



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire



West Yorkshire **Local Growth Plan**

Executive Summary
2025-2035



Tracy Brabin
Mayor of West
Yorkshire

Foreword

I am proud to represent West Yorkshire and thrilled to call it home. It is an incredible meeting place of diverse people, businesses and communities. A place of practical engineers and pioneering innovators. A place with a rich history and a bright future.

We have some incredible assets. Home to the NHS, world-class universities, research facilities and teaching hospitals. Renowned cultural institutes and conservatoires. Clusters of excellence in areas like financial services and healthtech. But most of all, we are home to more than two million innovative, hard-working people.

Our Local Growth Plan sets out how the Combined Authority will help those people, those businesses and those institutions fulfil their potential. It is a combination of big ambitions and a focus on fundamentals – a meeting of ideas just like West Yorkshire itself.

The opportunities in front of us are huge. Over the next decade, we have the potential to add £26 billion to the UK economy. We can build a brighter, stronger region. One where people have warm, comfortable, low-carbon homes in places they want to live. Where they have the skills they need to find good work and the connectivity to reach it. A place with a

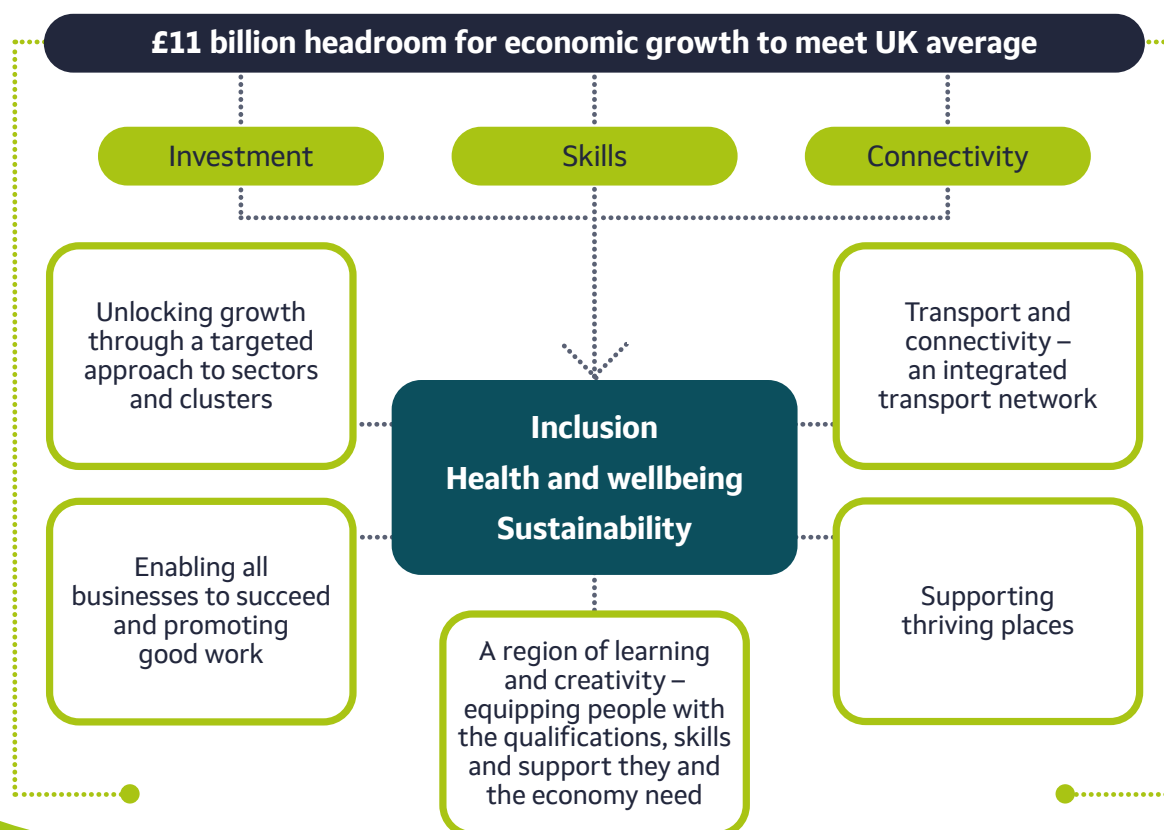
world-class integrated transport network, including a new tram. A region which is known worldwide for its sector strengths and innovative breakthroughs.

