Public Document Pack

Agenda Reports & Other Papers

Presented to the
Meeting of the
Hertfordshire Growth Board
on
Tuesday, 22 June 2021

1. AGENDA 1 - 144

Agenda

Hertfordshire Growth Board

HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD

COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, HERTFORD

TUESDAY, 22 JUNE 2021, 16:30 – 18:30

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD (12) – QUORUM 9 VOTING MEMBERS

Council Leaders (11 Voting Members)

M Bright, Hertsmere Borough Council
L Cocking, Broxbourne Borough Council
S Giles-Medhurst *(substituting for S Nelmes),* Three Rivers District Council
L Haysey, East Herts District Council
T Kingsbury, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
E Dennis-Harburg, North Hertfordshire District Council
P Taylor (Mayor), Watford Borough Council
S Taylor, Stevenage Borough Council
C White, St Albans City and District Council
A Williams, Dacorum Borough Council
R Roberts, Hertfordshire County Council

Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (1 Co-opted Member)
M Bretton, Chairman

NOTE: COVID 19 – Press and Public Attendance at this meeting

As required by law, the Council will be holding this meeting in person at the venue stated above. The number of press and public will be limited according to the safe capacity of the venue and social distancing requirements in place at the time of the meeting. This meeting will also be webcast; those wishing to watch the live broadcast should go here www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/watchmeetings where there will be a link to the meeting in due course.

1. Appointment of Chair

In accordance with Annex A to Appendix 1 of the Hertfordshire Growth Board Constitution the Board "shall appoint a Chair at its first meeting….. for a term up to the first meeting of the HGB that follows both the 2021 local elections and the 2021 Annual Meetings of the constituent Councils. At the Post-Election Meeting, the Board may either re-appoint the same member as Chair or appoint a new Chair for a term of two years. Save in the above case, the Chair shall serve a single consecutive term of two years."
The Board is therefore invited to elect a Chair.

2. Minutes

The Board is invited to note the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 March 2021 (attached).

3. Public Questions

At the discretion of the Chairman, members of the public may ask questions at meetings of the Hertfordshire Growth Board. Notice of the question should be submitted to the Chief Legal Officer of Hertfordshire County Council by 10am at least five working days before the meeting.
The Hertfordshire Growth's Board arrangements for the receipt of public questions are set out in Annex A – Standing Orders of the Hertfordshire's Growth Board Constitution*.

4. Public Petitions

At the discretion of the Chairman, members of the public may submit and present petitions to the Hertfordshire Growth Board if they include at least 500 signatures of people living or working in Hertfordshire.

Notification of intent to present a petition must be given at least 10 clear working days before the date of the meeting.

The Hertfordshire Growth's Board arrangements for the receipt of petitions are set out in Annex A – Standing Orders of the Hertfordshire's Growth Board Constitution*.

*If you have any queries about the questions or petitions procedures for this meeting please contact Stephanie Tarrant, Democratic Services Officer, by telephone on (01992) 555481 or by email to stephanie.tarrant@hertfordshire.gov.uk

5. Presentation of the Hertfordshire and Essex Mass Rapid Transit (HERT) Scheme Strategic Outline Business Case stage

Presentation by Rupert Thacker, Hertfordshire County Council

6. Hertfordshire LEP Key Sector investigations – Headlines from the recent Creative Industries and Cell and Gene cluster studies and action plans.

Presentation by Neil Hayes, Hertfordshire LEP

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

Report attached

8. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Investment into Hertfordshire Programme Next Steps

Report attached

9. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Establishing a Hertfordshire Development Forum

Report attached

10. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Evolving the Growth Board Governance

Report attached

11. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Growth Corridor Programme Boards Work Programme Updates

Report attached

12. Towards Digital Growth – Draft Framework and Priorities

Report attached

13. Standing items

South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan – verbal update by Cllr Chris White

14. Date of next meeting

The next planned meeting will be held on 7 September 2021 at 9:30am.

15. Other Part I Business

Such other Part I Business which, if the Chairman agrees, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

PART II ('CLOSED') AGENDA

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There are no items of Part II business on this agenda. If Part II business is notified the Chairman will move:-

"That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item/s of business on the grounds that it/they involve/s the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph/s ……. of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information."

If you require further information about this agenda, please contact Stephanie Tarrant, Democratic and Statutory Services, Hertfordshire County Council on Telephone 01992 555481, or email stephanie.tarrant@hertfordshire.gov.uk. Agenda documents are available on the internet at https://www.hertfordshiregrowthboard.com/documents.

QUENTIN BAKER
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER

This page is intentionally left blank

Hertfordshire Growth Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 30 March 2021

Hertfordshire Growth Board

Minutes

To: **All Members of the Hertfordshire Growth Board**

From: **Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services, Hertfordshire County Council**

Ask for: **Stephanie Tarrant**

Tel: **01992 555481**

Date: Tuesday, 30 March 2021

Members of the Board

Council Leaders (11 Voting Members)

M Bright, Hertsmere Borough Council
L Cocking, Broxbourne Borough Council
S Giles-Medhurst, Three Rivers District Council *(substituted for S Nelmes)*
L Haysey, East Herts District Council
T Kingsbury, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
M Stears-Handscomb, North Hertfordshire District Council
P Taylor (Mayor), Watford Borough Council
S Taylor, Stevenage Borough Council
C White, St Albans City and District Council
A Williams, Dacorum Borough Council
D Williams, Hertfordshire County Council

Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (1 Co-opted Member)

M Bretton, Chairman

ACTION

1. Minutes

1.1 The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 26 January 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

2. Public Questions – Standing order 12

2.1 There were no Public Questions.

3. Public Petitions – Standing Order 13

3.1 There were no Public Petitions.

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

4.1 The Board reviewed a report which provided an update on the progress with the agreed work programme for the Growth Board in 2021 and specific areas of work that were new or which the Board needed to provide a view on.

4.2 Members were given an update on the national budget announcements and new funding streams under the government's build back better programme. Officers proposed that the Growth Board Steering Group worked with the Chief Executives' Group to ensure that bids to Government were co-ordinated. Members noted the expertise of the Herts LEP in bidding processes.

4.3 In relation to the housing workstream, the Board noted that the Affordable Homes prospectus from Homes England was being considered and the feasibility of submitting an expression of interest to become a strategic partner with Homes England was being looked at. Conversations were taking place with stockholding councils and other partners with current delivery programmes. Officers would report back on progress and if the examination suggested it was a feasible proposition, an expression of interest could be made in agreement with partners.

4.4 Members acknowledged the scope for the investment workstream, as detailed within the report.

4.5 With regards to governance arrangements, the Board discussed options to recruit additional co-opted Members. The Board heard that Paul Burstow, Independent Chair of Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care System, had been asked to join the Growth Board in recognition of the importance of health and place on the lives of residents. Members suggested representation from further education colleges to support local growth. Members suggested that rather than expanding the board membership, a broader contact group with representatives from the railway/police was created, for routine engagement when developing plans. Members agreed any governance changes would be from September 2021, with review to ensure the work of the LEP was not being duplicated. A proposal for this to be brought back to the June Board meeting.

ACTION

4.6 In terms of the communications workstream, a Growth Board webinar took place on 12 March 2021, with over 130 attendees. Work was to continue with MPs and communities in promoting the work of the Growth Board.

4.7 Neil Hayes, Chief Executive, Herts LEP gave a presentation on the digital workstream progress. The Board heard that a plan for the digital workstream was being progressed and that a separate session would take place with Board Members on next steps. Members welcomed the update and acknowledged the priority need for high quality digital infrastructure across the county and the necessity to meet future digital requirements, including the change in ways that people/organisations may work.

