

Cabinet

Report Title	Pride in Place Programme – Governance Model
Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 14 January 2026
Report Author	Rebecca Jenkins
Lead Officer	Executive Director - Place
Lead Cabinet Member(s)	Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Infrastructure
Why is this a key decision?	To be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough.
Wards Affected	Friar Park Ward
Identify exempt information and exemption category	Open
Is the report urgent?	No
Reasons for urgency (only where applicable)	N/A
Appendices (if any)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pride in Place Programme Boundary 2. Government role description for Neighbourhood Board Chair 3. Draft Friar Park Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board Membership 4. Draft Friar Park Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board Terms of Reference

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report seeks approval to a proposed governance model and arrangements for the delivery of the Pride in Place Programme, including any delegations required.

2. Recommendations

The Cabinet is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Delegate authority to the Service Director for Economy and Regeneration in consultation with Service Director Governance (Monitoring Officer) and the Leader to establish a Friar Park Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board through undertaking necessary selection processes to make appointments to the Board and Independent Chair position.
- 2.2 Delegate authority to the Service Director Governance (Monitoring Officer) in consultation with Service Director for Economy and Regeneration, the Leader, MP and the Chair of the Board (once appointed) to finalise the Friar Park Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board Terms of Reference and Board Membership and to make any changes to respond to Government guidance or requirements, and in accordance with guidance to make arrangements for the reasonable expenses of board members to be met.
- 2.3 Delegate authority to the to the newly appointed board, once constituted to develop a Regeneration Plan for Friar Park, to include public consultation, and to submit to Government subject to s151 Officer authorisation.
- 2.4 Agree that approval be given for the Council to act as Accountable Body for the Pride in Place Programme and adopt programme governance arrangements, receive the geographical boundary for the Pride in Place Programme as determined and delegate authority to Service Director for Economy and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader, MP and Chair of the Board to make any necessary representation to Government to amend the boundary in consultation with the new Board.
- 2.5 Authorise that public consultation be undertaken in relation to the Pride in Place programme.
- 2.6 Delegate authority to the Service Director Governance (Monitoring Officer) in consultation with the Service Director for Economy and Regeneration, the S151 Officer and the Leader, to review and formally accept the Pride in Place offer / grant conditions from Government including any capacity funding.
- 2.7 Delegate authority to the Service Director for Economy and Regeneration to authorise spend of any capacity funding for the purposes of establishing the Neighbourhood Board, developing the Regeneration Plan, programme management, technical expertise for project development and other activities in accordance with government guidance.

3. Proposals – Reasons for the recommendations

- 3.1 In late September 2025, the Prime Minister launched the Pride In Place Strategy and Programme. This is a newly announced initiative to empower local communities, particularly in more deprived areas, to take control of local regeneration, high streets, public spaces and community assets. It is part of a broader ambition of the government to shift more power from central

government to local neighbourhoods, give communities more say in how money is spent and what interventions are prioritised. There are two new funding strands Sandwell will benefit from:

- 3.1.1 **Pride in Place Programme (PiPP):** longer term investment (up to £20 million per place over 10 years) in selected deprived neighbourhoods. Friar Park in Wednesbury has been selected.
- 3.1.2 **Pride in Place Impact Fund (PiPIF):** a shorter-term capital fund providing £1.5 million per area over two years to selected places for visible, immediate works like improving high streets, public spaces etc. Sandwell is listed as one of the 95 places identified for the Pride in Place Impact Fund. This fund will be subject to a future report to Cabinet.
- 3.2 Friar Park has been selected in the Pride in Place Programme by the government. The selection of locations has been based on areas that are 'doubly disadvantaged' by both the highest deprivation levels and weakest social infrastructure. Selection of places has been based on need: metrics of deprivation (for example the Index of Multiple Deprivation, IMD) and community need / local pride (for example the Community Needs Index). Further details of the Government's methodology for the selection of places can be found [here](#).
- 3.3 These newly announced areas are referred to as *Pride in Place Phase 2* with Plan for Neighbourhoods areas (Smethwick) now referred to as *Phase 1 Pride in Place*. The Pride in Place programmes are not currently incorporated in the *Local Regeneration Fund* requirements which aims to simplify monitoring and reporting arrangements on existing government grant funded regeneration programmes
- 3.4 Initial guidance for the Pride in Place Phase 2 programme was published in September 2025 in the form of the [strategy document](#) and [FAQs](#). This included initial information around the requirements of the programme. Detailed guidance was released in December 2025 in the form of a [Pride in Place Programme Prospectus](#).
- 3.5 The government set out that the Pride in Place Programme relies on the power of local people and partnerships, bringing together residents, the local MP, councils, businesses and community organisations to produce a clear vision for their area. A Neighbourhood Board will be responsible for producing a 10 year vision for a place, supported by interventions which are set out in the Regeneration Plan, to achieve the strategic objectives of the programme.
 - 3.5.1 **To build stronger communities** – All places should have strong relationships and a collective sense of belonging to their community. This helps bring people together to build community cohesion and resilience, helping people to feel proud of their area and safe in their neighbourhood.
 - 3.5.2 **To create thriving places** – Every part of the UK deserves to have vibrant neighbourhoods and communities with busy high streets, a good range of local amenities and high-quality physical infrastructure.

