

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
LEEDS CITY REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2022 AT COMMITTEE ROOM 1,  
WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS**

---

**Present:**

Mark Roberts	Private Sector (Interim LEP Board Chair)
Mayor Tracy Brabin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Prof Shirley Congdon	Private Sector
Helen Featherstone	Private Sector
Amir Hussain	Private Sector
Kamran Rashid	Private Sector
Andrew Wright	Private Sector
Beckie Hart	Business Representative
Asma Iqbal	Private Sector (LEP Diversity Champion)
Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Council
Councillor Matthew Morley (Substitute)	Wakefield Council
Councillor James Lewis	Leeds City Council
Councillor Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Council
Councillor Jane Scullion (Substitute)	Calderdale Council
Councillor Andrew Waller	City of York Council

**In attendance:**

Ben Still	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Angela Taylor	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philip Witcherley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Craig Taylor	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Patrick Bowes	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Julie Haigh	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Jennifer Robson	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Myles Larrington	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**1. Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair opened the meeting by noting that many developments had taken place since the Board last met, especially in relation to the national political situation, where the government had introduced a growth plan and a new Chancellor had been appointed. Subsequently, a new Prime Minister was also appointed to lead the Country and an Autumn Statement was introduced which reversed much of the growth plan.

In addition, the Chair also observed that there had been considerable activity and progress on a number of items discussed at the last Board meeting including:

- The economic strategy and plans
- Continued activity on the Local Digital Skills Plan, transforming it into a local digital plan. This has included a meeting with officials from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and also with local groups.
- Progress on trade and investment including the Mayor's trade mission to India which took place from 21 to 28 September which helped secure a multimillion-pound investment for the region.

The Chair also welcomed Asma Iqbal to the Board as the LEP Diversity Champion and noted that members look forward to her being part of the Board as they move forward.

## **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Denise Jeffrey, Professor Simon Pringle, Kully Thiarai, Councillor Tim Swift and guest, Peter Mucklow.

## **3. Declarations of Interest**

Helen Featherstone declared an interest in Item 6 (the Report on Governance Arrangements) which made reference to the fact that she is stepping down from the Board and a new co-optee will take her place.

## **4. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

## **5. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2022**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board held on 21 September 2022 be approved.

## **6. Mayor's Update**

The Mayor presented her latest update to the LEP Board highlighting the following matters:

- The Mayor and the Chair undertook a trade mission to India from 21 to 28 September leading a regional trade mission to strengthen West Yorkshire's economic and cultural links with the country. This consisted of trips to Mumbai and Bangalore. There was a positive reaction from business representatives in India and a wish to do more business with West Yorkshire. The Mayor met a number of financial technology companies and secured an agreement with the Bangalore-based global technology company, Mphasis, will create 1,000 new jobs in West Yorkshire.
- The Mayor observed that the economic outlook was very grim. The UK was going into a recession due to soaring inflation and the cost-of-living crisis. Surveys indicated that 70% of businesses were concerned about their survival as economic data suggested that living standards would fall back by 10 years. This was why the Combined Authority was working to put together a multi-million-pound package to help communities, businesses, and the public through this challenging time.
- Measures included the £3 million pound Energy Funds Grant which was being delivered through local authority partners and debt advice delivered through the third sector.
- The Mayor also recently participated in a delegate of northern mayors who met with the Secretary of State for Transport, The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP, in Manchester. The Mayor put the case that further rail improvements were needed within West Yorkshire. However, she made clear that any additional support for rail must not come at the expense of bus services as 80% of the public use these.

The Chair thanked the Mayor for her update.

## **7. Governance Arrangements**

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal & Governance Services regarding changes to governance arrangements

The Chair introduced this item and then presented the report to the Board. The Board was asked to:

- Appoint a co-optee member to the LEP Board
- Recommend to the Combined Authority that the co-optee appointed in accordance with recommendation 10.1 be appointed to the role of Deputy Chair of the Culture, Heritage & Sport Committee.

