



Report of

Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The Purpose of this report is to
 - (a) Provide Board members with a progress update of the All together for Spennymoor neighbourhood board following updated guidance from central government.

2 Background

- 3 On 30th October 2024 the new Government confirmed that the LTPT programme would continue and working alongside local and devolved government, has subsequently been rebranded as plan for neighbourhoods.
- 4 An updated prospectus was received from central government which sets out the principles and objectives of the government's new Plan for Neighbourhoods (PfN).
- 5 We have also received governance and boundary guidance which provides information specific to the Neighbourhood Boards and place boundaries of those communities and local authorities involved in the PfN programme.
- 6 This will assist with our Regeneration Plan to MHCLG for assessment and approval between Spring and winter 2025 ahead of funding in April 2026 to begin our delivery phase.
- 7 In order to access their funding allocation, each town is required to submit a Long-Term Investment Plan to the government. This plan will consist of a 10-year vision coupled with a 4-year investment plan, replacing the previous 3-year framework, with submissions scheduled between Spring and Winter 2025
- 8 To date a pro-forma template for outlining the investment plan breakdown has not been received.
- 9 Further community engagement will take place over the coming months, with the delivery of projects within the programme to begin in 2026/27 including:

Event	Location	Date
Spennymoor Town Vibrancy event	Spennymoor Market Place	24.05.2025
Spennymoor Gala	Jubilee Park	05.07.2025
Spennymoor Brass Festival	Spennymoor Market Place	10.07.2025

- 10 We were advised additional £200,000 of capacity funding payments due to be paid in the 2025 to 2026 budget year will only take place once membership and boundary arrangements are formalised.
- 11 As confirmed by email, the board we have agreed to retain our existing chair and the All together for Spennymoor Town board to ensure continuity and to build upon our work undertaken so far and that this is to be confirmed to MHCLG by the deadline of 22nd April 2025.
- 12 We have approved a change to the previous built-up area boundary map (attached as **Appendix 2**) to incorporate Byers Green and Kirk Merrington which also forms part of the new local network which is also to be confirmed to MHCLG by 22nd April.

Changes and Additions from the Long-Term Plan for Towns prospectus

- 13 **Scope and Funding:** The PfN expands the scope from 55 towns in the Long-Term Plan for Towns to 75 areas
- 14 **Goals and Focus:** While the Long-Term Plan for Towns focused on regenerating local high streets and addressing crime and anti-social behaviour, the PfN focuses on creating thriving places, building stronger communities, and empowering local areas to take back control.
- 15 **Community Involvement:** Both plans emphasise community involvement, but the PfN places a stronger emphasis on grassroots solutions and local empowerment. These changes and additions reflect a more targeted and community-driven approach in the PfN, building on the foundation laid by the Long-Term Plan for Towns.
- 16 **Interventions** – The interventions previously available for funding—including High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration, Safety and Security, and Transport and Connectivity—have now been expanded to give flexibility to boards as to how and what they can deliver.
- 17 The new interventions are:-
- (a) Regeneration, high streets and heritage
 - (b) Transport

- (c) Safety and Security
 - (d) Housing
 - (e) Work, productivity and skills
 - (f) Cohesion
 - (g) Health and wellbeing
 - (h) Education and opportunity
- 18 **Expanded Scope and Funding:** With the expansion from 55 towns to 75 areas and a significant increase in funding, accountable bodies and lead councils will need to manage larger and more complex projects. This includes ensuring that the additional funds are allocated and spent effectively to achieve the desired outcomes.
- 19 **Stronger Focus on Local Empowerment:** The PfN places a stronger emphasis on empowering local areas. This means that accountable bodies and lead councils will need to support and facilitate local decision-making processes, ensuring that communities have a say in how their areas are developed.
- 20 We have now also received further guidance for places on Neighbourhood Board governance and boundaries. The outlined framework emphasizes the importance of collaboration among the Neighbourhood Board, local authority, and community in managing funding effectively which will assist with future community consultation opportunities.
- 21 The Youth consultation has been active since December and has received over 200 responses.
- 22 Further consultation will take place at events in Spennymoor and newly added locations to further develop projects for the long-term plan for towns in Spennymoor on the existing and newly added interventions.

