

Agenda item 7

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Work Programme 2021 Progress Report June 2021

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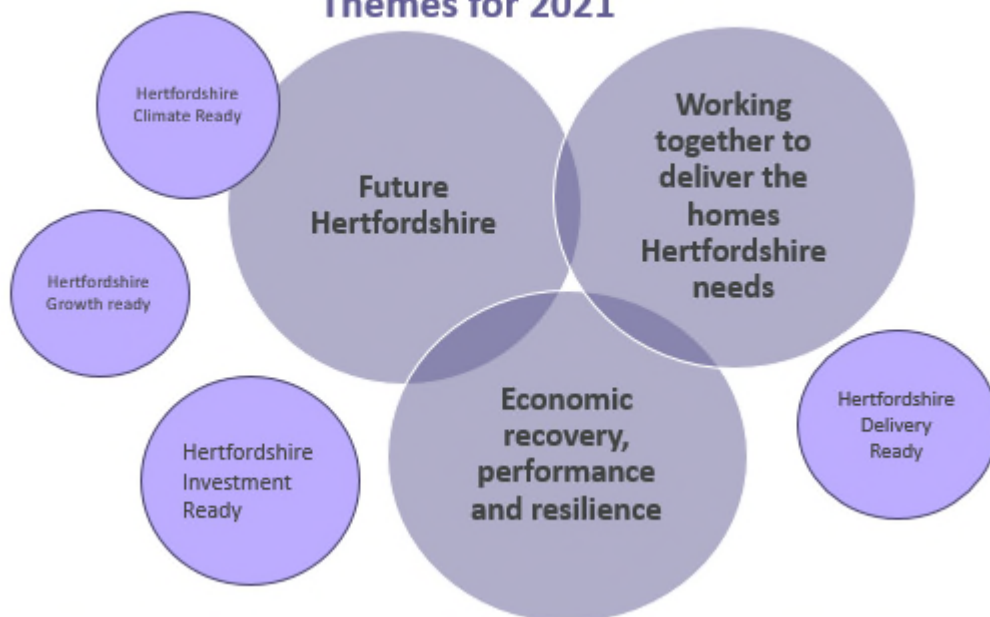
1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report updates on progress with the agreed work programme for the Growth Board in 2021 and specific areas of work that are new or which the Board needs to provide a view on.

2 The 2021 Work Programme and Priorities

- 2.1 At the January 2021 Board meeting, Leaders confirmed the priority themes for 2021 as:
- Economic Recovery, performance and resilience;
 - Working together to deliver the homes that Hertfordshire needs;
 - Future Hertfordshire.
 - Completion of the 2020 Work programme Projects

Hertfordshire Growth Board Work Programme Themes for 2021



- 2.2 By December 2021 the ambition is to have:
- Matured Governance and the Boards 'reach';
 - Continued to build on the HGB brand, story and reputation;
 - Secured a Growth Deal with HM Government;
 - Protected Hertfordshire from the impact of the virus upon Hertfordshire's economy;
 - Established the Hertfordshire Housing pipeline and Delivery Pathway;
 - Developed an investment prospectus and approach;

- Assembled a spade ready projects investment portfolio;
- Embedded high productivity systems of joint working across the Board's portfolio of projects;
- Delivered wave 1 projects (current) and be progressing wave 2 (new).

2.3 Attached at Appendix 1 is the Work Programme Plan to December 2021. This was approved in draft in January 2021 and has been updated to roll forward for the six months ahead. It is a dynamic document which will be updated regularly to reflect progress on the Growth Board workstreams.

2.4 Attached at Appendix 2 is the updated Growth Board Programme Architecture map showing the work of the Growth Board across its various existing and new workstreams.

3 Engagement with HM Government

3.1 As Board members will recall, the Board, had a helpful briefing from John McManus of MHCLG in March 2021. John was able to update on current national policy towards supporting the acceleration and additional delivery of housing in areas like Hertfordshire. He encouraged the Growth Board to focus on developing a robust housing pipeline to demonstrate housing delivery activity and to continue to engage with his team over the coming months.

3.2 MHCLG is particularly interested in sites that have problems of market failure and measures that would assist Herts councils meeting the annualised housing delivery rate required to meet Hertfordshire's Objectively Assessed Housing need of 7,000 homes delivered per annum.

3.3 Work has commenced on reviewing the Hertfordshire housing pipeline to ensure that any sites that will contribute to additional delivery or which suffer from market failure in the short, medium and longer term are identified. A timetable to submit a revised proposition (including an updated Growth and Recovery prospectus and housing pipeline) to MHCLG has been discussed with MHCLG officials and would need to be submitted over the summer to be considered within the spending review window in early autumn. An on-line briefing on this work will be arranged for July/August 2021 (given the gap between Growth Board meetings over the summer) and the final version will be considered at the September 2021 Growth Board meeting.

