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

Date: 13 June 2023

Subject: **Committees Update Report**

Led by: Mark Roberts, Interim Chair

Lead Officer: Myles Larrington, Governance Services Officer

1. Purpose of this report

To provide the LEP Board with a brief update from the six Thematic Committees at the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Any substantial items from the committees will be brought to the LEP Board as separate agenda items for comment and feedback.

2. Information

Thematic Committee Updates

2.1 Business, Economy and Innovation Committee

2.1.1 The Committee met on 29 March and considered a range of reports to support businesses in the region and grow the economy.

2.1.2 A paper was presented on innovation finance policy and development alongside an overview of the Combined Authority's decision to invest in Northern Gritstone Ltd, a venture capital firm providing venture capital to university spinouts and high-growth companies across the North of England.

2.1.3 The Committee also discussed two reports on the Business Support team. The first report considered EDI and the Committee endorsed proposals to develop and EDI Strategy for the Business Support team. The second paper discussed "principles" for Business Support, including an approach to more targeted business support in new and upcoming services.

2.1.4 The Committee also received an update on inward investment, citing highlights from 2022/2023 and endorsed proposals to develop a new Inward Investment Strategy for the region.

2.2 Climate, Energy and Environment Committee

- 2.2.1 The Committee met on 21 March and considered a range of reports relating to tackling the climate emergency. They were also asked to provide approval for two projects to allow them to enter delivery.
- 2.2.2 A paper on monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the Climate and Environment Plan (CEP) was presented to the Committee. This aims to provide the Combined Authority with a flexible way to monitor progress towards the commitments in the CEP. Feedback was provided by the Committee.
- 2.2.3 The Committee approved £2,060,000 of funding for the Better Neighbourhoods programme, a community grants programme for net zero projects. Approval was also granted for the programme to move into delivery.
- 2.2.4 The Committee also approved £366,310 of funding for the Combined Authority Assets Solar Project – Bus Stations, a project to install solar panels on seven of the Combined Authority's bus stations. Approval was also granted for the project to move into delivery.
- 2.2.5 Committee were also provided with updates on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including proposed governance arrangements, flooding (both the capital and natural flood management programmes), and Better Homes Hub.

2.3 Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee

- 2.3.1 No formal meeting of the Culture Heritage and Sport Committee was held during this period.
- 2.3.2 Members of the Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee met on the 28th of March at the Piece Hall for a private workshop.
- 2.3.3 It was an opportunity for the Mayor, Deputy Chair Nicky Chance-Thompson, and Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture Phil Witcherley to update Committee members on progress against the Culture, Heritage and Sport Framework, almost one year on from the large consultation exercise to get stakeholder feedback on the frameworks aims and objectives.
- 2.3.4 Members were given an opportunity to share their successes, discuss how this mapped against the Framework and how the Committee can work collectively to share these stories in the future.
- 2.3.5 There was also an exercise to gather committee members thoughts and feedback on what a West Yorkshire Trailblazer deal should include from a culture, heritage and sport background, and to also get their high-level thoughts on Investment Zones.

2.4 Employment and Skills Committee

- 2.4.1 The Committee met on 23rd March during the pre-election period, and considered reports on Adult Skills, Green Jobs Taskforce and Future Funding Priorities.

- 2.4.2 The Committee received comprehensive verbal updates on the Spring Budget Statement including the packages of support focussed on employment and new emerging DWP programmes. The Committee also heard from the Chambers of Commerce leading the Local Skills Improvement Plans work commissioned by DfE to capture and ensure employer voice is part of planning for future skills provision. The Chambers noted that there was distance to travel to ensure the LSIP in West Yorkshire is able to fulfil its ambitions.
- 2.4.3 A detailed thematic paper on adult skills provision context, delivery and next steps was presented and the Committee considered and approved a change request to Skills Bootcamps programmes to reflect additional funding received from DfE and note the key achievements and progress of the first year delivery of devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB). Proposals to develop E&S programmes were also supported by the Committee.

2.5 Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee

- 2.5.1 The Committee met on the 2nd March and considered reports on the Strategic Place Partnership, Creating Places and Accelerating Infrastructure Programme Development, the Dementia Task Force and the West Yorkshire Digital Blueprint and Local Digital Partnership.
- 2.5.2 The Committee were also given an update on relevant monitoring indicators from the State of the Region report, including housing and rental affordability, fuel poverty and digital accessibility, alongside Marcoeconomy Economic Analysis.
- 2.5.3 The Committee endorsed the Strategic Place Partnership Business Plan. This sets the shared ambition of the Combined Authority and Homes England to build and strengthen collaborative working across the region with the following agreed strategic objectives:
- SO1 - Develop short, medium and long term investment ready proposals to unlock and accelerate housing delivery and regeneration across West Yorkshire, supporting the region's levelling up, economic growth and inclusivity objectives.
 - SO2 - Realise opportunities to create and grow sustainable neighbourhoods contributing to the region's net zero carbon ambitions.
 - SO3 - Improve the supply of good quality and affordable homes providing greater choice and opportunity for people to access a home in West Yorkshire that meets their housing need
- 2.5.4 An update was provided on Programme Development work relating to delivery of Investment Priority 3 (IP3) Creating Great Places and Accelerating Infrastructure. A portfolio of programmes/projects identified across a range of themes, including flood, housing, employment land and Spatial Priority Areas to deliver the objectives of IP3. This was an update following submission of a Strategic Assessment in February for consideration by the Combined Authority.

Further business case development on specific themes will be consulted on as they are developed.

