

POLICY UPDATE

January 2022



West & North
Yorkshire Chamber
of Commerce
British Chambers of Commerce
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POLICY UPDATE : JANUARY 2022

Regional / National

Economy - The Chamber published the Q4 economic report. Key findings included strong UK demand, international trade remains subdued, recruitment challenges and enormous inflationary pressures. The full report is available [here](#)

Technology - The Chamber met with a number of regional education providers to discuss the approach being taken by their institutions in regards to digital skills. Further discussions took place in the view of considering how the Chamber may work with each institution moving forward in order to solve the skills and recruitment challenges businesses are reporting.

International - The Chamber met with the Department for International Trade and the organisation UK Israel Business to better understand how the Chamber can support and facilitate international trade. This included promoting the Chamber of its activities in an interview with a community magazine.

West Yorkshire Fair Work Charter - The West Yorkshire Mayor's aim to introduce this charter during 2022 looks set to go ahead. A formal consultation is due to be launched in March, and this has been preceded by West Yorkshire Combined Authority's James Flanagan presenting to Bradford Leadership Group on 25 January. Leeds Leadership Group is to receive a presentation at its March meeting. The big issue for the Charter's proponents (highlighted by the Chamber) is making it relevant for SMEs.

Bradford

Leadership Group - The Leadership Group met in January, the main item being the Fair Work Charter mentioned above; but the group also welcomed two new representatives – Becky Fitzgerald of the Yorkshire building Society, and Bradford College's Asa Gordon, who has replaced Dawn Leak.

Economy - Interviews are taking place for a Chair of the Bradford Economic Partnership, and an announcement will be made in due course. It is understood that several candidates are locally-based. There has been no Chair in place for a considerable time.

Leeds

Transport – The Chamber welcomed Network Rail announcement about the completion of £161m upgrades to Leeds station. Our response is available [here](#). The upgrades completed just over 10 years from the now legendary Leeds Chamber Property Forum meeting where a senior Network Rail executive told members that we, “Should not expect a St Pancras here in Leeds”. This provoked a serious backlash and the Chamber campaigned for a station gateway worthy of the economic capital of Yorkshire.

Leadership Group – The LLG met with and heard from Cllr James Lewis, Leader of Leeds City Council to discuss prospects and challenges for the city over the coming 12 months. More information [here](#)

Economy – Meetings with Leeds MPs have been re-established following the Covid crisis. Known as Team Leeds, the quarterly meetings bring together Leeds City Council, all 8 Leeds MPs, the Chamber and other key stakeholders to discuss the city's economy and provide Westminster politicians with updates and actions to raise with government.

York & North Yorkshire

Economy - The Chamber has agreed a contract with City of York Council to offer subsidised membership for York based SMEs to access services and support from the Chamber. The contract also includes funding to deliver policy reports across a range of subject matters.

Technology – Chamber president Laurence Beardmore has pulled together a policy paper which seeks to support the technology sector within the city. This has been shared with City of York Council and the YNY LEP.

Economy (2) – The Chamber is supporting the preparation of a bid for the City of York to be the future home of Great British Railways, the newly proposed organisation which will manage the UK's rail network and which will replace Network Rail and the train operating companies. More information can be found [here](#)

Media Coverage

January: <https://share.coveragebook.com/b/ce4fabd7332d3a8b>

Meetings

Date	Stakeholder meeting
06/01/2022	Meeting with Tech-UK
10/01/2022	Meeting with Neil Ferris, City of York Council
10/01/2022	YNY LEP Business Consultation
10/01/2022	Meeting with DiT regarding international trade
11/01/2022	James Flanagan, WYCA - Fair Work Charter
11/01/2022	BCC Employment & Skills Policy Group
11/01/2022	Leeds Digital Forum
11/01/2022	Tech Sector skills research – Leeds Trinity
12/01/2022	Meeting with BCC regarding Youth Skills
12/01/2022	Tech Sector skills research – University of York
12/01/2022	Tech Sector skills research – WYLP
13/01/2022	Bradford Communications Group
13/01/2022	Leeds Rail Programme Board
13/01/2022	YNY LEP Skills catch up meeting
13/01/2022	Tech Sector skills research – University of York follow up
14/01/2022	Julian Jackson, Assistant Director for Transport, Planning & Highways, Bradford Council
14/01/2022	Leeds Leadership Group meeting
14/01/2022	York Rail Sector roundtable
14/01/2022	BCC Economic & Tax Policy Group
17/01/2022	York Property Forum Steering Group
17/01/2022	Meeting with DiT regarding Tech Sector trade
18/01/2022	BPF Steering Group
18/01/2022	Morley Town Deal Board
18/01/2022	BCC Clean Air Zone Group
18/01/2022	Tech Sector skills research – Northcoders

19/01/2022	YNY LEP Annual Skills Conference
19/01/2022	Meeting with Great British Rail Transition Team
19/01/2022	City of York Business Leaders roundtable
19/01/2022	BCC Policy Steering Group
19/01/2022	Tech Sector skills research – The Coder’s Guild
20/01/2022	Bradford Economic Recovery Group
21/01/2022	West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges – Principals’ meeting
21/01/2022	Meeting with Cllr Paula Widdowson, CYC
24/01/2022	Local Digital Skills Partnership meeting
24/01/2022	Meeting with TechUK regarding regional Tech-Sector international trade
25/01/2022	Bradford Leadership Group
25/01/2022	BCC Trade Policy Committee
25/01/2022	LCR LEP Business Communications Group
25/01/2022	York & North Yorkshire Leadership Group
26/01/2022	Team Leeds (meeting with Leeds MPs)
26/01/2022	Morley Town Deal – Skills & Education sub-group
26/01/2022	Commercial Properties - retrofit workshop - policy and best practice
27/01/2022	Bradford Communications Group
27/01/2022	QES presentation to MYCC members
28/01/2022	York Freight Forum
28/01/2022	BCC Youth Skills Group – Careers & Enterprise Company bid
28/01/2022	Tech Sector skills research – Northcoders followup
31/01/2022	City of York business intelligence update

Sources of local authority Covid grant support

Local Authority	Website	Contact details
Leeds	https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus/business#small	
Bradford	https://www.bradford.gov.uk/business/help-for-businesses/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-business/#brr	business.rates@bradford.gov.uk 01274 437744
York	https://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDBusinessGrant	01904 551550
Harrogate	https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/info/20202/business_support/1310/business_rates_coronavirus_grants	01423 500600
Selby	https://www.selby.gov.uk/covid-19-business-grants	01757 705101
Craven	https://www.cravenc.gov.uk/business/business-rates/business-rates-government-grants/	01756 700600
Ryedale	https://www.ryedale.gov.uk/covid-19-2020/support-for-businesses.html	01653 600666
Richmondshire	https://www.richmondshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/coronavirus/support-for-businesses/apply-for-business-grant-covid-19/	01748 829100
Scarborough	https://www.scarborough.gov.uk/home/business-licensing-and-grants/small-business-grant-fund-and-retail-hospitality-and-leisure	01723 232323
North Yorkshire CC	https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/help-your-business-during-coronavirus-covid-19	01609 780780
Hambleton	https://www.hambleton.gov.uk/info/20038/health_and_wellbeing/1043/coronavirus_covid-19/6	01609 779977
Wakefield	http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/business/business-rates/reliefs/small-business-grant	01977 727 121 nndr@wakefield.gov.uk
Kirklees	https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/health-and-well-being/coronavirus-businesses-and-self-employed.aspx#grants	business.rates@kirklees.gov.uk 01484 414941
Calderdale	https://www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/businesses/business-rates/covid-19-business-support	