4.8 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 00:5:55 Item 4 - HGB Work Programme 2021.

RESOLVED

4.9 The Board:

1) noted the progress with the work programme and the overall priorities to September 2021, as set out in the paper and in appendix 1.
2) noted and approved the current scope of work for the housing workstream (noting that the final submission of any Expression of Interest to be a Homes England Strategic Partner would need the board partners' support).
3) noted and approved the scope of investigatory work for the investment workstream.
4) agreed to review a list of organisations to join the Growth Board as co-opted Members at its June 2021 meeting, with membership taking effect from September 2021.
5) noted the next steps and the urgency of the digital workstream, with a further update to be brought to the June 2021 Board meeting.

5. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Establishing a Hertfordshire Developers Forum

5.1 The Board considered a report which explored the principles and next steps in establishing a Hertfordshire Developers Forum.

5.2 Members heard that a co-designed model with developer funding was being considered, with Members suggesting that their preference would be for a co-designed model supported by the development sectors. The need to engage across a wide agenda and promote issues such as Modern Methods of Construction were discussed for consideration. It was noted that some districts already had forums in place and that their best practices should be reviewed.

5.3 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 01:06:03 Item 5 - HGB - Establishing a Hertfordshire Developers Forum.

RESOLVED

5.4 The Board provided feedback to officers on preferences for the development of a Hertfordshire Developers Forum. Preferences to be worked up into a firm proposal,

ACTION

including engagement with the sector as needed, for consideration at the June 2021 Growth Board Meeting.

6. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Growth Board Work Programme 2020 and 2021 Updates

6.1 The Board reviewed a report which provided an update on the overall progress of key Growth Board programmes and projects since January 2021.

6.2 Members heard that the agreement for the Housing Investment Grant contract (£172 million) was due to be signed for the infrastructure for the Harlow/Gilston Garden Town. Gratitude was expressed to all involved in the successful bidding and contracting process.

6.3 In relation to the Northern Growth Corridor, it was noted that the first step for the Joint Strategic Plan had commenced with a tender to be put out for a growth study. The science and technology programme was progressing, and development of a county wide approach to climate and sustainability issues was being considered.

6.4 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 01:14:50 Item 6 - HGB Work Programme 2020 and 2021 updates.

RESOLVED

6.5 The Board noted the project updates detailed in Appendix 1 and the overall progress across the Growth Board programme and individual workstreams since the last meeting.

7. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Review of Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership (HIPP)

7.1 The Board reviewed a report which provided an update on the recent review of the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership (HIPP).

7.2 Members heard that HIPP had discussed its future and that there remained a strong desire to meet on a regular basis to discuss countywide planning and infrastructure issues. It was proposed that HIPP should regularly report to the Growth Board on its actions and progress.

7.3 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 01:10:58 Item 7 - HGB Review of Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership.

RESOLVED

7.4 The Board:

- noted the paper attached at appendix 1.
- agreed that the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership continued to have a valuable role to play within the wider work of the Growth Board. Updates

		ACTION
	from the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership should be provided to each Hertfordshire Growth Board meeting in future. • agreed to provide future secretariat support to the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership meetings.	
8.	**Standing Items** **South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan**	
8.1	The Board heard that a statement of common ground was about to be created. The statutory statement of community involvement, a visioning engagement and regulation 18 consultation was to commence after the elections.	
9.	**Date of next meeting**	
9.1	The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, 22 June 2021: 16.30 – 18.30.	
10.	**Other Part I Business**	
10.1	None.	

Hertfordshire Growth Board

www.HertfordshireGrowthBoard.com

@hertsgoodgrowth

Room 204, Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8DE

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda item 7

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

Report Author: Patsy Dell, Hertfordshire Growth Board (Tel: 07949 887794)

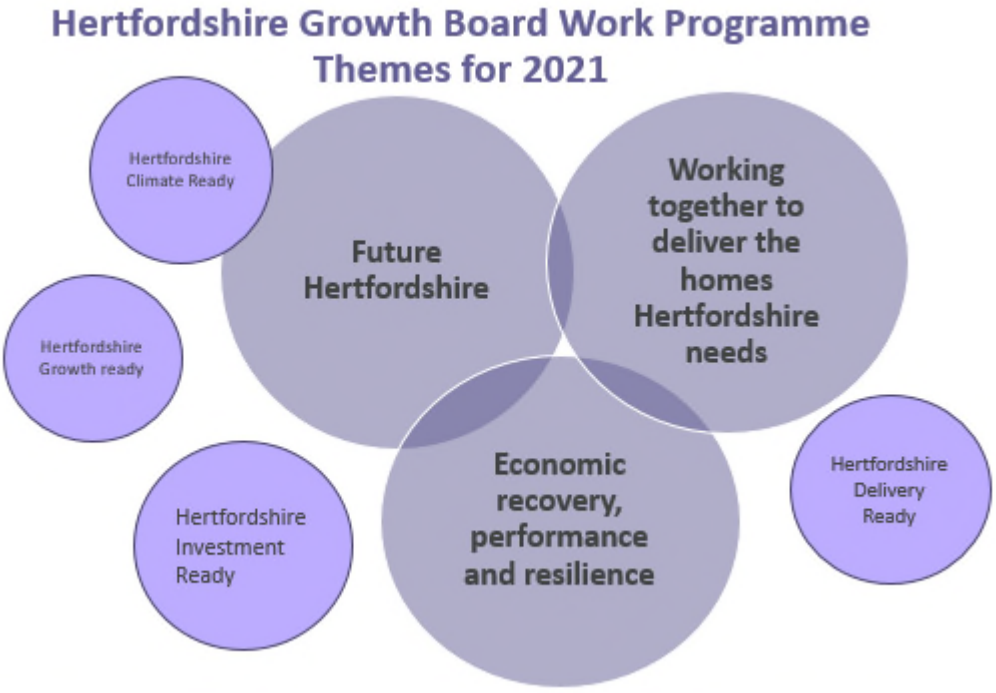
1 Purpose of report

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:

a) Economic Recovery, performance and resilience;
b) Working together to deliver the homes that Hertfordshire needs;
c) Future Hertfordshire.
d) Completion of the 2020 Work programme Projects



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) 01 07 14 21 28	Jul (w/c) 05 12 19 26	Aug (w/c) 02 09 16 23 30	Sep (w/c) 06 13 20 27	Oct (w/c) 04 11 18 25	Nov (w/c) 01 08 15 22
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		22			07		02
	Communications and Engagement	HGB Communications Strategy	Implementation across 2021					
		Engagement and participation events (virtual)	Implementation across 2021					
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 EoI 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						

