

**INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD**

**9<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2019**

**GOVERNANCE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Purpose of Report**

This report summarises the governance arrangements for the Infrastructure Board, clarifies the reporting obligations and proposes dates for future meetings.

**Freedom of Information**

Thematic Board Papers and any appendices will be made available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme. This scheme commits the Authority to make information about how decisions are made available to the public as part of its normal business activities.

**Recommendations**

Board members are asked to:

1. note the governance arrangements, reporting obligations and proposed future dates and identify any issues.
2. agree for Board meetings to be scheduled in accordance with the proposal set out in para 2.2

**1. Introduction**

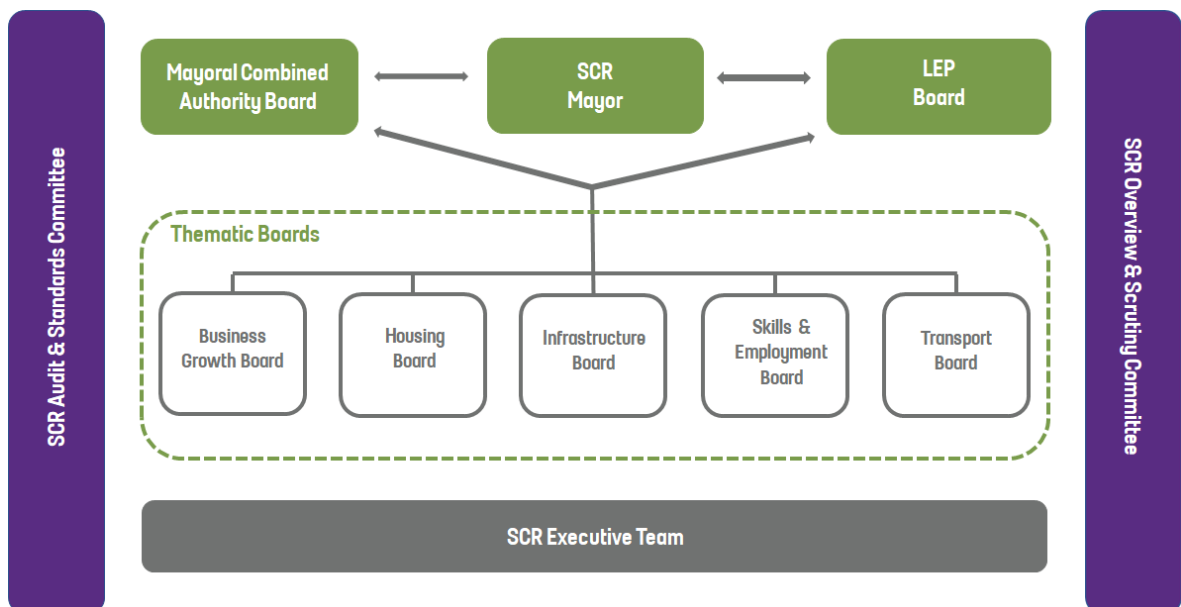
- 1.1** Following consultation with partners and a review of the models in other mayoral combined authorities, the MCA and LEP at their meetings 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 14<sup>th</sup> January respectively approved strengthened governance arrangements. These arrangements have been designed to create more efficient, effective and transparent decision-making processes. The MCA Constitution has been amended to reflect these new arrangements. From the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 five thematic boards, with appropriate delegations to complement their role in implementing policy and programmes more transparently, came into effect.

1.2 The main changes to the governance structure from 1 April 2019 are:

- **Increasing the number of Thematic Boards from four to five by separating housing and infrastructure** – the five Thematic Boards are Business Growth, Housing, Infrastructure, Skills and Employment and Transport.
- **Delegating authority** – the Thematic Boards have the authority to approve projects and schemes with a value of less than £2m.
- **Meeting frequency reduced to an eight-weekly cycle** – this will allow more time for work to be progressed between Board meetings.
- **Establishing a procedure for making urgent decisions between meetings** – Thematic Boards will be permitted to make decisions by written procedure by exception, when a decision falls outside the parameters of the meeting cycle.
- **Housing Investment** - the Housing Investment Board (HIB) has ceased to operate and its responsibilities for approving Housing Investment Fund applications have been moved under the Housing Board.
- **Business Investment Fund** – the Business Investment Fund (BIF) Panel has ceased to operate and its responsibilities for approving BIF applications have moved under the Business Growth Board.
- **Key decisions published in advance** – decisions that will be taken by each Thematic Board will be published in the SCR Forward Plan of Key Decisions 28 days in advance of the decision being made
- **Papers and agendas published on the SCR website** – meeting agendas and papers will be published five clear working days in advance of a Board meeting and minutes will be published within ten clear working days after the meeting
- **Mechanism for the public to ask questions** - members of the public are be able to submit questions to the Thematic Board in relation to Key Decision items and will be given a written response following the relevant meeting.

