

**Report of: Chief Executive**

**Report to: Full Council**

**Date: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

**Subject: Devolution**

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

### **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 April.

### **Recommendations**

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

### **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 combined authority meeting in April.

## **2. Background information**

- 2.1 Following cross party agreement, this is the eleventh report to Full Council to provide an update to Members on the work of the WYCA and Leeds City Region LEP.
- 2.2 Devolution remains an issue of significant importance to the city region; both in terms of using the powers and flexibilities already devolved, and in making progress towards further devolution. The WYCA continue to be in negotiations with Whitehall officials regarding the freedoms and flexibilities of a possible devolution deal that would build on those deals previously concluded, most recently in March 2015.

## **Main Issues**

- 3.1 The following items were among those discussed at the Combined Authority meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017

### **3.2 Capital Spending and Project Approvals**

The combined authority was asked to approve the progression of, and funding for, schemes from the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund (WY+TF) and Local Growth Deal projects. Projects progress through a three stage process from Pipeline Eligibility, to Pipeline Development, to Delivery and Evaluation.

Project recommendations outlined included:

(Pipeline Eligibility)

- Enterprise Zone Phase 2
- West Yorkshire Cycling and Walking to Work Fund
- National Productivity Investment Fund
- Global Shared Services Centre
- Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy Phase 2

(Pipeline Development)

- Leeds District Heat Network - Change Request

### **3.3 Industrial Strategy**

WYCA discussed the city regions draft response to the Government's consultation on the industrial strategy. The proposed submission focusses on making the industrial strategy 'inclusive growth' focussed and highlighting the following transformative opportunities in the region:

- Doubling the size of Leeds and York city centres;
- Better commercialising our role as a world-class digital economy, with the only UK internet exchange outside of London and commitment to use 5G connectivity to transform business and public services;
- Securing Leeds as the Capital of Culture 2023 and its impact across The Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Bradford's UNESCO City of Film;
- Making the switch to a hydrogen-based economy, with zero carbon emissions at the point of use;
- Go beyond a NEET-free city region, raising skills and employability through more STEM education for future jobs, and seeing equality of skills to tackle the gender gap;
- Improving infrastructure, with a spend per head compared with London unlocking better road, rail and air links; managing the risks and consequences of flooding, and delivering new homes.

#### 3.4 Low emission strategy adoption

The meeting discussed adopting the West Yorkshire Low Emissions Strategy (WYLES) to reduce harmful emissions from transport and other sources which impact on health and the environment. West Yorkshire's urban areas have some of the highest levels of air pollution in the UK.

Given the cross-boundary nature of traffic movements, and shared nature of transport emission problems and possible actions, a joint strategy has been recommended as the best option. Next steps will include a three month process to develop a joint action plan, engaging also with partners such as Highways England.

#### 3.5 Better skills outcomes – delivery agreements with West Yorkshire colleges

The combined authority received an update on the progress of activity to develop delivery agreements with FE colleges in West Yorkshire to influence the alignment of activity. This work is a crucial step to prepare the region for taking on a "commissioning" role, which would be required if the Adult Education Budget is fully devolved in future devolution.

It is intended that a delivery agreement will be published for each of the seven FE colleges in West Yorkshire, demonstrating their current position and setting out actions to achieve the college's future ambition in line with the employment and skills plan.

#### 3.6 European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) update

The meeting received an update on the progress of the region's Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) strategy, which forms part of the UK's allocation of ESIF funding. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between

WYCA and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), and calls for applicants to apply for the funding are expected to be published in July 2017.

The three elements the SUD will focus on are:

1. Site infrastructure,
2. flood remediation and
3. green infrastructure

### 3.7 Integrated Transport Block Programme

As part of the 20 year Transport Strategy, the WYCA meeting considered the proposed integrated transport block programme for 2017-2022, intended to fund smaller scale improvements to transport networks and facilities.

The meeting also considered the 2017/18 National Productivity Investment Fund programme, funded from the £6.925m allocated to WYCA from the Department for Transport in January 2017. WYCA has confirmed its readiness to spend NPIF funding in 2017/18 on improving local road networks and public transport works, and it is expected that future years funding will be made available through a competitive bidding process.

### 3.8 Governance Arrangements

The WYCA meeting considered a proposal to integrate LEP Panels and the Strategic Land and Assets Board into WYCA's decision making structure in the context of the on-going review of Leeds City Region governance arrangements. The principle advantages were outlined as being the streamlining of decision making, having direct private sector involvement in WYCA decision making and increased accountability and transparency. It was agreed that the following Panels be appointed as WYCA advisory committees or sub committees at the Annual Meeting, subject to the outcome of further consultation including with the LEP Board and LEP Panel Chairs:

- Business Innovation and Growth Panel
- Employment and Skills Panel
- Green Economy Panel
- Land and Assets Panel
- Investment Panel (to be appointed as an advisory sub-committee of WYCA's West Yorkshire and York Investment Committee)

The meeting also considered other governance arrangements required by an Order of the Secretary of State that came into force on 8 May, primarily relating to overview and scrutiny arrangements.

## **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.

**4.7 Recommendations**

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

**4.8 Background documents**

None