

SCR - MAYORAL COMBINED AUTHORITY BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

MONDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 10.00 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING



Present:

Mayor Dan Jarvis MBE (Chair)	SCR Mayoral Combined Authority
Councillor Garry Purdy	Derbyshire Dales DC
Councillor Julie Dore	Sheffield City Council
Mayor Ros Jones CBE	Doncaster MBC
Councillor Simon Greaves	Bassetlaw DC
Councillor Sir Steve Houghton CBE	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Alex Dale	NE Derbyshire DC

Officers in Attendance:

Gareth Sutton	Chief Finance Officer/S73 Officer	SCR Executive Team
Dr Dave Smith	Chief Executive	SCR Executive Team
Dr Ruth Adams	Deputy Chief Executive	SCR Executive Team
Steve Davenport	Principal Solicitor & Monitoring Officer	SCR Executive Team
Mark Lynam	Director of Transport, Housing and Infrastructure	SCR Executive Team
Rob Harvey	Senior Programme Manager	SCR Executive Team
Emily Hickey	Governance and Compliance Officer	SCR Executive Team
Claire James	Senior Governance & Compliance Manager	SCR Executive Team
Sue Sykes	Assistant Director - Programme and Performance Unit	SCR Executive Team
Melanie McCoole (Minute Taker)		

Apologies:

Councillor Chris Read	Rotherham MBC
Councillor Steve Fritchley	Bolsover DC
Councillor Tricia Gilby	Chesterfield BC
James Muir	Chair of LEP Board

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting, and he introduced the Members present.

2 **Announcements**

The Mayor addressed the meeting in respect of the challenges faced as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The latest position on Covid-19 in South Yorkshire caused everyone significant concern. Despite the unstinting work of the NHS and local authorities, the situation remained precarious, with rates of infection rapidly heading in the wrong direction. Every local council was doing all that they could to limit the spread of the virus and to protect communities. It was unacceptable that people both across South Yorkshire and nationally, were unable to obtain a Coronavirus test. As the number of cases significantly increased across the North of England, the Government must ensure that sufficient tests were made available. The Mayor was pressing the Ministers to fix the problem before it became too late.

In relation to the economy, the Mayor stated that it was becoming increasingly clear that the impact of the virus meant that businesses were closing, jobs were being lost and investments were delayed. Government intervention had no doubt, helped mitigate the worst of this. As the Job Retention Scheme wound down in October 2020, and with the risk of further restrictions, it was imperative to have the funding locally to respond, and that the Government listened to businesses, local council leaders and Mayors to implement further measures of support. Over the coming months, the Mayor would push hard on the matter through submissions to the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review and in the Autumn Budget. He would continue to press the Government for the vitally needed investment in flood defences that South Yorkshire so urgently required. It was essential as winter approached, that all of the necessary preparations were made to protect both people and communities from the risk of further flooding.

The Mayor had recently met with the Environment Agency to understand their plans. As the climate changed, it was essential to secure in full the funding for the programme of investment to protect homes and businesses across the region for the long term.

3 **Urgent Items**

Members were informed of the means by which the meeting would be conducted, to be compliant with appropriate legislation and pursuant of SCR's own Constitution.

4 **Items to be Considered in the Absence of Public and Press**

None.

5 **Voting Rights for Non-constituent Members**

It was agreed that agenda items 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16 applied solely to South Yorkshire Members of the Combined Authority.

6 **Declarations of Interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda**

Councillor Dale declared a non-pecuniary interest in the matters to be discussed at agenda item 12 (Adult Education Budget) by virtue of being a Cabinet Member for the Children Services, and Chair of the Derbyshire Adult Community Education Board.

7 **Reports from and questions by members**

None.

8 **Receipt of Petitions**

None.

9 **Public Questions**

Two public questions had been received by Mr Nigel Slack and delivered as follows:-

Question 1 'Just before the country went into lockdown the Mayor announced a proposal to create the position of an Arts and Culture Commissioner for the City Region. What has happened to that proposal?'

Question 2 'With the city and indeed country sitting on the precipice of a second wave, what further plans do the Sheffield City Region have for mitigating the economic impact without risking the safety of our residents?'

In response to Question 1, the Mayor was pleased to report that an Art, Culture and Heritage Project Director would very soon be recruited, following on from the proposal presented earlier in the year. In recent months, focus had been given to advocating the theatres, venues, freelancers and artists, and to make sure that their voice was heard in Whitehall. The Mayor had met with key stakeholders from the Arts Council England and with local cultural organisations to better understand the affects of the lockdown measures. In partnership with the University of Sheffield, two South Yorkshire wide surveys had been undertaken on the impact of the crisis on art and culture, and the music sector. The results of which had fed into a submission to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport call for evidence on the impact of Covid-19.

