

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2022 AT COMMITTEE ROOM 1,  
WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS**

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**Present:**

Mayor Tracy Brabin (Chair)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Council
Councillor Stewart Golton (Substitute)	Leeds City Council
Councillor James Lewis	Leeds City Council
Councillor Cathy Scott (Substitute)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Rebecca Poulsen	Bradford Council
Mark Roberts	Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership
Councillor Jane Scullion (Substitute)	Calderdale Council
Councillor Andrew Waller	City of York Council

**In attendance:**

Ben Still	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Melanie Corcoran	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Dave Pearson	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Angela Taylor	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philip Witcherley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Caroline Allen	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Parr	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**50. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pandor, Cllr Swift, Cllr Holdsworth, Cllr Jeffery, Cllr Morley, Cllr Robinson, and Cllr Carter.

The Mayor opened the meeting and noted that the impact of inflation upon West Yorkshire remains a key issue for the Combined Authority, and along with all other mayoral combined authorities the Combined Authority is reviewing upcoming projects to ensure sustainable and swift delivery when budget constraints allow. The Combined Authority is working closely with the local authorities to minimise disruption and ensure no part of the region is unfairly impacted.

The Mayor provided an update on her recent meeting with the Transport Secretary, Mark Harper, in which the ongoing issue regarding the number of

cancelled services was raised, and it was stressed that action must be taken by government to address the issues. Further contact has been made with the Secretary of State, with the hope that decisive action is taken in the coming days.

**51. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

**52. Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

**53. Minutes of the Meeting of the Combined Authority held on 21 October 2022**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 21 October 2022 be approved and signed by the Chair.

**54. Crisis in the Cost of Living and Doing Business**

Members received a report from the Director of Strategy, Communications and Intelligence to provide an update on latest economic intelligence and the Combined Authority's response to cost of living crisis.

Economic forecasts predict the UK will experience a recession lasting until 2024, driven by higher energy costs and the war in Ukraine, among other factors. West Yorkshire will be disproportionately affected compared with other UK areas, with around one third of households falling within the poorest 20% of neighbourhoods in England. This means households will spend a higher proportion of their income on energy and essentials, with lower or diminishing savings as the cost-of-living crisis continues. Energy intensive businesses such as manufacturing are also struggling, with approximately 57,000 employees affected and a potential £8 billion in turnover at risk.

Support packages have already been agreed by the Combined Authority, such as the Mayor's Cost of Living fund and the Mayor's Fares scheme, with further support to be agreed. Expressions of interest have already been received from businesses regarding support for decarbonisation and energy saving, and further support is available in the form of financial, housing, and jobs advice, with the aid of local authorities and the voluntary sector.

The Mayor has sent a letter to the Chancellor setting out key priorities for West Yorkshire – help for businesses' energy bills, the delivery of the Northern Powerhouse Rail, and the commitment to a new mass transit system. There are potential opportunities to explore regarding investment zones, as well as a review of the way Mayoral Combined Authorities receive and allocate funding.

Members noted discussions from the recent LEP board meeting, with business owners concerned that inflation and energy bills could still rise for

businesses, and the consequences of potential energy blackouts. In research undertaken on the behalf of the Combined Authority, 67% of businesses responded with concerns about their survival, most of them being small-to-medium enterprises. The LEP board discussed the regional response, emergency grants, support for vulnerable people, and the launch of the Employment West Yorkshire scheme. Members pointed out importance of the voluntary sector and non-profit organisations, and private sector support is available to provide training.

Members questioned if there is capacity to support businesses who have not yet expressed an interest in the available support. Officers confirmed this is the case.

**Resolved:** That the latest intelligence be noted, the implications of the current economic situation for businesses within the region be discussed, and the action taken so far by the Combined Authority, and the next steps following the Autumn Statement be noted.

## **55. Inflation - Transport Programmes**

The Combined Authority received a report from the Director of Transport Policy and Delivery to approve the pausing of some projects and approve funding for others identified in the report. The same report was presented to the Finance, Resources, and Corporate Committee on 10 November, with total identified savings of £266 million. Officers expressed thanks to the local authority partners authority partners for the joint work.

Officers emphasised that no schemes are being discarded, only paused until the delivery becomes viable. Work will progress outstanding business cases and identifying external funding sources to ensure that schemes are ready for delivery as soon as possible. Officers clarified the three main criteria for reviewing projects – financial viability, deliverability, and timescales. Some projects will be paused in their entirety, and others may only be paused in part.

Members raised concerns that projects are stopped without consulting the affected communities. Officers confirmed that consultation is a part of the business case for each project, with multiple means through which communities are kept up to date. Members noted the importance of their role in communicating with local communities.

Members questioned if schemes from the CRSTS funding stream will be affected, officers responded they are not, however there is a time limit on some funding streams.

**Resolved:** The Combined Authority approved:

- i) The projects to be pipelined and the Revised Full Funding required to reach the pause decision point, as set out in this report. (Appendix 1).