3.4 Leaders will be aware that Levelling Up Fund, and Community Renewal Fund bids were to be submitted by 18 June 2021. An update on Hertfordshire Bids will be given at the meeting.

4 Housing workstream update

4.1 There are a number of matters to brief Leaders on related to the range of housing work being undertaken across the Growth Board work programme. These are:

- a) MHCLG engagement and the development of an economic recovery and housing proposition
- b) Homes England Affordable Housing Fund – Feasibility Investigation of Homes England Local Authority Strategic Partnership Expression of Interest.

c) Temporary Accommodation Collaboration – Strategic Outline Business case for collaboration

- 4.2 The MHCLG engagement and the development of an economic recovery and housing proposition has been covered above. Further briefings on the work as it progresses will take place over the summer. Leaders will be asked to agree the submission at September's Growth Board.
- 4.3 The work programme agreed in January 2021 included investigation of the feasibility of submitting an expression of interest to become a local authority Strategic Partner with Homes England. These partnerships are prioritised to the delivery of new affordable homes by local authorities. Once approved through the process strategic partners are able to access funding under the Homes England Affordable Homes Fund. MHCLG and Homes England issued a prospectus for the submission of expressions of interest (EoI) in March 2021.
- 4.4 All councils in Hertfordshire engaged positively in the feasibility work, particularly the four stock-holding councils. Additional specialist housing consultancy support was taken on to help with the evaluation process. Strategic partnerships require a minimum of 1500 additional new affordable homes to be delivered by lead partners along with other delivery partners. Although the investigation identified that there is potential for a high number of additional affordable homes to come forward in Hertfordshire over the required time period (up to 2027). It was not possible to be wholly confident that the required number of new affordable units would be delivered and that the risks and benefits for the lead bodies, outweighed other funding options for new homes delivery. The conclusion reached was that at this point in time, pursuing an expression of interest to become a strategic partner was not the right step for the Growth Board partners. Leaders and CEx's were advised of this conclusion mid-May 2021.
- 4.5 The alternative to becoming a strategic partner is to engage in a process of 'Continuous Market Engagement' with Homes England, which many growth board partners already do. That option will also be evaluated as a means of increasing funding options.
- 4.6 The work that has been undertaken as part of the EoI investigation to map affordable homes delivery sites and plans, will usefully contribute to the MHCLG workstream and the overall creation of the Hertfordshire pipeline for both affordable and market housing sites. If over the next 12 months submission of an EoI offers greater advantages than now, then this option can be revisited.
- 4.7 The Housing and Communities officers' group have recently started a new joint investigation of the options available to local authorities in Hertfordshire to better meet the housing needs of people living in Temporary Accommodation. This aims to achieve quality and value for money by looking at the service collaboratively, as well as addressing the acute shortage in housing supply with the identified demand from those facing challenge in accessing social and affordable housing across the county.
- 4.8 The scale of challenge facing the county, of households in temporary accommodation (TA) is significant. The demand in Hertfordshire has doubled over the last ten years (Q3, 2020/21 = 1194) and the enduring impact of Covid-19 will add significant new demand, as initiatives to

reduce rough sleeping and eviction are scaled back and the private rental sector becomes even less accessible or affordable. Whilst responsibility for TA provision and management sits with each authority within Hertfordshire, the scale of future response is limited by the capacity of each. There is, therefore, opportunity to build on existing collaboration and partnership working to realise significantly improved outcomes and efficiencies, not achievable as individual authorities. This requires a strategic long-term approach to bring together a range of activity, existing and new, into a coordinated response to resolve the situation.

