
Report to: West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Date: 16 March 2023

Subject: **West Yorkshire / Homes England Strategic Place Partnership**

Director: Liz Hunter, Director of Policing, Environment and Place

Author: Rebecca Greenwood, Head of Housing

Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Combined Authority for the West Yorkshire / Homes England Strategic Place Partnership (SPP) – Partnership Business Plan.
- 1.2 The report includes;
- An update on the development of the SPP, including the final draft submitted for approval attached as appendix 1.
 - An update on the Terms of Reference for the SPP Board, submitted for approval attached as appendix 2. These have been developed in consultation with senior officers in partner councils and with the Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee.
 - Next steps ahead of and following SPP approval.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 In recognition of the shared ambition to drive forward good quality housing growth, the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal set out a commitment to develop a Strategic Place Partnership (SPP) between the Combined Authority and

Homes England to build and strengthen collaborative working across the region.

- 2.2 The SPP Partnership Business Plan and the Terms of Reference for the SPP Board were endorsed and recommended for approval by the Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee at the meeting on 2nd March 2023. Committee members welcomed the progress towards formalising the partnership with Homes England and any feedback has been incorporated into the final draft attached to this report as appendix 1.

Strategic Place Partnership – Partnership Business Plan

- 2.3 The Partnership Business Plan sets out the shared ambition of the SPP to realise the untapped potential of West Yorkshire to contribute to the delivery of new homes and meet the needs of the region's residents and communities as part of a wider approach to levelling up and transforming our places. The challenges, opportunities, and risks to delivery in West Yorkshire are outlined in section two of the draft followed by the strategic objectives. The strategic objectives have been agreed as follows:

- SO1 - Develop short, medium and long term investment ready proposals to unlock and accelerate housing delivery and regeneration across West Yorkshire, supporting the region's levelling up, economic growth and inclusivity objectives.
- SO2 - Realise opportunities to create and grow sustainable neighbourhoods contributing to the region's net zero carbon ambitions.
- SO3 - Improve the supply of good quality and affordable homes providing greater choice and opportunity for people to access a home in West Yorkshire that meets their housing need.

- 2.4 Focus areas of activity for the SPP have been identified for each of the five West Yorkshire Local Authorities. These locations are those that have been highlighted by Local Authority partners as key strategic housing growth and regeneration projects with the opportunity to have a transformational impact in the district and region. Crucially, the focus area locations are places where public sector intervention is required to; accelerate delivery, to deliver the right mix and quality of homes and they are places where there is collective activity that Homes England, West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Local Authorities can undertake to add value in year one of the Strategic Place Partnership. The identified focus areas are as follows:

- **Bradford** – Bradford City Centre (including Bradford City Village), Holmewood Urban Extension, Canal Road Corridor
- **Calderdale** – Brighouse Garden Suburbs, Halifax Urban Centre, North Halifax
- **Kirklees** – Dewsbury Riverside, Bradley Park, Dewsbury and Huddersfield Town Centres
- **Leeds** – East of Otley, Kirkstall Forge, East Leeds Extension, Leeds Centre/City Centre rim

- **Wakefield** – Castleford Housing Growth Zone, Pontefract, Wakefield City Centre

2.5 The focus areas align with the West Yorkshire Spatial Priority Areas in places where there is a significant opportunity for transformational housing growth with the exception of East of Otley. East of Otley has been identified as a focus area of SPP activity due to the investment already committed within the scheme and the need for joined up working across Homes England, Leeds City Council and the Combined Authority to continue to see the scheme through to its delivery.

2.6 Combined Authority members are asked to note that whilst the SPP outlines our collective ambition for West Yorkshire, there are significant delivery risks, particularly economic instability and the expectation of a recession, that continue to dampen market certainty over delivery. In the short term much of our collective work will aim to instil confidence in the market and maintain the security of current development pipelines.

