

West Yorkshire Devolution - Public Consultation

What will a devolution deal mean for West Yorkshire?

On 11 March 2020, a 'minded to' devolution deal was agreed between HM Government and West Yorkshire. Implementation of this deal is being done jointly between Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield Councils, West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Devolution is the transferring of money and powers from central Government. This will enable decisions that are a priority for West Yorkshire to be made locally. These decisions will be made by a mayoral combined authority and Mayor, who will be elected to serve local people, communities and businesses.

Each Local Authority in West Yorkshire and the Combined Authority have carefully considered the 'minded to' devolution deal along with the proposals for implementation and have decided that the introduction of a mayoral combined authority and election of a Mayor would benefit the whole area.

Public consultation

Subject to the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal being implemented, work has begun to set out how it will help meet the priorities related to the economic and infrastructure development of the region: transport, education and skills, planning and housing, and, potentially, Police and Crime Commissioner functions.

Structures will be put in place to give each of the five West Yorkshire councils representation, to work with the Mayor and exercise these new functions as a mayoral combined authority.

It is proposed that the mayoral combined authority will continue to be called the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority will retain its current functions and powers, and these will be complemented by the devolution deal.

We have set out the detail of how this will work, our proposals and ambitions. We want to know what you think.

To include: governance information and paper/form completion instructions inc. closing date

How will it work?

To implement the deal we are proposing the following:

- The first Mayor for West Yorkshire will be elected in May 2021 by the residents of the five West Yorkshire council areas: Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield
- The initial term of the Mayoral will be for 3 years, to 2024. Then each mayoral term will last for 4 years to align with other mayoral combined authority elections in England
- The Mayor will be supported in their operations and functions by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority as a mayoral combined authority
- The deal will provide control and influence of £1.8bn funding and a range of devolved powers to focus and invest in our towns, cities and rural areas, for: infrastructure, skills, business, housing and regeneration, cultural and heritage assets.
- Decisions on funding, operations and functions of the mayoral combined authority will be made in agreement by the five councils of West Yorkshire working together with the Mayor
- The mayoral combined authority will have a total of 11 Members:
 - eight voting members from the constituent councils expected to include the five leaders of each council (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield), and three members chosen in collective agreement to reflect as far as practical the political parties among the constituent councils
 - the Mayor
 - plus, two non-voting additional members which will include an elected member from City of York Council and a member of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP) board
- Police and Crime Commissioner functions will be passed to the mayor who will be able to appoint a Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime to delegate some functions
- The mayor will also have functions relating to transport, housing and planning and finance
- The mayoral combined authority will have non-mayoral functions of transport-related powers, adult education and skills functions, housing functions, economic development and finance
- The mayoral combined authority will exercise responsibility for overview and scrutiny of its, and the Mayor's, functions, as well as exercises to audit. The Mayor's Police and Crime Commissioner functions will be scrutinised by a Police and Crime Panel.

Detail of the governance, scrutiny and auditing arrangements are set out in the scheme [\[hyperlink\]](#).

Q1a. Do you agree or disagree with our proposals for the devolution arrangements of the Mayor, mayoral combined authority, and the councils, working together?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree
nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly
disagree

Don't know

Q1b. Please use the space below to tell us more about your answer:

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Transport

The deal will give the Mayor and mayoral combined authority responsibilities for significant investment in transport infrastructure and services, including public transport. This will help create effective and efficient long-term asset management and procurement to deliver a 21st century transport system for West Yorkshire.

It is proposed that this will be done by:

Devolving powers to the Mayor to:

- produce a Local Transport Plan and strategies
- manage a multi-year local transport budget
- have access to franchising powers for bus services that would enable the Mayor to decide what bus services are provided (routes, timetables and fares) which would have many benefits including smart, simple, integrated ticketing across West Yorkshire. There will be a separate process and consultation if the Mayor decides to consider franchising.
- request the provision of electric vehicle charging points that are beneficial to promoting lower carbon transport

Devolving powers to the mayoral combined authority to:

- set up a Key Route Network across West Yorkshire on behalf of the Mayor to enable a consistent approach to the management of that network, building on the existing Key Route Network of local roads.
- mitigate disruption on the Key Route Network with a permit scheme to help plan and manage utility and highway works.
- enter into agreements with local highway authorities for construction, improvement and maintenance. The expectation is that all operational responsibility for highways will remain with the constituent Councils. So, the use of these powers will need to be agreed with constituent authorities.
- make grants to bus operators

These powers will unlock transport funds and funding flexibilities that will build on successful funding bids in the region that include the £317m Transforming Cities Fund recently awarded to the Leeds City Region.

Q2a. Do you support or oppose this proposal to devolve transport powers to a West Yorkshire Mayor and mayoral combined authority?