The terms of reference for the Infrastructure Board is included at Appendix A.

1.3 Figure 1 below sets out the revised SCR Board and Sub-Board structure:



#### 1.4 Reporting

Investment decisions taken within delegated authority will be reported to the next available appropriate Board (LEP or MCA). These will form part of the regular 'Programme Approvals' item. Any investment decisions above the delegated authority limit will be

considered by the board and then presented, with the boards endorsement, to the next available MCA as part of the 'Programme Approvals' paper.

The progress and performance of schemes relevant to the Board's thematic area will be reported regularly to the Board and to the MCA.

The Executive, in liaison with the Board Co-Chairs, will ensure that any thematic cross cutting issues relevant to one or more Boards are communicated between Boards. Issues considered by the Transport Board may be particularly relevant to the Infrastructure Board agenda, especially transport schemes would support wider growth and development.

## 2. Proposal and justification

**2.1** This paper proposes that the Infrastructure Board meets during week four of the MCA eight-week cycle. This will allow any decisions requiring escalation to the MCA due to the value exceeding the delegation, to progress through the decision making process in a timely manner.

### 2.2 Proposed dates

Based on the agreed 2019 MCA dates and the proposed 2020 MCA dates, week four of the eight-week cycle through to December 2020, would mean that meetings would need to be scheduled in the following timeframes:

Proposed Infrastructure Board dates (week 4 of the 8-week cycle)	MCA Date (week 8 of the 8-week cycle)
26/08/19 – 30/08/19	23/09/19
21/10/19 – 25/10/19	18/11/19
*30/12/19 - 03/01/20	27/01/20
24/02/20 – 28/02/20	23/03/20
04/05/20 – 08/05/20	01/06/20
29/06/20 – 03/07/20	27/07/20
24/08/20 – 28/08/20	21/09/20
19/10/20 – 23/10/20	16/11/20

\*potentially move to week 5 to avoid Christmas holidays

## 3. Consideration of alternative approaches

**3.1** It is recognised that the areas of activity that the Infrastructure Board may evolve over time such as a result of changes in SCR policies and priorities as a result of the review of the Strategic Economic Plan and preparation of the Local Industrial Strategy. Any proposed changes would need to be endorsed by the LEP and MCA.

**3.2** There may be opportunities, subject to diaries, to arrange the meetings at a different time within the 8-week MCA schedule. However, this could lead to non-alignment with the MCA meetings and result in delays to any investment Key Decisions which need to be referred to the MCA due to being £2m or above.

## 4. Implications

### 4.1 Financial

Thematic Boards have the authority to approve projects and schemes with a value of less than £2m. This provides consistency with the limits previously place for the BIF and Housing Investment Boards and is below the average (financial) value of schemes currently being funded through the LGF programme. The Thematic Boards are also able to accept tenders and quotations for the supply of goods, materials and services up to a limit of £200,000.

#### **4.2 Legal**

The changes have been captured in the MCAs Constitution and elements of the LEPs governance framework and came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

#### **4.3 Risk Management**

Strong governance arrangements in the Sheffield City Region are an important mechanism in managing a number of corporate risks. This reflects the commitment of both the MCA and LEP to transparency, and the clear delineation of responsibilities between different elements of the decision-making system.

#### **4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion (Equality Act - Public Sector Equality Duty)**

In line with the LEP's Diversity Policy equality and diversity has been taken into consideration in the composition of the Thematic Boards.

### **5. Communications**

**5.1** It is important to clarify and communicate to the public how decisions are made by the MCA, LEP and Thematic Boards in order to provide transparency and to ensure accountability for how public funds are invested. The roles and responsibilities of the new Thematic Boards are explained in the SCR Assurance Framework and the MCA Constitution which is published on the SCR website. All meeting papers and membership of the Thematic Boards will be published on the SCR website.

### **6. Appendices/Annexes**

**6.1** Appendix A – Terms of Reference

<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Claire James
<b>POST</b>	Senior Governance & Compliance Manager
Director responsible	Mark Lynam
Email	Mark.lynam@sheffieldcityregion.org.uk
Telephone	0114 2203445

Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ

Other sources and references: