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

Date: 28 April 2021

Subject: **Governance arrangements**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To advise the LEP Board of changes to Leeds City Council's LEP Board member and substitute member.
- 1.2 To consider a recommendation to extend both the Board and advisory group term of office of the LEP Board Member, Joanna Robinson.
- 1.3 To consider a recommendation to appoint the LEP Board member Mandy Ridyard to the Business Innovation and Growth Panel (or its successor) and to recommend such appointment to the Combined Authority.
- 1.4 To provide LEP Board members with the outcome and recommendations of the review of the current LEP Chair's final year of tenure and proposals for the recruitment of a new Chair.
- 1.5 To advise the LEP Board of proposals for changes to be made to the Combined Authority's decision-making arrangements to better reflect the changed role and responsibilities of the Authority following the appointment of a Mayor for West Yorkshire, due to be considered by the Combined Authority at its meeting on 22 April.

2. Information

Leeds City Council – Appointment

- 2.1 Following a change in leadership at Leeds City Council, the Council have provided formal notification of a change in their appointment to the LEP Board as follows:
 - Councillor James Lewis to replace Councillor Judith Blake as the LEP Board member,
 - Councillor Debra Coupar to replace Councillor James Lewis as the substitute LEP Board member.

Board Membership

- 2.2 Joanna Robinson was appointed to the LEP Board in 2016. She serves as the Board's SME representative and as Chair of the Business Communications Group, an advisory group of the LEP Board, which coordinates effective communications between the LEP and the business community. Joanna's LEP Board term of office is shortly coming to an end, and it is proposed that this term is extended until the LEP Board Annual meeting in June 2021 as a reflection of the valuable contribution she is making to the work of the Board, the Business Communications Group and the LEP as a whole, and the importance of ensuring continuity whilst initial mayoral combined authority work is ongoing.

Advisory Panel Membership

- 2.3 The Combined Authority currently appoints a number of advisory committees (panels) which advise both the Combined Authority and the LEP.
- 2.4 The LEP Constitution provides that the Combined Authority may appoint any member of the LEP Board to be a member of a Combined Authority panel or committee.
- 2.5 Membership of the panels includes members of the LEP Board and other private sector representatives (as well as local authority representatives from partner councils).
- 2.6 Due to a recent private sector member resignation on the Business Innovation & Growth Panel, expressions of interest have been sought from existing private sector members. To this end, an expression of interest was received from a private sector LEP Board member. The LEP Board is therefore asked to nominate the following representative to the following panel:

Board Member:	Proposed panel appointment:
Mandy Ridyard	Business Innovation & Growth Panel

LEP Chair Review

- 2.7 The [Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships](#) review (2018), resulted in actions being taken to recruit new members to the LEP Board / advisory panels, and a change to the LEP's geography.
- 2.8 In February 2020, it was agreed that given the exceptional circumstances of the 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 appointed.

- 2.9 The second year of the extended term is subject to a light-touch review in the context of the future role of LEPs and future role profile of the next LEP Chair. The terms of reference for the review were agreed at the February LEP Board. The review considered:
- the extension of the current Chair's tenure and
 - the potential future role of a new LEP Chair.
- 2.10 The review involved a mix of desk-based research and interviews / group discussions. The interviews were structured around a short set of questions which were circulated to participants in advance. Representatives from the following groups were consulted:
- West Yorkshire Chief Executives and senior Local Authority representatives
 - West Yorkshire Council Leaders
 - Private sector LEP Panel members
 - Senior Civil Servants.
- 2.11 Interviews conducted as part of the review were undertaken in the context of an uncertain period for both Leeds City Region and LEPs more generally. The future role of LEPs will not become clear until at least the outcome of the Government review is reported in summer. The impact of Covid-19 will continue to pose challenges for the region as the country emerges from restrictions. The election of a Mayor for West Yorkshire will lead to a period of transition for the LEP as new ways of working are established and new relationships built.
- 2.12 The review found widespread recognition that the LEP has performed strongly under challenging circumstances including the impact of Covid-19 and implementation of the outcomes of the Strengthening Local Enterprise Partnerships review. The LEP has continued to build on its strong reputation and has embedded the approach to tackle the climate emergency and drive inclusive growth at the heart of activities. The enhanced diversity of the LEP Board was highlighted as a strength and asset for the region.
- 2.13 The role of the current LEP Chair in driving the agenda for economic recovery while promoting a compelling narrative for the region was praised, as were the Chair's strong links locally, regionally, and nationally. The Chair was seen to have put the LEP on a strong footing on which to build for the future.
- 2.14 While there are considerable challenges ahead, there are also opportunities for the LEP to build a more partnership-based approach which draws on a diverse range of private sector members and enhances the contribution of members with deeper engagement and clearly defined roles. The full review is attached as **Appendix 1** of this report. In the light of the review findings the following recommendations are proposed:
- The LEP Chair remains in post for the remainder of the agreed tenure,

