

Report to: West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Date: 29 July 2021

Subject: **Place Narrative**

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Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide the Combined Authority with an update on the development of the Place Narrative and seek endorsement for the adoption of the Place Narrative as part of the Strategic Economic Framework.
- 1.2 The Place Narrative brings together spatial information about our region and our infrastructure priorities. The document is the first place-based strategic document of the Combined Authority focused on infrastructure (connectivity, resilience, regeneration and strategic sites). The narrative should help the Combined Authority and Districts to speak consistently about the challenges and opportunities that the region faces and make the region more credible when communicating with partners who want to understand the region better.

2. Information

- 2.1 An action identified at the Place Panel workshop held on the 11 April 2019 was to 'to develop a unified spatial narrative for the City Region'. This action was endorsed at the Panel's first formal meeting on 30 July 2019 as follows:

Develop a unified spatial narrative for the City Region, building from districts existing plans, in order to present the story of the region as a whole with a

high-level narrative describing the Combined Authority's role in Place, to provide a conduit for closer working with district partners to add value and support collaboration where a collaborative approach is beneficial to the City Region as a whole: "the regional glue". The Combined Authority to coordinate and facilitate.

- 2.2 The Place Narrative has been developed in partnership with the Place Panel and has been written for partners and stakeholders of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. It provides a single narrative, and a consistent but flexible evidence base to underpin our plans and strategies, and those of our partners. It is an online, interactive document and can be accessed at <https://arcg.is/1ee0mq0>.
- 2.3 The Place Narrative describes our places and how they relate to each other. It includes evidence on the spatial challenges we face and it provides details of our infrastructure investment plans, which will ensure places can thrive.
- 2.4 The Place Panel has shaped the content and structure of the document. An engagement phase was undertaken in autumn 2020 with feedback requested on a full draft of the content from Panel members, local authority officers and officers within the Combined Authority.
- 2.5 A summary of the feedback received, and an overview of the changes made in response was reported to the Place Panel on 28 January 2021, and the final draft of the Place Narrative was endorsed.
- 2.6 The Panel acknowledged that part of the role of the document is in providing a common understanding of the spatial challenges faced in West Yorkshire and its wider City Region. It was noted that the task of preparing such a document had been complex and that it is a successful piece of work but one that needs to be updated to ensure it remains relevant.
- 2.7 Since Place Panel endorsement, the content of the Place Narrative has been refreshed to reflect the Mayoral pledges and to update the document with new information including that relating to the implications of the Covid 19 pandemic, economic recovery and the climate emergency.
- 2.8 The document will be updated periodically to improve it and to keep the content current. It has already been used, for example in the development of content for the [Connectivity Infrastructure Plan](#).

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The Place Narrative is framed in the context of the climate emergency. It states that we need to invest in places in a coordinated way to meet our environmental commitments and to maximise the benefit of investments, ensuring that the benefits of a green economic recovery are felt by all.
- 3.2 The document considers six cross-cutting spatial challenges that underpin our approach to infrastructure planning. Two of these challenges are 'tackling the climate emergency by reducing carbon emissions' and 'building climate

resilient communities'. The Place Narrative therefore strengthens our evidence base on matters relating to the climate emergency by exploring the spatial complexity of these challenges. The narrative draws together some of the strands of our work relating to the climate emergency and directly signposts the Carbon Emissions Reduction Pathways work.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 The Place Narrative considers six cross-cutting spatial challenges that underpin our approach to infrastructure planning. Two of these challenges are 'reducing deprivation and inequality' and 'creating good jobs that are accessible to all'. The Place Narrative therefore strengthens our evidence base on matters relating to the inclusive growth and directly signposts the Inclusive Growth Framework.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 In drafting the Place Narrative the Place Panel and consultees directly commented on issues relating to equality and diversity. As a strategic document the Place Narrative is limited in its ability to explore local diversity in detail but highlights that West Yorkshire and the wider city region has a population with many ethnicities, backgrounds and lifestyles represented, bringing great cultural diversity. The narrative aims to celebrate this diversity.

5.2 The Place Narrative contributes to our understanding of equality and diversity issues. For example, it explores spatial patterns associated with ethnicity and states that these need to be recognised and understood, with that knowledge applied in the development of policies to tackle deprivation and inequality.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. The Place Narrative has been developed internally by the Policy and Development, and Strategy, Communications and Policing Directorates.

7. Legal Implications

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

8. Staffing Implications

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

9. External Consultees

9.1 The Place Narrative has been developed in partnership with the Place Panel and local authority officers (West Yorkshire and the wider City Region). No public engagement has been undertaken as this document is not new policy or strategy. It pulls together content on our current challenges (particularly spatial content) and signposts existing policy and strategy documents.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the Combined Authority approves the Place Narrative and endorses its positioning as part of the Strategic Economic Framework.
- 10.2 That approval of future updates of the Place Narrative are delegated to the Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee.

11. Background Documents

- 11.1 There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

- 12.1 There are no appendices to this report.