
Report to: Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board (LEP Board)

Date: 24 February 2021

Subject: **Governance Report**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide LEP Board members with proposals to review the Chair's final year of tenure as per the agreement in February 2020, following the outcome of the Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships review.
- 1.2 To ask LEP Board members to approve the terms of the review.
- 1.3 To consider a recommendation to appoint a non-voting advisory representative of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) for the Yorkshire & Humber to the Employment and Skills Panel and to recommend such appointment to the Combined Authority.

2. Information

LEP Chair Review

- 2.1 The Government's 'Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships' review required the LEP to make a number of changes to its operating procedures. The review resulted in the implementation of actions including new recruits to the LEP Board and panels, and a change to the LEP's geography.
- 2.2 In February 2020 it was agreed that, given the exceptional circumstances of the Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships review and ongoing negotiations to agree a devolution deal for West Yorkshire, the current LEP Chair's tenure would be extended for up to two years to the Annual Meeting in 2022. At the end of this two-year period, the maximum nine-year term of the Chair will have been reached and a new LEP Chair will be appointed.
- 2.3 The second year of the extended term is subject to a light-touch review undertaken during 2020/21 in the context of the future role of LEPs and future role profile of the next LEP Chair. The review will be set against terms of reference and will advise both on the final year of the current Chair's

tenure and future requirements for the new LEP Chair. The outcome of the review will be considered at the LEP Board in April.

Terms of the Review

2.4 It is proposed that the following issues be considered as part of the review:

The Future role of LEPs and future LEP Chair: The future funding, both capacity and programme, for LEPs remains uncertain. Further detail on the Levelling Up / UK Shared Prosperity Funds are likely to be provided at the March Budget and may offer some clarity on the future for LEPs. It is also expected that the Devolution White Paper will provide further information on the future of LEPs, however the publication date for this paper is unknown. The successor LEP Chair's role profile will be dependent upon a clear understanding of the future role of LEPs.

West Yorkshire devolution deal: The move to becoming a Mayoral Combined Authority and the new powers and funding this brings will lead to a period of change and disruption within the Combined Authority / the LEP. This will have a significant impact on the role of the LEP Chair as new ways of working are implemented.

Covid-19 pandemic: The ongoing health and economic risks from Covid-19 will continue to impact on our region over the coming months. This will be a challenging time for many businesses and there will be increasing need to ensure that Government is providing adequate support.

LEP Performance: The current performance of the LEP will be reviewed and any major issues with delivery and performance identified.

Conclusions will be drawn on the implications from the above for the focus of the remaining year of the current LEP Chair's tenure.

Review Methodology

2.5 The review will incorporate a mix of interviews and desk-based research. It is expected that interviews will be undertaken with the LEP Chair, West Yorkshire Leaders, Chief Executives, private sector Panel Chairs, plus Senior Civil Servants.

Timescales

2.6 Timescales for the review are as follows:

- **February 2021:** Terms of the review discussed at LEP Board.
- **March 2021:** If terms agreed, desk-based research undertaken followed by interviews.
- **April 2021:** Review outcome considered by the LEP Board.

Employment & Skills Panel – advisory representative

- 2.7 The TUC have extensive knowledge and insight into business needs around skills and employment, together with years of experience supporting employees to train and re-skill. They have contributed to priority areas of the work of both the Combined Authority and LEP in the past 18 months, most notably the Future Ready Skills Commission and the Economic Recovery Board. It is particularly important that the CA and LEP acquire this insight and support as the region enters a period of economic recovery.
- 2.8 Due to the TUC's role and scale of engagement in the employment and skills arena, it is recognised that it would be advantageous to invite a non-voting advisory representative of the TUC to contribute to the work of the Employment and Skills Panel providing that vital link and insight.
- 2.9 Appointments to advisory panels are required to be approved by the Combined Authority. The LEP Board are therefore asked to consider recommending such an appointment to the next ordinary meeting of the Combined Authority.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 None arising directly from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 None arising directly from this report.

7. Staffing Implications

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

8. External Consultees

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 The LEP Board is asked to:

- 9.1.1 Agree the terms of the LEP Chair review outlined in paragraph 2.4 above and give approval for the work to begin.

9.1.2 Recommend the appointment of a non-voting advisory representative of the TUC to the Employment and Skills Panel, as detailed in paragraph 2.9 above, for consideration by the Combined Authority at their meeting on 9 March 2021.

10. Background Documents

10.1 None.

11. Appendices

11.1 None.