

# Responses to issues raised

## Devolution Consultation

November 2020

A decorative graphic consisting of two overlapping, curved bands of teal color that sweep across the bottom right corner of the page.

# Consultation on the devolution deal

Between 25 May and 19 July 2020, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held a public consultation on the devolution deal. A total of 4,113 responses were received, making it the largest ever public consultation on English regional devolution. Analysis and reporting on the responses received was produced independently by Ipsos Mori, published, and submitted to the Secretary of State. The full analysis report can be viewed [here](#).

The feedback received to the public consultation included support for the proposals of the devolution deal and highlighted opportunities for the region. These opportunities were not just about the detail of the devolution deal but included wider issues and areas of interest to the public and stakeholders who took part in the consultation.

The devolution deal begins the journey for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority transitioning to a Mayoral Combined Authority, with the election of the first Mayor for West Yorkshire in May 2021. Alongside significant immediate benefits that were presented in the consultation, it means that West Yorkshire will benefit from new Mayoral funding streams and continued discussions with Government over further powers and funding to achieve our ambitions.

This 'You said, we did' table summarises in the left column those issues and opportunities that were mentioned through the consultation, and in the right column sets out how we think devolution can meet those issues and opportunities, immediately or in the future.

## Content:

Theme:	Topics covered:
<a href="#">General themes:</a>	Cost, bureaucracy, decision making
<a href="#">Governance</a>	Decision making, local communities
<a href="#">Transport</a>	Ticketing, climate emergency
<a href="#">Employment and skills</a>	Unemployment, upskilling
<a href="#">Housing and planning</a>	Affordable housing, energy efficiency
<a href="#">Police and crime</a>	Accountability, politicisation
<a href="#">Finances</a>	Taxes, value for money

## General themes:

You said	We did
Devolution should bring opportunities and a stronger voice to the region	The West Yorkshire devolution deal, the biggest of its kind, will unlock significant long term funding and, critically, give our region greater freedom to decide how best to meet local needs and create new opportunity. It will enable our region to

	<p>reach its full potential, and in doing so raise living standards for our communities, while making a full contribution to the UK economy. <u><a href="#">A full list of the benefits of the devolution deal can be found online.</a></u></p>
<p>Devolution should bring money and power to the region, not in central Government – with greater local autonomy, co-ordination and decision making</p>	<p>The West Yorkshire devolution deal brings more than £1.8 billion of investment for West Yorkshire into local control. This also includes £38 million per year for 30 years into the West Yorkshire Investment Fund, with a 25%/75% capital/revenue split. This guaranteed long term funding will allow us to invest in public transport, support business, improve skills and living standards while tackling the climate emergency. It will mean more of the decisions with major impacts on our region, which are currently taken in London, will be taken here. And it means being at the front of the queue for future powers and funding.</p>
<p>Concern that the governance proposals of devolution would lead to more bureaucracy and cost</p>	<p>As part of the devolution deal, funding has been secured to meet the additional costs of the new arrangements. The Mayor will have limited tax-raising powers and will be accountable to the electorate for that decision and how that money is spent.</p> <p>Devolution is about reducing bureaucracy. By taking decisions closer to where they will have an impact, we can reduce the lengthy processes involved with dealing with Government and secure better outcomes offering better value for money.</p>
<p>Devolution should bring localised decision making – to make the most of local knowledge</p>	<p>The deal means that decisions currently taken in London will be taken in West Yorkshire, by people who know and understand the region and the places within it. It will mean more decisions are made locally, more investment in the things that matter locally and more opportunities for our region. Local communities will see investments in</p>

	<p>areas such as better transport, skills, housing and regeneration.</p> <p>Councils will continue to have the responsibilities they do now, providing vital services to their communities and championing their towns, rural communities and cities. This is about moving powers and money from Whitehall to West Yorkshire for the benefit of all our communities.</p>
<p>Devolution should have transparency and scrutiny</p>	<p>The Mayor would be part of a Combined Authority with West Yorkshire council leaders who would all have a say in the decisions taken at a regional level. There will also be an Overview and Scrutiny process, similar to that in place in local authorities. The Mayor would be accountable to voters and subject to election every four years.</p> <p>As already happens with the Combined Authority and local authorities, meetings will be held in public and all decisions will be published online.</p>
<p>Devolution should not be a done deal already</p>	<p>The public consultation, the biggest of its kind, was a crucial part of the process of deciding whether there should be devolution in West Yorkshire. The consultation established an overwhelming majority in support of the devolution deal. This is just the start of the process and the public will be involved throughout, helping to make those decisions. The biggest of those will be the Mayor which will be decided by a public vote in May.</p>
<p>Devolution should be representative – and bring improvements across the region</p>	<p>Our communities continue to suffer the consequences of historic underinvestment and the failure of national programmes and projects to address local needs. We face emerging challenges too, including how our region recovers from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and how to tackle the climate emergency.</p>