3.5.3 **To empower people to take back control** – Talent is spread equally but opportunity is not. Everybody should be empowered and in control of their lives and have a say over the future of their community.

3.6 The default geographic boundary for each place is determined by the definition of a neighbourhood as Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs). These are [ONS census geographies](#) with a resident population of between 5,000 and 15,000 people. The Friar Park neighbourhood selected for the funding is shown in appendix 1. Government guidance has set out that proposals for alterations to the boundary can be submitted to Government by the Neighbourhood Board and that a case can be made to deliver interventions outside of the boundary so long as it benefits and reflects the preferences of the resident population.

Governance and Neighbourhood Board Formation

3.7 Government have set out that a Neighbourhood Board is required to be established for the Pride in Place Programme and that the Board will be responsible for developing a Regeneration Plan for the 10 year funding period and agreeing interventions in partnership with the local authority.

3.8 Requirements of the Neighbourhood Board are that:

- 3.8.1 Each Neighbourhood Board will be led by an independent chair, appointed and approved by the local authority and the local MP. The chair should act as a champion for the place and provide leadership for the board, ensuring it is community-led and embedded within the local area.
- 3.8.2 Neighbourhood Boards must include the relevant local MP and at least one ward councillor.
- 3.8.3 Boards must have at least eight members to ensure a broad range of voices and perspectives
- 3.8.4 The majority should live or work within the boundaries of the neighbourhood
- 3.8.5 Members should broadly reflect the range and diversity of people who live in the area

Wednesbury already has a partnership board in place under the Levelling Up Partnership (LUP). The guidance acknowledges that existing partnerships boards may be in place but sets out that areas should have a dedicated structure or forum to influence decisions which is focused solely on that area. As the neighbourhood area for Pride in Place is a much smaller geography than the LUP, a new board will be required. Government have provided an outline for the role of the Independent Chair (see appendix 2).

3.9 Draft membership of the Friar Park Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board is included at appendix 3. In accordance with the government guidance, Chairs are expected to lead the process of recruiting and convening the Neighbourhood Board. Once appointed, the Chair's input on the size and numbers of seats in each category of the Board Membership will be sought before the Board composition is finalised. Subject to Cabinet's approval, Elected Member appointments to the Neighbourhood Board will be appointed by Full Council. Expressions of interest will be sought for other representatives and the Independent Chair.

3.10 The draft terms of reference for the Board are provided at appendix 4 and have been compiled based on learning from the Towns Fund Programme, Levelling Up Partnership Programme and Pride in Place Phase 1 governance model. The new Board once constituted will review and finalise the terms of reference at its first meeting. The proposed terms of reference will then be submitted for approval by the Service Director Governance (Monitoring Officer) in consultation with Service Director for Economy and Regeneration the Leader, MP and Chair of the Board. The terms of reference will comprise the following components:

- Governance Model
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Board Positions
- Code of Conduct
- Decision Making
- Scrutiny
- Transparency and Accountability
- Board Member profiles
- Conflicts of Interest
- Scheme of Delegation

Funding and Interventions

3.11 Guidance has set out that neighbourhoods will receive up to £20m of funding and support over 10 years. This will include £7.17m of the £20m as revenue funding over the 10 years.

3.12 Capacity funding of £150K will be released this financial year (25/26) to support local community engagement and the establishment of the Neighbourhood Board.

3.13 A list of [pre-approved interventions](#) that would not require a business case to be agreed with MHCLG has been provided. Neighbourhood Boards will be encouraged to think innovatively and creatively about how to deliver the strategic objectives of the programme. In line with the council's Accountable Body remit, interventions will be required to follow the Council's processes for appraisal of projects to ensure value for money requirements are met.

Timescales

3.14 Government released timescales for the Pride in Place Programme Phase 2 are set out as follows:

Early 2026	Release of capacity funding
April 2026	First programme delivery funding payment
July 2026	Neighbourhood Boards confirm membership and plans for boundary alterations
Autumn 2026	MHCLG review of Neighbourhood Boards and boundary change proposals
28 November 2026	Submission of Regeneration Plan

2026/2027 – 2029/2030 financial years	Investment Period 1 (4 years)
2030/2031 – 2032/2033 financial years	Investment Period 2 (3 years)
2033/2034 – 2035/2036 financial years	Investment Period 3 (3 years)