The only way we can achieve growth is through partnership. Our people, our businesses, our education institutes – they rely on each other for expertise, opportunity and insight. The Combined Authority's role is to bring them together to learn from each other and create new opportunities. We will enable all our incredible assets to reach their full potential.

Above all, our role is to deliver, deliver, deliver. Delivering good growth means putting more money in people's pockets. It means more opportunities for our young people and businesses. It means celebrating accolades such as Leeds being crowned the best place to live in the UK in 2024. It means healthier, wealthier, more connected communities across our region.

This Local Growth Plan marks the next step in our incredible journey, and I'm excited to take it together. I hope you are too.

Local Growth Plan at a glance



West Yorkshire's strengths

West Yorkshire is a diverse and young region of 2.4 million people. We have a broad economic base with almost 100,000 businesses. Established industries like manufacturing and financial services have been joined by a thriving knowledge and creative economy that includes specialisms such as healthtech, fintech and space.

Our seven universities host around 111,000 students and produce 35,000 graduates each year. Dedicated innovation infrastructure and world-class data strengths present growth opportunities.

Our 13,000 voluntary and social enterprise groups have 150,000 employees and volunteers and contribute £4.9 billion to the economy.

Closing the productivity gap

There are three major barriers that are holding back our socio-economic potential:

- **Investment:** Public and private investment has lagged the national average since 2008.
- **Infrastructure:** Poor connectivity between our core urban centres is constraining growth.
- **Skills:** The rate of higher-level skills is not in line with the national average.

Meeting the UK productivity average would mean an economy £11 billion larger than it is today. The Combined Authority is on track to invest over £7 billion over the next ten years to support this growth.

Corridors of opportunity

Unlocking the major opportunities of growth in West Yorkshire requires an approach that maximises the benefits of agglomeration. The priorities of the Local Growth Plan are built on three corridors of opportunity connecting the major urban centres and areas of economic strength in West Yorkshire and beyond.

Western corridor

Leeds and Bradford have the biggest commuter flows between any two UK cities. Sitting just eight miles apart, they have a combined population close to 1.3 million.

Key to unlocking the opportunities will be the first tram line between Leeds and Bradford, a new railway station for Bradford and strengthened rail connectivity to Halifax and beyond.

Southern corridor

The Southern corridor is centred on the major urban extensions of Dewsbury Riverside and Leeds Southbank, which in the future will be connected via our new tram network, as well as the exciting Stadium transformational programme in Huddersfield.

