

Mayoral Combined Authority Board

06 June 2022

Mayoral Priorities

Is the paper exempt from the press and public? No

Reason why exempt: Not applicable

Purpose of this report: Discussion

Is this a Key Decision? No

Has it been included on the Forward Plan? No

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Executive Summary

This report sets out a programme of early interventions led by the Mayor to deliver against his Manifesto commitments and an indication of some short term priorities for action.

What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?

The Mayor's Manifesto sets out an ambition to transform South Yorkshire; delivering a better public transport system; securing higher value and better paid jobs; a cleaner and greener South Yorkshire; healthier and happier communities; supported by an approach that will focus on a different and more pervasive way of engaging with communities and businesses and supported through a strong partnership with government.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

1. Note the content of this report.

Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel

N/A

1. Background

- 1.1 The Mayor's priorities as set out in the Manifesto outline a clear direction for the Mayoralty. This direction is routed around the principal themes of politics, people and place. Across these themes there are particular priorities that align with, build on and extend into new arena's of the MCAs work to date. These include:
- Getting to Net Zero by 2040.
 - Building a better, not just bigger economy, including championing and investing in technologies and industries of the future.
 - Investing in places to create more liveable communities.
 - Enhancing provision of Skills and Adult Education; including undertaking a Future of Work Commission.
 - Delivering real public transport improvements, including commitments to expediting the MCA's commitment to assess Franchising for buses, a Tram Review learning from the Bus Review together with a continuing commitment to Active Travel.
- 1.2 The manifesto signals a change of style and approach with an emphasis on creating a new deal with national government and a commitment to doing politics differently in South Yorkshire.
- 1.3 With the Mayor only in post for a short period of time early progress has focused on establishing ("resetting") a productive relationship with government, re-engaging with communities and public transport users, speaking to businesses, reaching out to public transport operators and user groups, supporting the recovery of bus patronage, securing rapid progress on a review of the long-term state of the bus network and bringing forward proposals to the MCA aimed at mitigating the cost of living crisis.

2. Key Issues

2.1 **Engaging with national government:**

The Mayor has opened up a renewed dialogue with Government, including:

- Writing to the Prime Minister seeking to develop a meaningful and productive relationship with the Government to deliver on the twelve national Levelling Up Missions set out the Queen's Speech. This letter set out where South Yorkshire currently sits against the Missions and called upon the Government to work with us to deliver them.
- Meeting alongside the other Metro Mayors with the Secretary of State for the Department for Education and pressed him and his team to support South Yorkshire with further devolution and influence over vocational education to match our devolved Adult Education Budget powers.
- Writing to the Secretary of State for Transport, signalling our appetite to work with the DfT to deliver on bus, tram, rail and active travel investment whilst also making clear that:
 - o the challenges facing commercial bus operations in South Yorkshire need a long term revenue solution
 - o the Government's rejection of the BSIP funding submission and the Integrated Rail Plan fall short of providing the investment we need
 - o the MCA needs to enter into further discussions on Supertram investment and

- that the Departments support for the MCAs developing Levelling Up Fund transport bid will be critical.

2.2 **Engaging with businesses, communities and places**

The Mayor has made it a priority to reset and reengage businesses and communities. In the first weeks of the Mayoralty this has included speaking with businesses in a roundtable hosted by the three Chambers of Commerce in South Yorkshire, speaking directly to readers of the Sheffield Star and Barnsley Chronicle, meeting with the Better Buses group, convening a meeting of the Bus Commissioners, visiting the Stagecoach Rawmarsh bus depot, meeting with the SYMCA Transport Contact Centre and hearing first-hand from public transport users questions, queries and complaints about the South Yorkshire transport system.

Activity during Better Business week included steps to establish positive proactive relationships with the Living Wage Foundation, the Trades Unions, Employer Owned businesses and Cooperatives, championing businesses with strong Environmental, Social and Governance approaches and showcasing the MCA's own Skills Bank and Working Win projects that support employees in employment.