- 2.5.5 The Committee were also given an update on ongoing work by the Dementia Ready Task Force and proposals to refresh the 2019 Digital Framework and creation of a Local Digital Partnership.
- 2.5.6 Finally, the Committee gave project approval to the BHF Railway Street scheme to progress to Decision Point 4 (Full Business Case) with £1,500,000 of Combined Authority funding and a total scheme value of £11,842,757. The scheme will develop 58 affordable homes in the Burmantofts and Richmond Hill areas in Leeds.
- 2.5.7 The Committee also met on 1st June and considered reports covering the Combined Authorities housing work programmes and strategic sites programmes. The Committee were also given an update on relevant monitoring indicators from the state of the Region report, in particular at this meeting this included newly released data on house price to income ratios as a measure of housing affordability.
- 2.5.8 The housing update paper presented to the committee included key updates on progress towards delivery of the Mayors housing pledge and key programme developments including the Housing Accelerator Fund business case currently in development and the Brownfield Housing Fund.
- 2.5.9 The Strategic Sites report presented to the committee included an update on work to progress the Spatial Priority Area delivery models, an update on the Langthwaite employment site in Wakefield, the development of the business case for the Employment Accelerator Fund and progress on the Investment Zones.

2.6 Transport Committee

- 2.6.1 This Committee met on 10th March, and considered reports on the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), passenger experience and a project approval for a scheme at Bradford Interchange.
- 2.6.2 A draft Passenger Charter was presented to Committee as part of the BSIP report, which was developed and endorsed by the Bus Alliance Board. The Charter sets out:
- What the passenger can expect from bus services in terms of on buses, at bus stops and stations, reliability of service and passenger information
 - How the bus service will support equality, diversity and inclusion
 - What the service operator will guarantee
 - How to make comments and complaints
- 2.6.3 The Passenger Charter was approved for adoption.

- 2.6.4 The BSIP report also provided an update on bus infrastructure funding relating to the recently successful Levelling up Fund bid.
- 2.6.5 A quarterly report was presented, to provide an update on the performance of the transport network in West Yorkshire, including an update on the Combined Authority's passenger facing activity. The Committee noted the content.
- 1.1.6 Finally, a report on proposals for the progression of, and funding for projects under Investment Priority 5 – Delivering Sustainable, Inclusive and Affordable transport within the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy (WYIS), that have been considered at stages 1, 2 or 3 of the Combined Authority's assurance process, was presented. The Committee noted a number of project approvals made in line with the Combined Authority's assurance process, and approved progression of a Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) scheme at Bradford Interchange through decision point 3 (outline business case), and further development funding to commence work on activity 4 (full business case).
- 1.1.7 The Committee also met on 26th May, and considered reports on a variety of topics.
- 1.1.8 A report was presented seeking approval to go out and consult on the draft rail strategy, which has been developed over the last few months. This is a technical rail document, which will set the policy for future investment in rail to be made. Consultation of the draft document will take place over the summer.
- 1.1.9 The Committee also considered a report on Local Engagement Forums, and re-establishing arrangements for these in 2023/24. A Transport Engagement Lead will be identified for each Council area, and they will hold two forum's each their respective area over the next municipal year, to give opportunity for engagement locally on transport related matters, and provide a link back into the Transport Committee on Combined Authority transport activity.
- 1.1.10 There was a quarterly update report on Transport Policy matters not covered elsewhere in the report, covering Transport for the North activity, Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund and the Public Particulate Information Improvement (PIIP) project. A verbal update on the outcome of the Active Travel Fund (ATF) 4 programme was also given. The Committee noted the content.
- 1.1.11 A BSIP report was presented, which focussed on the state of the local bus network and ongoing delivery of BSIP. A verbal update was given in the meeting regarding the recent announcement by Government on future funding for local buses. This report also included the approval of funding to deliver an initial tranche of enhancements to the local bus network, and continued delivery of Mayor's Fares up to March 2024.
- 1.1.12 A further report was presented, to provide an update on the performance of the transport network in West Yorkshire, including an update on the Combined Authority's passenger facing activity. The Committee noted the content.

- 1.1.13 The Transport Committee then noted the actions being taken to ensure the provision of MyBus primary school services remains within the policy guidelines set by the Committee in 2019.
- 1.1.14 Finally, a report on proposals for the progression of, and funding for projects under Investment Priority 5 – Delivering Sustainable, Inclusive and Affordable transport within the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy (WYIS), that have been considered at stages 1, 2 or 3 of the Combined Authority’s assurance process, was presented. The Committee noted a number of project approvals made in line with the Combined Authority’s assurance process, and approved the progression of Combined Services and Assets (CoSA) database through decision point 2 to 4, and work commence on activity 5 (delivery). Leeds City Bike scheme was approved to move from decision point 4 into activity 5 (delivery), a change request for Thorpe Park Rail Station to increase the Combined Authority’s contribution to the scheme and release funding from DfT New Stations Fund 3 for continued development and early works, and a further change request to increase the funding for Halifax Bus Station scheme, which is currently under construction.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report. Any implications from reports will have been addressed at the respective meeting of the Thematic Committee.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 There are no inclusive growth implications directly arising from this report. Any implications from reports will have been addressed at the respective meeting of that Thematic Committee.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report. Any implications from reports will have been addressed at the respective meeting of that Thematic Committee.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. Any implications from reports will have been addressed at the respective meeting of that Thematic Committee.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report. Any implications from reports will have been addressed at the respective meeting of that Thematic Committee.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report. Any implications from reports will have been addressed at the respective meeting of that Thematic Committee.

9. External Consultees

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the LEP Board notes the updates from the Thematic Committees

11. Background Documents

11.1 There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

12.1 There are no appendices to this report.