

May 2019**Mayor's Update****Purpose of Report**

To provide LEP Board Members with an update on key Mayoral activity relating to the economic agenda.

1. One year in office

I have recently reached the milestone of completing my first year in office as Mayor. As I set out in the [Yorkshire Post](#), I am proud of the progress that has been made so far, but am mindful that there is still much to do. Our combined ability to harness the region's potential by continuing to grow our economy, sparking more innovation and inspiration by connecting people, places, businesses and ideas, will be a key measure of success.

In the months and years ahead I am confident that the LEP will build on successes to date and position itself to play an ambitious role in refreshing our Strategic Economic Plan and developing our Local Industrial Strategy; leveraging additional investment from Government; and providing more transparent, accountable, efficient and effective decision making through the implementation of our new governance model.

2. Brexit

Whilst the timetable for the UK's withdrawal from the EU has changed, uncertainty remains regarding the process by which this will take place and the nature of the future trading relationship. Within this context the SCR continues to plan for the various scenarios that may arise. This includes exploring and seeking to better understand the potential opportunities and risks associated with these options.

3. Devolution

At the Mayoral Combined Authority meeting on Monday 25th March, the four constituent local authority leaders and I announced an agreed position on the delivery of devolution in South Yorkshire. This was an extremely positive development intended to unlock powers and funding until the end of this mayoral term in 2022. At that point individual local authorities should be able to pursue their own devolution ambitions, without detriment to any constituent member that may wish to remain part of the current Combined Authority.

This is proposed as a pragmatic solution that will enable the SCR to secure and benefit from the 2015 devolution deal without hindering the long-term devolution ambitions of individual local authorities. Our position, and suggested approach, has been laid out in a [letter](#) to the Secretary of State, a response to which was received on the 7th of May. This represents an important step towards the devolution of further powers and resources to communities across our region (attached at Annex A). The Secretary of State's positive reply provides the basis for further dialogue, with leaders locally and nationally, which we must now grasp to reach a consensus to access the powers and resources that our region needs to continue its economic transformation

4. Active Travel Commissioner appointment

On the 1st April I announced Dame Sarah Storey's appointment as our region's first Active Travel Commissioner. Dame Sarah is Britain's most successful female Paralympian of all time and I am excited to have such an exceptional, inspirational and passionate individual leading our active travel agenda.

Dame Sarah will play a crucial role in helping us to make sure that active travel remains an absolute priority as we make our region's transport network fit for the 21st century. By prioritising active travel, we can improve people's health, cut carbon emissions and reduce congestion. I am looking forward to working with her on this important agenda.

6. Bus Review

Clive Betts MP, the Chair of the independent Bus Review will shortly be announcing the panel of Commissioners with whom he will be undertaking this work. This announcement will include details of how the public and all stakeholder-partners can get involved in this process, sharing their views and experiences of the bus network. The review is looking at all options for improving bus services across South Yorkshire and, ultimately, will conclude by making a series of recommendations on how we can work together to tackle issues such as declining patronage, congestion and air quality so that we have bus services fit for the 21st Century.

7. Transport Conference

On the 9th May I convened a Transport Conference, which brought together key figures including Dame Sarah Storey, Chris Boardman, John Cridland, Clive Betts and a member of our Youth Combined Authority, with around 100 attendees to consider how we can deliver the region's transport vision.

Critically we discussed how we can deliver the connectivity our region needs to connect people, places and ideas, whilst also enabling people to shift from using their cars to more active and sustainable modes of transport. Such a shift is essential if we are to successfully tackle air quality, improve public health and social mobility. This means we must create communities where people can choose to live healthy and active lifestyles.

8. Shared Prosperity Fund

The Government has not yet published its Shared Prosperity Fund consultation. I will be leading a debate in Parliament on this issue on the 14th May, in which I will set out my expectations for how this fund must be designed. As the successor to the Local Growth Fund and European Structural Funds, which total in excess of half a billion pounds of investment in the area over the last 5 years, it is vital that we secure an approach that works for the Sheffield City Region.

More broadly, I will be meeting with the Transport Minister Jesse Norman soon, to discuss the process by which Government makes investment decisions on transport investments, where I will be making the case for a fairer distribution of this funding, recognising opportunity and not just demand.

9. The Music Board

The SCR Music Board, chaired by Laura Bennett, brings together a mix of individuals and organisations who promote our unique cultural offer. The Board has been established to ensure we promote our strengths nationally and internationally, creating a stronger culture of creativity and talent development and growing the creative industries' contribution to our economy. The first Board of its kind to meet outside of London, its third meeting, taking place on the 10th May, will discuss the actions needed to deliver its vision and priorities.