- 4.9 Whilst responsibility for TA provision and management sits with each authority within Hertfordshire, the scale of future response is limited by the capacity of each. There is, therefore, opportunity to build on existing collaboration and partnership working to realise significantly improved outcomes and efficiencies, not achievable as individual authorities. This requires a strategic long-term approach to bring together a range of activity, existing and new, into a coordinated response to resolve the situation.
- 4.10 The officer group looking at this work have devised a set of programme outcomes to guide this work:
- Improved outcomes and life chances for households who are temporarily homeless;
 - Accommodation provided meets the standards as defined in the guidance;
 - Increased return on financial investment in provision of temporary accommodation.
 - Reduced reliance on bed and breakfast, hotel or similar private sector accommodation;
 - Consistent planning of TA in response to modelled local demand and needs;
 - Effective use of publicly owned land and assets to support delivery of homes;
 - Maximised opportunities for sharing expertise and learning from good practice through a whole system collaborative approach.
- 4.11 The Hertfordshire Property Partnership Board (HPP) have given their support to this work, bringing the One Public Estate perspective into the investigation of possible solutions. The Local Government Association has also provided grant assistance enabling research around finance, demand & policy approaches and specialist legal and financial expertise to be secured. This is incorporated within the background document at Appendix 3.
- 4.12 The scope of the work has a focus on the opportunity for further collaboration between the authorities in Hertfordshire to increase the volume of housing supply available for use in the provision of temporary accommodation as part of the Growth Board commitment to deliver the homes that Hertfordshire needs. The Hertfordshire housing pipeline is a differentiated one and housing supply is needed across a number of tenure types.
- 4.13 Next steps in this joint work would be to develop detailed options and to bring that options appraisal and recommendations, in the form of a more detailed Outline Business Case (OBC), back to the Growth Board in the autumn.
- 4.14 Supporting this report is the initial Strategic Outline Business Case, that sets out detailed background on this important subject area and provides a focus on the benefits to be gained and an insight into the potential options for change to be investigated. This is attached to this report at Appendix 3.

4.15 Additional opportunities for collaboration on tactical and operational issues have been identified as part of the work to date and will be taken forward alongside recommendations in the SOC. The interim progress with this work will be overseen by the Growth Board officer team and the HGB Southern Growth Corridor Programme Board.

4.16 Leaders are asked to support the continuation and next steps with this work.

5 Hertfordshire Investment Ready Workstream

5.1 This workstream is to take forward the Board's intention to secure greater investment into Hertfordshire. The update on progress with this work and recommended next steps is covered in item 10 on this agenda.

6 Update on Place Narrative, Branding and Communications workstream

6.1 Stakeholder engagement: The next internal webinar is scheduled to take place on 9 July 2021 for councillors across Hertfordshire. This will serve as an opportunity to bring all current and newly elected members up to speed on the HGB programme and will build on the progress made since the last webinar on 12 March 2021 which had over 95% attendance rate. A series of external events is also scheduled to commence this summer to update stakeholders/partners on activity over the past 12 months and deployment of the More for Life place narrative in line with future priorities. These are anticipated to be livestreamed panel discussions.

6.2 Ten-point checklist: Hertfordshire Growth Board with the Institute of Place Management (IPM) has drawn up a ten-point checklist to help town centres re-open safely and recover quickly from COVID-19 (see appendix 2 on item 13 for details) or download the checklist and read the full article [here](#)¹. There was significant interest after this was published with 3.5k Twitter updates.

6.3 Leader profiles: A full-length interview opportunity will be available for the new HGB Chair and other HGB members next month. The feature and video interview will be published under The Voice of Authority platform and available to view on the HGB YouTube channel.

6.4 Sponsorship: Hertfordshire Growth Board is sponsoring the 'Keeping the Heart in Hertfordshire' campaign, delivered by Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce, to drive growth, economic recovery and renewal across the county. HGB's sponsorship has attracted widespread local press and radio coverage since its launch in May 2021. Read the full story [here](#)².

7 Implications

¹ <https://www.hertfordshiregrowthboard.com/2021/04/27/ten-point-checklist-to-support-safe-return-to-hertfordshire-high-streets/>

² <https://www.hertfordshiregrowthboard.com/2021/05/18/hertfordshire-growth-board-to-champion-the-lets-keep-the-heart-in-hertfordshire-campaign/>

7.1 There are no adverse legal, financial, equalities, environmental, sustainability or other implications arising from this report and its recommendations which support the ongoing work and priorities of the Growth Board.

8 Recommendations

8.1 That the Board notes the progress with the work programme and the overall priorities to December 2021 as set out in the paper and in Appendix 1.

8.2 That the Board additionally notes and approves the current scope of work for the housing workstream:

- i. MHCLG engagement as set out in section 3, specifically further development of the Hertfordshire Housing Pipeline and updating of the growth and recovery proposition (to be brought back to the September Growth Board for formal ratification)
- ii. The outcome of the feasibility investigation of the merits of an Expression of Interest under the Homes England Local Authority Strategic Partnership Prospectus, (confirming not to proceed at this time)
- iii. The developing work on a collaborative approach to Temporary Accommodation provision across Hertfordshire as set out in section 4 and the background in Appendix 3, noting the next steps in preparation of an outline business case.