Governance - structures

- 23 Technical officer and working group meetings have continued to take place in line with programme guidance to identify and align current and planned activity across the PfN area.
- 24 Key working groups have been tasked with providing cost assessments and identifying priority areas that assist in project prioritisation. Additional groups will be established to encompass new interventions outlined in recent government guidance. A significant collaboration is also being formed with the youth council to amplify the voices and involvement of young people in these initiatives

- 25 Spennymoor youth and community will work with the youth council representative to strengthen young people's voices and involvement.
- 26 The final element of Board recruitment – Business representatives, was paused once we entered the pre-election period. Some initial expressions of interest were received and a range of potential representatives reflecting small and large employers as well as town centre based businesses have been identified to progress through to informal discussions. The process for confirming these positions will recommence following the election period

Submission

- 27 Revised guidance confirming timelines and a new set of strategic objectives for the programme aligned with the Government's priorities will be published shortly. Further community engagement will take place over the coming months, with the delivery of projects within the programme to commence in April 2026/27.
- 28 Government has provided a further capacity funding allocation for us to use across 2025/26 as we review our investment programme and this will be released following confirmation of our Chair, board membership and geographical Boundary.
- 29 Work on project prioritisation to provide information for the template has not paused at any period during the pre-election period or since with working groups continuing to provide information and input to aid project development.
- 30 Additional information gathered or commissioned through the early stages of the programme is being used in support of the consultation responses. Notable progress involved further surveys such as further car park surveys have been undertaken to provide further information potential areas for interventions, and if issues regarding car parking that were highlighted in the public consultation are an issue.
- 31 Town Centre survey – annual vacancy assessment has been provided.
- 32 Retail and Leisure Gaps and Capacity Study has been provided which compares against national statistics. This has provided potential areas for interventions, and identified issues regarding vacant buildings that were highlighted in the public consultation as an issue.
- 33 Asset Mapping of DCC Land and Buildings has been undertaken, including Industrial and Commercial Land.

Next Steps and Way forward

Detailed Implementation Timeline: The PfN includes a more detailed and phased implementation timeline, with specific dates for confirming Chair, and Neighbourhood Boards and submitting Regeneration Plans. which is shown below:

February to 22nd April 2025:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council and MP needs to confirm the existing chair to remain• Neighbourhood Boards to confirm finalised membership• Neighbourhood Boards to confirm geographical boundary and any proposals to alter the 'default' area boundary for spending in their community• A nominated contact for the Spennymoor Neighbourhood Board• Supplementary documentation (terms of reference, code of conduct)• Neighbourhood Boards and local authorities receive a tailored data pack detailing metrics across the 3 strategic objectives, and polling on local sentiment around investment priorities for their area• Outline capacity funding spends to date and plans for additional spending
Spring 2025:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MHCLG to review membership and boundary proposals and confirm to places whether acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further guidance on fund delivery, tailored policy toolkits for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, Regeneration Plan submission, assessment and approval to be published
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MHCLG issues 2025 to 2026 capacity funding payment to all places
Spring 2025 to winter 2025:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neighbourhood Boards submit their Regeneration Plan to MHCLG for assessment and approval
From April 2026:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First programme delivery funding payment to be made to lead local authorities, commencement of delivery phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MHCLG issues 2026 to 2027 capacity funding payment to all places

Forward Plan

Date	Venue	Agenda Items
22.04.2025		Formalisation of Board Chair , Board Membership and geographical boundary
06.06.2025	Livin	Youth Consultation Summary Detailed discussion of Investment Plan and project prioritisation Project Updates & Quick Wins
15.08.2025	Livin	Investment plan discussion and agreement Update from working groups including new interventions
September Date TBC		Investment plan submission

- 34 Continued face to face public engagement events at various community centres and events will recommence in 2025 and will continue throughout the 10 year period of the plan for neighbourhoods
- 35 The effective management of funding through the collaborative efforts of the Neighbourhood Board, local authority and the wider community is crucial for the successful implementation of the Regeneration Plan. By adhering to established principles of accountability, compliance with the Subsidy Control Act and state aid regulations, and ensuring robust public procurement practices, we can enhance transparency and maximize the impact of the interventions we will make in the Spennymoor community.