The Chair explained that Helen Featherstone, who is a private sector member of the Board, had advised that she will be moving to a new role with a public

sector organisation in mid-January 2023 and was therefore stepping down as a private sector member from both the LEP Board and Culture, Sport and Heritage Committee. Helen will continue to sit on the Culture, Sport and Heritage Committee in her new, public sector, role.

The Chair noted that Helen was moving into a new role at England North for the Lottery Heritage Fund. He thanked Helen for all her work on the Cultural Framework as a member of the Culture, Heritage & Sport Committee and for her contribution as a member of the LEP Board. On behalf of the Board, he also wished her all the best in her new role.

As well as this resulting in a further private sector vacancy on the LEP Board, Helen's departure will also leave the Deputy Chair role on the Culture, Heritage & Sport Committee vacant which is held by a private sector member.

A private sector member from the Culture, Heritage & Sport Committee had been sought for this role, with the intention that this individual would also become a co-opted member of the LEP Board, serving a term of office until Summer 2023 when LEP governance arrangements become clearer.

One Expression of Interest for the role had been received from **Nicky Chance-Thompson**, CEO of The Piece Hall. Board approval was therefore sought that she be appointed as a co-opted Member to the LEP Board until June 2023.

The Board were asked to approve a recommendation to the Combined Authority to appoint Nicky Chance-Thompson to the Culture, Heritage & Sport Committee and to hold the role of Deputy Chair of that committee.

**Resolved:**

- i. That Nicky Chance-Thompson be appointed as a co-opted member to the LEP Board for the term of office of the Interim Chair
- ii. That Nicky Chance-Thompson be recommended to the Combined Authority to be appointed to the role of Deputy Chair of the Culture, Heritage & Sport Committee.

**Chair's Update on the LEP Integration Plan**

The Chair also provided the Board with an update on the LEP Integration Plans.

At the last meeting the Board agreed that work would be undertaken to make the necessary changes to the constitution to bring into force the proposals for the LEP that are set out in the implementation plan that the Board agreed in the summer. Work has been progressing on the details of how to make those changes happen, including formalising the relationship with the Combined Authority and the Committees, but these plans won't be finalised until after the Government has agreed to the implementation plan which had been

completed on 27 July 2022 and submitted to the Government.

It had been hoped that the Government would respond in time to report back to the previous LEP Board meeting which was held on 21 September 2022. However, a response from Government is still awaited and the Plan cannot be finalised until a formal response is received.

As such, the revised Constitution for the LEP Board will be brought forward to the next Board meeting in March next year. This will include a revised recruitment procedure for private sector members, and therefore we need to wait until then before launching a new recruitment round. One of the greatest strengths of the Combined Authority's model, which the Government supports, is the formal role of private sector members voting and taking decisions alongside elected members on all of the decision-making committees.

## **8. Economic Report - Crisis in the Cost of Living and Doing Business**

The Board considered a report of the Director of Strategy, Communications and Policing which provided an update on the latest economic and business intelligence

The Chair introduced the report by noting the continued uncertainties in the economic climate since the last Board meeting following the introduction of the Government's Growth Plan and then the subsequent revisions as part of the Autumn Statement. He then asked the Director of Strategy, Communications and Policing to present the report. He noted that:

- The Combined Authority had commissioned research on the cost of doing business from Yonder, which indicated that 67% of businesses within West Yorkshire were concerned about the survival of their business as a result of the cost-of-living crisis.
- Consequently, the Combined Authority are working on a grants package of financial support to help businesses improve energy efficiency.
- The Combined Authority was also looking to launch Employment West Yorkshire to provide bespoke support to individuals across West Yorkshire to gain employment support advice and support for re-training, upskilling, and secure or progress in employment.
- The Combined Authority was also continuing to lobby central government to provide more assistance to energy-intensive businesses, offer more tax incentive schemes to support businesses, progress plans to invest in energy generation take additional measures to on the rent cap issue to approve affordability at a local level.

