

[Open letter to the business community]

Dear Colleague,

In West Yorkshire, we have a long and proud history of the private and public sectors working in partnership to grow our economy and create a fairer, more prosperous and sustainable society. Before the pandemic struck, this partnership had led to our region being the only net contributor to the UK economy in the North.

The Leeds City Region LEP has long been one of the most diverse and successful LEPs in the country, leading on the delivery of the £1bn Growth Deal.

The Government announced in its Spring Budget that Local Enterprise Partnerships would no longer be supported from 2024, and that the role they have previously played would be brought into Mayoral Combined Authorities.

In our region, this means completing the process that has already been underway to integrate the LEP fully into the Mayoral Combined Authority. Throughout the integration process all partners have been clear that the strong partnership between the public and private sector in West Yorkshire must be maintained. The model that we have in our region is held up at a national level as best practice and therefore any changes made must not destabilise this.

Whether the issue has been how to encourage more people to start and grow businesses, or to provide services to develop skills, how to improve transport in our region, or investment to tackle the climate emergency, the private and public sectors have sat side by side in shaping and taking decisions about our strategies and our investments.

We want this model of deep partnership to continue, because we know that only by the private and public sectors working together can we make the change we want to see: to make our region globally competitive whilst also providing opportunity so that everyone can reach their potential.

The private sector will therefore remain represented within the Mayoral Combined Authority and its committees, and will remain a fundamental partner in decision-making and delivery.

We are grateful to every member of the private sector who provides their time freely to help shape the future of our region. We are now recruiting for new private sector members to go on the next stage of the journey with us. We are looking for people who would like to share their experience, knowledge, connections and passion for the region, in order to help us deliver better outcomes for the people and businesses of West Yorkshire.

We know that the Government's announcement was greeted with concern that some places might seek to roll back on commitments to ensure the private sector voice was heard. Please be reassured that in West Yorkshire, this will not be the case.

Best wishes,



Tracy Brabin  
Mayor of West Yorkshire



Mark Roberts  
Interim Chair Leeds City Region LEP



Ben Still  
Chief Executive