

## **Scrutiny Boards (Housing and Regeneration) and (Sustainable Economy and Culture)**

**4 February 2014**

### **Strategic Economic Plan**

#### **Comments to Executive Board**

The Scrutiny Boards (Housing and Regeneration) and (Sustainable Economy and Culture) held a joint meeting on 4 February 2014 to consider the proposed Leeds City Council input to the Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan.

The Scrutiny Boards would ask the Executive Board to take account of the following observations in finalising the Council's submission to the City Region.

#### General

Members welcomed the opportunity to have an input to this process, and agreed that the format of the joint scrutiny meeting was the most appropriate approach to achieve this.

Members stressed the importance of both the overall regional Plan and the Leeds element of it being of a high enough quality to attract the maximum possible allocation of resources from government.

#### Specific issues

We felt that the final submission and the final version of the Plan itself need to demonstrate a greater sense of ambition on behalf of the city and the region. This was particularly highlighted in relation to transport, where we need greater powers to raise our own funds to deliver our own regional priority projects, as opposed to those which are part of a national funding programme, such as HS2.

We would like to see the private sector within the region and as representatives on the LEP contributing to the generation of finance and investment on behalf of the region.

We felt that the section on West Leeds could be strengthened in terms of transport, and supporting businesses, particularly in the manufacturing sector, to invest and grow in West Leeds and the Leeds-Bradford corridor.

It was felt that housing growth and the provision of the supporting infrastructure should feature as a much stronger theme. This is crucial to ensuring the quality of place that the council is committed to promoting as a feature of housing growth in the city. It will also support our employment and skills aims.

We discussed the need to create good quality employment opportunities for local people to improve the city and region's economy and to enable people to fulfil their potential.

Members suggested that the narrative should emphasise the commitment to tackling poverty, worklessness, low pay and health inequalities to a stronger degree.

We would have found it helpful to see greater specificity in terms of the actual projects in Leeds that the Plan will be putting forward. We were assured that a pipeline of projects was being prepared to a standard that will meet the government's assessment requirements. We would urge that the specific projects included in the Leeds submission reflect the issues raised in our discussion above.

We recommended that the submission should include information on the SWOT analysis for Leeds.