



Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee

31 July 2024

Title:	Infrastructure Development Framework
Report of:	Judith Barker, Executive Director Place and Connectivity
Lead Member:	Cllr. Bridget Smith, Lead Member for Environment
Public Report:	Yes
Key Decision:	No
Voting Arrangements:	Choose from the following: A No vote required B A simple majority of voting Members

Recommendations:

A	To note progress on the Infrastructure Delivery Framework and next steps
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Strategic Objective(s):

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

x	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
X	Achieving good growth
X	Increased connectivity
X	Enabling resilient communities
	Achieving best value and high performance

1. Purpose

1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide a progress report on the Infrastructure Delivery Framework and set that in context with the new government's proposals for Local Growth Plans.
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2. Proposal

2.1	<p>The Infrastructure Delivery Framework study final report is currently being finalised by consultants, STANTEC.</p> <p>Since the winter, they have been working with constituent councils and key infrastructure stakeholders to assess the readiness of infrastructure to support strategic-scale housing and employment opportunities (as currently planned or emerging in Local Plans).</p> <p>This work has focussed on four themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy• Water
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport, connectivity and digital infrastructure • Blue/green infrastructure <p>The project identifies potential infrastructure barriers to delivering and accelerating sustainable growth at regional and local level. Whilst such constraints are generally understood locally, the report brings those challenges together at a Combined Authority scale for the first time and allows a consideration of cumulative impacts and opportunities across areas.</p> <p>The study was always intended to form part of the evidence base to help unlock solutions and to allow further work to be done with partners to work up proposals and business cases to bring forward projects that would have the greatest impact on unlocking growth. This could be the basis of bids to government for devolution deals but also to look at innovative public and private finance solutions.</p>
2.2	<p>The new government has indicated that that regional growth should be supported through the creation of 'Local Growth Plans'. Detailed requirements for the Local Growth Plans are not yet clear but the government wishes to push forward rapidly in unlocking growth working particularly with MCAs.</p> <p>The evidence of the infrastructure study will be a very important contribution to this thinking, and the development of a future Local Growth Plan.</p>
2.3	<p>It is proposed that the next steps on the Infrastructure Delivery Framework are decided as part of a corporate response to the Local Growth Plan development working collaboratively with partners. The report will aid the mapping of activity for the emerging Local Growth Plan process and the national policy changes.</p> <p>A verbal update on proposals for the Local Growth Plan will be provided at the meeting.</p>
2.4	<p>CPCA and partners remain actively engaged with infrastructure providers on tackling barriers to growth. To this end, CPCA are hosting a Commissioners Visit from National Infrastructure Commission on 1 August where our local experiences will be considered as evidence in their report due in early 2025 on how infrastructure and particularly electricity is holding back growth.</p>

3. Background

3.1	<p>Environment & Sustainable Communities Committee in June 2023 approved work to develop an evidence base and framework that assists in the identification of physical infrastructure challenges to achieving sustainable growth, and proposals to tackle those challenges. Over a 12 month period the study would draw together existing infrastructure evidence, identify gaps and interdependences, and scope interventions.</p>
3.2	<p>The Place Directors Group (with senior officer membership from all Councils) agreed the scope of the work needed to identify the main infrastructure challenges and develop a process for keeping that up to date and promoting interventions. It would draw together evidence on the infrastructure challenges (including evidence relating to planned strategic housing sites), look at potential to accelerate solutions and identify gaps where more work is required.</p> <p>External capacity was commissioned from Stantec Ltd to undertake the study.</p>
3.3	<p>The final report was due to be reported and presented to July Committee.</p> <p>However, after discussion with the Place Director's Group and a workshops held on 3 and 11 July it was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Government may require some refinement of the document to align to new opportunities and policy positions • Some additional clarifications to the technical work were required to align with existing Local Planning evidence. • The narrative would need to be developed to fit with a Local Growth Plan <p>The consultants are now undertaking that final revision, with a completion date set for the 26 July.</p> <p>The proposal would be to share that document with Place Directors and then develop a detailed response and plan with linkage to the Local Growth Plan to present to the September 2024 Committee.</p>

4. Appendices

4.1	None.
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5. Implications

Financial Implications

5.1	The report may require provision in future MTFP discussions for the development of business cases and project development.
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Legal Implications

5.2	None.
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Public Health Implications

5.3	Ensuring appropriate housing and infrastructure can have an important impact on health outcomes. The study provides an evidence base to accelerate necessary infrastructure, reducing barriers to delivery of new homes and jobs.
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Environmental & Climate Change Implications

5.4	Appropriate infrastructure needs to respond to climate impacts and reduce net emissions. The study does consider overall impact on climate issues, but it will be for individual business cases for new infrastructure that need to demonstrate they have addressed climate impacts,
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Other Significant Implications

5.5	None.
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Background Papers

5.6	Report to Environment Committee June 2023
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