Members made several observations as follows:

- The statistics appeared to show that communities within West Yorkshire with people in vulnerable positions are likely to be most impacted by the economic downturn. From a business perspective, third sector

organisations within the non-profit sector might also bare the greatest impact. As such, it was important that the Combined Authority continued to work closely with third sector organisations otherwise this could have a detrimental impact on productivity locally.

- It was agreed that a strategic approach was required to ensure targeted help was offered where possible. It was especially important to partner large corporate businesses to make small adjustments that could have big impacts within local communities in West Yorkshire.
- It was agreed that everything possible must be done to ensure that the 67% of businesses who were concerned about their viability can be helped to survive. Members agreed that the Combined Authority could assist by helping to link businesses together and providing health audits in order to safe-guard jobs by assisting businesses to restructure in response to the changing economic environment.
- A vital part of the picture within West Yorkshire was energy production, especially for energy intensive businesses. The Combined Authority should continue to support this, especially from sustainable sources, as the opportunity to generate further revenue streams was considerable.
- Continuing to help individuals advance their skills through the Yorkshire Skills Plan. It was noted that many training courses offered by large tech companies are largely free and require little or no prior qualifications. The Combined Authority should continue to promote these as a route into employment for people.
- Additional funding may be available through Institutional Corporate Funds that are required to invest money locally and could be positioned to assist in generating further employment opportunities within West Yorkshire.
- It was observed that rising inflation meant that many more small businesses would need to register for VAT and would therefore fall into this tax bracket much earlier than they might have anticipated.
- It was vital to continue to promote the Mayor's Fair Work Charter to encourage best practice. Board members welcomed the fact that work was ongoing to understand what small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) required from the Fair Work Charter to make it work.

**Resolved:** That the latest intelligence and asks of Government were noted along with feedback from The Board.

## 9. Economic Plan

The Board considered a report of the Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture which provided an update on the development of an economic plan for the region.

The Chair introduced the report and noted that it had much in common with the previous paper. He then invited the Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture to present the report. He noted that:

- Two activities were in development, a review of the Combined

- Authority's approach to sectors, and economic scenario forecasting.
- Following private sector workshops held on 7th and 15<sup>th</sup> November, a sectoral framework was being progressed which placed sectors into three different strands – Enabling Sectors, Strategic Sectors and Vital Sectors. These classifications would help to identify the most strategically important business sectors.
  - As part of this work, the Combined Authority will develop a short Economic Plan which will be presented to the next LEP Board in March 2023 for approval. This will include a synopsis of a plan for the next 2 years detailing the pipeline of proposed work and work underway.
  - The other piece of work relates to economic scenario forecasting. The economic scenarios work will explore opportunities to build a low-carbon economy and create more sustainable and resilient businesses as well as ensuring inclusive growth.

As part of this process, a Task and Finish Group will be established which will include members of the Board. Asma Iqbal indicated a willingness to participate in this. The Chair also invited other members of the Board to provide expressions of interest.

The Board made several observations:

- It was noted that the universities within West Yorkshire were keen to be more involved in this process and that ongoing engagement with them was vital.
- The economic plan should consider the needs of the Asian business sector which has different characteristics to the wider economy. Many Asian businesses have been badly impacted by the current economic crisis and this should be a focus of the Combined Authority's ongoing commitment to inclusive growth.

**Resolved:**

- i. That the update on the development of an economic plan publication be noted.
- ii. That the Board be involved in shaping the content of the document over the coming months.
- iii. That the Task and Finish Group include members of the Board.

**10. Committees Update Report**

The Board considered a report providing an update on the work of the six Thematic Committees as follows:

- Councillor Shabir Pandor, Chair of the Business Economy and Innovation Committee, presented an update on the proceedings of the Committee which met on 19 October 2022. He advised that the

Committee considered a range of reports, including the latest economic and business intelligence around the Crisis in the Cost of Living and Doing Business, the Combined Authority's response to the crisis, and asks of the Government.

