

**Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development**

**Report to Scrutiny Board (Resources and Council Services)**

**Date: 10 May 2013**

**Subject: Review of Governance Arrangements in West Yorkshire**

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. The Leeds City Region City Deal was agreed with national Government in July 2012. This secured for Leeds City Region genuine freedoms and flexibilities to raise funding and to invest in transport and economic infrastructure, alongside measures to improve skills, and to promote trade and investment. There is now a need to ensure the right governance arrangements in place to oversee and manage the investment resulting from City Deal, and to help secure further devolution from Whitehall of powers and funding to promote economic growth.
2. The Government's requirement for implementing the City Deal fully and for devolving further powers is that West Yorkshire Local Authorities covering Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield put in place a Combined Authority for West Yorkshire by spring 2014.
3. A draft statutory Review of governance arrangements in West Yorkshire has now been undertaken. This was required legally to encompass economic development and regeneration, as well as transport. The conclusions of the draft Review are that there is a strong case for a Combined Authority to secure further funding and devolved powers. The proposed main focus of a Combined Authority is on transport, with it also having general power of competence on economic well-being matters of cross-boundary significance.
4. A draft governance Scheme has been produced to set out the proposed roles and structure of a Combined Authority. This was reported to Executive Board on 24 April and a copy is attached to this report. The purpose of the report to Executive Board

was to provide an update on the Review of governance arrangements in West Yorkshire, and the proposed next steps towards establishing a West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Executive Board in April approved the recommendations in the Report. Executive Board Members highlighted the importance of democratic accountability in the development of the detailed proposals for a Combined Authority.

5. There will now be consultation on these proposals. This Scrutiny Board is being formally consulted as part of that process. A further report on the outcome of the consultation and consideration of the responses received will be considered by Executive Board in June for endorsement by Members, and a recommendation to Council to approve for submission to the Secretary of State in July.
6. Main issues relating to the consultation on the Draft Scheme setting out the proposed roles and structure of a Combined Authority include:

**Roles and extent of powers** – it is proposed that a Combined Authority would have extensive transport powers including those held currently by the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority (which would be dissolved). It is proposed that the powers in relation to economic development and regeneration would be fairly modest, limited to overseeing strategic city region investment funds, and a general power of competence (which would be held concurrently) with the individual Local Authorities.

**Approach to working with individual Local Authorities** – the main focus for a Combined Authority is to secure further devolution of powers from Whitehall, not to pool together powers held currently by individual Local Authorities.

**Decision making structures** – it will be important to ensure decision making structures are effective, involve the right range of elected Members, and there are appropriate scrutiny arrangements.

### **Recommendation**

7. Members are asked to consider the review of governance arrangements in West Yorkshire as set out in the report of the Director of City Development, and make any comments or recommendations.

### **Background papers<sup>1</sup>**

None used

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<sup>1</sup> 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.