

Harlow Regeneration Partnership Business Plan



Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	7 September 2023
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Michael Hardware, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development
Lead Officer:	James Gardner, Assistant Director - Regeneration (01279 446228)
Key Decision:	No
Forward Plan:	Forward Plan Number I016233
Call In:	This item is subject to call in procedures
Corporate Priorities:	Rebuild our town Secure investment into our town
Wards Affected:	None specifically

Recommended that Cabinet:

- A** Approves the Harlow Regeneration Partnership (HRP): First Investment Plan – September 2023 – August 2026 as set out in Appendix A
- B** Agrees that annual reporting from the HRP should take place at each October Cabinet Meeting, repeating annually from 2024 until such time that the partnership is dissolved.
- C** Approves the development of a public-facing website containing details of the HRP targeted to be live in January 2024 and notes the establishment of the HRP branding.

Reason for decision

- A** To establish strategic and tactical direction for the HRP for the period of September 2023 – August 2026, and

- B** To establish an organisation and operational framework within which the Harlow Regeneration Partnership can deliver commercially viable schemes as part of Regeneration and Council House Building Programmes.

Other Options

- A** Harlow Regeneration Partnership: First Investment Plan – September 2023 – August 2026 has been developed in line with the Cabinet Approval of March 2023: *Harlow Investment Partnership – Approval of selection of partner and partnership commencement*.

Background

1. The delivery of a Joint Venture partnership to contribute to the delivery of regeneration ambitions for Harlow was set out as a mid-term priority within the Harlow Council Corporate Strategy: 2021-2024.
2. Senior officers investigated different forms of joint venture partnerships, considering those currently being deployed by other authorities as well as alternative models. The conclusion of this work was a form of public private partnership known as an Investment Partnership (IP) as a model that would be the most appropriate approach for the Council to secure its regeneration objectives for Harlow from the potential redevelopment of suitable owned sites. Options were presented to Members via an independent report and an Investment Partnership was agreed as the way forward.
3. Following a selection and evaluation process, a Cabinet Decision was taken to appoint Hill Group in line with the recommendations and accompanying decisions set-out Cabinet report of March 2023: *Harlow Investment Partnership – Approval of selection of partner and partnership commencement*, and its associated Appendices.

Issues/Proposals

1. In line with the approval for the commencement of the HRP, an initial Investment Plan for the period of September 2023 – August 2026 has been compiled to guide the activities of the partnership for both commercial and operational considerations. The Investment Plan is set out in Appendix A - Harlow Regeneration Partnership: First Investment Plan – September 2023 – August 2026.
2. An initial set of sites have been set out with Appendix B – Initial Site Selection. It is proposed that this Investment Plan is approved and that the Board and Investment Team detailed therein is established and governance and development and delivery proposals commence.

3. If the Investment Plan is approved, it is proposed that the HRP develop its own branding and also a public-facing website containing details of the partnership and all schemes being promoted, with ongoing updates on development and delivery. This website will be targeted to be live in January 2024 and will be developed directly by HRP.
4. It is further proposed that a Harlow Regeneration: Annual Performance Report be produced with the inaugural report being duly provided to the October 2024 meeting of the Cabinet, and thereafter on an annual basis until such time that the partnership is dissolved.
5. Where further Cabinet decisions are required in line with agreed governance arrangements, these will be added to the forward plan for consideration by the Cabinet in the normal way.

Implications

Equalities and Diversity

There are no direct equality and poverty implications in establishing an IP, but the redevelopment of individual sites and the effective realisation of the Council's land and property assets may release funding to assist the Council to pursue its equality and poverty policies.

Climate Change

There are no direct climate change implications in establishing an IP but there will be a specification for each redevelopment that addresses sustainability, climate change & environmental outcomes.

Communities and Environment

There are no direct environmental implications in establishing an IP but there will be a specification for each redevelopment that addresses required outcomes.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Finance

Sites identified within the investment plan will only be taken forward once the Partners and Board have approved a site Project Plan. Each site is required to go through a development appraisal and all financial aspects will be considered.

Author: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Assistant Director – Finance on behalf of Simon Freeman, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Governance and Corporate Services

The development of the business plan is in line with previous decisions made in March 2023 to enter a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP).

Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services

Appendices

Confidential Appendix A - Harlow Regeneration Partnership: First Investment Plan – September 2023 – August 2026

This appendix is confidential under Paragraph 3 of Part One of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Background Papers

Cabinet Report of March 2023 - Harlow Investment Partnership – Approval of selection of partner and partnership commencement.

Harlow Council Corporate Strategy: 2021-2023

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used:

HRP – Harlow Regeneration Partnership