

## Mayoral Scrutiny: SYMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee (14<sup>th</sup> March 2024)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair has asked that we provide a short summary of the Mayor's focus since December 2023:

- **Transfer of control of Supertram:** In January, a business plan was approved for the SYMCA-owned South Yorkshire Future Trams Ltd, which will operate Supertram from 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024. The Mayor and Combined Authority have been working hard to ensure a smooth transition.
- **Reopening Doncaster Sheffield Airport:** The Mayor and the February MCA Board agreed to an Outline Business Case to reopen Doncaster Sheffield Airport, as part of a wider South Yorkshire Airport City development including the Gateway East site. At the same time, the Mayor has been engaging with the Department for Transport to secure additional funding to support DSA.
- **Bus franchising assessment process:** The Mayor has been working alongside officers and other MCA Board members to assess options for how we operate our bus system. We have provided notice of a key decision for our 12<sup>th</sup> March MCA Board to review the bus franchising assessment.
- **Bus funding and changes:** The Mayor launched his joint campaign for fair funding with the Sheffield Star. Information from last autumn's campaign of public bus meetings has been used to negotiate route and timetable changes with operators, to take effect from April 2024.
- **Active travel:** The Mayor launched his "Year of Active Travel", including weekly Park Runs across South Yorkshire and regular visits to schools across the region to encourage walking, running and cycling. He met with Active Travel England Commissioner Chris Boardman and ATE officials to discuss plans to improve active travel across the region.
- **Economic growth:** In February the MCA Board approved the design proposals of our Investment Zone, which are now with DHLUC for sign-off. We also signed Memoranda of Understanding with Aviva Capital Partners and South Yorkshire Pension Fund, as well as a Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England. In our March MCA Board, the MCA will consider a Plan for Growth and a Skills Strategy.
- **Transfer of Police and Crime Commission Functions:** From late December to late January, the Home Office ran a consultation on the transfer of the OPCC into the office of the Mayor. An order was subsequently laid in parliament in early February to enable the transfer. Parliament has until late March. If it is approved, there will be a South Yorkshire Mayoral election on 2 May with the pre-election period commencing 26 March.
- **Further devolution:** The Mayor, alongside other leaders on the MCA Board, wrote to the Levelling Up Secretary formally requesting "level 4" devolution, which would enable additional partnerships (like the Homes England Strategic Place Partnership) and spending flexibilities in regeneration and transport.
- **Governance changes:** A Mayor's Economic Advisory Council was appointed in January made up of national and international leaders who will help shape the strategic economic vision in South Yorkshire. The Mayor hosted the first meeting of MEAC with visits to Barnsley, Goldthorpe and the AWRC.