- ii) The new project indicative / full allocations, as set out in this report (Appendix 2).
- iii) The additional funding requests on projects in WYTF, TCF and CRSTS, as set out in this report.
- iv) The re-baselined based on the milestone information included in the report (Appendix 3 and 4).
- v) That no further approvals for the changes requested will be required through the Assurance Framework and that projects continue on their approval pathways and routes to the next decision point.
- vi) The Combined Authority enters into a Funding Agreement or an addendum to the existing Funding Agreement with the relevant partner for expenditure as detailed in Appendix 1 and 2 and for milestone dates as detailed in Appendix 3 and 4.

## **56. Business planning and budgets**

The Combined Authority received a report from the Director of Corporate and Commercial Services to consider the 2022/23 business forecast, and provide an update on the 2023/24 budget process.

The 2023/24 budget will be aligned with the new directorate structure to support the focus on outcomes and delivery. The Combined Authority's income has not increased in line with inflation, and reviews are being undertaken to identify additional savings and funding. Officers acknowledged the need to manage the cost pressures without increasing the cost for the local authorities. Transport-related costs are especially difficult due to the volatile nature of available funding as well as still-recovering bus passenger numbers, though it is key to maintain the same or better levels of service with the available budget.

Members praised the involvement of the Local Government Association with the Communications review, and requested the outcomes of the review be shared with members. Officers offered to circulate the outcomes, and added that many of the Combined Authority's existing plans were endorsed by the LGA. Discussions have been held regarding additional consultation across the whole Combined Authority in late 2023.

Members queried how cross-boundary services are supported and how relationships with authorities neighbouring West Yorkshire are managed. Officers confirmed that relationships with cross-boundary services are managed in the same way as West Yorkshire services.

Members noted the need for ward members and communities to be informed of new developments. It was noted that there are committees and information channels through which information is distributed. Officers added that operators are required to register any service cuts with the Traffic Commissioner two months in advance, and are required to share the same

information with the Combined Authority. Service cuts are shared with the appropriate ward members wherever possible, however cuts are not always able to be shared in the public domain.

**Resolved:**

- i) That changes to the 2022/23 business plans be approved.
- ii) That the Combined Authority consider the emerging budget for 2023/24
- iii) That input be provided and consideration be given to the emerging outcome led business plans for 2023/24.

**57. Culture, Heritage and Sport Framework**

The Combined Authority received a report from the Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills, and Culture to approve the final version of the Culture, Heritage and Sport Framework.

Officers informed members the framework has been out for public consultation conducted through the Your Voice platform as well as multiple community events. The majority of the feedback was positive and will help to guide the investment, and further collaboration with external organisations will help to unlock additional funding. The framework targets communities with limited access to cultural events, and the diversity of the sector is growing. Job resilience is an important focus due to the proportion of freelancing jobs within the sector, though since the area is relatively new there are questions regarding how support is measured and evaluated.

The Mayor thanked the Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee members for their input, and noted that the cultural sector in West Yorkshire contributes around £2 billion per year to the economy and continues to grow. There are several cultural events in West Yorkshire to be delivered in the coming months which will bring further development, and emphasised the cultural sector is not just about holding events, as it offers employment, skills, and training for local people.

Members noted the recent meeting of the Culture, Tourism and Sport board was attended by Visit England, and suggested that there would be an opportunity to develop links if they have not yet been made. Officers agreed and responded that conversations are taking place with multiple organisations, and West Yorkshire is an attractive prospect with upcoming cultural events.

Members noted the relatively low levels of feedback received, officers replied that a more detailed report and breakdown of the feedback was presented to the Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee. The Framework was promoted heavily on social media, and the original response deadline was extended due to the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

**Resolved:** That the update on the Cultural, Heritage and Sport Framework be noted, and the Framework text in in Appendix 1 be approved for publication.

**58. Project Approvals**

**(a) Investment Priority 4 - Tackling the Climate Emergency and Environmental Sustainability**

Members received a report from the Director of Transport Policy and Delivery on the progression of, and approval of funding for schemes. Officers informed the members that projects will now be presented under their associated investment priorities for clearer understanding of how budgets are spent.

Officers introduced the Business Sustainability Package, which aims to support small and medium-sized enterprises to meet their targets to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2038 through measuring emissions, identifying improvements, and supporting action to reduce emissions.

Members noted the scheme builds upon previous schemes which have already helped to reduce annual emissions of supported businesses by 4,500 tonnes of carbon and reducing their energy bills.

**Resolved:** The Combined Authority approved that:

- (i) The Business Sustainability Package proceeds through decision point 2 (strategic outline case) and decision point 4 (full business case) work commences on activity 5 (delivery).
- (ii) Approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of up to £10,596,934 is given. The total scheme value is up to £21,946,934.
- (iii) Future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in this report and any change requests are delegated to the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee, which will be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in this report.

**(b) Investment Priority 5 - Future Transport**

Members received a report from the Director of Transport Policy and Delivery on the progression of, and approval of funding for schemes.