Agenda Pack Page 19

		community in June, partnership options to be presented to HGB June 22, implementation September	
Workstream	**Key deliverables**	**Key activities**	Jun (w/c) 01 07 14 21 28 05 Jul (w/c) 12 19 26 02 Aug (w/c) 09 16 23 30 Sep (w/c) 06 13 20 Oct (w/c) 27 04 11 18 25 Nov (w/c) 01 08 15 22
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 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) 01 07 14 21 28 05 Jul (w/c) 12 19 26 02 Aug (w/c) 09 16 23 30 Sep (w/c) 06 13 20 Oct (w/c) 27 04 11 18 25 Nov (w/c) 01 08 15 22
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 HIPF in 2021/22	Roll Forward of the HIFP – investigate cost effective options and optimal timing for this. HIPP oversight and recommendations to HGB later in 2021		
Workstream	**Key deliverables**	**Key activities**		Jun (w/c) 01 07 14 21 28 / Jul (w/c) 05 12 19 26 / Aug (w/c) 02 09 16 23 30 / Sep (w/c) 06 13 20 27 / Oct (w/c) 04 11 18 25 / Nov (w/c) 01 08 15 22
Growth Corridor Programme Boards	HGB overall Strategy & Steering Group structures in place.	HGB Senior Officer Steering Group meets fortnightly HBG 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,		See below. Progress on projects reported to HGB through project updates from the 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	Developing a framework of common policies from which HGB can lobby for developed powers/legislative changes and through which delivery projects can emerge and be assessed against. • Housing • Investment • Future Hertfordshire
	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.		Information gathering and detailed OBC development work as needed across 2021 and in support of the HGB submission to HM Government for the next fiscal event.
Workstream	**Key deliverables**	**Projects & key milestones**		Jun (w/c) 01 07 14 21 28 / Jul (w/c) 05 12 19 26 / Aug (w/c) 02 09 16 23 30 / Sep (w/c) 06 13 20 27 / Oct (w/c) 04 11 18 25 / Nov (w/c) 01 08 15 22
Southern Corridor Board and Delivery Programmes	Southern Corridor Programme Board	Board oversight	Southern Corridor Programme Board dates	05 / 09 / 06 / 04
	Southern Corridor Delivery Programmes	Accelerating Housing	• Housing Pipeline Delivery • Local interventions to address housing market failure	Housing pipeline validation and dialogue with MGCLG. Progress being reported through project updates.

Agenda Pack Page 23

			• Deploying freedoms and flexibilities from Govt to accelerate housing delivery	
		Creative & Screen Industry Sector Support	• Screen Industries Incubator • Film & TV Production Business Support • Creative & Screen Industries Skills Development Programme	Progress being reported through project updates.
		Harlow Gilston Garden Town	• Integrated Transport Hubs & Sustainable Mobility Behavioural Change • Local Employment Space & Digital Implementation • Supporting Infrastructure Projects	Progress being reported through project updates.
		Hemel Garden Communities	• 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	• MRT Promotional Video • Options Assessment Report; Appraisal Specification Report • Strategic Outline Business Case	Progress being reported through project updates.
		SE Hertfordshire Economy	• 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	• SOBC Transport Interventions (subject to funding) • Network Rail design pedestrian link/entire station development • Development Agreement	Progress being reported through project updates.

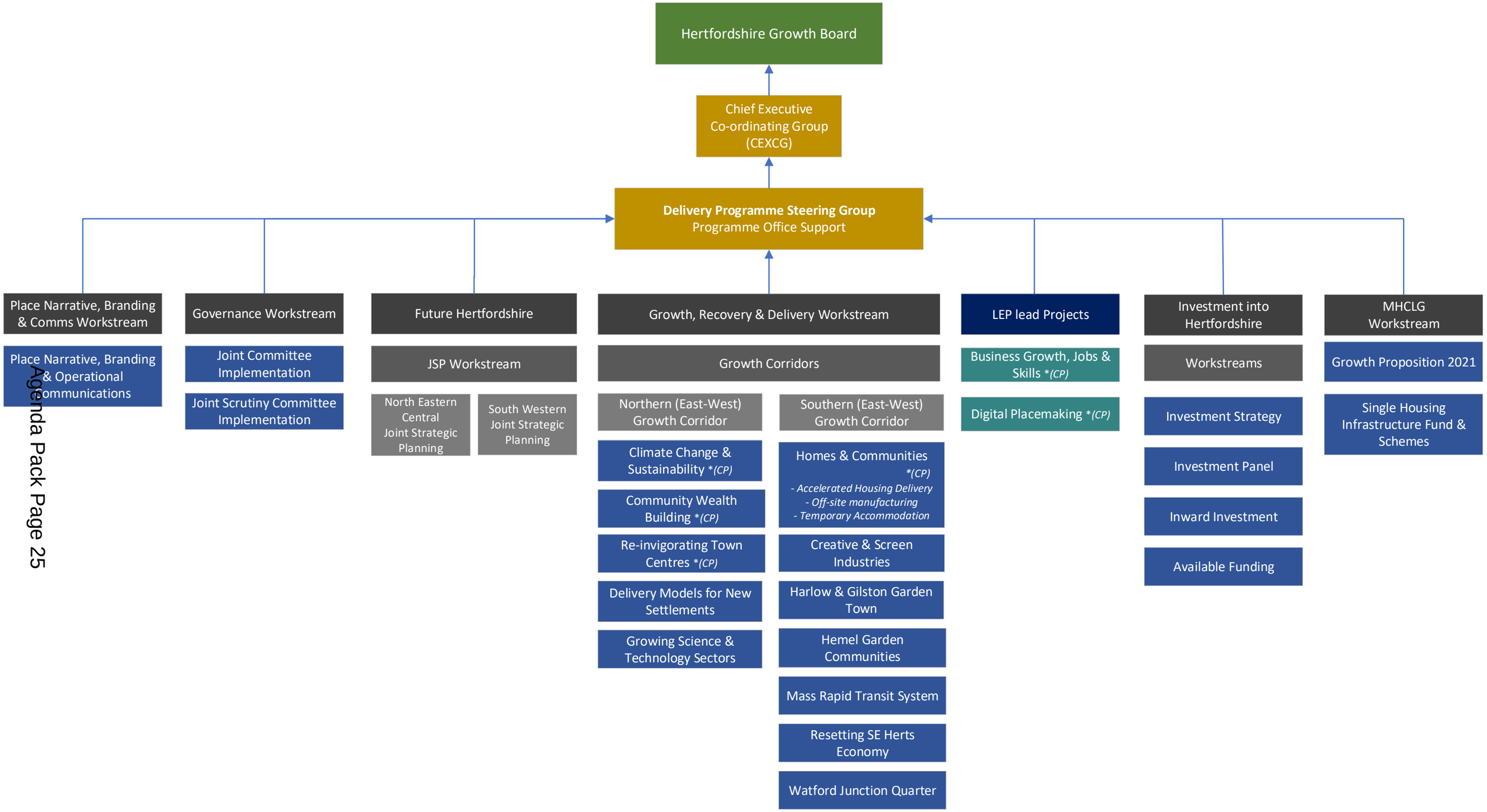
Workstream	Key deliverables	Projects & key milestones		Jun (w/c)					Jul (w/c)					Aug (w/c)					Sep (w/c)					Oct (w/c)					Nov (w/c)			
				01	07	14	21	28	05	12	19	26	02	09	16	23	30	06	13	20	27	04	11	18	25	01	08	15	22	29	05	12
Northern Corridor Board and Delivery Programmes	Northern Corridor Programme Board	Board oversight	Northern Corridor Programme Board dates					30						12							23						03						
	Northern Corridor Delivery Programmes	Community Wealth Building	• 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	• 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/visioning study for Gunnels Wood Road	Progress being reported through project updates.																												
		Climate, carbon and Sustainability	• 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)			
				01	07	14	21	28	05	12	19	26	02	09	16	23	30	06	13	20	27	04	11	18	25	01	08	15	22	29	05	12

Joint Strategic Planning (JSP) workstreams	SWH JSP	JSP Programme	On-going implementation programme across 2021
	NECH JSP	JSP Programme	

Agenda Pack Page 24

Hertfordshire Growth Board Programme Architecture



*These programmes are common across Hertfordshire (CP)

This page is intentionally left blank

REVIEW OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PROVISION:

Appendix 3 - STRATEGIC OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

Growth Board: 22 June 2021

DRAFT

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Document Owner	Roger Barrett

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

Role	Name©	Signature	Date
Project Sponsor	Simone Russell		
Project Lead	Roger Barrett		04/06/21

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Name	Approval	Date
Temporary Accommodation in Hertfordshire Summary Paper *(embedded below)*	Corridor Boards – Southern & Northern	24 May 2021
Temporary Accommodation in H		

DRAFT

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary and Recommendations..... 4
2. The Need for Investment 5
3. Strategic Case 6
4. Commercial Case 7
5. Financial Case 8
6. Management Case 9
7. Next Steps 10
Appendix 1: Homelessness Analysis..... 10
Appendix 2: Hertfordshire TA Expenditure 2019/20 15
Appendix 3: TA Provision Case Studies 16
Appendix 4: Statutory Requirements..... 18
Appendix 5: Hertfordshire TA Joint working.....22
Appendix 6: Programme Delivery Structure 22

DRAFT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Purpose

This Strategic Outline Business Case (SOC) sets out the strategic and business justifications for implementing a programme of work, situated within the oversight of the Growth Board's Housing Delivery Programme, that investigates the options available to local authorities in Hertfordshire to better meet the housing need for people living in Temporary Accommodation (TA), whilst achieving quality and value for money.

1.2 The need for investment

The demand for TA in Hertfordshire has doubled over the last ten years, 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.

1.3 Business case

The case for adopting a coordinated and innovative response for the supply and management of TA, as required of each Hertfordshire authority, can be developed in four ways:

Strategic: Delivering flexible, scalable accommodation solutions and *whole-system* outcomes;

Commercial: Jointly procuring and commissioning accommodation and support services;

Financial: Pooling expertise and resources to maximise funding and sustain services;

Management: Supporting the statutory responsibilities of each authority, by better aligning policies, access pathways and working practice to deliver best value.

1.4 Approach to delivery

Through the leadership provided by the Growth Board, a managed programme of work can deliver a focussed review of TA provision, enabling the development of options, improving the wellbeing of those most in need and delivering sustainable solutions for all stakeholders.

1.5 Recommendations

1.5.1 Approval to proceed with the development of an Outline Business Case (OBC), to develop a coordinated, county-wide framework to improve outcomes and life chances for households who are homeless and secure sustainable improvements in accommodation arrangements;

1.5.2 Delegate oversight of the Outline Business Case development to the Chief Executive lead for the Homes & Communities strand of the Growth Board work;

1.5.3 Approval for the established Temporary Accommodation Steering Group, under the remit of the Homes & Communities Group, to be the primary delivery mechanism of the programme, ensuring effective representation from Districts, Boroughs and County Council;

1.5.4 To note the tactical and operational options for change identified, that officers will review and take forward (Appendix 6).

DRAFT

2. THE NEED FOR INVESTMENT

The case for making an investment in a coordinated set of TA solutions and management processes is made through a combination of increasing demand and complexity of needs from those presenting as homeless, and the responsiveness and sustainability of the current model, delivered independently by each authority, in meeting those needs. A detailed review of current TA provision in Hertfordshire is presented in Appendix 1.

2.1 Facing-up to a new reality

TA is offered to households who seek help from their council as they are homeless, eligible for help and owed 'a rehousing duty.' In Hertfordshire, there are currently 1194 households living in TA[1]; in December 2011, the number was 481 households.

The household composition of those living in temporary accommodation in Hertfordshire reflects regional and national patterns, however there are significantly fewer households with children (46% compared with the national figure of 63%), whilst there are significantly more single adult males (32% compared with the national figure of 19%).

There is evidence of increasing complexity of need amongst households presenting as homelessness and the delayed impact of Covid-19 will undoubtedly drive additional demand from families presenting as homeless. Specifically, through a significant rise in unemployment, a rise in rent and mortgage payments, and in evictions now the temporary ban has been lifted. There is already evidence of increased levels of domestic abuse and more people experiencing mental health problems. These factors, especially when the Domestic Abuse Bill comes into operation, are likely to increase homelessness for families and single people, reversing the stable family numbers in TA seen since 2017.

The emerging risk is that the financial costs of delivering homelessness services for significantly more households will increase the cost of temporary accommodation, placing councils at the risk of budget overspends.

2.2 Rethinking the model

In 2019/20, Hertfordshire councils spent £5,695k[2] on TA provision, returning £4,870k of income, with a resultant net current expenditure of £825k. Homelessness administration and prevention work by the districts and HCC resulted in an additional £9,002k net current expenditure (see breakdown in Appendix 2).

Whilst Hertfordshire authorities make significantly more use of their own stock for TA compared to the national and regional averages, greater use is made of B&B and hostel accommodation than the national average. An increase in B&B and other expensive nightly paid accommodation in response to increased demand could lead to a rapid rise in costs. It may not therefore be an exaggeration to state that without applying new thinking about the way TA is delivered across Hertfordshire, homelessness provision could become a significant drain on the resources of some councils, as has already happened elsewhere.

However, the Covid crisis is focusing the minds of all stakeholders. District Councils, core service commissioners within the County Council and service providers all recognise the need for opening-up strategic service partnerships that create a whole system approach, delivering wider and lasting outcomes at reduced costs.

3. STRATEGIC CASE

3.1 Strategic vision

[1] MCHLG dataset (Q3, 2020/21)

[2] 2019/20 - RO4 (10 districts & HCC)

DRAFT

To maximise the options available to local authorities in Hertfordshire to better meet their individual statutory obligations, and the housing needs for people living in temporary accommodation, whilst achieving quality and value for money across the whole system.

3.2 A whole system approach

The provision of high-quality TA is a critical element of a sustainable housing solution that benefits the whole system supporting those most in need in Hertfordshire:

- Using early intervention and prevention strategies to keep households away from the point of crisis and the need to access TA solutions;
- Providing tailored packages of a suitable turnaround space and personalised support to enable households to stabilise their situation before taking the next step forward;
- Ending reliance on poor quality or unsuitable accommodation solutions that fail to promote wellbeing and further jeopardise life chances;
- Ensuring tenancy sustainment strategies prevent repeat homelessness;
- Working with commissioners to create specialist reabling solutions that provide homes and support for people leaving hospital, care or prison to re-establish their lives.

3.3 Best-in-class exemplars

In seeking to create an exemplar model for the delivery and management of TA, Hertfordshire can reference successful approaches already delivering benefits in other council areas. Four examples are provided in Appendix 3, these are:

- The *Capital Letters* partnership developed by 20 London Boroughs to manage the sourcing and management of TA and private rented accommodation in collaboration;
- The delivery and management of homes in Enfield through *Housing Gateway*; and the offsite construction of *modular homes* for use as TA in Lewisham;
- An *Accommodation Pathway* model developed by Broadland and South Norfolk Councils.

3.4 Expected outcomes

The local delivery of TA means that an effective, joined-up approach is likely to be highly beneficial in providing a better service to homeless households and in terms of achieving efficiencies for the councils. A coordinated framework is expected to deliver:

- 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. COMMERCIAL CASE

DRAFT

This paper is not proposing final recommendations, however the following provided insight into early thinking and options to be explored in the subsequent Outline Business Case, if approved.

