

Agenda item 7

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) Implementation of Growth Board Joint Committees

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1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report updates on the progress with the proposed Integrated Governance Framework and implementation of the Growth Board Statutory Joint Committees.

2 Background

- 2.1 At the last HGB meeting Leaders agreed to the Growth Board Joint Committees Integrated Governance Framework (as subsequently finalised) being put forward and for all partners to proceed with seeking approval to establish the joint committees. The final framework and common covering report for that process is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 All councils are now in the process of taking the framework through their democratic processes and the confirmed timescales for that are set out in Table 1 below. The Local Enterprise Partnership has confirmed its support at the Board meeting on 24th September.

Table 1 – Timeline for approval of the Integrated Governance Framework and Establishment of the Growth Board Joint Committees

Growth Board Member Organisation	Cabinet/Committee Meeting Dates	Council Meeting Date
Borough of Broxbourne Council	21 st October	3 rd November
Dacorum Borough Council	20 th October	18 th November
East Herts District Council	24 th November	1 st December
Hertfordshire County Council	19 th October	20 th October
Hertsmere Borough Council	11 th November	18 th November
North Hertfordshire District Council	22 nd October	12 th November
St Albans City and District Council	22 nd October	2 nd December
Stevenage Borough Council	13 th November	16 th December
Three Rivers District Council		20 th October
Watford Borough Council	5 th October	13 th October
WelwynHatfield Borough Council	3 rd November	23 rd November
Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	Board Meeting 24 th September	

- 2.3 Agenda item 6 addresses the most recent feedback from HM Government on the availability of Housing Growth Deals through this year's budget. The challenging economic position and the range and complexity of national issues being grappled with concurrently has now increased the uncertainty of achieving some kind of deal for Hertfordshire this autumn.
- 2.4 Whilst the national picture and timetable in relation to Growth Deals has changed since MHCLG officials spoke to the Growth Board on 4th August, the genesis of the Growth Board work was to further common cause and additionality across a range of interventions and supported areas felt to be important by Hertfordshire Leaders. This includes working

together to deliver long-term beneficial growth and place related outcomes beyond that which the partners could secure on their own. This ambition across the wide breadth of programmes being pursued still remains the case even if there is greater uncertainty about the timetables for securing deals with Government.

2.5 The Growth Board provides the partners with:

- Strategic direction, monitoring, delivery and co-ordination of current and future Growth Board strategy, identified programmes, projects and implementation of any Growth Deal
- A Governance body that secures strategic collaboration and delivery across the councils and with the LEP on place, economic performance and infrastructure matters
- Acts as the place leadership body for Hertfordshire that provides a single voice to Government, also identifies, promotes, lobbies for Hertfordshire's interests and for funding
- Oversight, accountability for and prioritisation of the Growth Board Growth fund

2.6 These activities along with the ambition to continue to strengthen and develop the Growth Board will be enhanced by continuing to move on the plans to implement the statutory joint committees. At the Growth Board meetings on 4th August and 8th September it was agreed to progress more rapidly with evolving the Growth Board Governance into a joint (s.101 type) committee and for that to happen this year.

2.7 This recognises advantages for Growth Board partners in signalling the strong local commitment to the Growth Board work, its delivery programmes and co-ordinating role now and in the future including:

- a) Establishment of the formal governance structure continues to build on the momentum and progress made by the Growth Board over the last two years,
- b) Helps maintain government and investor confidence in the visible alignment of business, political and civic support to delivery commitments in Hertfordshire,
- c) Increases openness and transparency in the work of the Growth Board
- d) Provides a governance vehicle that is neutral in respect of any future devolution position or option, allowing Hertfordshire to continue to pursue common cause and collaborative joint working on the established programmes
- e) Continues the Growth Board work and positions Hertfordshire in anticipation of and in readiness for any deal discussions or options that flow from HM Government in coming months.

2.8 Given the above, Leaders are recommended to continue to support the implementation of the Growth Board joint committee. The first joint committee was being planned to take place this December, that date is no longer possible, so it is now proposed that the first meeting of the Growth Board in 2021 is used. Proposed dates for the Growth Board in 2021 are about to be circulated for approval allowing the amended date for the first joint committee to be confirmed at the Board on 13th October.

2.9 As far as the Growth Board Scrutiny Committee is concerned, the establishment and provision of ongoing support to a new scrutiny committee will be significant and this should be aligned to when the work programme requirements arise. Given this it would be sensible for all partners to secure the legal basis to establish the Scrutiny Committee, but for the commencement of the scrutiny committee to be aligned to MHCLG announcement of any growth deal.

3 Next Steps

- 3.1 Assuming that all Growth Board partner councils secure approval to establish the Growth Board Joint Committees then the next step would be to press on with the first meeting in early 2021 (date to be confirmed).

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 That Leaders/LEP Chair agree:
- a. To proceed with securing the partner approvals necessary for implementation of the Growth Board Statutory Joint Committees as agreed at the September 8th Growth Board;
 - b. The first Growth Board Joint Committee to take place in early 2021 under the new arrangements set out in the Integrated Governance Framework attached at Appendix 1;
 - c. The implementation of the Growth Board Scrutiny Committee to be aligned to MHCLG confirmation of a Growth and Housing Deal.