The Mayor had written to the Department for Digital, Media and Sport to urge the Government to offer financial support specific to the sector. Close working had been undertaken with the local authority partners to create a business case for future growth and investment into the arts, culture and heritage, to unlock their economic and social potential on a city region wide level. Further details would be made available within the 'Unlocking the potential of Culture, Arts and Heritage in South Yorkshire report' which would be published on 22 September 2020. The Mayor had long believed that the arts, culture and heritage sector was not just vital for the economy, but also for our character and spirit. These sectors, were not a luxury, but a vital part of the region's recovery and renewal

which contributed to healthy and sustainable communities, strong local identities and vibrant places, together with the economic recovery. There was now an even greater need to level-up the North, to invest in our communities, and to build a stronger, greener and fairer South Yorkshire, to which culture, arts and heritage must be central to. Once in place the Project Director would add further capacity to work with culture stakeholders to identify creative solutions for the sector to re-open, captivate and offer much needed relief to audiences across South Yorkshire and the wider city region once more.

In response to Question 2, the Mayor stated that the Renewal Action Plan which had been submitted to Government, had outlined the proposals for mitigating the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on our economy and on our people. It set out a number of projects and initiatives to deliver support to our businesses, safeguard jobs and invest in our infrastructure in order to adopt to the changing economic circumstances.

The Mayor commented that it was unacceptable that people were unable to obtain a Coronavirus test, which was a national priority when the Government wanted to reach their target set of 100,000 tests per day. It was vital for the Government to ensure that the necessary testing capabilities were in place, as the tests were now urgently needed, with the rate of cases significantly rising across the North of England. The medical professionals and those on the front line of fighting the virus were correct; the test and trace had descended into chaos. As the number of Coronavirus cases increased daily, and there were vast swathes of areas that were being forced into lockdown. It was now the time to act before more lives, jobs and businesses were put at risk.

As the rates of infection in South Yorkshire continued to head fast into the wrong direction, the Mayor urged all residents, young and old to play their part in slowing the spread of the virus through social distancing, the wearing of face coverings on public transport and in shops, and to isolate if they had Covid-19 symptoms or had been in contact with someone who had symptoms. He also urged the businesses to ensure that they had effective measures in place, to enable their employees to work safely.

The Mayor thanked Mr Slack for his questions.

10 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 July 2020 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

11 **Integration Of The SYPTE With The MCA**

A report was presented to set out for the MCA Board a number of considerations and key milestones in progressing the integration of the PTE fully within the MCA, following agreement to progress the 7-point implementation plan of the Bus Review. There were no indicative timescales at the moment, but planning work would be progressed in advance.

Councillor Dore gave thanks to R Adams, the Mayor and everyone involved in the Bus Review. She welcomed the report and proposal. The current bus

operation showed severe deficiencies in the way that the current bus services operated. She fundamentally believed that the proposal would address those deficiencies. She requested that an update be provided to the South Yorkshire Leaders Board following 6 months of implementation.

The Mayor agreed with Councillor Dore's sentiments, and he agreed that a 6 month review would be undertaken by the South Yorkshire Leaders Board.

RESOLVED – That the MCA Board:-

1. Agreed the aim and objectives, as outlined in section 2.1 to the report, and whether these accurately captured Member's intentions following agreement to the 7-point plan (27.07.20).
2. Noted the proposed workstreams and outline for communication, and that a fuller work programme and risk register would be developed in the coming months.

12 **Adult Education Budget**

A report was submitted which provided a progress update to enable effective commissioning of AEB provision to SCR residents from 1 August 2021.

On 3 August 2020, the MHCLG had confirmed the enactment of the Devolution Order. As a result of which, the MCA would become responsible for c£36m of devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) from 1 August 2021, which would provide funding for the delivery of adult skills activities to the residents of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. During the interim year, the MCA had a series of responsibilities to prepare in readiness for the full implementation in 2021.

Mayor Jones sought assurance that the local authorities would continue to receive funding. She also urged that consideration should be given to those companies that worked hand in glove, especially due to the need to enable individuals to become fully involved and to enable people to return back into training.

Councillor Door endorsed Mayor Jones' comments. She stated that adult education was a very important issue throughout the roles within the local authorities, and was the main sole reason that the MCA was in existence due to the economy and the need for growth. She supported the proposal outlined within the report.

Councillor Dale queried the funding in relation to the South Yorkshire residents that undertook cross border learning into Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire and vice versa.

D Smith referred to the procurement of the grant system. The South Yorkshire local authorities and colleges would continue to receive a grant allocation. Independent providers and those outside of the region, would form part of the procurement process to openly bid for contracts in delivery of the adult education system. Support would be provided to the residents and learners in

South Yorkshire, and to ensure that the funding support followed within the contracts entered into with providers from South Yorkshire and beyond the borders.