4.1 Market drivers

The focus for TA and its procurement could benefit from procuring more quality short-term 'quick turnover' type temporary accommodation, to accommodate applicants in priority need and owed the relief of homelessness duty, whilst they wait in TA for an accommodation solution, whether in social housing or a private rented offer of a minimum 6-month period. The number of households owed the main homelessness duty and therefore likely to require longer term TA has fallen nationally, a trend replicated in Hertfordshire.

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) has altered the 'balance' between the need for short-term emergency accommodation and longer-term TA need. More short-term TA units are required, and fewer long-term units are needed, however, the majority of single people accommodated will have significant and complex needs that require other services.

4.2 Joint procurement and commissioning

A joint approach to procurement and commissioning would build shared capacity across the county which is not sustainable within a single authority. Such a strategy could work efficiently across the county and be big enough to establish an effective brand and a good reputation with private sector landlords, especially if this is supported by consistent landlord and tenant liaison work and provision of necessary resettlement support:

- Joint procurement of nightly paid accommodation, leased accommodation to use as TA, and PRS accommodation to end a homelessness prevention, relief or main duty;
- An emergency TA support system whereby an authority in need of emergency TA with no other options can request help from a neighbouring authority;
- Procurement of accommodation for Children's Services, reducing the need for social workers to try to find accommodation for clients;
- Joint commissioning (with Health) of 'step down' accommodation would support homeless people with continued recovery needs leaving hospital;
- Providing accommodation for victims of domestic abuse, and similarly ex-offenders, away from home districts;

4.3 Social lettings agency

Consideration could be given to delivering a county-wide approach to the sourcing of private rented property to discharge duty and therefore reduce the need for TA through a Social Lettings Agency or similar joint arrangement. Coordinating the acquisition of PRS properties through one team will increase the number of properties acquired to discharge duty.

4.4 TA Self-sufficiency

Ultimately, an objective to become self-sufficient in TA across all authorities through new build and purchase schemes, based on mapping the gaps in authority owned emergency and longer-term TA for families and single people, could substantially lower the costs of TA for each authority in the medium to longer term. This could be achieved by setting up a jointly owned company to acquire and manage properties following the example of Capital Letters.

5. FINANCIAL CASE

DRAFT

The programme of work proposed by this SOC is unlikely to reduce the total costs incurred by temporary accommodation in the short or medium term, if homelessness demand rises as expected. However, through further investigation and design of the options, there is opportunity for rationalisation of the county's current spend on temporary accommodation provision, as well as an improved customer experience associated, by adopting a more collaborative approach and working model.

The priority of the financial case will be to ensure the sustainability of TA provision addressing the high net cost of nightly paid (£370k), and bed-and-breakfast (£733k) accommodation, re-sourcing and managing that provision as cost effectively as possible. Additionally, working within a whole-system approach of maximising housing options, homelessness prevention and tenancy sustainment.

5.1 Hertfordshire TA Financial Model

A robust financial model is required to underpin any form of joint TA procurement strategy and to support all parties' procurement decisions in respect of the type of temporary accommodation that would enable each council to meet their legal duties and to deliver TA at the lowest possible cost. Examples of what this type of model could be used to assess, and deliver are:

- A Hertfordshire-wide *Procurement Strategy* for TA including cost benefit analysis for all the TA used and potential TA that could be used;
- An agreed maximum rate for each of type of TA provided. This approach has been successful in reducing prices paid in London, and a similar approach could be adopted;
- A Hertfordshire-wide out-of-hours emergency assessment and TA placement service, which would improve consistency of approach and reduce costs;
- A Hertfordshire-wide emergency accommodation call-off contract to reduce costs and improve standards;
- Delivering TA through joint commissioning, Hertfordshire-wide, or through individual partnerships between groups of councils that wish to develop specific schemes;
- A TA rent setting framework to ensure that for each type of TA used by each district the maximum DWP subsidy allowed is being claimed;
- A system to maximize grant funding from Government for TA initiatives including joint bids.

5.2 Outline Business Case

In describing options for change through an *Outline Business Case*, clear financial benefits and disbenefits will be included to enable a clear strategic choice to be made as to the efficacy of a collaborative approach to the supply of temporary accommodation that more closely meets the needs of households.

The appraisal of options for change will include a legal assessment of the implication of recommendations made (See Appendix 4 for the legal framework that governs TA).

6. MANAGEMENT CASE

There is a strong management case for adopting a shared approach to TA management, with common policies, protocols and pathways that support those most in need across the county, underpinned by the consistent and efficient application of shared standards, supply and demand modelling, and the oversight of statutory compliance and reporting. This would build upon existing joint working, such as the Hertfordshire Accommodation Cell set-up in response to Covid, the Joint Housing Protocol to support young homeless and care leavers, and a rough-sleeper tracker and health assessment framework (see Appendix 5 for details).

DRAFT

6.1 Common policies, support protocols and pathways

An example framework for managing TA across Hertfordshire could include:

- An *Out-of-Area Placement Policy* with agreed criteria for in-district and out-of-district TA placements including time periods, support and notification arrangements (including agreed processes to maintain links to Children's and Adult Services, where applicable);
- Utilisation of existing work to ensure availability of safe TA for victims of domestic abuse who have to leave their accommodation;
- Utilisation of existing collaborative work to understand the needs of people with vulnerable and complex needs, ensuring the right type of TA is provided to meet needs;
- TA that supports the Joint Protocols for Children & Young People developed by the County Council with the districts/Boroughs;
- Specific TA and support for the most vulnerable groups, delivered through a *Housing First* approach and move-on accommodation for former rough sleepers.

6.2 Common standards

Another benefit of a joint approach to temporary accommodation would be the development of common minimum standards of accommodation, and potentially a joint approach to inspection, perhaps along the lines of the latest 'Setting the Standard' work in London.
A common set of standards applicable to each type of TA procured could be developed, as could a *TA Operations Manual*, with shared operational TA processes and procedures including charging policy and evictions, templated standard letters, and model licences.

6.3 Robust demand and supply modelling

A *TA Monitoring and Control Model* would enable authorities to improve the monitoring and control and throughput of cases in TA, identifying 'blocked' cases. Similarly, a *TA Predictive Model* would help authorities set targets month by month for managing or reducing TA numbers. The model would aim to better control demand (into TA) and supply (out of TA) and be able to be used as a 'live performance tool' by Councils.

6.4 Compliant performance management

A performance framework for TA would help drive-up standards and benchmarked performance, beyond the data that is available from the Governments national reporting data scheme.

7.NEXT STEPS

7.1 Approval to proceed

The Growth Board are requested to approve this Strategic Outline Business Case and recommendations set out below:

7.1.1 Approval to proceed with the development of an Outline Business Case (OBC), to develop a coordinated, county-wide framework to improve outcomes and life chances for households who are temporarily homeless and secure sustainable, long term improvements in accommodation arrangements;

DRAFT

7.1.2 Delegate oversight of the Outline Business Case development to the Chief Executive lead for the Homes & Communities strand of the Growth Board work;

7.1.3 Approval for the established Temporary Accommodation Steering Group, under the remit of the Homes & Communities Group, to be the primary delivery mechanism of the programme, ensuring that the group has effective representation from Districts and Boroughs;

7.1.4 To note the tactical and operational options for change identified, that officers will review and take forward.

7.2 Options appraisal structure

If approval is secured, a detailed options appraisal will be undertaken to develop a recommendation for change in how the provision of temporary accommodation is managed and delivered across Hertfordshire. It is anticipated that the recommendations will brought-forward for decision by end September 2021.

7.3 Governance arrangement

A cross organisational steering group was established last year in order to develop the SOC for the temporary accommodation programme. The group is comprised of a team of district and county colleagues with complementary professional, technical and specialist skills in order to progress the identified programme of work.

