
Report to: Place Panel

Date: 24 October 2018

Subject: **Statement of Common Ground and Strategic Planning Review**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To update and seek endorsement from the Place Panel on the development of the Statement of Common Ground and an updated version of the Leeds City Region Strategic Planning Review recommendations (originally endorsed by West Yorkshire Combined Authority in September 2015).
- 1.2 Subject to any changes, recommend that the Place Panel endorses and recommends to the Combined Authority that the Leeds City Region Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) and Planning Review be approved.

2. Information

West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Role in Planning

- 1.3 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is not a strategic or local planning authority, it therefore has no statutory responsibilities relating to planning. However the Leeds City Region Local Planning Authorities are committed to partnership working to ensure a joined-up approach to spatial planning including tackling cross-boundary issues and agreeing strategic priorities. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority supports and facilitates some of this activity.

Duty to Co-operates (DtC)

- 1.4 The DtC, introduced through the Localism Act 2011, was designed to reflect that strategic cross-boundary planning matters can be most effectively tackled when local planning authorities work together. This legal test, requiring local authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with one another to effectively deal with strategic, cross-boundary matters, is now a fundamental part of the plan-making process.

The Leeds City Region Statement of Common Ground (SoCG)

- 1.5 The SoCG will play a significant role in plan-making in satisfying the DtC for planning authorities.
- 1.6 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have set out in the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that all local planning authorities are required to produce a SoCG.
- 1.7 MHCLG requires that a SoCG has to be produced to support more effective joint working where planning issues need to be addressed by more than one local planning authority. The objectives of the policy are to:
- a) Increase certainty and transparency, earlier on in the plan-making process, on where effective co-operation is and is not happening;
 - b) encourage all local planning authorities, regardless of their stage in plan-making, to co-operate effectively and seek agreement on strategic cross-boundary matters, including planning for the wider area's housing need; and
 - c) help local planning authorities demonstrate evidence of co-operation by setting clearer and more consistent expectations as to how co-operation in plan-making should be approached and documented.
- 1.8 The Planning Advisory Services (PAS) has provided support in the development of the SoCG and the document has been endorsed by Leeds City Region Heads of Planning and Directors of Development.
- 1.9 Place Panel members are invited to provide comments on the SoCG and to endorse the document (subject to any changes) to be presented to the Combined Authority.

The Leeds City Region Strategic Planning Review

- 1.10 The Combined Authority previously requested that options on the potential roles and requirements of both the Combined Authority and the LEP in respect of the Duty to Cooperate and strategic planning. The Strategic Planning Review was undertaken in response to this request.
- 1.11 The Planning Review concluded in September 2015, the output of which was a set of agreed recommendations. These recommendations were endorsed by Planning Portfolios Board and approved by the Combined Authority.
- 1.12 The recommendations agreed in 2015 have now been updated to reflect changing governance arrangements and to reflect progress made relating to cross-boundary working since 2015. The changes have been endorsed by Leeds City Region Heads of Planning and Directors of Development.

Planning Review Key Changes

1.13 There are now 35 recommendations, reduced from 36 that were approved by the Combined Authority in September 2015. The following recommendations have been removed:

- Further consideration be given with local authority partners to the opportunities and benefits of more formalised arrangements e.g. West Yorkshire Combined Authority becoming a statutory consultee on major planning applications. – **This is no longer being progressed**
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority officers will ensure internal processes are in place to coordinate and align planning application responses across economic and transport, as required. – **This is now established with joint planning application and local plan consultation responses**
- Keep under review the Leeds City Region Interim Strategy Statement (2011). – **this has been superseded by the Statement of Common Ground / Statement of Cooperation work**

1.14 Three recommendations have been amended significantly (relating to the Statement of Common Ground and Infrastructure Investment Framework):

- 2) The West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the LEP to apply the high level principles of the emerging Statement of Common Ground and Statement of Cooperation in preparing strategic plans.
- 28) A commitment by all partner councils to the use of the Leeds City Region Infrastructure Map (online tool) and to keep the data layers up to date, to be coordinated by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. This tool illustrates the alignment between Local Plan employment and housing growth opportunities and committed infrastructure investments.
- 29) To continue to prepare sub-regional, non-statutory, joint evidence and strategies that reflect emerging local plans across the city region (for example the Leeds City Region Connectivity Study and joint work on infrastructure planning).

1.15 Two recommendations have been added (in response to the Heads of Planning feedback):

- 30) The West Yorkshire Combined Authority will work with partner councils to ensure alignment of Local Plan spatial priorities with strategic spatial priorities and strategic infrastructure investment decisions.
- 31) The West Yorkshire Combined Authority will review the existing processes in place including the Assurance Framework to identify any issues and opportunities in achieving greater alignment between development management approvals and the funding of strategic transport infrastructure (including consideration of the timely funding of required infrastructure).

- 1.16 Place Panel members are invited to provide comments on the Leeds City Region Planning Review recommendations and to endorse the document (subject to any changes) to be presented to the Combined Authority.

3. Financial Implications

- 1.17 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

4. Legal Implications

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

5. Staffing Implications

- 1.19 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

6. External Consultees

- 1.20 No external public consultations have been undertaken. Leeds City Region Partner Council's have been consulted as part of the drafting of this document.

7. Recommendations

- 1.21 To note the contents of the report.
- 1.22 To recommend that the Place Panel endorses the Leeds City Region Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) and recommends to the Combined Authority that it be approved.
- 1.23 To recommend that the Place Panel endorses the Leeds City Region Strategic Planning Review and recommends to the Combined Authority that it be approved.

8. Background Documents

- 1.24 None.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – The Leeds City Region Statement of Common Ground

Appendix 2 – Leeds City Region Strategic Planning Review
Recommendations Including Tracked Changes (Updated 2018)