

POLICY UPDATE

March 2022



West & North
Yorkshire Chamber
of Commerce
British Chambers of Commerce
Accredited

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Regional / National

Future Workforce - 10 in-depth interviews have been conducted with members as part of a national Chamber project looking at future workforce issues and the talent pipeline. The Chamber worked with the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) and several other local/regional Chambers to compare and contrast how various SMEs were managing to engage with schools and young people to attract talent into their sectors. The findings are currently being analysed.

International Trade – The Chamber continues to contribute to regular discussions with the other local Chambers and BCC on international trade issues. BCC remain keen to hear from us on what additional goods and commodities are likely to be in short supply due to the war in Ukraine. A request has been submitted to the department for International Trade for a more comprehensive and bespoke business guidance service for those affected.

Levelling Up – The Northern Regional Assembly of Chambers met in March to discuss the Levelling Up white paper and to discuss our collective response.

BAME – The committee led recently on the promotion of another ‘Meet the Chamber’ event, focusing on recruiting BAME-led businesses into the Chamber. The well-attended event at the Midland Hotel led to several immediate sign-ups, and a number of arranged follow-up calls.

Economy – The Chamber responded to the Chancellor’s Spring Statement, pointing out a missed opportunity to renew and rebuild the economy. The full response can be found [here](#)

Bradford

Leadership Group – The March Leadership Group included two presentations. One from a staff member in the International Trade team, covering the effect of sanctions on Russia, global supply chain problems and over-hanging ramifications from the pandemic. The second was an update on Bradford’s post-Covid recovery plan, and how businesses are currently coping.

Property Forum – The Steering Group met with Bradford Council’s officer leading on the city centre Townscape Heritage Scheme (THS). The scheme has funds available to help redevelop dilapidated and disused buildings. The Chamber is helping to create a ‘consultants list’ that property owners and tenants can refer to if applying for the THS grant.

Leeds

Technology (1) – The Chamber’s new Technology Group was launched during March. The group is being chaired by Leeds Vic-President Dan Murray. Initially focused on Leeds, the group will later evolve to include both Bradford and York & North Yorkshire to ensure all our geographical areas are covered.

Technology (2) – Members of the team attended the ‘Artificial Intelligence Technology North Summit’ in Leeds in March. It was an opportunity to both pick up new information and advice related to the sector, as well as make new contacts and flag up the creation of the Chamber’s new Technology Group.

Property Forum - Leeds Property Forum held an event for members in the city in early March. One of the key topics was the importance of public realm in the city.

Leadership Group – The group met on 18 March, and received a presentation on the Mayor’s Fair Work Charter plans. Feedback suggested that the Mayor’s office review and meet with businesses about the work they are already conducting with regards the ESG agenda and in particular the focus on the need to be a good employer as the labour market is so challenging right now.

York & North Yorkshire

Planning – The Economist visited the city in March, and spoke with the president, Laurence Beardmore. The focus was on constraints on new office space and the impact on economic growth. The conversation widened to include other planning-related problems, including the continued absence of a Local Plan, and the various positive schemes currently being worked on (e.g. Coney Street, York Central, Castle Gateway, Roman Quarter).

Planning (2) – The Chamber submitted its response to the Government Planning Inspectorate in relation to the York Local Plan, ahead of giving evidence to inspectors in May

Property Forum – The Helmsley Group and contractors presented to a well-attended event in the city in March. The focus was on the poor condition of various buildings and the surrounding area on Coney Street, and was held in Revolution, which backs onto the river. The scheme to redevelop many of the street’s buildings will open up the riverside, and galvanise the wider area, members were told.

Media Coverage

March: <https://share.coveragebook.com/b/b2bc4c754de75f08>

Stakeholder Meetings

(Plus 10 meetings with members on 'future workforce and engaging schools' topic listed above)

Date	Stakeholder meeting
01-03-22	Leeds City Council on energy and hydrogen stations
01-03-22	Environment Agency – Natural Flood Management scheme
03-03-22	Leeds Manufacturing Festival – T Level launch
03-03-22	Leeds City Council – Employment & Skills team
03-03-22	West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges
04-03-22	Northern Regional Assembly – meeting of Northern Chambers
07-03-22	Bradford Sustainable Development Partnership – Green Business Hub
08-03-22	BCC Employment & Skills Group meeting
08-03-22	Leeds Property Forum
09-03-22	Bradford & Airedale Manufacturing Alliance steering group
09-03-22	British Bulgaria Chamber of Commerce - Inward Trade Mission
09-03-22	Bradford Sustainable Development Partnership – full meeting
10-03-22	SDN – Education-Business Partnership mapping
10-03-22	York St John University
11-03-22	YNY Consortium of Colleges meeting
11-03-22	North Yorkshire County Council – Low Carbon Infrastructure
14-03-22	Helens Chamber 'future workforce' weekly catch-up
14-03-22	North Yorkshire Council 'Low Carbon Infrastructure' scheme
15-03-22	Focus group for A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project
15-03-22	Institute for Government – meeting with West Yorkshire Mayor
16-03-22	City of York Business Leaders meeting
17-03-22	Green Skills Research – Wakefield College
17-03-22	Northern AI summit
17-03-22	Bradford Skills Month steering group meeting

18-03-22	Leeds Leadership Group
18-03-22	Meeting with Department for Education
21-03-22	British Chambers of Commerce – QES update
21-03-22	Leeds Active Travel and Healthier Streets steering group
22-03-22	Bradford Leadership Group
22-03-22	BCC Trade Policy Group meeting
23-03-22	UK Israel Business Association
28-03-22	BCC Policy Steering Group
29-03-22	QES presentation to MYCC members
29-03-22	LCR LEP Business, Economy & Innovation committee
29-03-22	St Helens Chamber future workforce weekly catch-up
29-03-22	Leeds Chamber Leadership Group
29-03-22	Leeds BID Showcase
30-03-22	Meeting with Leeds MPs
30-03-22	Meeting with UTC Leeds
30-03-22	York Property Forum
31-03-22	Be The Business conference
31-03-22	BCC Economic & Tax Policy Group
31-03-22	Leeds Manufacturing Festival – awards event
31-03-22	Meeting with WYCA re UK Shared Prosperity Fund

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	