8.3 That the Board notes the proposed date for an introductory webinar on the work of the Growth Board for all new and existing councillors across Hertfordshire, and for the proposed series of externally focussed webinars over the summer promoting the Boards' work.

APPENDIX 1: HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD WORK PROGRAMME APR – NOV 2021

Agreed Hertfordshire Growth Board Priority Themes:

- Economic recovery, performance and resilience,
- Building the homes Hertfordshire needs, and
- Future Hertfordshire

Workstream	Key deliverables	Key activities	Jun (w/c)	Jul (w/c)	Aug (w/c)	Sep (w/c)	Oct (w/c)	Nov (w/c)																					
			0	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	
			1	7	4	1	8	5	2	9	6	2	9	6	3	0	6	3	0	7	4	1	8	5	1	8	5	2	
HGB Governance	Implementation of Joint Committee(s)		Hertfordshire Growth Board dates in 2021																										
	Review Co-opted membership to see if other partners should be involved e.g. Health, Homes England, HE and FE				2												0											0	
	Communications and Engagement	HGB Communications Strategy			2													7											2
		Engagement and participation events (virtual)																											
Delivering the Homes Hertfordshire Needs	Strategy & Steering Group established.	Group formed & priorities agreed Housing Policy statement to be updated																											
	Strategic Partnership work	On-going housing pipeline and delivery pathway development work informed by Government discussions & accelerating housing workstream.	Prepare pipeline for fiscal event in Autumn '21.																										
		Homes England Strategic Partnership Expression of Interest Bid to Homes England Affordable Homes Fund	Affordable Homes Fund bidding prospectus published. Feasibility Investigation of the merits of submission of a Hertfordshire Eol for Local Authority Strategic Partnership. Concluded May 21 – recommendation not to proceed at this time.																										
		Temporary Accommodation Collaboration Investigation	Outline case to proceed with strategic outline business case to be considered at H on 22/6																										
		OSM/MMC project actions – facilitating the uptake of this option as part of our pipeline of sites	Support for the work on Herts OSM with Herts LEP continues. Planning and Development Guide for increased use of OSM in Herts commissioned.																										
	Preparation of Housing and Growth Bid submission to MHCLG	Programme of meetings with MHCLG officials on-going. MHCLG Deputy Director attends and briefs Growth Board regularly.	John McManus from MHCLG briefed HGB on 30/3/21																										
		Briefing Herts MP’s at the appropriate times	Briefings to Herts MPs on HGB work and Levelling up Fund project bids ongoing																										
Partners, investors & delivery bodies Engagement	Establish Developer Forum with partners, potential investors, developers, housebuilders in conjunction with the LEP. Exploratory conversations with development																												

Workstream	Key deliverables	Key activities	Jun (w/c)	Jul (w/c)	Aug (w/c)	Sep (w/c)	Oct (w/c)	Nov (w/c)																	
		community in June, partnership options to be presented to HGB June 22, implementation September																							
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			1 7 4 1 8 5 2 9 6 2 9 6 3 0 6 3 0 7 4 1 8 5 1 8 5 2																						
Economic Recovery, Performance and Resilience	Hertfordshire Investment Ready	Development of a purposeful Investment Ready Strategy – to bring greater investment into Herts (both public and private sources). Investigate options such as impact and regional funds and bear down on establishing the conditions locally that need to be created to leverage in investment. Investment Strategy and Portfolio of our investable propositions (infrastructure and schemes that are or can be made spade ready). Investigation of potential funding options/routes for strategic scale, part or non-commercial infrastructure projects.	Next steps in implementation of this work to be discussed at HGB 22/6 and will be incorporated into the work programme thereafter.																						
	Digital Workstream	LEP lead, supported by HGB and partners Update at HGB on 22/6																							
	Virtual observatory	Enhance the joint LEP/HGB data analytics availability to support Board members as well as enhancing bidding and lobbying activities across our priority areas. Monitoring of national funding streams and bidding opportunities aligned with bidding capability and expertise. – scope to September HGB																							
Workstream	Key deliverables	Key activities	Jun (w/c)	Jul (w/c)	Aug (w/c)	Sep (w/c)	Oct (w/c)	Nov (w/c)																	
			0 0 1 2 2 0 1 1 2 0 0 1 2 3 0 1 2 2 0 1 1 2 0 0 1 2																						
			1 7 4 1 8 5 2 9 6 2 9 6 3 0 6 3 0 7 4 1 8 5 1 8 5 2																						
Future Hertfordshire	Closer working with Health sector, ensuring wellbeing as part of placemaking	Working group set up with Health sector, task and finish project to enhance cross sector working and impact, particularly around infrastructure and place-making																							