Councillor Houghton stated that the immediate challenge was to ensure that the system continued under a new name, to ensure stability. The challenge in the medium to long term was to begin to consider the system, to ascertain whether it was the correct system and whether it was provided correctly moving forwards.

Councillor Greaves referred to the advancement of the Devolution Bill in relation to South Yorkshire. North Notts College was managed by the R&M Group with a key base in Worksop. He was concerned in terms of commissioning arrangements and training provision, as to whether there would be a framework which would result in individuals travelling from South Yorkshire into Worksop, to the disadvantage of the local provision for the North Nottinghamshire area.

D Smith reiterated Councillor Houghton's comments that the MCA did not envisage to make a radical change, but to devolve the system moving forward to ensure that the interests of all learners were protected, and to enhance the services available within the resources available. Opportunities for collaborative working would always be sought in the best interests of learners. The soft lab testing before entering into the formal procurement was to ensure that any issues had been uncovered and addressed through the Skills Board, where a policy position would be adopted in advance of the commencement of a formal procurement.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

1. Endorsed the areas for the MCA Commissioning Strategy and the proposed Commissioning Approach detailed in section 2.2 of the report.
2. Endorsed the Procurement Principles, set out in section 2.4 of the report.
3. Noted the approach to Soft Market Testing set out in section 2.5 of the report.
4. Noted the position regarding Implementation Funding, detailed in section 2.6 of the report.

13

LGF Capital Programme Approvals

A report was presented which sought approval of one scheme with a total value of £2.8m Local Growth Fund (LGF), a change request for an existing project, and approval for delegated authority to be granted to the Head of Paid service in consultation with the Section 73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to enter into a legal agreement for the schemes.

RESOLVED – That MCA Board considered and approved:-

1. Progression of Forge Island Enabling to full approval and award of £2.8m grant (which consisted of £1.5m existing loan being converted to a grant and an additional grant award of £1.3m) to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council subject to the conditions set out in the Appraisal Panel Summary Table.
2. Project change request from “DSAL Passenger Capacity Expansion” to agree an extension to works completion from September 2021 to September 2022 and reprofile of outputs and outcomes in accordance with the revised timescales.
3. Delegated authority be given to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreements for the schemes covered above.

14

SCR MCA Budget Revision

A report was submitted to detail the results of the budget revision exercise, which had been undertaken across the MCA’s revenue budgets and capital programme, following the significant disruption to activity as a result of Covid-19.

The Mayor commented that as with each of the authorities present at the meeting today, Covid has had and continued to have a significant impact on the MCA Group’s finances. With so much uncertainty before us, this was an issue which would need to continue to be kept under review.

Members’ attention was drawn to the following significant arising issues in relation to the commercial viability of the public transport system in South Yorkshire. Following the collapse of patronage on all modes of transport, there had been a requirement for ongoing public support from the Central Government grant and local support from the SCR budgets. In August 2020, the Government had extended the support for the tram into October 2020 and had committed to support bus on a 2 month rolling cycle; parity was still awaited from Government. There was a requirement for an ongoing contribution from Government to the costs, patronage of 55% for bus and 40% for tram. Matters would be undertaken to continuously press Government on the matter, and an internal plan would be devised on the exit strategy from the current funding package.

Income assumption testing had been undertaken, which had identified that the SCR was significantly below where it thought it would be on a number of income streams totalling approximately £1.3m. There were a number of further expenditure requirements that had not been budgeted for i.e. the fit out of Broad Street West, to enable efficient work during the pandemic and agile working whilst ensuring that the correct tools were in place to prevent future disruption. The total of which equated to approximately £2m. Members noted the pace of the Capital Programme, which always included challenging targets for spend over the financial year to meet Government targets. There was a need to pay close attention to the Transforming Cities Fund over the course of the year to develop plans.

On 15 September 2020, the first game share allocation had been received.

Councillor Dore expressed her thanks to G Sutton and everyone involved.

RESOLVED – That the MCA Board:-

1. Noted the disruption to the MCA's income streams and expenditure plans as detailed in the report.
2. Noted the ongoing concerns around the commercial viability of the transport network.
3. Adopted the revised budget estimates.
4. Noted the Section 73 officer's recommendations to not draw down on the Enterprise Zone retained business rate reserve as previously planned.
5. Approved the proposal to fund Bus Review activity from the MCA's SY Transport reserve.
6. Approved the proposal to draw down £500k from the MCA's earmarked Covid reserve to support the MCA Executive's revenue budget.
7. Approved the addition to the capital programme of £411k of new and accelerated capital activity required to support the MCA's response to Covid resilience to be funded from capital receipts unapplied.