2.3 **Progress on public transport improvements**

The Mayor has made rapid progress on a number of public transport fronts, including engaging with the Secretary of State for the Department for Transport, confirming internal resources required to undertake the Franchising Assessment work, writing to bus operators signalling our intention in the coming months to formally request the data on patronage, performance and financial information and bringing forward for consideration by the MCA an option for a short continuation of the Zoom Beyond pass which provides concessionary travel to 18-21 year olds in South Yorkshire.

2.4 **Developing a Manifesto Delivery Plan**

With a new emphasis on a manifesto-led approach the MCA Executive Team will be working closely with the Mayor to develop a detailed plan with a set of prioritised actions. This plan will be driven by the themes and priorities set out in the Mayor's manifesto and will inform detailed discussions with thematic board leads and Leaders.

2.5 **Delivering on transport improvements in the short term**

In the coming months the Mayor will be focused on:

- Appointing a new Active Travel Commissioner for South Yorkshire and engaging with active travel groups and the new Active Travel England body.
- Delivering the new Enhanced Partnership Forum and ensuring the Enhanced Partnership Board delivers for South Yorkshire; including a new Customer Charter.
- Resetting relationships with the public transport operators, challenging poor performance but also working with those operators to enable them to deliver for transport users.
- Progressing at pace our work on Franchising Assessment.

- Delivering a compelling Levelling Up Fund bid for transport improvements in the here and now.

2.6 Engaging with communities and stakeholders

In the coming months the Mayor will be focused on establishing new forums for engaging with people, business and communities right across South Yorkshire. This will include:

- meeting with and confirming a continued commitment to the Youth Mayoral Combined Authority.
- putting in place a programme of public facing Mayor's Question Time themed events enabling a more direct conversation with the communities served across the region.
- ensuring that stakeholders and communities are engaged in developing the MCAs approach to the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Developing our collective thinking on what the region can do to grow it's Arts, Culture and Heritage offer.

2.7 Net Zero

Work over the coming months will include:

- Representing South Yorkshire's communities and businesses at the national Decarbonisation Summit in Manchester.
- Kickstarting engagement with partners on the development of the MCAs Local Nature Recovery Strategy for South Yorkshire.
- Developing plans to convene a South Yorkshire Citizen's Assembly on Net Zero and establishing a Retrofit Task Force.

2.8 Business, Economy and Skills

Work over the coming months will include:

- Overseeing the establishment of the South Yorkshire Innovation Board and meeting with key innovation businesses and innovation assets (including the University of Sheffield Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre, the Sheffield Hallam University Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre and National Centre of Excellence for Food Engineering) and place-based assets such as the Barnsley Digital Media Centre and working with Doncaster on the development of the innovation potential of the Gateway East site.
- Oversight of a number of business case proposals to the MCA to unlock private finance investment in businesses in South Yorkshire.
- A focus on promoting and support 'better business', including engaging with partners including the Living Wage Foundation, Cooperatives UK, the Ownership Hub and organisations engaged in Community Wealth Building to bring forward a community wealth building strategy for South Yorkshire.
- Leading work on Destination Management and Marketing of South Yorkshire; working with the Yorkshire Leaders Board, Leaders and key stakeholders on developing a response to the Yorkshire DMO review and how South Yorkshire plays its full part in Yorkshire wide arrangements as well working with partners to develop the South Yorkshire story and how the region promotes itself nationally and internationally.
- Supporting the co-chairs of the Education, Skills and Employment Board on the development of the MCAs Skills Strategy.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

3.1 At this stage there are no alternative options to consider.

4. Consultation on Proposal

4.1 n/a

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 n/a

6. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice

6.1 n/a

7. Legal Implications and Advice

7.1 n/a

8. Human Resources Implications and Advice

8.1 n/a

9. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice

9.1 The Mayor committed to undertake an annual equality impact assessment of the work of the MCA.

10. Climate Change Implications and Advice

10.1 Given the prominence of net-zero in the Mayor's manifesto, climate change implications will be given consideration throughout the delivery of the Mayor's agenda.

11. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice

11.1 N/A at this stage

12. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice

12.1 n/a

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

[Oliver Coppard: Our future – Rebuilding the pride, purpose and prosperity of South Yorkshire](#)