



Angela Foulkes

Councillor Terry Fox  
Louisa Harrison-Walker  
Councillor Chris Read  
Councillor Julie Grocutt  
Damian Allen  
Kate Josephs  
Sharon Kemp

Private Sector LEP Board  
Member  
Sheffield City Council  
Sheffield Chambers  
Rotherham MBC  
Sheffield City Council  
City of Doncaster Council  
Sheffield City Council  
Rotherham MBC

## 72 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Apologies were noted as above.

## 73 **Declarations of Interest**

As representatives of skills providers in the region, Professor Kevin Kerrigan and Professor Koen Lamberts both declared an interest in item 6, Skills Strategy Development.

## 74 **Notes of Last Meeting and Action Log**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023 be agreed as a true record.

**RESOLVED:** to note updates to the action log.

## 75 **The South Yorkshire Economy - Presentation**

A presentation on the South Yorkshire Economy was given which highlighted the following:

- Inflation was still high, but was steadily declining, and forecast to be at 3% by the end of the year,
- Interest rates were also still high, and were forecast to remain high but stop rising in 2023,
- The economic growth is flat, but was forecast to improve in 2024,
- Economic inactivity was at 8.5 million people, and the post-Covid increase was mainly driven by long term sickness, and is especially prevalent in households over the age of 50 and in low wealth households,
- Unemployment claimant rates had fallen since the pandemic, and were now almost returned to the pre-pandemic level, following the national average,
- The cost of energy was forecast to return to competitive market operation by the second half of 2023.

Specifically, regarding the local region it was noted that:

- Surveys of businesses had shown that most were expecting their

- workforces to grow in the coming year,
- The greatest concerns for businesses at this time was costs increasing,
- High interest rates will be increasingly felt by businesses over coming months and years as arranged debt is renewed.

It was asked how many businesses in the region had made use of the super-deduction capital allowance. **ACTION: Senior Economic Policy Manager** - A response was given that this information wasn't currently known, but would be looked in to.

**RESOLVED:** To note the update.

## 76 **National Policy Environment and Government Engagement: South Yorkshire Approach**

An update was presented of the National Policy Environment and Government Engagement with South Yorkshire. It noted in particular the creation of 3 new Government departments: the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, and Department for Business and Trade.

Policy changes in the March budget were expected to be:

- Extension of powers for 'devolution trailblazers' Greater Manchester and West Midlands, with new powers being announced, as well as existing devolved powers being extended,
- Focus on research and development as a driver of economic growth. It was noted that there are a number of assets in South Yorkshire which align with this priority,
- The possible announcement of Investment Zones, which the MCA was prepared to respond to quickly.

A discussion was had on Treasury clawback of investment in railways, and the subsequent impact on South Yorkshire, in particular cuts to services.

The Chair requested that with changes to government departments, the MCA's stakeholder engagement catalogue be reviewed. **ACTION: Assistant Director External Affairs** – to bring a more detailed approach to this at a future meeting.

**RESOLVED:** To note the update.

## 77 **Skills Strategy Development**

An update report on the development of the SYMCA Skills Strategy was presented. It noted that:

- KADA Consultancy had completed a series of workshops with stakeholders, and work was now underway to identify key opportunities, gaps and risks which need addressing in the strategy,
- The issues identified in this work would then be tested with relevant groups such as the Regional Skills Advisory Board, colleges and training providers, and employers,
- The final strategy would establish a set of shared priorities for the region,

a detailed outcomes framework and an implementation plan.

Key sectors to target had been identified as:

- Digital skills,
- Green skills,
- Cultural and creative sectors,
- Health and social care.

The discussions and the available evidence base had been developed into five broad themes:

- A strong start for a secure future,
- Lifelong learning and creating a resilient and inclusive workforce/communities,
- Changing futures,
- The place for innovation and enterprise,
- A connected and responsive system.

The Board discussed key elements which should also be addressed in the strategy, including the deployment of Apprenticeship Levy funding, an innovation and higher technical skills pipeline and the unequal distribution of skills provision for older age groups.

**ACTION: Assistant Director Employment & Skills** - to present a draft of the strategy to the LEP Board before it is agreed by the MCA.

**RESOLVED:** To note the update.

78

### **UKREiiF Update**

A report on attendance at the UK Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREIIF) was presented. It noted that:

- The UKREiiF event would be an opportunity to refresh and relaunch the proposition for the region,
- A steering group had been formed and was meeting regularly to develop a programme of engagement from the MCA alongside Local Authorities and local partners,
- There was high demand for a programme of activity as part of the main event, but also at the South Yorkshire stand space and at fringe venues,
- The online investible opportunities portfolio was undergoing updates to reflect current portfolio opportunities.

Board members emphasised the need for a clear and consistent brand and message from South Yorkshire at the event.

**RESOLVED:** To note the update.

79

### **Integrated Care Partnership: Expert Panel Update**

An update report was presented on the Integrated Care Partnership, and the formation of an Expert Panel. It noted the prevalence of lower life expectancy and high health inequalities in the region, and the Mayor's manifesto commitment to making South Yorkshire the healthiest region in the country.

It was noted that healthy life expectancy is linked to many other areas of the MCA's work, including skills provision and bolstering the well-respected health, wellbeing and Med Tech industries in the region.

Professor Alan Walker, Co-Director of the University of Sheffield Healthy Lifespan Institute and Chair of the Task and Finish Group established to deliver this work, also noted that:

- The task and finish group would have a short lifespan, focussed on reviewing existing research and evidence of health outcomes in the region, identifying key opportunities, and producing an plan of medium and long term actions,
- The Health Advisory Action Panel would comprise Directors of Public Health, academic partners, and partners across the business and voluntary sectors,
- The ageing population in South Yorkshire meant that increasing life expectancy would be key to meeting the needs of the labour market.

Board members expressed their support for this work, but also expressed caution about the scale of the issue seeking to be tackled, and the need to therefore engage many workstreams and partners.

**RESOLVED:** To note the update.

80 **MCA and LEP: Policy and Programmes Update**

An update was provided on ongoing MCA and LEP Policy and Programmes, noting in particular:

- The appointment of Ed Clancy as the new Active Travel Commissioner,
- Approval of £6m funding for the new National Centre for Child Health Technology (NCCHT),
- The Convention of the North event in January.

**RESOLVED:** To note the update.

81 **Forward Plan**

A Forward Plan for future meetings of the Board was presented.

**RESOLVED:** To note the Forward Plan.

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

Signed .....

Name .....

Position .....

Date .....