



<b>Report to:</b>	Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee
<b>Date:</b>	26 October 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>West Yorkshire Housing Strategy</b>
<b>Director:</b>	Liz Hunter, Director Policing, Environment and Place
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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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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 To seek the Committee's comments and endorsement of the high-level draft of the West Yorkshire Housing Strategy 2040 including the mission statement, objectives and outcomes attached at appendix one.
- 1.2 To seek the Committee's agreement to proceed with an online public consultation of the high-level West Yorkshire Housing Strategy that will directly feed into the development of the final strategy.

## 2. Information

### Background

- 2.1 The existing housing strategy and policy position was established in the Housing and Regeneration Strategy 2014 and built on in the Leeds City Region Housing Vision 2019. Since the Housing Vision was established, the Combined Authority has seen significant changes including securing the 2020 devolution deal, electing the first Mayor of West Yorkshire as well as national policy and market shifts that have had an impact on housing delivery.

- 2.2 In addition to the current landscape, the evidence demonstrates an ongoing need for the development of good quality homes that meet the needs of communities and are affordable for local people. The strategy will focus on delivering homes in the right places, aligned to good connectivity to support people to access wider opportunities including employment and developing sustainable and resilient places.
- 2.3 The Mayor and five West Yorkshire Local Authority leaders launched the West Yorkshire Plan 2040 in June 2023. The West Yorkshire Plan sets out the collective ambitions of the Combined Authority and Local Authorities across 5 missions that collectively aim to achieve the vision for *'a brighter West Yorkshire – a place that works for all. An engine room of ideas and creativity, where anyone can make a home'*.
- 2.4 In this context, the development of the West Yorkshire Housing Strategy 2040 represents an opportunity to present a regional strategy which links to and mirrors our wider strategic focus on inclusive growth, productivity, skills and training, connectivity, transport, digital, climate change and health which are all aligned to the West Yorkshire Plan.
- 2.5 An update on the initial evidence base commission was brought to Committee in Winter 2022/23 which has informed the strategy development. Since the evidence base commission, the strategy development has been led by the Combined Authority with significant input from Local Authorities and other public, private and third sector partners including the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership. The strategy is grounded in partnership working, recognising that the objectives and outcomes of the strategy can only be realised through working together.

### **Methodology**

- 2.6 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority Corporate Plan 2022-23 included a commitment to developing a new West Yorkshire Housing Strategy that clearly sets out the objectives and mission of the Combined Authority in supporting the housing ambitions of the region.
- 2.7 The development of the housing strategy has been broken down into six phases, of which 1-4 have been completed in collaboration with partners.

#### (1) Evidence and Policy Baseline.

- In this first phase of work external partners and consultants were engaged to develop a baseline identifying recent drivers of change which have altered the pattern of housing need, demand, and supply in the West Yorkshire area.
- The research also undertook a review of how funding for housing and regeneration had been distributed across the region.
- A review of policy innovation and delivery mechanisms used by other Combined Authorities to accelerate outputs and outcomes was undertaken.



## (2) Developing the Strategic Objectives.

- Following establishing the evidence base workshops were held with partners to establish the emerging themes and priorities for the strategy to refine the objectives and mission statement.
- The second stage then involved wider engagement with all partners to obtain views and agree areas where the strategy can have greatest impact through different intervention types and identifying where synergies can be generated across themes and programmes at regional level.