36 The next All together for Spennymoor Neighbourhood Board meeting is Friday 6th June 2025.

Recommendation(s)

37 Board is recommended to:

- a) Note the continued progress with the plan for neighbourhood's programme submission.

Author(s)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None associated with this report.

Finance

Government have confirmed the ability of local areas to carry forward unspent allocations in line with their Investment Plans.

An initial £50,000 Capacity funding allocation was received in 2023/4 with a further £200,000 released in April, linked to commencing Board meetings and confirming initial governance requirements are in place. It is understood Spennymoor was one of the first Town Boards to pass the governance checks and receive this further funding. A further £200,000 capacity funding allocation will be released in 2025/26 following confirmation of the neighbourhood board.

Consultation

The programme has co design and extensive consultation at its core. Co-design programme being delivered by sector specialists with feedback sessions commencing in July and continuing into August with schools and local community centres to be revisited in the new year

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

As a publicly funded programme activities in developing and delivering this programme are required to support the public Sector Equality Duties

Climate Change

None associated with this report.

Human Rights

None associated with this report.

Crime and Disorder

None associated with this report. Safety and Security are a core theme for the programme and the subsequent investment plan.

Risk

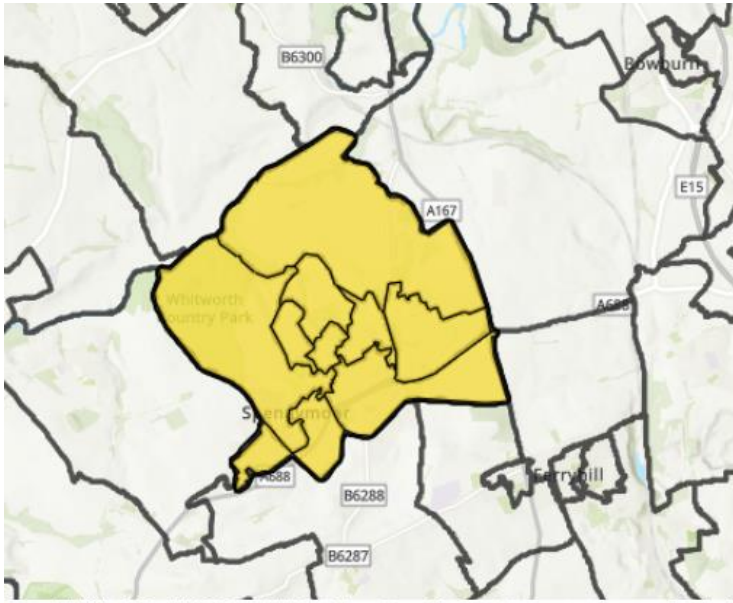
None associated with this report.

Procurement

Specialist Co-design capacity has been procured following the Council's established procurement methodology

Appendix 2: Spennymoor PfN boundary amendment

Initial LTPT Spennymoor Boundary



Low Spennymoor, Middlestone Moor, Spennymoor Central, Spennymoor Green Lane, Spennymoor Whitworth Hall, Tudhoe, Tudhoe Grange East, Tudhoe Grange North, Tudhoe Grange South, Tudhoe Grange West

17,936

Total estimated population
(2020)

Source: ONS*

8,802

(49.1%)
Male estimated population
(2020)

