

Economy & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

8 July 2024

Strategic Place Plans



Report of Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy & Growth

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This cover report accompanies the presentation to Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee and provides an update on the established Strategic Place Plans. Specifically, this report;
 - (a) Sets out the pilot approach to Strategic Place Plans;
 - (b) Highlights the Spennymoor case study and it's alignment with the Strategic Place Plans model;
 - (c) Outlines the delivery of future Strategic Place Plans and the factors influencing the order of delivery.

Executive Summary

- 2 Strategic Place Plans (SPPs) have replaced Masterplans in line with the principles and priorities of the Inclusive Economic Strategy & its Delivery Plan (approved by Cabinet December 2022 & November 2023 respectively) and subsequent report to Economy & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny in January 2024 setting out the process to be applied.
- 3 The SPP process is underpinned by the co-development principle within the Inclusive Economic Strategy. Central to this methodology is empowering local communities to be at the heart of shaping the future of their towns and villages, collaborating with local people, businesses and stakeholders to establish shared visions for each place. This agreed vision will then be the foundation on which spatial, investment and action plans will be developed to create SPPs.

Recommendation(s)

- 4 Members are asked to note
 - (a) the ongoing development of Strategic Place Plans
 - (b) progress with the Spennymoor Case Study set out in the accompanying presentation.

Background

- 5 The Strategic Place Plan pilot phase includes the development of plans in Durham City, Shildon and Spennymoor as reported previously.
- 6 A significant change from the previous suite of masterplans, Strategic Place plans are built around an agreed local area vision, established with communities through a process of Co-design. Strategic place Plans also include spatial plans, reflective of core components of previous plans and linking in with the established policy framework of the County Durham Plan. However, in line with the approach adopted for the Inclusive Economic Strategy, each Strategic Place Plan can also include a Delivery Plan and Investment Plan.
- 7 Spennymoor has been included as a Strategic Place Plan pilot phase following the allocation of £20 million of funding to the town by Government through the Long-Term Plan for the Towns. Appendix 2 details the key milestones for the programme mapped against the agreed phases of Strategic Place Plan development and provides an early case study of Strategic Place Plan development.
- 8 Future pilot SPPs will continue with Durham City and then Shildon/ Newton Aycliffe subject to resource and a review of the development and implementation of the three pilot plans. With co-design at the heart of the Strategic Place Plans process, the recent realignment of the Area Action Partnerships to the Economic Development Function provides opportunities to support / accelerate the engagement and visioning aspects of the process.
- 9 Factors for consideration in order of developing plans for the remaining towns is attached in Appendix 3. As with the initial pilots, awards of external funding may impact on the scheduled Strategic Place Plan order of delivery.

Background papers

- [Adoption of the Inclusive Economic Strategy, Cabinet Report December 2022](#)
- [Adoption of the Inclusive Economic Strategy Delivery Plan Cabinet Report November 2023](#)
- [Masterplan Activity in County Durham, Report to Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee January 2024](#)

Other useful documents

- None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

Pilot Strategic Place Plans are being taken forward utilising existing resource with some elements of capacity funding provided by external funding programmes. Future financial implications for the delivery of the full programme to be assessed once Area Action Partnership capacity to support the co-design phase is assessed.

Once completed, Strategic Place Plans will identify priorities for the delivery of schemes. They will not however guarantee funding for the projects identified.

Consultation

Co-design is central to the Strategic Place Plan programme. Details of the engagement programme for to each Strategic Place Plan will be agreed with the Council's Corporate Communications Team and the Council's Consultation Officers Group.

Future consultation mechanisms will be enhanced in line with the IES principles of co-development and following lessons learned as part of the Spennymoor pilot process.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None

Climate Change

None

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

None

Staffing

Strategic Place Plans underway at present include significant multi-disciplinary input from existing staffing resources across the Council. Through the presence of external funding and /or specific programme requirements this may be supplemented by specialist external input.

With the recent realignment of the Area Action Partnerships to the Economic Development Service, consideration is currently being given to the use of existing staffing resource to support the co-design elements of the next round of plans.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

Detailed risk assessments will be undertaken at the individual project level.

Procurement

Any specialist input to the development of the Strategic Place Plans will be secured in accordance with the Council's procurement rules and procedures.

Spennymoor case study



DLUHC 3 Themes Brief

- 11 Public engagement events;
- Family Fun Day 1000+;
- Street engagement
- 1100 Students Whitworth Park Academy & Primary Schools
- Online Survey
- Enabled open conversations
- Produced observations

Shape vision

- Led by Urban Foresight
- Spennymoor Town Board developing draft 10 Year Vision
- Facilitated by DCC

Consult

- Public engagement/ co design responses received formed draft vision
- Use of social media, questionnaire, public event(s)

Adopt

- Refine 10 Year vision based on public engagement
- Spennymoor Town Board
- Cabinet adopt the vision

Delivery Plan

- Develop 3 Year Investment Plan based on adopted vision utilising first £6 million
- Owned by Spennymoor Town Board
- Adopted by Cabinet

Factors for consideration in prioritisation

The below is the current thinking on factors to take into account

Level of deprivation

- Applying indices of deprivation to help identify highest areas of need

High Street vacancies

- Targeting the areas with the highest number of high street vacancies

Age of the existing masterplan

- Prioritising areas that have the least up to date masterplans

Settlement size

- Take in to account place size and number of residents impacted

Strategic impact

- Consider the wider catchment area and focus on district centres first

Opportunities and challenges

- Identify places with specific issues that mean they are more likely to attract funding, or have specific issues to address