## (3) Developing the narrative

- The narrative was developed by establishing a clear need for change across each of the objectives, setting out the current policy and delivery landscape for West Yorkshire and identifying the areas the strategy will seek to change as key performance measures.
- This approach aims to ensure we work with partners to achieve the right outcomes rather than be driven by national targets which fail to achieve regional and local impact towards levelling up.
- The high-level strategy as appendix 1 has been developed with partners following this approach and by entering a public consultation at this stage in the strategy development process, it enables the public to feed into the objectives and how they can be shaped (rather than presenting a finalised document)

## (4) Delivery Mechanisms.

- An understanding of the existing policy landscape and policy levers and tools as well as current and future programmes and networks has been mapped against objectives.
- Where further research and partnerships need to be developed to understand the role from a regional perspective, these have been highlighted in the first steps for delivering on each of the objectives.
- The strategy recognises the value of working at a local level in terms of place shaping and seeks to leverage in additional value by working at scale where partners have identified this would achieve greater efficiencies and improved outcomes as well as bring a greater opportunity to access funding, flexibilities, and powers that greater devolution can bring.

## (5) Consultation Process.

- The strategy has been developed with partners at each stage, from the evidence base workshops through to the draft at appendix 1. This has been via local authority groups and with wider external partners



- A public consultation is proposed on the draft high level strategy following committees endorsement.

(6) Final Strategy Approval and Document Preparation.

- The slides at appendix one will be further developed into a final strategy document with the aim for this to then be presented to the Combined Authority for approval on in Spring 2024.

**Partner Engagement**

- 2.8 The strategy has been co-developed with partners with regular engagement via structures and specific sessions to ensure all partners have had the opportunity to feed in and shape the strategy.
- 2.9 Progress updates have been shared at various stages for endorsement of the objectives and direction of travel with Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee, West Yorkshire Housing Partnership, Combined Authority and Local Authority and other private and third sector partners. The team developing the strategy have also worked closely with colleagues across the Combined Authority's wider policy remit to develop the strategy. All feedback from partners has been included in the strategy development to date.
- 2.10 The key message through the engagement with all partners was to ensure that the strategy adds value and does not duplicate or confuse the wider policy environment. It should function as a tool to enable and enhance delivery of quality, affordable and sustainable homes, and places.
- 2.11 As such the strategy has the following opportunities to add value at the regional level:
- Presenting a clear narrative to Government on our ambition for housing delivery in West Yorkshire
  - Demonstrating the scale of housing delivery potential and our track record in West Yorkshire.
  - Making the case for increased funding and flexibility in West Yorkshire
  - Presenting an opportunity at a regional scale to influence our partners in land allocations, development opportunities and alignment with regional ambition.
  - Ensuring collaborative working across the region to support improved standards of existing housing stock and the development of high-quality homes.
  - Establishing wider links to housing needs, homelessness, and communities – linking the role of housing to wider Mayoral functions, particularly on Policing and Crime.
  - Providing an opportunity to show alignment with our wider strategic aims – particularly around transport and connectivity.



- Recognising affordable housing and sustainable housing as our top priorities in West Yorkshire – Creating a fair and equitable housing offer that builds on our ambitions and existing programmes and flexibility to do more specific to the needs of the region.

### **Housing Strategy Content**

- 2.12 The Strategy supports the West Yorkshire Plan, and particularly addresses Mission 2: A Happy West Yorkshire which sets out the Combined Authority's headline ambitions regarding the development of sustainable and affordable homes linked to the Mayor's pledge to build 5000 sustainable and affordable homes.
- 2.13 The current draft (for consultation) of the West Yorkshire Housing Strategy is attached at appendix 1. Committee members are asked to provide comments on the draft strategy and to endorse the strategy ahead of an online public consultation commencing following the Committee meeting.
- 2.14 The mission statement was developed with our partners and has been tested with local authority teams and West Yorkshire Housing Partnership as well as with Committee members in a private session on 31<sup>st</sup> August.
- 2.15 The mission statement sets out our vision for West Yorkshire, made up of key messages and themes from our district partners, and defines what we are aiming to achieve through the housing strategy objectives. The four objectives have also been developed with partners as the areas where we can add the greatest value at a regional level, that will guide the Combined Authorities housing policy and programme delivery across the life of the strategy.
- 2.16 The guiding principles of 'sustainability' and 'equality and inclusive growth' were identified with partners as 'golden threads' which underpin our programmes and the outcomes that the strategy is seeking to achieve. Each objective will demonstrate how these principles are embedded with their delivery.