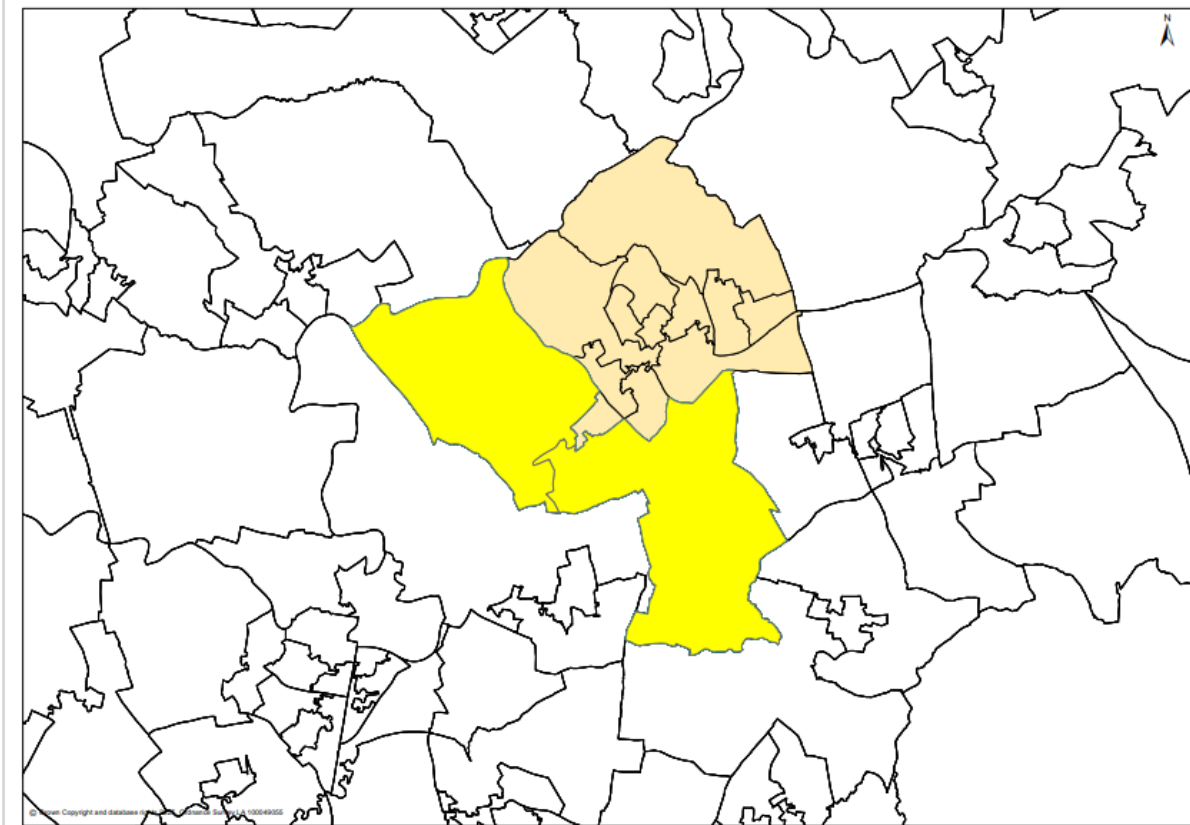
Source: ONS*

9,134

(50.9%)
Female estimated population
(2020)

Source: ONS*

Spennymoor PfN Boundary



The following custom report provides an overview of the selected areas: **Byers Green, Kirk Merrington, Low Spennymoor, Middlestone Moor, Spennymoor Central, Spennymoor Green Lane, Spennymoor Whitworth Hall, Tudhoe, Tudhoe Grange East, Tudhoe Grange North, Tudhoe Grange South, Tudhoe Grange West** LSOAss selected, using some of the main indicators used in the reports available via the 'Themes' menu above.

22,039 Total estimated population (2020) Source: ONS*	10,841 (49.2%) Male estimated population (2020) Source: ONS*	11,198 (50.8%) Female estimated population (2020) Source: ONS*
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