15

Cladding Remediation Of High Rise Buildings

A report was presented for the MCA Board to consider progress since the Grenfell Disaster in replacing unsafe cladding on high rise buildings in the Sheffield City Region, and to discuss actions to ensure that the necessary building safety improvements continued.

Members recalled that earlier in the year, the Metro Mayors had made a commitment to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to support progress to remediate cladding on high-rise tower blocks in the respective Combined Authorities, subject to it being safe to do so.

Following the Grenfell Tower incident in 2017, all of the SCR Local Authorities had immediately begun to identify potential tower blocks with similar style aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding system, that could pose a health and safety risk. Barnsley and Rotherham Councils had established that they had no tower blocks of local authority, public sector or private ownership which had ACM cladding. Within Doncaster Council, only one high rise block out of a total of nine owned by the Authority had been identified as containing part ACM cladding and part High Pressure Laminate (HPL) cladding. The cladding had been replaced within six months. The removal costs had been funded by the contractor and the Government's Cladding Remediation Fund (CRF).

The Mayor expressed his thanks to Members for all of the work undertaken to identify and replace unsafe cladding on high-rise buildings in their local authorities, to ensure that they delivered on the pledge made to safeguard the health and safety of residents and those working to remediate those sites during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Councillor Dore gave thanks to C Blackburn and the SCR for collating the information from the local authorities. On behalf of Sheffield City Council, she referred to the clearly identified issues in relation to some of the privately owned developer perspective blocks and the Government's unwillingness to address the matter; whilst noting that it was a greater issue in other areas around the country. She considered that it needed enforcing that the main responsibility of each local authority, as a priority, was to keep its citizens safe. Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the Government had repeatedly stated that it would reimburse the local authorities to keep citizens safe. She considered that the Government's lack of responsibility to keep citizens safe was shameful, and she urged the Mayor to continue to pursue matters with the Government, through the Labour Party.

RESOLVED – That the MCA Board:-

1. Noted the Mayor's pledge to ensure necessary building safety improvements to high rise blocks continued at pace.
2. Noted the positive and rapid actions already undertaken by Local Authorities in the Sheffield City Region to deliver safety improvements to high rise blocks.
3. Discussed ongoing issues experienced in tackling cladding remediation, and further actions that needed to be taken to continue addressing the ongoing safety issues, including any supportive actions by the Mayor.

16 Governance Arrangements to Support the Leadership of Thematic Priorities

A report was presented to seek approval of governance changes (including changes to the Constitution) to the Thematic Boards which were first established by the MCA in early 2019.

Councillor Houghton requested that when decisions were required by the Thematic Boards, that they should be circulated to Members of the MCA Board prior to those decisions being made, and that once those decisions had been made, that they be reported back to the MCA Board.

Councillor Greaves acknowledged the devolution arrangements and the shift in emphasis in relation to the SCR and Combined Authority. He was mindful that the North Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Authorities were non-constituent Members. Earlier on in the year, the Chair had reached out to those overlap areas to discuss future matters. He would have expected those conversations to have taken place in advance of the MCA decision that was likely to be taken

today. He understood the shift in emphasis, but in his view, it was for Bassetlaw to represent its own interests. He sincerely hoped that meaningful arrangements would be considered in the future within the spirit of what had been embarked upon originally.

The Mayor commented that this did mark a shift in emphasis which had been forced upon the MCA by events, not least the Government's decision to reorganise the local enterprise partnership arrangements. From a South Yorkshire perspective, it was important to continue with the best possible working arrangements with non-constituent members. Ongoing conversations were required to ensure that the MCA met the standards set.

Councillor Purdy referred to the recent email conversations on the matter. He sought a good relationship with the MCA as the bulk of the North Derbyshire Dales was intrinsically linked with the Sheffield area. He considered that it was incorrect to have a boarder cut off. He was happy to continue attending the MCA Board meetings and liaison, and he considered that constructive relationship work was required to reach an agreement.

Members noted the importance for South Yorkshire to have the best possible relationship with its neighbours. Further conversations would take place amongst the Leaders to reach an agreement that was satisfactory to all parties.

Councillor Dale reiterated the points made. It was necessary to enable an ability to constructively work together in the future. North East Derbyshire had chosen to become a non-constituent Member of the MCA Board, and he did not want this to prevent the four South Yorkshire local authorities from making decisions in relation to a devolution deal which were South Yorkshire specific.

The Mayor would take Councillor Dale's comments away as an action point, with a view to reporting back to Members on proposals of how best to proceed.

RESOLVED – That the MCA Board approved:-

1. The changes to the Thematic Boards set out in sections 2.2 to 2.6 within the report.
2. The Monitoring Officer to make the consequential amendments to the Constitution by adopting the Terms of Reference at Appendices A-D.

I, the undersigned, confirm that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed

Name

Position

Date