

Mayor Luke Campbell MBE
Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority

Sent by email to: mayor@hullandeastyorkshire.gov.uk

Wednesday 16 December 2025

Dear Mayor Campbell

Re: Public Consultation on the Hull and East Yorkshire Local Growth Plan

[Yorkshire Universities \(YU\)](#) is the representative partnership for twelve universities in Yorkshire. There are over 225,000 students studying at our member institutions, in a sector that generates over £8 billion in value, each year, to the region. The [University of Hull](#), as the only university in Hull and East Yorkshire, is a key anchor institution and employer in the region, and an important partner for the Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority (HEYCA). The University is a major regional driver of skills, talent, innovation and business growth and development, and it will play a pivotal role in helping to achieve the ambitions set out in the Local Growth Plan (LGP).

We welcome the fact that HEYCA is developing a new LGP – under your leadership – and has invited public comments on the draft Plan. Members of my team, as well as the [Yorkshire and Humber Policy Engagement and Research Network \(Y-PERN\)](#), have participated in initial workshops with Combined Authority officers, as part of the drafting of the HEYCA Gameplan (over-arching strategy) to identify and analyse the social, economic and environmental context of Hull and East Yorkshire, as a baseline to informing proposed priorities and potential interventions in the LGP. Our response to the LGP consultation will complement and add value to comments on the Plan provided by the University of Hull.

Like elsewhere in Yorkshire, the north of England, and the UK overall, Hull and East Yorkshire face significant challenges with flatling productivity. There are distinct factors that stifle prosperity, and the Economic Assessment, published alongside the LGP, illustrates these in detail. These variables are also set out in dashboards produced by [The Yorkshire and Humber Office for Data Analytics](#), a new online, and free to use, tool funded by [UK Research and Innovation](#), maintained by researchers in YU member institutions, and hosted by the [University of Sheffield](#).

Increasing economic and employment participation, raising the demand for, and supply of, skills, particularly at higher and technical levels, improving health and well-being, and growing investment in both physical and social infrastructure, are essential components of any strategy or plan to create and sustain 'good jobs'. The focus in the LGP on three 'Big Plays': *Powering the Energy and Production Transition; Skills, Health, and Connectivity for Growth*, and *Innovation, Investment, and Enterprise*, and the symbiotic relationship between the priorities, is sensible, and they will give clarity and confidence to business and industry in the region, and also at national and international levels. The distinct geography and physical assets of Hull and East Yorkshire, makes the region ideally placed to lead on some of the major priorities in the national [Industrial Strategy](#), and also the [Defence Industrial Strategy](#).

The draft Plan is also right to highlight the value of local leadership and agency in shaping local and regional priorities in partnership with national Government. HEYCA is at the start of the journey of devolution, and, as a supporter of greater autonomy for people and places within and across Yorkshire, YU welcomes the aim of the [English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill](#), to enable more places, including Hull and East Yorkshire, to acquire new responsibilities, powers and funding. For far too long, Whitehall and Westminster (and national agencies) have been 'place-blind',

which means that too many policies have not been sufficiently reflective of local and regional circumstances. This has contributed towards an increasing number of communities feeling left behind and forgotten. There is an opportunity, using the new devolution framework in England, to empower more local people and business, and to unlock latent potential, ambition, and opportunities.

The focus on key sectors, such as manufacturing, energy, and ports and logistics, are underpinned by the economic evidence, as is the aim to grow some sub-sectors, such as the creative industries, and value foundational sectors, including health, education and retail, recognising the important place-place-shaping roles of these elements of the Hull and East Yorkshire economy.

In terms of the constraints to growth, poor transport and under-developed inter and intra-regional connectivity, feature high on the scorecard. We welcome the proposal for HEYCA to work closely with partners elsewhere in Yorkshire, and the wider north of England, as working across administrative boundaries is vital when planning and delivering investment and interventions that reflect the geographical realities of housing and labour markets, business supply chains, and transport and digital infrastructure.

At YU, we work with all the Yorkshire Mayors and Combined Authorities, as well as all local authorities. This is a partnership underpinned by our [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\) with Yorkshire and Humber Councils](#). We are keen to widen and deepen our partnership with HEYCA, and to work with you and your officers and partners to help contribute towards creating a strong voice for Hull and East Yorkshire, and the wider Yorkshire region.

Yours sincerely

Dr Peter O'Brien
Executive Director
Yorkshire Universities