

Report of Chief Executive

Report to Full Council

Date: 8th July 2015

Subject: Devolution

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report is intended to update Members on matters in the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).
2. The main issues described in this report are from the latest public WYCA meeting in March.

Recommendations

3. Members are asked to consider the content of this paper and any action that might be needed from Leeds City Council as a result.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report is intended to update Members on matters in the Leeds City Region LEP and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- 1.2 Specifically this report provides details of the latest public WYCA meeting in March.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Following cross party agreement this is the first report to Full Council to provide an update to Members on the work of the WYCA and Leeds City Region LEP.
- 2.2 The March devolution deal to the WYCA gave a number of functional powers on transport, skills, business support and housing, but was seen very much as being a first step deal and the start of the process. As part of this deal it was noted that WYCA would consult on options for enhanced governance to be agreed with Government as part of any further deal.
- 2.3 Work is being done to build the case for a further devolution deal, looking at the powers, governance and geography of such a deal and what benefits it would bring.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The following items were discussed at the Combined Authority meeting on the 12th March.
 - 3.1.1 *Leeds City Region Housing Requirements.* Work was undertaken by the Leeds City Region Planning Portfolios Board to better understand housing need, the cross boundary impacts of housing markets and joint planning of housing provision across the city region. The report asked for a future report on housing growth and enabling the housing industry to build more homes which would demonstrate links to the delivery of both the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund and the LCR Strategic Economic Plan.
 - 3.1.2 *Leeds City Region Growth Deal Delivery.* This item was to update about preparations for delivery of the Growth Deal, the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund, and the delivery of other City Region projects and programmes. It also endorsed detailed work be conducted between the Investment Committee and the Local Enterprise Partnership's Employment and Skills Panel to explore how to raise awareness of the opportunities for apprenticeships with schools, parents and young people.
 - 3.1.3 *West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund.* Two schemes were considered through the "West Yorkshire Plus" Transport Fund gateway process, one in Halifax and the second the East Leeds Orbital Road.
 - 3.1.4 *Leeds City Region Assurance Framework.* Central government has requested that Local Enterprise Partnerships and their accountable bodies agree an Assurance Framework (publicly available and reviewed annually), as part of the

Growth Deal process. WYCA were asked to approve the Assurance Framework for the Leeds City Region for future investment decisions that would fall within scope.

3.1.5 *Rail North and Transport for the North.* An update on these two initiatives was given for information.

- Rail North has been established to manage the Northern and Trans Pennines franchising contracts which are currently out for tender, taking over from the Department for Transport. The management team for this will be hosted by WYCA, with costs being shared among the partners.
- Transport for the North is a partnership between Northern city regions/ Combined Authorities and the Department for Transport working closely with Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency) and Network Rail. The partnership is producing an initial transport strategy for the North.

3.1.6 *WYCA Development: Transfer of Functions.* This item asked the Combined Authority to agree to the transfer to WYCA of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) staff from Leeds City Region and of the inward investment function carried out by Leeds and Partners.

3.1.7 *Governance and Audit Committee Recommendations.* The Governance and Audit Committee sought approval of their Internal Audit Plan 2015/16, setting out the assignments deemed mandatory or high priority, along with the expected resource required to perform the audit (to be met by the current audit team).

3.1.8 *Devolution and Manifesto.* The Combined Authority received a verbal update in March about a devolution deal and on the development of a WYCA Manifesto. The devolution deal was subsequently announced by George Osborne in his March Budget speech and included powers and functions around transport, skills, housing and business support. A draft WYCA Manifesto is under development to outline the vision for WYCA in simple and accessible language. It is hoped that this will give a clear purpose to the work undertaken and make clear to partners and central government the ambition over the next five years.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

As this report is providing an update from a WYCA meeting, there hasn't been any specific consultation and engagement.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

There are no specific implications for this report.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

The Best Council Plan priorities refer to aspects of the WYCA work and are undertaken in that context.

4.4 **Resources and value for money**

There are no specific implications for this report.

4.5 **Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

4.6 **Risk Management**

There are no specific implications for this report.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to consider the content of this paper and action that might be needed from Leeds City Council as a result.

6 Background documents¹

6.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.