	(planning and delivery stages)																																		
	Climate, Carbon and Sustainability work alignment with HGB	Alignment with the current work being overseen by Herts leaders.																																	
	Infrastructure costs update via the HIPP in 2021/22	Roll Forward of the HIPP – investigate cost effective options and optimal timing for this. HIPP oversight and recommendations to HGB later in 2021																																	
Workstream	Key deliverables	Key activities																																	
Growth Corridor Programme Boards	HGB overall Strategy & Steering Group structures in place.	HGB Senior Officer Steering Group meets fortnightly HGB agenda oversight through CEX CG meetings																																	
	Development of two E-W strategic growth corridors	Corridor growth opportunities and priority projects overseen by corridor programme boards,																																	
	Development of Common HGB Policy Programmes.	Work Programmes established, policy statements and positions being updated/prepared in 2021	To be updated/ prepared across all workstreams in 2021																																
	Outline Business Cases.	Initial tranche of business cases developed to a common framework and to support investment opportunity discussions with Government and private sector. Update where supports spade readiness for bidding.																																	
Workstream	Key deliverables	Projects & key milestones																																	
Southern Corridor Board and Delivery Programmes	Southern Corridor Programme Board	Board oversight	Southern Corridor Programme Board dates																																
	Southern Corridor Delivery Programmes	Accelerating Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Pipeline Delivery Local interventions to address housing market failure 																																

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploying freedoms and flexibilities from Govt to accelerate housing delivery 	
	Creative & Screen Industry Sector Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen Industries Incubator • Film & TV Production Business Support • Creative & Screen Industries Skills Development Programme 	Progress being reported through project updates.
	Harlow Gilston Garden Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Transport Hubs & Sustainable Mobility Behavioural Change • Local Employment Space & Digital Implementation • Supporting Infrastructure Projects 	Progress being reported through project updates.
	Hemel Garden Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viability and Delivery Strategy • Stewardship Framework & Approach • HGC Strategic Masterplan Guidance & Transformational Plan • HGC Infrastructure Delivery Plan • Social Housing Delivery • Sustainable Energy Infrastructure Projects - Evidence Base Study 	Progress being reported through project updates.
	Hertfordshire MRT System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRT Promotional Video • Options Assessment Report; Appraisal Specification Report • Strategic Outline Business Case 	Progress being reported through project updates.
	SE Hertfordshire Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Plaza West - planning permission secured • New Park Lane Railway Station (Waltham Cross) - Footbridge Procurement • New Business Park and hi-tech starter Centre: Maxwells West – Planning permission & procurement • Waltham Cross Town Centre Regeneration - Public realm design - Phase 1 	Progress being reported through project updates.

		Watford Junction Interchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOBC Transport Interventions (subject to funding) • Network Rail design pedestrian link/entire station development • Development Agreement 	Progress being reported through project updates.																									
Workstream	Key deliverables	Projects & key milestones		Jun (w/c)			Jul (w/c)			Aug (w/c)			Sep (w/c)			Oct (w/c)			Nov (w/c)										
				0	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	2
				1	7	4	1	8	5	2	9	6	2	9	6	3	0	6	3	0	7	4	1	8	5	1	8	5	2
Northern Corridor Board and Delivery Programmes	Northern Corridor Programme Board	Board oversight	Northern Corridor Programme Board dates					3						1															0
	Northern Corridor Delivery Programmes	Community Wealth Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CWB Pilot 1 Stevenage & 2 North Herts • Community Wealth Building Plan • County-wide working group established 	Progress being reported through project updates.																									
		Future Growth Locations	• Scope review to be undertaken																										
		Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal steering group with monthly meeting • Health check questionnaire 	Progress being reported through project updates.																									
		Science and Technology (Cell and Gene Focus) Sector Support	• Framework/Masterplanning/visiting study for Gunnels Wood Road	Progress being reported through project updates.																									
		Climate, carbon and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalised Water Action Plan • Biodiversity Action Plan and baselines established • Carbon Action Plan finalised • Transport Action Plan finalised 	Progress being reported through project updates.																									
Workstream	Key deliverables	Key milestones & activities		Jun (w/c)			Jul (w/c)			Aug (w/c)			Sep (w/c)			Oct (w/c)			Nov (w/c)										
				0	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	2
				1	7	4	1	8	5	2	9	6	2	9	6	3	0	6	3	0	7	4	1	8	5	1	8	5	2

Joint Strategic Planning (JSP) workstreams

SWH JSP	JSP Programme	On-going implementation programme across 2021																				
NECH JSP	JSP Programme																					