- The Mayor presented an update on the Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee which had met on 28 October 2022 and had considered = reports which included presentations from Calderdale and Wakefield on respective plans for Year of Culture activities in 2024; Sector Economic Intelligence; progress of the Creative Catalyst and Mayor's Screen Diversity Programme, and a report on the development of the Culture, Heritage and Sport Framework following sector and public engagement.
- The Chair, Mark Roberts, presented an update on the proceedings of the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee which had met on 4 October 2022 and had considered reports relating to the Mayoral pledge to tackle the climate emergency and meeting the 2038 net-zero carbon target.
- Councillor James Lewis, Chair of the Employment & Skills Committee, presented an update on the proceedings of the Committee which had met on 20 October. The Committee had received an update that in West Yorkshire, West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, and the Mid-Yorkshire Chamber had been chosen to lead the LSIP (Local Skills Improvement Plan being set up by Government) and intended to work closely with WYCA. The Committee were also recommending an increase in the funding rate for the Adult Education Budget, which would be subject to approval by the Combined Authority at its in February 2023.
- Amir Hussain, Deputy Chair of the Place, Regeneration & Housing Committee, presented the update on the proceedings of the Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee which had met on 3 November 2022. The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the relevant economic indicators and reported on their performance to support the work of the Committee, including the State of the Region, the Cost of Living and Doing Business, the Leeds City Region Business Survey and Footfall Data. They also considered the Housing Pledge and Policy which provided an update on progress towards delivery of the Mayoral pledge to deliver 5000 affordable and sustainable homes in West Yorkshire and two Project Approvals.
- Councillor Hinchcliffe, Chair of the Transport Committee, presented an update on the proceedings of the Committee which had met on 14 October 2022 as the 16 September 2022 meeting had been cancelled with papers moved forward to the October meeting. The Committee considered a range of reports including a response to the Government's mini budget and the projects identified for acceleration. It was agreed by the Committee that a letter should be drafted to send to Government highlighting the need to focus on delivery and ways to



accelerate projects such as Mass Transit and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

**Resolved:** That the updates from the Thematic Committees be noted.

## 11. Assurance Framework Annual Review

The Board considered a report of the Head of Portfolio Management and Appraisal which provided an update on the annual review of the Leeds City Regional Local Framework.

The Chair introduced the report and then invited the Head of Portfolio Management and Appraisal to present this.

The Head of Portfolio Management and Appraisal explained that the report set out the progress on the annual review of the Leeds City Region Local Framework which must be reviewed annually and published on the Combined Authority and LEP's websites by 28 February 2023. Board members were asked to provide comments on this to feed into the annual review. The Head of Portfolio Management noted that:

- The Local Assurance Framework was developed in 2015 as part of the Growth Deal with Government and in February 2021 was updated to comply with changes arising from the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal for a Mayoral Combined Authority.
- Its purpose is to ensure that the necessary systems and processes are in place to manage funding effectively, and to ensure the successful delivery of the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) and West Yorkshire Investment Strategy (WYIS) ambitions.
- The Local Assurance Framework must be reviewed annually and published on the Combined Authority and LEP's websites. The deadline for this to be completed is 28 February 2023.
- Following LEP Board and after the publication of the revised Local Growth National Assurance Framework guidance, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will be sent the draft Local Assurance Framework 2023 for their initial feedback. A further review process will then take place before the revised Assurance Framework is reported to the Combined Authority for review and approval.

Member of the Board commented that the framework should be properly reviewed to ensure that it works for all local authority partners within West Yorkshire.

**Resolved:** That the revised draft Assurance Framework document, the proposed peer review and the next steps were noted following feedback from the Board.

## 12. Cultural Framework

The Chair noted that the Cultural Framework was included in the pack of papers for information. He also thanked the members of the Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee for their work in putting this together.

**13. Draft Minutes of the Combined Authority held on 21 October 2022**

The Chair asked members of the Board to note that the draft Minutes of the Combined Authority held on 21 October 2022 were included in the pack of papers for information.

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the LEP Board will be held on 8 March 2023.