to the Mytholmroyd Flood Alleviation scheme to award an additional £2.000 million from the Local Growth Fund, taking the total Combined Authority Local Growth Fund contribution to £4.500 million, is approved.
 - (ii) That the Combined Authority enters into a variation to the existing funding agreement or into a new agreement with the Environment Agency, for additional expenditure of up to £2.000 million from the Local Growth Fund taking the full allocation of Combined Authority funding to £4.500 million.
 - (iii) That future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in the submitted report subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in the report.

68. EU Exit: End of Transition Period

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Policy, Strategy and Communications on the EU exit and end of the transition period.

Members noted the organisational preparation being undertaken by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership for the end of the European Union transition period which is due to finish on 31 December 2020.

The Combined Authority and LEP have continued to work to support the region's preparedness, with a particular focus on supporting businesses with accessing the right advice and guidance. It was noted that some businesses have technical enquiries and were struggling to get the specialist legal expertise required and additional resource was being sought to address some of the challenges across the support systems.

The report provided an overview of the areas where there will be key changes in the new year with or without a deal. Members highlighted the importance of supporting Hull as a regional port in a post-Brexit trade environment and discussed several issues including freight, global trading strategy and the extra costs that will be incurred for businesses. A report would be prepared for the next meeting once the outcome of the UK-EU negotiations are known.

Resolved: That the organisational preparation being undertaken by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership as the transition period of the UK's exit from the European Union comes to an end be endorsed.

69. Spatial Priority Areas (SPAs) Refresh

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Policy, Strategy and Communications on the revised Spatial Priority Areas (SPA).

It was reported that the SPAs originally set out in the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) have been refreshed. Members discussed the new SPA categories, which had been developed in partnership with all local authorities and supported by Place Panel. It was noted that they are closely aligned to reflect the future of devolved funding and investment in West Yorkshire, as well as wider policy priorities including growth, regeneration and urban renewal and economic and environmental resilience. The proposed SPAs were listed in the submitted report and the need to ensure that the benefits of economic activity are spread evenly across the region was emphasised. The supporting definitions and criteria were attached at Appendix 3.

It was proposed that the SPAs remain under review and additional SPAs can be put forward as new priorities emerge. They will form part of the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) and will be used in the emerging Draft Connectivity Plan.

Resolved: That the revised Spatial Priority Areas listed in paragraph 2.7 of the submitted report, including the supporting definitions and criteria attached at Appendix 3, be endorsed and published as part of the Strategic Economic Framework.

70. West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan: Investing in the future of West Yorkshire

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Policy, Strategy and Communications on the West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan: Investing in the future of West Yorkshire.

It was noted that the draft Plan has been developed with the oversight of the Transport Committee and Councillor Groves was thanked for previously providing Members with a useful and informative briefing.

The report provided an update on the work undertaken to date and the proposed next steps. Members endorsed the commencement of online engagement, involving the public, stakeholders and a wide range of the business community.

Engagement on the Connectivity Plan and associated documents would commence in January 2021 and last for 12 weeks. The plans will be reviewed in Spring 2021 and work to define schemes details and costs will be undertaken to produce a shorter list of preferred options.

Resolved: That the commencement of an engagement in January 2021 on the Connectivity Plan and associated documents be endorsed in principle.

71. Comprehensive Spending Review

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Policy, Strategy and Communications on the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR).

The report provided information on the Government's key announcements following the CSR on 25 November 2020. It was noted that the CSR did not respond directly to regional economic recovery plan submissions, mayoral capacity funding or funding for the LEPs and Growth Hubs. However it was understood that capacity funding had been secured although there had not been an announcement regarding the extension to the Local Growth Fund.

Work would continue to understand the potential benefits arising from the CSR, including bidding to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Levelling Up Fund in 2021 and how it can support regional recovery. It was noted that significant investment was needed to meet the economic challenges and further lobbying for funding would be vital.

Resolved: That the elements of the Spending Review as they may be seen to align with the Combined Authority's economic recovery priorities be noted.

72. Draft Business Plan and Budget 2021/22

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Corporate Services which provided the draft corporate business plan on a page and the proposed draft revenue and capital budget for 2021/22.

The draft corporate business plan summarising plans for each directorate was attached at Appendix 1. This set out the priorities and focus for the coming year, aligned with the four corporate objectives.

It was noted that there would be significant challenges in the new budget, including funding the mayoral elections and the impact of the EU exit. Possible methods of reducing concessionary reimbursement payments were being considered but it was currently assumed that the Transport Levy would have to remain unchanged.

Members discussed the proposed draft revenue budget for 2021/22 attached at Appendix 2 and the report outlined a number of budget assumptions including a £1.6m additional cost estimate for being a mayoral authority. It was proposed to fund this from both the mayoral capacity fund and an allocation from the gainshare, until further clarity is received from the Comprehensive Spending Review regarding additional funding for MCAs.