	<p>This is a deal that guarantees long term funding that will allow us to invest in public transport, support business, improve skills and living standards. It could mean more of the decisions with major impacts on our region which are currently taken in London will be taken here. And it means being at the front of the queue for future powers and funding.</p>
<p>Devolution should use local knowledge and address local need</p>	<p>The five West Yorkshire authorities already work together through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Each local authority is represented by a mix of locally elected councillors from a range of political parties and diverse areas. Together, they champion the different needs of their communities and ensure funding is directed to the places and projects which will really make a difference. The devolution deal represents the next step forward in that partnership working.</p>

**Governance:**

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
<p>Devolution needs to bring greater opportunities for the region with stronger decision making</p>	<p>Devolution means more decisions are made locally, more investment in the things that matter locally and more opportunities for our region. Alongside significant immediate benefits, it also positions West Yorkshire to benefit from new Mayoral funding streams and continue our discussions with Government over further powers and funding to achieve our ambitions. <u><a href="#">A full list of the benefits of the devolution deal can be found online.</a></u></p>
<p>Devolution should avoid disproportionate delivery with Leeds dominating</p>	<p>The funding which has been secured as part of the devolution deal is for the whole of West Yorkshire. Funding allocations (where not specified in the deal) are still to be determined. These will be agreed by the Combined Authority, which</p>

	includes elected members from each of the West Yorkshire councils as well as the Mayor for West Yorkshire. An investment strategy will be developed that will be open to scrutiny by elected members.
Devolution should be transparent	<p>The Mayor would be the Chair of the Combined Authority with West Yorkshire council leaders who would all have a say in the decisions taken at a regional level. There would also be an Overview and Scrutiny process, similar to that in place in local authorities. The Mayor would be responsible to voters and re-elected every four years.</p> <p>As already happens with the Combined Authority and local authorities, meetings will be held in public and all decisions will be published online.</p>
Devolution should listen to local members and communities	<p>Our communities continue to suffer the consequences of historic underinvestment and the failure of national programmes and projects to address local needs. We face emerging challenges too, including how our region recovers from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and how to tackle the climate emergency.</p> <p>This is a deal that guarantees long term funding that will allow us to invest in public transport, support business, improve skills and living standards. It will mean more of the decisions with major impacts on our region, which are currently taken in London, will be taken here. And it means being at the front of the queue for future powers and funding.</p>

**Transport:**

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
Devolution should bring integrated and connected modes of transport and ticketing	The devolution deal gives the Mayor functions to produce a Local Transport plan and strategies. The Mayor will be

	<p>responsible for the multi-year local transport budget for the Combined Area. It will enable greater surety of funding, and more effective and efficient long-term planning.</p> <p>Also, the Government committed to a five-year, integrated transport settlement with West Yorkshire Combined Authority starting in 2022/23 from a wider £4.2bn envelope. It is separate from the existing 20-year transport funding already agreed with Government (that is the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund).</p> <p>The Mayor can decide whether they would like to take bus franchising powers to make decisions about bus services in West Yorkshire. This includes working with the Combined Authority to decide on routes, timetables and fares. A decision on franchising will be subject to an assessment through a business case</p> <p>The deal also includes £317 million from the Transforming Cities Fund to dramatically improve access to public transport, cycling and walking. This is a major new programme of investment that aims to deliver transformational, new infrastructure and help create a step change in travel across the region, and is essential to reducing reliance on car travel and meeting the Leeds City Region commitment to become a net zero carbon city region by 2038.</p>
Devolution should have climate targets	<p>We agree. The Combined Authority is working towards creating a net zero carbon West Yorkshire by 2038, with significant progress by 2030. This pledge will remain at the heart of our decision making. <a href="#">Visit our website to find out more about what we're doing to tackle the climate emergency.</a></p>