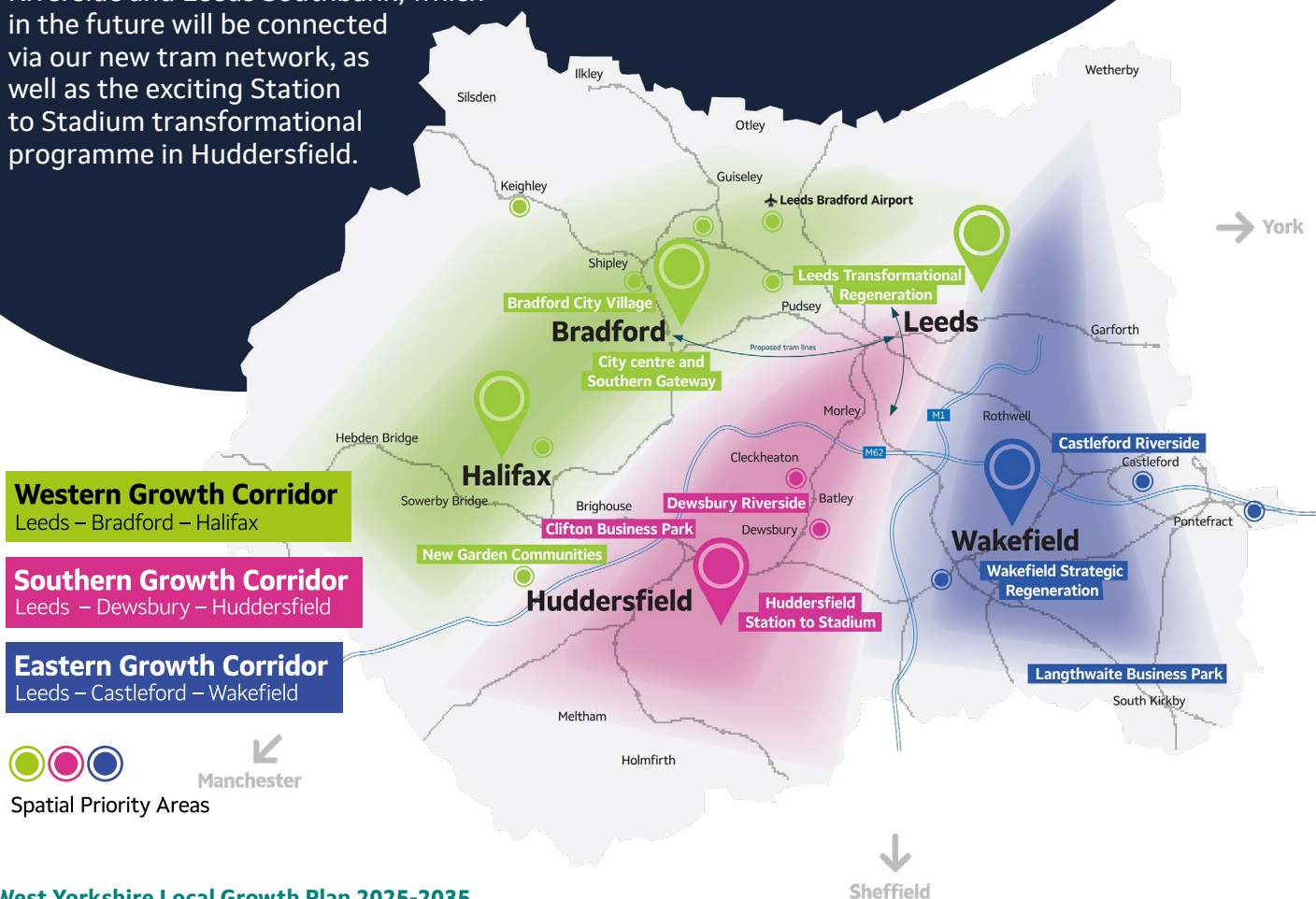
It includes flagship cultural elements including British Library North.

Investment in this corridor will sit alongside the £11 billion Transpennine Route Upgrade, transforming rail connectivity with quicker, more frequent and reliable services.

Eastern corridor

The Eastern corridor will be a catalyst for growth through the Aire Valley and into Wakefield and its Five Towns. This includes emerging tech opportunities in Ferrybridge and Skelton Grange, where there is significant planned investment in a new hyperscale data centre run by Microsoft.

The Eastern corridor will strengthen connections between Leeds, Wakefield and manufacturing expertise in South Yorkshire.



Our growth priorities

There are five core strands to delivering the Local Growth Plan. Delivering on these priorities will lower the barriers that new and existing businesses face, develop a pipeline of crucial technical and soft skills, transform the region's connectivity and create safe, attractive and thriving places.

Each of the priorities will be delivered in alignment with the core principles of inclusion, health and wellbeing and sustainability. Each priority includes a set of key deliverables that will underpin the success of the Local Growth Plan.

Priority one: unlocking growth in sectors

We will boost innovation, attract investment, unlock capital, drive international activity and support businesses to access new markets. We will take a focused approach to sectors of strength and emerging clusters to maximise opportunities.



Priority two: enabling all businesses to succeed

We will ensure that support is easily available so that all good and purposeful businesses can thrive in the region. We will support sectors that can sometimes be characterised by insecurity and low pay, despite providing the critical foundations for our economy to function.



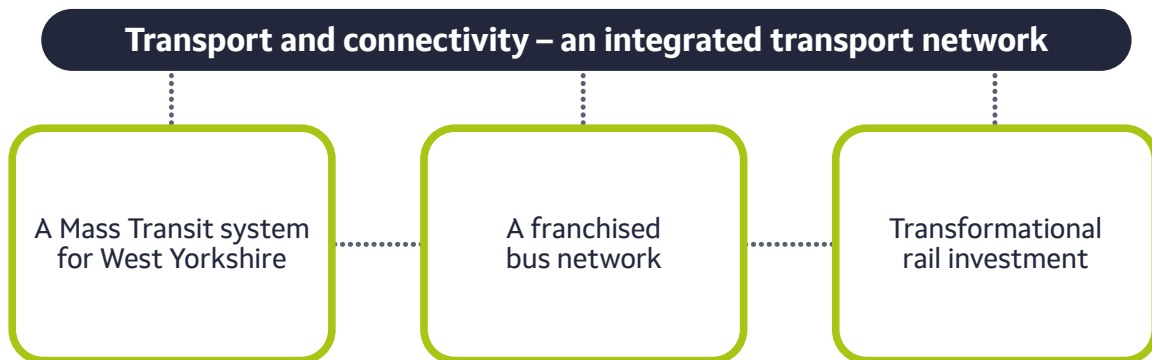
Priority three: a region of learning and creativity

We will give everyone the opportunity to gain technical and employability skills throughout their lives. We will work with businesses to build a pipeline of talent with the crucial skills needed to boost growth.