SPP Governance

2.7 The Strategic Place Partnership in West Yorkshire will be governed by the SPP board comprised of Homes England, Local Authority and Combined Authority partners alongside other key stakeholders from Government departments and the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership. The SPP Board will be responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Partnership and providing a forum for liaison between the parties involved in the SPP.

2.8 SPP Board meetings will take place twice per year and will be supported by the Strategic Place Officer Group comprised of local authority housing growth and regeneration teams, Homes England and West Yorkshire Combined Authority officers as the operational group responsible for overseeing the SPP Delivery Plan. The Mayor will chair the SPP Board for the first year. The meetings will take place in private to allow for discussion of commercially sensitive projects to take place openly. The SPP Board will not be decision making in terms of investments as both the Combined Authority and Homes England have current governance structures in place to ensure transparency of investment decisions. The SPP Board will act in an advisory capacity giving oversight to the strategic objectives and focus area activities of the SPP.

2.9 A governance diagram to show how the SPP board links to wider Combined Authority and Homes England governance structures is shown below.



2.10 The Terms of Reference for the SPP Board is attached as appendix 2. Letters from the Mayoral Office are currently being drafted to invite the Board Members to convene, preferably in late April 2023.

Next Steps

2.11 Following approval of the SPP Partnership Business Plan by the Combined Authority, it is proposed that the SPP will be formally launched at UKREiiF on 16th May 2023 and the first meeting of the board will take place around a similar time (date to be confirmed). A Memorandum of Understanding is also being developed which will ultimately formalise the commitments of SPP partners to work together.

2.12 Stakeholder engagement meetings have taken place with the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership, Historic England, Government departments (DLUHC and CLGU), internally across Homes England and the Combined Authority, Place Regeneration and Housing Committee and the Mayor. Local Authority partners have taken the responsibility for engaging senior officers and elected members within their respective Councils.

2.13 Alongside the SPP approval process, a SPP Delivery Plan including year one activity across the identified focus areas will be developed. The SPP board will have strategic oversight of the Delivery Plan. Homes England approval of the document will take place alongside the West Yorkshire Combined Authority approval process.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The proposed Strategic Objectives for the SPP include an explicit reference to supporting the region's net zero carbon ambitions highlighting the continued focus on tackling to climate emergency.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 The focus on supporting good quality housing growth as a key strategic objective for the SPP will support the regions inclusive growth ambitions. Particularly in the context of the cost of living crisis, ensuring housing is affordable and equitable is a key priority across the region and for Local Authority partners.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 The SPP includes a section relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion recognising the duties placed upon public sector bodies to comply with the Equality Act and highlighting that EDI is at the forefront of investment decisions and programme development. The Delivery Plan will include EDI as a key performance measure against all SPP activity and individual projects will be required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment as business cases are developed for funding.
- 5.2 A stage one Equality Impact Assessment is in development and will be discussed by the SPP Board at the first meeting.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. The SPP does not secure direct access to Homes England or Combined Authority investment programmes. Decisions regarding investment remain within the existing governance structures of each respective organisation.

7. Legal Implications

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

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 The development of the SPP is being led collectively between the Combined Authority, Homes England, and West Yorkshire Local Authorities. Local Authorities have each contributed officer time and commitment to developing the SPP alongside the CA and Homes England which is key to ensuring the strategic outcomes and actions are embedded and supported across the region. Officer time and support is gratefully received.

9. External Consultees

9.1. The following partners have been directly consulted on the development of the SPP.

- West Yorkshire Housing Partnership
- Historic England
- Government departments (DLUHC and CLGU)
- Internally across Homes England and the Combined Authority
- Place Regeneration and Housing Committee
- The Mayor
- Local Authority Officers. These officers have taken responsibility for briefing senior officers and elected members in their respective councils.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the Combined Authority agrees to enter into the Strategic Place Partnership.

10.2 That the Combined Authority approves the Strategic Place Partnership Business Plan.

10.3 That the Combined Authority approves the Terms of Reference for the SPP Board.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Strategic Place Partnership – Partnership Business Plan

Appendix 2 – Strategic Place Partnership Board Terms of Reference