The draft capital budget was attached at Appendix 3 and set out the latest draft forecast budget for capital expenditure and funding by programme up to 2022/23.

It was noted that the Brownfield Housing capital programme was part of the devolution deal. It was expected that additional revenue spend of £250,000 will be needed in the current year and this was approved by the Authority, subject to receiving formal confirmation from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Budget Working Group would oversee the continuing work in developing the final business plan and budget for 2021/22 which will be brought to the next meeting on 4 February 2021.

Resolved:

- (a) That the draft business plan and revenue budget proposals for 2021/22 and draft capital budget be noted.
- (b) That additional Brownfield Housing revenue spend of £250k in 2020/21 be approved, subject to receiving the formal confirmation from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

73. Assurance Framework Review

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director of Delivery on the Assurance Framework review.

The report provided an update on progress relating to proposed changes to the Leeds City Region Assurance Framework arising from the West Yorkshire devolution deal for a Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) to be established.

A copy of the updated Assurance Framework was attached at Appendix 1 and the key changes were outlined in the submitted report. It was reported that the Assurance Framework had been sent to Government for approval and it was agreed that if the Government require any amendments authority be delegated to the Combined Authority's Managing Director in consultation with the Chairs of the LEP and Combined Authority to approve the Assurance Framework.

Resolved:

- (a) That the progress made on the Assurance Framework and changes that have been made to the content and structure of the document be noted.
- (b) That submission of the Assurance Framework to Government be approved.
- (c) That authority to approve the Assurance Framework be delegated to the Combined Authority's Managing Director in consultation with Chairs of the LEP and Combined Authority if the Government require any amendments.

74. Tackling the Climate Emergency - Carbon Impact Assessment

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Policy, Strategy and Communications on Tackling the Climate Emergency – Carbon Impact Assessment.

The report provided an update on progress in the development of a carbon impact assessment tool and incorporating it into the Assurance Framework. This work will ensure that the impact of proposals on the climate emergency and the Authority's target of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2038 are taken into account in future decision making.

Members congratulated officers for the Municipal Journal achievement award which the Authority had received for their leadership in tackling the climate emergency.

A report on the next stages of the Carbon Emissions Reduction Pathways work would be brought to the next meeting.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

75. Governance Arrangements

The Combined Authority considered a report of the Director, Corporate Services on the following governance arrangements:

Members discussed the gender diversity on the LEP Board and its panels and considered and agreed the nominations that had been received from the LEP Board for the appointment of Helen Featherstone to the Place Panel and Kamran Rashid and Kully Thiarai to the Inclusive Growth & Public Policy

Panel. The terms of office for these appointments would be to 31 December 2023.

In addition, following a recommendation from the LEP Board, the Authority also agreed to the extension to the following Panel members' terms of office:

Business Innovation & Growth Panel

Will Roebuck
Mike Danby
Philip Wilson
Simon Wright

Employment & Skills Panel

Glynn Robinson

Green Economy Panel

Bill Firth
Natasha Luther-Jones
Alice Owen

Business Investment Panel

Simon Wright
Michael Allen
Jonathan King
Gareth Yates

In order to reflect the valuable contribution they make to the work of the Panels and the LEP, it was agreed that their terms of office be extended for one year and details were set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

In respect of proposed overview and scrutiny reforms, it was noted that work was being undertaken to develop a future overview and scrutiny model in order to address the needs of the Mayoral Combined Authority.

It was noted that under the terms of the draft West Yorkshire Combined Authority (Election of Mayor and Functions) Order 2020, the Combined Authority may pay an allowance to the Mayor if consideration has been given to a report published by an independent remuneration panel (IRP). Further details were provided in the submitted report and it was agreed that the Head of Legal & Governance Services be authorised to convene the necessary IRP to make recommendations to a future meeting of the Authority.

Resolved:

- (a) That Helen Featherstone be appointed to the Place Panel with a term of office to 31 December 2023.

- (b) That Kamran Rashid and Kully Thiarai be appointed to the Inclusive Growth & Public Policy Panel with a term of office to 31 December 2023.
- (c) That the recommendations in relation to private sector representatives of the advisory panels as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved.
- (d) That the work underway on developing a future Overview and Scrutiny model, and the increased resources this may need be noted.
- (e) That the Combined Authority authorises the Head of Legal & Governance Services to convene an independent remuneration panel to make recommendations to the Combined Authority as to the allowance that shall be payable to the Mayor.

76. Minutes for Information

The Combined Authority noted the minutes of the committees and panels that have been published on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's website since the last meeting.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Combined Authority's committees and panels be noted