## Employment and skills:

You said	We did
<p>Devolution should bring a benefit to the economy by upskilling local people for the local need</p>	<p>The devolution deal brings control of the £63 million annual Adult Education Budget for West Yorkshire to closer align spending on skills to the opportunities and needs in the local economy. This will enable West Yorkshire to address existing challenges and to go beyond the many skills support schemes already put in place through the LEP. You can find more information about existing schemes on <a href="#">the LEP website</a>.</p>
<p>Devolution should reduce unemployment</p>	<p>The Adult Education Budget will provide adults with the skills needed for entering and sustaining employment, an apprenticeship, a traineeship, or other further learning. The funding pays specifically for learning programmes (predominantly qualifications) and provides an element of learner support funding for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. This will help to reduce unemployment levels at a time when nationally numbers will increase because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The devolution deal will also enable our region to continue to attract national and international companies to relocate here. We have already seen the impact of Channel 4's decision to relocate their headquarters to Leeds, and the deal will help us to attract even more big names, opening up further employment opportunities.</p>
<p>It must be representative – with a balanced proportional budget across the region</p>	<p>Within our region, some areas struggle with unemployment and low skills attainment more than others. The devolution deal will allow us the flexibility to target funding where it is needed most. The Combined Authority has already invested £79 million from its Growth Deal with Government into new and existing college facilities through the Skills Capital. The deal will allow us to build on</p>



	that success and ensure community need is matched with funding and support.
Devolution should bring inclusivity to employment and skills	Implementation of the Adult Education Budget will align with the West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Plan which has been developed to help our region recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The long term social and economic impact of the pandemic is currently unknown but looks likely to disproportionately impact those already facing the challenges posed by precarious employment. Having control of the Adult Education Budget will enable our region to mitigate against the existing barriers faced by deprived and isolated communities.
It should work with businesses and private sector to be delivered	West Yorkshire is currently leading national thinking with its own ambitious Future Ready Skills Commission. The Commission is an independent body made up of experts and leading thinkers from business, education, local government and think tanks. The Commission calls for a simplified skills system across the UK, unfettered by national silos and responsive to local economic needs and demands, exploring how greater devolution can deliver this, ensuring that local people are properly equipped for the jobs of the 21st century. <a href="#">The Commission published its recommendations in October 2020</a> , with a view to piloting the system changes needed in West Yorkshire to benefit our people and businesses. The Combined Authority is already embedding the learning and emerging recommendations into its thinking on Adult Education Budget usage, and how we can make positive changes to improve the impact on our local communities.

**Housing and planning:**

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
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<p>Devolution should bring affordable, good quality, energy efficient and supportive infrastructure</p>	<p>Through the devolution deal, the Combined Authority has secured £67 million to help deliver thousands of homes on brownfield land through the Brownfield Housing Fund.</p> <p>The Brownfield Housing Fund and £3.2m revenue funding to assist districts to bring suitable sites forward for investment was money that was allocated to the Combined Authority because of its track record on delivering major infrastructure projects including our £1 billion plus Growth Deal for the Leeds City Region.</p>
<p>It should use resources wisely, to protect people, places and the environment</p>	<p>West Yorkshire is unique in having large urban areas in close proximity to a high-quality natural environment. The <a href="#">Leeds City Region's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy</a> will ensure everybody is within easy reach of an outstanding and well used network of infrastructure that reduces flood risks and supports health, the economy, the environment and a superb quality of life. This includes managing flood risk both now and, in the future, ensuring people can easily access green spaces and investing to ensure people have the skills needed for the green jobs of the future.</p>
<p>It should work with developers to ensure the strategic vision and local needs are met</p>	<p>The Combined Authority works in close partnership with Local Authorities to ensure that schemes meet local need and align with the long term vision for our region.</p> <p>The Green and Blue Infrastructure strategy and delivery plan sets out how we will invest to build healthier, more environmentally sustainable communities. Additionally, our recently strengthened Assurance Framework ensures that the carbon impact of all potential schemes is fully assessed from the outset to inform better future planning.</p>
<p>Devolution should involve local people and communities in decision making</p>	<p>The deal means that decisions currently taken in London, will be taken in West Yorkshire, by people who know and</p>

	<p>understand the region and the places within it. It will mean more decisions are made locally, more investment in the things that matter locally and more opportunities for our region. Local communities will see investments in areas such as better transport, skills, housing and regeneration.</p> <p>Councils will continue to have the responsibilities they do now, providing vital services to their communities and championing their towns, rural communities and cities. This is about moving powers and money from Whitehall to West Yorkshire for the benefit of all our communities.</p>
<p>It should ensure there is affordable housing (using Brownfield sites first)</p>	<p>The devolution deal enables further work to be carried out to accelerate delivery of housing in places where people want to live and to improve the quality of housing across the region which includes addressing the blight of brownfield housing sites. Affordability across tenures is an important part of our housing market and addressing the needs of communities remains a key objective for partners.</p>
<p>Devolution should avoid additional bureaucracy – taking decisions away from local councillors</p>	<p>Devolution is about reducing bureaucracy. By taking decisions closer to where they will have an impact, we can reduce the lengthy processes involved with dealing with Government and secure better outcomes offering better value for money.</p> <p>This is not about removing power from local councils and local people. Councils will continue to have the responsibilities they do now, providing vital services to their communities and championing their towns, rural communities and cities. This is about moving powers and money from Whitehall to West Yorkshire for the benefit of all our communities.</p>