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 Consideration has been given to whether the Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board could act as the Neighbourhood Board for the Pride in Place Programme. This option was discounted as the Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board's membership does not reflect people with a deep-rooted connection with the Friar Park area.
- 4.2 The proposed delegations will enable final details for the establishment of the Neighbourhood Board to be agreed in a timely way to support the deadline for the submission of the Regeneration Plan.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The delegations allow for the membership of the Friar Park Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board to be finalised in consultation with the MP. The input of the Neighbourhood Board Chair (once appointed) will be sought before details are finalised.
- 5.2 The draft Board Terms of reference will be reviewed and finalised following discussion at the first meeting of the newly constituted Board. This will enable broader consultation and input to the terms of reference.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The programme represents a funding opportunity of up to £20m including £7.17m revenue. Additional resources will be required to meet the requirements of this programme. This will include programme management, monitoring and reporting, community engagement activity, neighbourhood board management and support, project appraisal, and capacity to develop and deliver interventions (for example demands on legal, procurement, design services and similar) over the 10-year duration. A cumulative impact will be placed on support and delivery services to respond to the scale of regeneration programme delivery across Sandwell.
- 6.2 An initial capacity funding payment of £150K will be released in early 2026 to support local community engagement, the formation of the Neighbourhood Board and programme management. Government guidance sets out an expectation that at least some of the funding in Year 1 of the programme will be used to support community engagement also. Existing council resources are being used to prepare for the Regeneration Plan and Board formation however this interim arrangement is not sustainable beyond March 2026 and capacity funding will be required to resource internal support for this

programme. A delegation is proposed to accept any capacity funding and authorise spend for the purposes of establishing the Neighbourhood Board, developing the Regeneration Plan, any technical expertise required for project development and any other activities in accordance with government guidance.

7. Legal and Governance Implications

- 7.1 S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 gave Local Authorities a general power of competence to do anything which an individual may do for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in their area. This report proposes governance arrangements for the Pride in Place Programme to respond to guidance around the programme requirements. The proposed delegations will enable the governance arrangements to be finalised following input from the Neighbourhood Board and Chair once in place and to ensure compliance with any further guidance received from Government.
- 7.2 Should the Regeneration Plan submission be accepted, the Council will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Government and undertake the role of Accountable Body for the funding. Subject to entry into a subsidy agreement, Officers and the proposed Board must ensure that Subsidy Control is considered in consultation with finance and legal officers and that all relevant assessments are made and recorded, all relevant notices are published, and all relevant regulations and legislation is complied with to the satisfaction of the S.151 Officer and in compliance with the Financial Procedure Rules of the Council.
- 7.3 The Council must be satisfied it can meet the objectives and terms and conditions and milestones of the funding imposed by the funding authority including any obligation to provide match funding and to monitor, keep any necessary records and file any necessary returns. Officers must also check the terms do not conflict with other funding conditions for the scheme/s or project/property already in place and ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and obtain any necessary assessments.
- 7.4 The grant may amount to a subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Therefore, a subsidy control analysis of the grant funding and what it will be used for is essential before payment of the grant is received. This process will be undertaken by relevant responsible officer with support and input from relevant service areas.

8. Risks

- 8.1 The timescales for the Pride in Place Phase 2 present a risk as the Regeneration Plan is required to be submitted in November 2026. For Sandwell, much of the period to establish the Board and prepare for consultation and engagement will be during the pre-election period. Risks are associated with community expectations around the speed to agree and start delivery of interventions given the announcement of the programme in September 2025.
- 8.2 Risks are associated with council resources related to being the accountable body for the fund and the programme management costs over the 10 year period. This will require programme management support resources and

support from finance. A significant work strand will be around community engagement and consultation to develop the Regeneration Plan and to shape the projects to meet the vision and objectives of the plan.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty)

- 9.1 The Regeneration Plan is yet to be developed and will be required to consider the public sector equality duty including considering data relating to EDI protected characteristics and the priorities for interventions.
- 9.2 The Neighbourhood Board is required to demonstrate respect for human rights and giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in all decisions.
- 9.3 The proposed composition of the Neighbourhood Board includes faith group representation and representation from other underrepresented groups. All Board Members are required to treat others with courtesy, valuing views of others and ensure a positive, inclusive environment.
- 9.4 Any project proposals that result from the PiPP will conduct an Equality Impact Assessment or screening as required as part of the project development process.

10. Other Relevant Implications

- **Climate change** – Climate change considerations will be utilised as part of the development of the Regeneration Plan and the subsequent priorities for intervention.
- **Corporate parenting** – Corporate Parenting considerations will be utilised as part of the development of the Regeneration Plan and the subsequent priorities for intervention. There is an opportunity for youth voice to shape the Regeneration Plan development from the outset through extensive engagement with young people. In line with other regeneration boards, seats have been included on the Neighbourhood Board for young people's representatives to support youth voice.
- **Social Value** – Social value will be embedded into any contracts granted.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – Health and wellbeing considerations will be utilised as part of the development of the Regeneration Plan and the subsequent priorities for intervention.
- **Crime and Disorder Act 1998** – Consideration of crime and anti-social behaviour in the Friar Park area will be utilised as part of the development of the Regeneration Plan and the subsequent priorities for intervention.

11. Background Documents

None - All in public domain

12. How does this deliver the objectives of the Strategic Themes?

This report will support the delivery of all Strategic Themes:-

- Growing up in Sandwell
- Living in Sandwell
- Healthy in Sandwell
- Thriving Economy in Sandwell
- One Council One Team Approach.

12.1 The Pride in Place Programme offers a contribution across all themes through tackling priorities within a Sandwell neighbourhood.