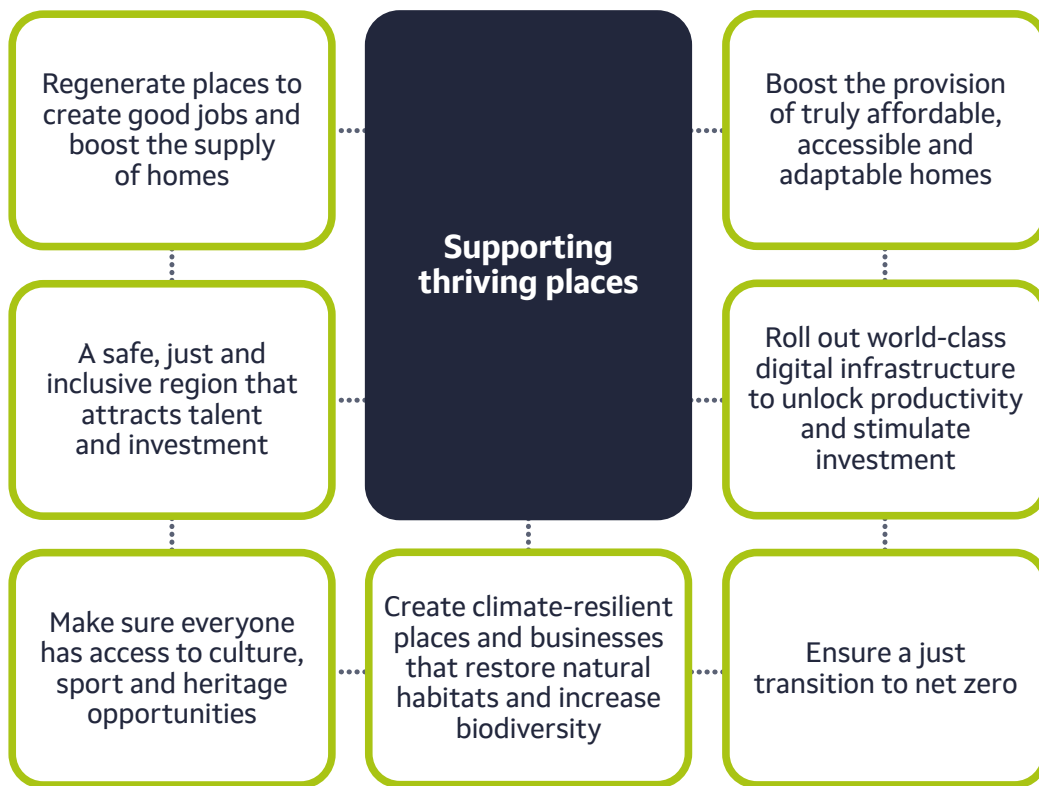
Priority four: an integrated travel network

We will revolutionise our regional transport infrastructure. We will also ensure that people and businesses across the region can maximise the advantages of better connectivity.



Priority five: support thriving places

We will encourage good housing in places people want to live, connected to where they work. We will work with our partners to strengthen our urban centres and make our rural areas more resilient and connected.



What will this mean?

If the UK is to achieve its national growth ambitions, it needs West Yorkshire – the fourth largest urban area in the country – to drive up productivity growth. Closing the output gap with the UK average would mean healthier, wealthier, safer and more connected communities. It would mean more money in people's pockets and more opportunities for our children. It would mean an increase of:

18,000
businesses

53,000
higher-level
learners

£3.2 billion
in annual
investment

40,000
jobs



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This is a summary of West Yorkshire's locally adopted local growth plan. A version agreed with Government will be published at a later date.

To read the full West Yorkshire Local Growth Plan click here:
<https://westyorks-ca.gov.uk/growing-the-economy/economic-strategy/local-growth-plan/>