

Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 23 January 2023

Subject: West Yorkshire Plan and Economic Strategy

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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 members of the Employment and Skills Committee with an overview of progress on the development of a West Yorkshire Plan and its fit with the wider policy framework of the Combined Authority, in particular development of the Economic Strategy.

2. Information

Background to the Plan

- 2.1 Work has been ongoing on the development of a West Yorkshire Plan to provide an overarching narrative for the region. The West Yorkshire Plan will provide a new framework to reflect major changes including, the devolution deal and election of the first Mayor of West Yorkshire, ongoing impact of cost of living and doing business crisis, and the new government's priorities for growth and proposals for spending cuts. The primary audience for the plan is government and regional partners, residents are a secondary audience. The purpose of the West Yorkshire Plan is to:

- Explain who West Yorkshire is and what we want to do.
- Set the trajectory for the longer-term up to 2040.

- Ensure that government and wider local and national stakeholders are clear on the priorities and ambitions of the region and how these align with the new government's plans for economic growth.
 - Ensure that all regional partners speak with one strong voice.
 - Continue to develop shared endeavour between the Combined Authority and the local authorities.
- 2.2 The first stage of this work has been to draft a vision and narrative. Research was undertaken to look at what other places, who have historically been better at telling their collective story than West Yorkshire, have produced. Initial ideas for the content were generated during in-depth strategic planning sessions. Building on this work a draft of the plan's narrative was completed. The draft has had input from nominated representatives from each local authority and has been shared with Chief Executives, leaders and the mayor who have provided comments. Wider engagement with key stakeholders and partners is now being undertaken with Combined Authority committees. The first draft of the vision and narrative is included in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 The intention of the Plan is to set targets that are aspirational and represent an ultimate ambition for the region, the plan includes draft targets currently, but these will be updated once the narrative has been agreed. State of the Region reporting will continue to provide the monitoring framework underpinning the West Yorkshire Plan and wider policies and strategies of the Combined Authority.
- 2.4 The West Yorkshire Plan will strengthen the existing policy framework of the Combined Authority. At present, the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) provides an overarching vision for the region and is supported by a suite of policies and strategies, this includes the Economic Strategy currently in development (see below). The vision and narrative will ultimately sit at the top of a revised and refreshed SEF with newly agreed regional priorities and targets with the collective suite of documents known as the West Yorkshire Plan.

Economic Strategy

- 2.5 The Economic Strategy will provide a vision for the future of the West Yorkshire Economy to support the development of investment priorities to meet these aims and objectives. The Economic Strategy will be developed in partnership with businesses, the private sector, and Local Authority partners.
- 2.6 The economic strategy is situated in the context of the current recession and will utilise a method of scenario planning to project potential future scenarios and use these to assess our current policies and interventions to ensure that we can mitigate against any economic risks and also take advantage of economic opportunities for the region.
- 2.7 Culture, heritage, and sport are a key component of our identity as a region and the vision and economic strategy and underpinned by our cultural framework. The economic opportunities linked to inclusive culture and diversity are considerable and the economic strategy aims to capitalise upon this.

2.8 A gap that the Economic Strategy is seeking to fill is our approach to sectors. We have conducted research to analyse different approaches to sectors and have developed a model to facilitate future economic growth. The model plays to the regions strengths but also provides the opportunity to work with a wider spectrum of businesses and link our interventions directly to the Mayors pledges. We want to ensure that this approach positions West Yorkshire in the best possible way to act upon economic opportunity.

2.9 Through the economic plan we intend to align the trajectory for the region discussed in the vision to economic outcomes.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 Tackling the climate emergency is one of the proposed regional priorities and will be a key driver of activity arising from this work. The economic strategy and our approach to sectors is underpinned by three driving forces 1) our commitment to Carbon Net Zero, 2) using technology (including digital) to enable innovation and productivity 3) creating a social foundation so that we protect the people of West Yorkshire. The sectoral approach also acts as a facilitator to encourage adoption of green technologies and the development of green jobs. Links will be made to ongoing workstreams on the circular economy.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 Growing an Inclusive Economy is one of the proposed regional priorities and will be a key driver of activity arising from this work. It has been a driver for our sectoral approach which looks to facilitate the best economic outcomes for everyone in the region both in the short and longer term. The economic plan and West Yorkshire vision provide an opportunity for us to place inclusive growth at the heart of everything we do. The two documents act as a golden thread for this theme tying it in to all of the policies which sit beneath.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 Enabling Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is one of the proposed regional priorities and will be a key driver of activity arising from this work. The economic strategy celebrates diversity as a regional strength and looks to facilitate opportunities which arise from creating the foundations of a diverse and inclusive economy.

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 The draft vision and narrative have been produced in partnership with a grouping of local authority colleagues and has been discussed by chief executives, political leaders and the mayor. Consultation is now underway with colleagues across the Combined Authority including attendance at all senior management meetings and directorate sessions. All committees will receive a presentation with request for comments along with members of the LEP Board, and the Business Communications Group. Following feedback, a further draft of the narrative will be produced for sign-off by the Combined Authority in March.
- 9.2 The concept for the economic strategy has been developed in conjunction with the BEIC Committee, LEP Board and the CA. We are now working in partnership with a task and finish group which includes private members and local authority colleagues to develop a draft. We will take this back to BEIC and the LEP board for further comments and inputs. Following feedback, a final draft will be produced for sign off by the BEIC Committee in March.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the Employment and Skills Committee consider the draft of the vision and narrative of the plan and agree the proposed next steps, with a particular focus on:
- Content
 - What we call the collective suite of documents
 - Language used
 - Anything missing / needs to be removed
- 10.2 That the Employment and Skills Committee consider the draft economic strategy and agree the proposed next steps with particular focus on;
- Content
 - Language used
 - Anything missing / needs to be removed

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft West Yorkshire Vision and Narrative