
Report to: Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board (LEP Board)

Date: 25 February 2020

Subject: **Place Panel**

Director(s): Alan Reiss, Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author(s): Judith Furlonger, Policy Manager

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board with a progress report on significant areas of activity related to the Place Panel following its meeting on 30 January 2020.

2. Information

Panel meeting

- 2.1 On 30 January 2020, the fourth meeting of the Place Panel was held, chaired by Councillor Tim Swift.

Cultural Framework

- 2.2 The Panel considered a report setting out progress made on the development of the Leeds City Region Cultural Framework. This work was born out of a recognition that culture, sport and major events play a unique role in helping to inform and deliver the inclusive growth agenda. The anticipated outcomes of this work are to:

- Understand the place-based priorities for culture, sport and major events by working closely with the local authorities and sector partners.
- Create a high-level vision for culture, sport and major events; integrating this as a key consideration in the development of all aspects of the City Region strategic policy framework.
- Develop the funding frameworks for the City Region and partners, to generate place-based funding models which facilitate and maximise investment in the identified priorities.

- 2.3 Significant work has been done to date to take this forward in consultation with a range of stakeholders including Welcome to Yorkshire, Leeds University Cultural Institute, Arts Council England, NHLF, Historic England and Yorkshire Sport. A Cultural Framework and Vision document are being prepared to take this forward and Place Panel considered drafts of the documents.

- 2.4 Place Panel discussed the drafts and welcomed progress made to date to drive forward this agenda. Members were keen to explore how this work could be adopted and applied in practice to local planning policy. The LEP Board is considering the Cultural Framework at item 12 on this agenda.

Urban Design Support

- 2.5 Place Panel considered an update on the Combined Authority's design support programme. This included key information on the process and findings of the local authority design capacity assessment, the emerging priorities for support and proposals for the future work programme including design advice and training.
- 2.6 The Panel noted that the paper was a helpful update and provided a good basis for discussions about design quality and considered how this work would tie in with the recommendations from the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission's report which was published on 30 January 2020. It was noted that the report, and the recent housing design quality audit by the Place Alliance, would be useful in structuring design support and training. These reports include some useful recommendations including the impact of building at higher densities, tree planting and re-use of existing buildings and sites.
- 2.7 It was also noted that training on development viability had emerged as a priority for local authorities. This will be taken forward and implemented as part of the Urban Design Support Programme.

Enabling Housing Growth

- 2.8 An update was provided to Place Panel on the Enabling Housing Growth project. The project is funded through a Business Rates Pool allocation of £250k and aims to develop the regional understanding of the strategic sites pipeline, focused on accelerating delivery of housing across the region through unlocking opportunities and tackling barriers.
- 2.9 The work to date has identified some common issues across the region, including:
- Additional planning and housing growth capacity is required across most districts to tackle stalled sites with planning permissions in place
 - Lack of viability is a barrier to delivery, particularly in lower value areas and specifically in relation to brownfield sites that have complex technical costly issues to resolve
 - Further support is required to better understand the individual financial and technical dynamics of sites across the strategic sites pipeline
 - Resource to bring forward public land is a common issue, particularly in relation to limited capacity for carrying out feasibility work and bid preparation. The limited availability of external funding to de-risk challenging sites is also an issue.
- 2.10 It is proposed that stage 2 of the project will seek to:

- Understand, within the extant planning permissions of 85,000, and quantify how many sites are unlikely to move forward without significant intervention.
- Develop a deeper, more in-depth understanding of the technical and financial constraints as well as viability issues across the strategic site pipelines.

2.11 This work will significantly build intelligence and identify key gaps – providing a robust evidence base for further asks to support delivery. The Place Panel highlighted that it would be beneficial to use the project to inform future asks in terms of funding to de-risk sites and ensure delivery.

Towns Fund

2.12 The Place Panel considered an update on the Towns Fund – a £3.6m fund which forms part of the Prime Minister’s commitment to ‘level up’ our regions. The Towns Fund comes in the context of several other similar funding announcements including the Future High Streets Fund, High Street Heritage Action Zones and the Cultural Development Fund. Collectively, these funds add up to substantial investment in the City Regions towns presenting a huge opportunity to instigate major transformation and attract wider private investment across the region through strengthening our towns.

2.13 Following a phase one application process, nine towns across Leeds City Region have been selected to develop proposals:

Lead Council	Town
Barnsley Council	Goldthorpe
Bradford Council	Keighley
	Shipley
Calderdale Council	Todmorden
	Brighouse
Kirklees Council	Dewsbury
Leeds City Council	Morley
Wakefield Council	Castleford
	Wakefield

2.14 Currently, the local authorities involved are developing up proposals individually, in consultation with MHCLG. The Combined Authority has offered support to Local Authorities in the development of Town Deal proposals and is currently discussing this in more detail with Directors of Development, focusing on areas the Combined Authority can add strategic value for districts.

Tackling the Climate Emergency

2.15 The Panel considered an update on the Combined Authority’s work to tackle the climate emergency, in relation to the commitment to become a net zero carbon city region by 2028.

3. Clean Growth Implications

3.1 There are no clean growth implications directly arising from this report.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

6. Staffing Implications

6.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

7. External Consultees

7.1 None.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The LEP Board is asked to note the contents of the report.

9. Background Documents

9.1 None.

10. Appendices

10.1 None.