
Report to: West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Date: 9 December 2021

Subject: **State of the Region**

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Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide an update on State of the Region, including details of published outputs, key messages and future plans.
- 1.2 To provide an opportunity for the Board to comment on future plans for State of the Region.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 State of the Region 2021 is the first annual review of the performance of West Yorkshire against key socio-economic and environmental indicators. The report is intended to provide a stocktake of where West Yorkshire currently stands, using a basket of 40 headline indicators developed as part of the Combined Authority's Strategic Economic Framework. It is designed to be a resource for all partners across West Yorkshire but will also be useful for stakeholders from outside the region, including national government. It

highlights areas of strength and positive trends in the local economy but also flags key issues and challenges that are priorities for future action.

- 2.2 The report aims to provide a balanced and objective view of performance in the region and gives some insight into the difference we are making through the combined action of all partners in West Yorkshire. It is not intended to act as an evaluation of the Combined Authority. The headline indicators are high level, strategic indicators that reflect key dimensions of performance in the West Yorkshire economy, the key areas where we would like to see change and improvement in order to support improved living standards and inclusion as set out in the SEF vision.

Publication and key messages

- 2.3 State of the Region was [published](#) on 25 October 2021 and consists of the following main outputs:

- [Main report](#)
- [Executive summary](#)
- [Women and Girls report](#)
- [Interactive dashboard](#).

- 2.4 Publication was supported with a social media communications campaign and emails to key stakeholders, both regional and national.

- 2.5 The key messages from State of the Region are set out in the executive summary provided as an appendix to this paper. These include the following key points:

- Productivity is increasing in West Yorkshire but not quickly enough to make significant inroads into the gap with the UK average.
- Life expectancy in West Yorkshire remains lower than the England average. The most recent data shows a fall in life expectancy (the first drop in 20 years) due to high mortality rates (Covid-19) in 2020.
- The proportion of people with no / low qualifications in West Yorkshire is falling and the deficit with the national average narrowed in 2020.
- Per capita emissions of carbon dioxide in West Yorkshire are below the national average and are on a downward trend. The rate of reduction needs to be significantly accelerated to achieve net zero by 2038.
- Before the pandemic West Yorkshire saw a decline in trips made by car and an increase in walking but West Yorkshire is still more reliant on the car than nationally.
- Prior to the pandemic West Yorkshire was the only northern Combined Authority area to achieve a positive net fiscal balance (*net difference per head between tax generated and public sector expenditure*).

Future plans

- 2.6 State of the Region will be refreshed on an annual basis. In response to feedback from stakeholders we propose to enhance State of the Region in its 2022 iteration. This would include the following improvements:
- Addition of a section to cover key indicators relating to policing and crime.
 - Increased coverage of equality and diversity issues through preparation of a dedicated mini-report, building on the approach taken to women and girls.
 - A general review of indicators to ensure coverage of all key issues. For example, an indicator relating to the vibrancy of our town and city centres has been suggested for inclusion, as has an indicator of quality of the region's housing stock. Any changes to indicators would be subject to approval by the Combined Authority and LEP Board.
- 2.7 Changes to reporting arrangements are also proposed, with State of the Region indicators becoming more closely aligned to the new Combined Authority committee structure. Under this approach the report would be restructured to reflect the remits of the seven committees and each committee would receive regular reporting against the subset of indicators relevant to its work.
- 3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications**
- 3.1 State of the Region includes a selection of indicators that measure West Yorkshire's performance against its climate commitments, including trends in carbon dioxide emissions and the emissions intensity of the region's economy.
- 4. Inclusive Growth Implications**
- 4.1 One of the SEF priorities is inclusive growth and State of the Region therefore includes a set of indicators that focus on various aspects of the inclusive growth agenda, including low pay, household income, skills and housing.
- 5. Equality and Diversity Implications**
- 5.1 A number of indicators in State of the Region look specifically at equality and diversity (differences in employment rates for disadvantaged groups, for example) whilst an equality and diversity lens is applied to a wide range of indicators in the report. A separate mini-report has also been produced focusing on women and girls and the plan is to produce a full equality and diversity report as part of 2022's State of the Region.
- 6. Financial Implications**
- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.
- 7. Legal Implications**

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the Combined Authority notes the publication of State of the Region and the key messages highlighted within it.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – State of the Region Executive Summary