Strongly support

Support

Neither support nor oppose

Oppose

Strongly oppose

Don't know

Q2b. Please use the space below to tell us more about your answer:

Skills and employment

The deal will give the mayoral combined authority powers to help people and businesses in West Yorkshire access the skills and support necessary to reach their ambitions and opportunities for our economy, through control of £63 million annually from the government's Adult Education Budget.

The proposal is for:

- promoting better access to adult education
- better business support that ensures the provision of skills meets demand
- giving our residents the skills our businesses need to grow, innovate, diversify, and be productive

Devolved control of the Adult Education Budget will give us greater influence over the adult skills and training to better meet the needs of the economy. It will also help deliver inclusive growth in the region by unlocking potential and progression, allowing as many people as possible to contribute to our region's prosperity.

Please note: a separate public consultation on the Adult Education Budget is planned for [date].

Q3a. Do you support or oppose this proposal to devolve skills and employment powers to a West Yorkshire mayoral combined authority?

Strongly support

Support

Neither support nor oppose

Oppose

Strongly oppose

Don't know

Q3b. Please use the space below to tell us more about your answer:

Housing and planning

The deal will give the Mayor and mayoral combined authority powers to look at planning across the West Yorkshire area to ensure that: there is enhanced coordination in decisions; decisions are not impacted by council boundaries; and add value by addressing cross-boundary issues.

The proposal is that this will be done by granting powers to the Mayor and mayoral combined authority to exercise functions alongside the West Yorkshire Councils or Homes England, as appropriate.

Devolved powers and funding to the Mayor that include:

- compulsory purchase powers
- powers to produce a spatial development strategy for West Yorkshire
- designate an area of land as a mayoral development area and set up a mayoral development corporation to focus on that area's community regeneration and sustainability

Devolved powers to the mayoral combined authority to:

- improve the supply and quality of housing
- secure regeneration or development of land or infrastructure
- support in other ways the creation, regeneration and development of communities
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and good design

The mayoral combined authority will provide a pipeline plan of housing sites in West Yorkshire, to bring more land into development for the delivery of housing on brownfield sites. Regeneration powers will allow compulsory purchase and land acquisition and disposal to support infrastructure and community development and wellbeing.

This includes providing coordination to infrastructure planning such as broadband and utilities management, and energy and risk planning, which includes flood risk management.

Q4a. Do you support or oppose this proposal to devolve housing and planning powers to a West Yorkshire Mayor and mayoral combined authority?

Strongly support

Support

Neither support nor oppose

Oppose

Strongly oppose

Don't know

Q4b. Please use the space below to tell us more about your answer:

Police and Crime Commissioner Functions

The 'minded to' devolution deal announcement included the transfer of Police and Crime Commissioner functions and powers to the Mayor in 2024.

Currently we are exploring the potential to transfer the functions and powers of the Police and Crime Commissioner to the Mayor ahead of the agreed 2024 timeline, possibly as early as 2021. This will deliver enhanced outcomes for the public by strengthening joined up working across public services, for example between inclusive growth and community safety and cohesion. Joining police and crime functions with oversight of other public services in the mayoral combined authority should also promote further collaboration within the area. A mayor exercising police and crime functions will continue to provide a single, directly accountable individual who is responsible for securing an efficient and effective police force in West Yorkshire, in the same way the Police and Crime Commissioner does currently.

It is proposed that the Mayor will have Police and Crime Commissioner functions to:

- issue a police and crime plan
- set the police budget including the council tax requirements
- undertake Chief Constable dismissals, suspensions and appointments

The Mayor will appoint a Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime to delegate functions like:

- determining police and crime objectives
- attending meetings of a Police and Crime Panel
- preparing an annual report
- decisions for auditing and liability limitations

These functions will be transferred from the existing West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, to the Mayor. A Police and Crime Panel will scrutinise the actions and decisions of the Mayor/Deputy Mayor for Policing and enable the public to hold them to account.

Q5a. Do you support or oppose this proposal to transfer Police and Crime Commissioner functions to a West Yorkshire Mayor and mayoral combined authority?

Strongly support

Support

Neither support nor oppose

Oppose

Strongly oppose

Don't know

Q5b. Please use the space below to tell us more about your answer:

The devolution deal agrees a significant shift of powers, funding and responsibility from central government to West Yorkshire. The additional powers and funding would help to drive productivity by enabling additional investment in our towns, cities and rural areas such as infrastructure, skills, business, housing and regeneration, cultural and heritage assets, and by boosting trade, innovation and inward investment. The scheme proposes the full details of how the new functions and changed arrangements will be carried out by the West Yorkshire Mayor and mayoral combined authority.

Are there any comments you would like to make that you do not feel you have addressed in this consultation survey? Please provide detail:

To include: about you information – business and individual applicable