This SOC is formally requesting agreement to approve this steering group as the primary delivery mechanism of the programme.

During the options development phase EQIA and implications relating to use of personal data, along with sustainability and climate change will be assessed.

DRAFT

APPENDIX 1: HOMELESSNESS ANALYSIS

Demand Analysis

In December of 2020, over a quarter of a million (253,620) people were living in temporary accommodation in England, or 95,615 households (MHCLG, 2021). This equates to an estimated 1 in 220 people being homeless and living in temporary accommodation. This number is the highest it's ever been. Whilst a significant factor in this increasing trend is the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent 'Everyone in' initiative, described in later sections of this document, there has still been a year-on-year increase in demand for TA over the last decade, from December 2011 (48,920).

However, it should be noted that from the end of March 2017 to the end of December 2020 the number of families in TA has been stable. This means that the overall rise in TA since the end of March 2017 is entirely driven by single person households and other non-family household types.

As may be expected, homelessness is most prevalent in London, with 68% of homeless people living in temporary accommodation living in the capital. However, likely caused by several factors there are local hotspots and increasing trends.

In the East of England, there are over 15,000 homeless people currently living in temporary accommodation, or 6,555 households. This marks a 5-year increase of around 70%. In Hertfordshire, there are over 1194 households living in temporary accommodation, which is 18% of the region's total figure. A breakdown of the data by district is provided below:

Households in Temporary Accommodation by District/Borough & Relative %		
District	**Households in TA in 2020/21 Q3**	**Relative % of County Total**
Broxbourne	245	20%
Dacorum	245	20%
East Hertfordshire	48	4%
Hertsmere	92	8%
North Hertfordshire	115	10%
St Albans	85	7%
Stevenage	127	11%
Three Rivers	49	4%
Watford	107	9%
Welwyn Hatfield	81	7%
Total	*1194*	*100%*

* Latest data set collated by MCHLG (Q3, 2020/21)

DRAFT

TA household composition

Almost two-thirds (63%) of households living in temporary accommodation in England are families with children. Whilst in the national population, families comprise only 28% of households. As would be expected from this, Children are also overrepresented. Half (50%) of homeless people living in temporary accommodation are children, while children make up just over a fifth (22%) of the national population.

Household composition of those living in TA and Relative %*			
Household Composition	**England**	**East of England**	**Hertfordshire**
Total households with children	*63%*	*55%*	*46%*
Couple with dependent children	16%	12%	11%
Single parent with dependent children - Male	3%	4%	4%
Single parent with dependent children - Female	39%	37%	29%
Single adult male	19%	25%	32%
Single adult female	11%	14%	14%
All other household types	12%	9%	7%
Household type other / unknown	<1%	<1%	<1%

* Latest data set collated by MCHLG (End of Q3, 2020/21)

In Hertfordshire, the household composition of those living in temporary accommodation largely reflects the same trends seen in the regional and national figures. However, there is some variation:

- Hertfordshire has significantly fewer households with children living in temporary accommodation (46% compared to the national figure of 63%). There are also significantly less couples with dependent children (11% of total compared to 16% nationally).
- There are more single adult males living in temporary accommodation in the county (32% compared to the national figure of 19% and the regional figure of 25%).
- There are more single adult females living in temporary accommodation in the county compared to the national figures. However, the relative percentages are closer to the regional trends.

(Note: the impact of the Government focus on housing rough sleepers through the Everyone in campaign has been to increase the proportion of single person households in TA).

Types of Temporary Accommodation

Hertfordshire along with other local authorities use a variety of types of accommodation as temporary housing for homeless households, including:

- Private sector rented housing;
- Social housing let on short-term tenancies;
- Hostel/refuge accommodation (sometimes with shared cooking/washing facilities);
- Bed and breakfast accommodation; and
- Others, such as supported lodgings and mobile homes

DRAFT

The table below provides an overview of the number of households in each type of Temporary Accommodation.

Households by type of TA and Relative Percentage*			
Type of Accommodation	**England**	**East of England**	**Hertfordshire**
Private sector accommodation leased by a LA or a registered provider	28,324 (29%)	1,204 (18%)	96 (8%)
Nightly paid, privately managed accommodation, self-contained	24,818 (26%)	918 (14%)	126 (11%)
Local authority or Housing association (LA/HA) stock	21,620 (22%)	2,480 (38%)	560 (47%)
Bed and breakfast hotels (including shared annexes)	10,510 (11%)	670 (10%)	149 (12%)
Hostels (including reception centres, emergency units and refuges)	5,793 (6%)	933 (14%)	232 (19%)
Any other type of temporary accommodation (incl. private landlord)	4,550 (5%)	350 (5%)	31 (3%)
Total	**95,615**	**6,555**	**1194**

* Latest data set collated by MCHLG (End of Q3, 2020/21)

As demonstrated in the table above, whilst Hertfordshire has a significantly higher use of its own housing stock compared to the national and regional averages, it has a higher use of B&B and Hostels compared to the national and regional averages. Additionally, 26% of households in B&B or Hostel temporary accommodation have dependent children (these are comparatively low figures).

Demand drivers

Long-term trend

The ONS statistics published in December 2011 marked the end of the long-term downward trend in the number of households in temporary accommodation; seasonally adjusted figures had fallen in each successive quarter since peaking in 2004 (House of Commons Briefing Paper, February 2020). Following this milestone, the numbers of households in temporary accommodation has been continuing to increase. The most recent national quarterly statistics recorded 98,300 households in temporary accommodation, marking a 101% increase on the figure compared to December 2011 (48,920).

Hertfordshire as a county has seen an increase of a similar scale. During the same period, the number of households in temporary accommodation has risen from 481 to over 1050, marking an increase of 118% (MHCLG, 2018).

COVID-19 Pandemic

In the last year, the number of homeless people living in temporary accommodation has increased by 6%. This is equivalent to an additional 13,500 homeless people and the numbers of people in temporary accommodation rose by 6,000 in the first three months of the pandemic.

DRAFT

A paper published by CRISIS in November 2020 concluded that the increase seen in the pandemic was due to several factors, including:

- People who were sofa surfing and living in dangerous and transient accommodation became more visible as their living situations forced them to access help.
- There have been bigger increases from people who are experiencing homelessness for the first time, who have been furloughed and those who are newly unemployed.
- There was significant government intervention through the Everyone In initiative (see section below)

One of the biggest challenges facing local authorities is the ability to successfully move those housed in emergency COVID-19 accommodation into permanent and secure housing. The structural barriers that existed before the pandemic, including a lack of housing supply and a welfare system that does not address the underlying causes of homelessness have been exacerbated during the pandemic.

Additionally, the sharp rise in the number of households in temporary accommodation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has not been uniform across all types of accommodation. The number of households in B&B-style accommodation increased by 60%, from 7,110 in June 2019 to 11,360 in June 2020. The number of households in local authority or Registered Social Landlord accommodation increased by 19%. The number of households in hostels and women's refuges fell by 8%, potentially because this type of accommodation is less likely to be COVID-secure (e.g. it may include shared rooms).