- The LEP takes a proactive role working with private sector members to engage with the Government's review of LEPs,
- Following the outcome of the Government review, work begins in partnership with local authorities, LEP Board members, and wider stakeholders on the scope and role profile for a new LEP chair, and enhanced LEP engagement from private sector members.

Proposals for changes to be made to the Combined Authority's decision-making arrangements

- 2.15 A report is due to be considered by the Combined Authority at its meeting on 22 April which puts forward proposals for changes to be made the Authority's formal decision-making arrangements with effect from the Authority's Annual meeting on 24 June 2021. A copy of that report and appendices is attached to this report at [Appendix 2](#) and the Board will be updated verbally on the outcome of the Combined Authority's consideration of that report.
- 2.16 Key points from the proposals of relevance for the LEP Board are as follows:
- The close alignment and partnership of the LEP Board and the Combined Authority is retained with the LEP Chair remaining as a member of the Combined Authority to provide the voice of business and the Mayor will also be a member of the LEP Board.
 - The advisory panels which currently feed into both the LEP Board and the Combined Authority are to become decision-making committees of the Combined Authority with greater responsibility and accountability (the detail of their terms of reference yet to be finalised)
 - The Inclusive Growth Panel is not to be retained as a decision-making committee, rather its work is to be embedded into the objectives and the workplans of the other committees. It is recognised that there may need to be further interim measures required to ensure that inclusive growth can be effectively embedded as proposed, and further discussions will need to be held as to the most appropriate form that should take.
 - The four thematic decision-making committees (as successors to Panels) would be chaired by a Combined Authority member who has the lead for that area and the Vice Chair for each of these would be a LEP Board member with voting rights. Current wider private sector membership would remain as non-voting members together with advisory ex office representatives.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 Tackling the Climate Emergency will remain a core objective of the LEP and all panels and committees will contribute towards this aim. There are no other implications arising from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 Under proposals considered by the Combined Authority and reported here, inclusive growth will be mainstreamed as an objective for all panels and

committees, to embed this aim fully in all areas of the Combined Authority and LEP's work. It is recognised that there may need to be further interim measures required to ensure that inclusive growth can be effectively embedded as proposed and further discussions will need to be held as to the most appropriate form that should take.

5. Equality & Diversity Implications

5.1 Work to implement the recommendations of the LEP Chair Review would be undertaken in line with the organisation's Equality and Diversity policy building on and enhancing the good practice of the Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships Review.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 None arising directly from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 Appointments are subject to any potential changes to governance arrangements further to the West Yorkshire devolution deal.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 None.

9. External Consultees

9.1 None.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the LEP Board:

- (i) Notes Leeds City Council's changed appointments to the LEP Board
- (ii) Agrees to extend both the Board and advisory group term of office of Joanna Robinson until the Board Annual Meeting in June 2021.
- (iii) Recommends the appointment of Mandy Ridyard to the Business Innovation & Growth Panel (or its successor committee) for consideration by the Combined Authority at its next meeting on 24 June 2021.
- (iv) Agrees that the LEP Chair remains in post for the remainder of the agreed tenure.
- (v) Agrees that the LEP takes a proactive role working with private sector members to engage with the Government's review of LEPs.
- (vi) Agrees that following the outcome of the Government review, work begins in partnership with local authorities, LEP Board members, and wider

stakeholders on the scope and role profile for a new LEP Chair, and enhanced LEP engagement from private sector members.

- (vii) Considers and comments on the proposals for changes to the Combined Authority's decision making arrangements.

11. Background Documents

11.1 None.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – LEP Chair Review Full Report

[Appendix 2 – Report and Appendices to the Combined Authority on 22 April](#)