Combined Services and Assets Database Replacement

Officers introduced the Combined Services and Assets (CoSA) Database Replacement, which will support sustainable transport by replacing the current IT system and allowing for better management of bus service data.

Members questioned if the new system will resolve ongoing issues with the real-time information screens at bus stops, which would improve commuters' confidence in buses. Officers responded that it is not a direct resolution but will pave the way towards improvements to the information screens. Separate conversations are being had with operators about how the data used by the real-time information boards can be made more reliable.

#### TCF - Bradford City Centre Cycling and Walking Improvements

Officers introduced the scheme which is designed to remove traffic in Bradford City Centre, thereby making walking and cycling easier. New public spaces, seating, and artwork will be introduced to improve the area, and new bus hubs, cycle tracks, and pedestrian crossings. Delivery is targeted before the Bradford City of Culture commences.

Members raised concerns regarding disruption to the city centre. Members acknowledged there may be disruption, but the works will ultimately make it more accessible. Officers added that the cost to benefit ratio for the scheme is high when assessed with the Department for Transport criteria, and should bring higher value to Bradford city centre as a destination upon completion.

#### **Resolved:**

With respect to the Combined Services and Assets Database (CoSA) Replacement, the Combined Authority approved that:

- (i) The Combined Services and Assets Database (CoSA) Replacement scheme proceeds through decision point 1 (strategic assessment) and work commences on activity 2 to 4 (business justification case).
- (ii) An indicative approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £615,000. The total scheme value is £615,000.
- (iii) Development costs of £50,000 are approved for development of the business justification case.
- (iv) Future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outline in this report and any change requests are delegated to the Transport Committee, which will be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in this report.

With respect to the TCF - Bradford City Centre Cycling and Walking improvements, the Combined Authority approved that:

- (i) The TCF Bradford City Centre Cycling and Walking Improvements scheme proceeds through decision point 3 (outline business case) and work commences on activity 4 (full business case).
- (ii) An indicative approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £43,166,000. The total scheme value is £43,266,000.
- (iii) Approval to an additional £3,741,000 of development costs is given, taking the total approval to £5,893,500.
- (iv) The Combined Authority enters into an addendum to the existing funding agreement with Bradford Council for expenditure of up to £5,893,500.
- (v) Future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in this report subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances set out in this report.

## **59. Committee Appointment**

Members received a report from the Head of Legal and Governance seeking approval to appoint Nicky Chance-Thompson, CEO of the Piece Hall Halifax, as the private sector Deputy Chair of the Culture, Heritage and Sport committee.

The report noted that the current Deputy Chair Helen Featherstone has resigned due to taking up a new role from January, and the Mayor expressed her thanks as Chair of the Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee for Helen's contributions during her term.

**Resolved:** That Nicky Chance-Thompson be appointed to the role of Deputy Chair of the Culture, Heritage & Sport Committee.

## **60. Director Roles and Appointments**

Members received a report from the Chief Executive providing an update on the new directorate structure, to ratify the new appointments of existing directors into new roles, and to approve the creation of two Executive Director roles. The report also provided an update regarding the changes to lead directors for the Combined Authority and thematic committees.

Officers explained that the Combined Authority members had previously taken the decision to approve the new directorate structure, and since then the existing directors have moved into new roles. Two further Executive Director roles will be created and appointed to in due course.

Officers informed the members that Phil Witcherley has been proposed as Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills, and Culture. Melanie Corcoran has also been proposed as Interim Chief Operating Officer. Both roles are



on an interim basis while an external substantive recruitment processes take place.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the amendment of the organisation's establishment to create the revised senior structure as set out in Figure 1 be approved.
- (ii) That the appointment of existing Directors into revised roles, shown in Table 1 be ratified.
- (iii) That progression to recruitment of all vacant Director posts in the structure be approved.
- (iv) That the appointment of Phil Witcherley into the post of Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture, until such time as a substantive appointment is made be approved.
- (v) That the appointment of Melanie Corcoran into the post of Chief Operating Officer from 1 January 2023 on an interim basis, until such time as a substantive appointment is made be approved.
- (vi) That the update to the list of responsible Directors for Combined Authority committees set out in Table 2 be noted.

**61. Officer Arrangements**

Members received a report from the Head of Legal and Governance containing revisions to the Officer Delegation Scheme, and seeking approval for the Chief Executive to discharge functions to Combined Authority Officers as appropriate.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the Officer Delegation Scheme in relation to Non-Mayoral Functions attached as Appendix 1 to the report to be brought into immediate effect, noting that some elements will come into effect from 1 January 2023 as referenced within the Scheme itself.
- (ii) That the Chief Executive be authorised to discharge any functions that the Combined Authority or one of its committees may have delegated outside of the Officer Delegation Scheme to a Combined Authority officer in relation to a specific matter.
- (iii) That it be noted that the Head of Legal & Governance Services will make any consequential revisions to the Constitution and other key documents.

**62. Minutes for Information**

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