'Everyone in' Initiative

At the end of March 2020, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) wrote to all local authorities in England instructing them to move everyone sleeping rough and in communal shelters into a safe place, ideally in self-contained accommodation. The primary aim of this initiative was to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on people facing homelessness and to prevent deaths. Plans included:

- Setting up a "a local coordination cell" to plan and manage the response to coronavirus, bringing together the local authority and the NHS
- Stopping homeless people congregating in shelters and street encampments
- "Urgently procuring accommodation for people on the streets
- Triaging homeless people "where possible" into three groups: those with symptoms of COVID19; those with pre-existing conditions but without symptoms; and those without any of the above
- Securing access to food and medical care for rehoused people
- "If possible," separating people with "significant drug and alcohol needs" from those without

The initiative was initially backed by £3.2 million targeted funding to local authorities, alongside £3.2 billion overall for councils to assist people classed as vulnerable.

This intervention has clearly saved lives during the pandemic, with infection rates and deaths amongst people experiencing homelessness at extremely low levels compared to international figures. However, the initiative is not expected to be sustainable beyond the medium term, as its sustainability relies on the additional funding supplied by central government.

The impact of Covid-19 will undoubtedly drive additional demand from families presenting as homeless. Specifically, a significant rise in unemployment could cause homelessness as residents' default on their rent and mortgage payments. There is already evidence of increased levels of domestic abuse and more people experiencing mental health problems. All of these factors are likely to result in more homelessness for families as well as single person households reversing the stable family numbers in TA seen since the end of March 2017.

DRAFT

The risk is that the financial costs of delivering homelessness services for significantly more households will increase the cost of temporary accommodation to a level unknown in Hertfordshire. A large increase in temporary accommodation costs has the potential to place several Councils at risk of significant budget overspends.

It may not therefore be an exaggeration to state that without applying new thinking in regard to the way Temporary Accommodation is delivered across Hertfordshire, the financial impact could put financial viability at risk.

The Covid-19 epidemic has already seen Councils, Housing Associations and partners working together in very different ways, with the usual demarcations and protocols pushed to one side. The legacy of this crisis may be that long discussed goals of wider strategic alignment and integration of service such as TA across the County may become a reality

The Covid-19 crisis is focusing the minds of all stakeholders. District Councils, core service commissioners within the County Council and service providers all recognise the need for opening-up strategic service partnerships that create whole system approach, delivering wider and lasting outcomes at reduced costs.

Coronavirus Act 2020

In order to protect the rights of tenants who have entered financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. The Coronavirus Act provides protection to social and private tenants by delaying when landlords can start proceedings to evict tenants. Funding was also made available through Local authorities to provide support for tenants to stay in their homes.

The act has successfully reduced the number of evictions. Applications to the courts for possession by private and social landlords were down 67% between October and December 2020, compared to the same quarter in 2019. The number of repossessions recorded October to December 2020 was also down by 93% compared to the same quarter in 2019. Only 548 repossessions were recorded between April and December 2020 compared to 22,444 in the same period in 2019 (MHCLG, 2021).

The end of the ban on bailiff evictions on 1st June 2020 is expected to generate a potential surge in demand for temporary accommodation could be seen across the country if a clear mitigation plan is not developed to manage tenant evictions when the ban is lifted. A quarter of a million private renters are at risk of homelessness when the Government's eviction ban lifts according to research from housing charity Shelter. Homeless Charity Homelink also believes that increasing numbers of landlords are planning to get out of the buy-to-let industry after the ban, as it is has become too stressful in the current climate (Homelink, 2020).

DRAFT

APPENDIX 2: HERTFORDSHIRE TA EXPENDITURE 2019/20

Hertfordshire TA and Homeless Expenditure 2019/20 (RO4 – 10 districts & HCC)			
Cost Element	**Total Expenditure**	**Total Income**	**Net Current Expenditure**
TA Expenditure			
Nightly paid, privately managed accommodation	£1,225,000	(£855,000)	£370,000
Hostels (non-HRA support)	£2,204,000	(£2,696,000)	(£492,000)
Bed and Breakfast accommodation	£1,080,000	(£347,000)	£733,000
Private managed accommodation leased by RSLs	£16,000	£0	£16,000
Directly with a private sector landlord	£1,030,000	(£717,000)	£313,000
Other temporary accommodation	£140,000	(£255,000)	(£115,000)
	£5,695,000	**-£4,870,000**	**£825,000**
Homelessness Expenditure			
Administration	£6,019,000	(£1,503,000)	£4,516,000
Prevention (incl. HCC prevention activity)	£5,587,000	(£1,101,000)	£4,486,000
	£11,606,000	**-£2,604,000**	**£9,002,000**
Hertfordshire TA and Homelessness Expenditure	**£17,301,000**	**-£7,474,000**	**£9,827,000**

DRAFT

APPENDIX 3: TA PROVISION CASE STUDIES

Capital Letters

Capital Letters is a publicly owned social business founded in 2019 by 14 London Boroughs, with a current membership of 20 boroughs, supported by £38m MHCLG Flexible Homelessness Support Grant. It has pooled the procurement activity of these boroughs to access an improved supply of good quality accommodation, to prevent and relieve homelessness, and where necessary for use as temporary accommodation. It alleviates the costs to boroughs of providing accommodation and to encourage greater efficiency, provide extra staffing, IT and other resources to increase supply and improve the service offered to both tenants and landlords.

Capital Letters is opening new sources of supply within the private sector, by providing confidence and assurance in the product offered to landlords, switching a landscape of competition between boroughs for supply to one of collaboration, that can better intervene and manage the market, to:

- Minimise disruption to homeless people on a council's waiting list by placing them as locally as possible, reversing the trend in out-of-borough and out-of-London placements;
- Reduce the use of nightly paid temporary accommodation and ensure that properties are allocated more locally;
- Provide a mixture of Private Rented Sector properties let by owners to households nominated by the boroughs, or directly leased from landlords and managing agents;
- Reduce costs through collaborative and efficient ways of working and, wherever possible, to end a council's statutory homelessness duty;
- Provide a high quality one-stop service to landlords and managing agents, offering them fast payment and other incentives.

By 2022 and within three years of launch, Capital Letters expects to have helped 20,000 homeless households into accommodation and have up to 13,000 homes under management, with an establishment of 270 staff and an annual income of £238m.

Broadland and South Norfolk District Councils

The two Councils (operating within a shared model since January 2020) are redesigning their housing service to create a Best-in-Class model, encompassing prevention and relief of homelessness, temporary accommodation management, and housing services transformation, funded by the LGA's Housing Advisor Programme (HAP). Senior stakeholders have worked collaboratively to understand their vision and aims, unique operating circumstances and specific strategic and operational priorities:

- Agreeing an overarching set of design principles with a Joint Member Working Group, who oversaw a review of Allocations Policy to ensure the target model would meet the specific requirements of both councils;
- Understanding local context and need, through the analysis of service data, a digital survey of recent service users;
- Understanding of the national context and cross-sector best practice.

The resultant Accommodation Pathway Model is the first of its kind in the UK to deliver a holistic housing service to a whole community regardless of their immediate need. It consists of:

- An Allocations Policy that is flexible, compliant and sustainable, making best use of the housing stock, whilst ensuring individuals are aware of their potential housing choices;

DRAFT

- Digitally enabled Accommodation Pathways that open-up realistic choices for those exploring their housing options, whilst protecting vulnerable individuals and households who need additional assistance in resolving their housing problems;
- A Temporary Accommodation Pathway that provides flexible capacity, delivered when needed through partnership arrangements, and sustained through accurate forecasting and utilisation modelling;
- A Target Operating Model that ensures policy is delivered in a robust, fair and compliant manner, through simplified and digitally enabled business processes, that streamline customer journeys and consequently release resources to support service objectives;
- A Partnership Framework that provides targeted support to sustain tenancies wherever possible, and access to support such as benefits and employment, health, and care services, that help individuals to access and sustain more permanent accommodation;

Enfield Housing Gateway

Housing Gateway was established by Enfield Council as an independent company in 2014 to reduce an anticipated £3.3m budget pressure associated with housing families in temporary accommodation.