## Police and crime:

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
Devolution should help address the causes of local crime	<p>The Mayor will carry out the functions of the PCC for West Yorkshire as a directly accountable individual, responsible to local people. The transfer of functions is an opportunity to deliver better outcomes for the public by strengthening links, such as between inclusive growth and community safety and cohesion. The Mayor/Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (if they choose to appoint one) will issue a Police and Crime Plan, determine police and crime objectives and provide an annual budget. They will work closely with the Chief Constable and West Yorkshire Police to make sure that how the budget and objectives are set meets the priorities of West Yorkshire Communities. This could include causes of crime, but that will be a decision taken by the Mayor when they are in office.</p>
Devolution should help improve local police numbers	<p>One of the key Police and Crime Commissioner functions transferred to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (if they Mayor chooses to appoint one) is to secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force. The Mayor/Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime will issue a Police and Crime Plan, determine police and crime objectives, and provide an annual budget. They will work closely with the Chief Constable and West Yorkshire Police to make sure that how the budget and objectives are set meets the priorities of West Yorkshire communities: this could include training and police recruitment, but that will be a decision taken by the Mayor when they are in office.</p>

<p>Devolution must deliver with clear accountability and ensure policing is not politicised</p>	<p>The Mayor would be part of a Combined Authority with West Yorkshire council leaders who would all have a say in the decisions taken at a regional level. There would also be an Overview and Scrutiny process, similar to that in place in local authorities. The Mayor would be responsible to voters and re-elected every four years.</p> <p>As already happens with the Combined Authority and local authorities, meetings will be held in public and all decisions will be published online.</p>
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**Finance:**

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
<p>Devolution must prioritise listening to locals – involve, engage and consult them</p>	<p>This is not about removing power from local councils and local people. Councils will continue to have the responsibilities they do now, providing vital services to their communities and championing their towns, rural communities and cities. This is about moving powers and money from Whitehall to West Yorkshire for the benefit of all our communities.</p> <p>As with all major schemes already undertaken by the Combined Authority, consultation with the public is a key part of their development and this will continue as we become a Mayoral Combined Authority.</p>
<p>Devolution must be transparent, fair and proportional</p>	<p>The Mayor would be part of a Combined Authority with West Yorkshire council leaders who would all have a say in the decisions taken at a regional level. There would also be an Overview and Scrutiny process, similar to that in place in local authorities. The Mayor would be responsible to voters and re-elected every four years.</p> <p>As already happens with the Combined Authority and local authorities, meetings</p>

	<p>will be held in public and all decisions will be published online.</p>
<p>Devolution must bring, and enable value for money</p>	<p>The West Yorkshire devolution deal brings more than £1.8 billion of investment for West Yorkshire into local control. This also includes £38 million per year for 30 years into the West Yorkshire Investment Fund with a 25%/75% capital/revenue split. This guaranteed long term funding will allow us to invest in public transport, support business, improve skills and living standards while tackling the climate emergency. It will mean more of the decisions with major impacts on our region, which are currently taken in London, will be taken here. And it means being at the front of the queue for future powers and funding.</p> <p>The Combined Authority must manage its finances appropriately and must make sure that public funds are to be used for the purposes intended and that public money is used responsibly.</p> <p>The Assurance Framework covers expenditure on projects and programmes funded by Government or local sources in the Leeds City Region. This includes funding received by the Combined Authority as the accountable body for the LEP, funding in respect of the Local Growth Fund, including Enterprise Zones, and a number of other funding streams. The purpose of the Assurance Framework is to ensure that the necessary systems and processes are in place to manage funding effectively, and to ensure the successful delivery of our ambitions</p>
<p>Devolution should bring the Mayor appropriate power – to be able to raise funds to meet local needs</p>	<p>The Mayor will have limited tax-raising powers which will be the ability to set a precept on council tax and charge a business rate supplement, subject to a ballot. They will be accountable to the electorate for that decision and how that money is spent.</p>
<p>Devolution should not increase taxes</p>	<p>The Mayor will have limited tax-raising powers which will be the ability to set a</p>

	<p>precept on council tax and charge a business rate, supplement subject to a ballot. They will be accountable to the electorate for that decision and how that money is spent.</p>
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## Find out more

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