### **West Yorkshire Housing Strategy Mission Statement**

Our ambition is to create safe and inclusive places to live that meet the needs of our residents

We will do this by working with our partners to deliver sustainable and affordable homes in well-connected neighbourhoods where people choose to live.

**Ensuring that West Yorkshire is a place we are proud to call home.**



### **Next Steps for Housing Strategy**

- 2.17 The commitment and efforts of the local authorities, public, private and third sector partners across the region is already generating good, but this work needs to be supported by co-ordinated, bold and innovative approaches to housing delivery and programming to enable the provision of strategic infrastructure to unlock development.
- 2.18 The key milestones for strategy development and approval are summarised below:
- w/c 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – Launch public consultation
  - From 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Review consultation feedback
  - From 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 – Present updated strategy to partners
  - 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 – Finalise strategy
  - Spring 2024 – Combined Authority approval
  - April 2024 onwards – Design and launch of strategy

### **3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications**

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy makes links and references to the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan and existing programmes including Better Homes Hub, the regions retrofit programme. The Strategy sets out the Combined Authority’s intentions for improving the quality of existing and new housing stock, which supports action on tackling the climate emergency.
- 3.2 Sustainability has also been identified as a guiding principle within the Housing Strategy in order to address creating and growing sustainable and well-connected neighbourhoods contributing to the region’s net zero carbon ambitions.
- 3.3 Through each of the objectives, the strategy will seek to support:
- The climate emergency and net zero carbon plans



- Sustainable neighbourhoods including bus network, active travel and reflecting the needs of our communities.
- Connecting housing to the wider system of places

#### **4. Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy seeks to set out interventions to alleviate regional discrepancies and address inclusive growth within its objectives and delivery plan.
- 4.2 Within the Strategy we have identified inclusive growth as a guiding principle, reflecting within each of the objectives how we support as many people as possible to contribute to, and benefit from, interventions and access homes within our region.
- 4.3 The focus on good quality affordable housing will support inclusive growth across the region. Supporting our partners to enable faster delivery of much needed new homes including a proportion of affordable and higher quality, better insulated homes with subsequently lower running costs for residents. Particularly in the context of the current cost of living crisis, ensuring housing is affordable and of good quality is a key priority across the region and for our Local Authority partners.

#### **5. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 5.1 The strategy in and of itself sets out the interventions and an internal Equality Impact Assessment has been completed setting out the implications of EDI within the housing strategy.
- 5.2 Equality has been identified through the strategy as one of the guiding principles. Through each of the objectives, the strategy will seek to support:
  - Individuals that face barriers to living, including access to housing and employment, including those with protected characteristics
  - Communities facing deprivation, inequality, and exclusion, as defined by either specific places, or groups through their shared interests, or collective identities.
- 5.3 We know through research that many of the most challenging housing market areas in the region are within the most deprived locations. A focus on delivering affordable and sustainable homes in the right places means that our housing strategy focuses on delivering outcomes to ensure good quality housing and resilient neighbourhoods are available across all of West Yorkshire.
- 5.4 To that extent, equality and diversity implications are embedded within the housing strategy objectives and integrated across the outcomes outlined in this report and associated appendices to ensure fairer access to housing across the region.



## **6. Financial Implications**

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

## **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 Engagement with partners has been carried out throughout the process of developing the strategy draft to date.

## **10. Recommendations**

10.1 To seek the Committee's comments and endorsement of the high-level draft of the West Yorkshire Housing Strategy 2040 including the mission statement, objectives and comes attached at appendix one.

10.2 To seek the Committee's agreement to proceed with an online public consultation of the high-level West Yorkshire Housing Strategy that will directly feed into the development of the final strategy.

## **11. Background Documents**

11.1 There are no background documents referenced in this report.

## **12. Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Draft High Level Housing Strategy 2040
- Appendix 2: Programme Plan