Since 2014, Housing Gateways has delivered 544 purchased homes, providing accommodation for over 750 homeless households, avoiding the need for costly nightly paid accommodation. Properties have also been bought specifically for people with learning disabilities and a number redeveloped to accommodate more bedrooms. It has also improved the quality, availability and security of private rented accommodation for those at risk of homelessness.

Since 2014, Housing Gateway has built an asset base of £129m and retained earnings of £11m, realising savings of at least £1m per year for Enfield Council, £7m in total since 2014. It has ambitious goals to expands its portfolio by at least a further 250 properties by 2023, and to develop an ethical lettings agent diversifying its product range, preventing homelessness as well as providing alternatives to temporary accommodation to a wider client base. The Council has also made a commitment of £5m equity investment and low rate, short-term borrowing to support this expansion of the company's portfolio, which is projected to grow in value to £259m.

Lewisham Council modular homes

Lewisham Council is building 34 two-and-three-bedroom modular housing units for use as temporary accommodation, at a development in Edward Street in Deptford, due for completion by 2022, the scheme also includes two small retail units.

The units will be built using Precision Manufacturing Housing (PMH) methods, also known as modular housing, by Caledonian Modular, with most of the construction taking place off-site in a factory setting, before being transported to site for assembly. The units take 30% less time to construct and at a cost 20% cheaper than traditional construction methods.

This 'pop-up village' scheme is a temporary solution while new-build and estate regeneration take place across the borough. The modular housing units are expected to remain on the site for around four years, when they can be moved to other sites as required.

Funding has been provided from the GLA via its Accelerated Construction Fund (£13.75m) and the Right to Buy Ringfence Agreement (a further £5m), as part of a three-scheme project delivering 65 homes in total, managed by Lewisham Homes. There are currently over 2,000 households in temporary accommodation in Lewisham.

DRAFT

APPENDIX 4: STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Assessment

When assessing the suitability of any TA to be offered to an applicant the Council is required to undertake a number of tests. These can be summarised as:

Test 1: Is the offer suitable re the property standards, and does the landlord pass the fit and proper test?

Test 2: Is the offer affordable (this will require an income and expenditure assessment)?

Test 3: Is the property's location suitable for that applicant and their family?

Test 4: Is there any other factor that renders the property suitable or unsuitable?

Sitting behind this 4-part test is the legislation, regulations, the Homelessness Code of Guidance and leading case law.

Legislation

Local housing authorities in England have an individual duty to secure accommodation for unintentionally homeless households in priority need under the Housing Act 1996. Households might be placed in temporary accommodation pending the completion of inquiries into an application, or they might spend time waiting in temporary accommodation after an application is accepted, until suitable secure accommodation becomes available. Temporary Accommodation is a limited provision and is therefore allocated on a priority need basis to those who are/will be classified as homeless. As far as reasonably practicable, authorities should avoid making out of area placements for homeless households and use this option only as a last resort when no accommodation in the local area can reasonably be procured.

Following the Homelessness Reduction Act, a local authority has a statutory duty to ensure that everyone it accepts as eligible for homelessness assistance and is homeless, is assisted under the section 189B "initial duty" usually referred to as the "relief" duty. This means that the authority must take reasonable steps to help them to secure accommodation with a reasonable prospect of being available for at least 6 months. Applicants who also have (or may have) a priority need for accommodation must be provided with suitable interim accommodation until the relief duty is brought to an end.

What is referred to in the homelessness legislation as the main housing duty is pushed back to a later stage of the homelessness process. If the relief duty is successfully discharged, so that 6-month accommodation is found, the authority does not need to make a decision about the main housing duty. If, however, the relief duty is unsuccessful in securing accommodation, then applicants who have a priority need and are not intentionally homeless, become, at the end of the 56-day relief duty, entitled to the main housing duty. This means they must be provided with suitable temporary accommodation until a long term settled housing solution is found. In this context a settled housing solution normally involves a social letting with security of tenure, or a suitable offer of a minimum 12-month fixed term AST in the private rented sector.

If there is no suitable social housing or private rented offer available at the point a main duty is accepted, a local authority will usually have to provide longer-term temporary accommodation until there is a solution. It is this point when Councils are more likely to use social housing stock as TA or leased accommodation from a private landlord.

APPENDIX 5: HERTFORDSHIRE TA JOINT WORKING

Hertfordshire Accommodation Cell

DRAFT

Purpose

- To provide a forum for dissemination and exchange of information and effective joint working across the county to ensure the successful provision of accommodation and appropriate support to anyone who is rough sleeping, at risk of rough sleeping or homeless during the Covid 19 outbreak;
- To identify any gaps in availability of accommodation, support, goods and services across the county;
- To establish costs and funding streams to support this work across the county;
- To identify opportunities for collaborative working in terms of information exchange, joint procurement/commissioning, joint funding, sharing of experience and good practice.

Key Aims of Cell

Data Capture and Analysis

Information to be collated weekly by districts and key stakeholders to capture the demand and supply of accommodation and support, gaps and opportunities for collaborative working and the costs.

Established Referral and Housing Pathways for specific groups

- Rough Sleepers with complex needs or failure to engage
- Prison release
- Probation
- Domestic Abuse
- Hospital Discharge
- Drug/Alcohol
- Mental Health

Collaborative Working

Identifying opportunities for collaborative procurement, commissioning and pooling of resources, to ensure that we have an effective response across Hertfordshire.

Maximising Funding Opportunities

- Collecting relevant information about the cost of the response and reporting this to MHCLG and other bodies to maximise the opportunity of recovering costs.
- Considering current budgets and funding opportunities to ensure the most effective use of available resources
- Sharing information about capacity within existing services.
- Identifying Key Risks, challenges and barriers to be escalated

Information Sharing

An Information Sharing Protocol will be developed/is in place to ensure that all relevant information will be shared by members in a timely way.

Identifying and sharing good practice.

Agreeing Long term Strategy for move on from temporary accommodation.

DRAFT

Membership

Representation from the following organisations:

Hertfordshire County Council

Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust

NHS England

Probation

BENCH

Hertfordshire's ten District/Borough Councils (housing leads)

MHCLG

Governance Structure

Reports to Tactical Coordinating Group

Links to Voluntary and People Assistance Cell

Outcomes

The Cell has addressed the urgent demands placed on Local Authorities due to the Everyone In and Protect Directive with the intention to share good practice, feed into the Volunteering, People and Action Cell and the Local Resilience Forum set up during the pandemic and improve county wide working.

The outcomes of the Cell have been better information sharing about sites in which we have all made placements to meet our homeless requirements, placements numbers and challenges for all authorities which identified gaps in Housing Related Support which was followed by the County council providing funding and services to meet this gap worked jointly to provide accommodation during the first national restrictions; Stevenage Council led on the lease of the Holiday Inn Express provision for accommodation, security, food and support for not only SBC but also East Herts and North Herts Council.

Cell meetings have become less frequent however continues to be a vital tool for the 10 Hertfordshire Local Authorities to share information, receive guidance from Ministry Housing and Communities for Local Government, Homes England and other partners and have opened discussions about how we can work better together.

Authorities have also jointly worked on a template to bid for Ministry of Justice funding, the roll out of the Survivors Against Domestic Abuse provision across Herts has been monitored at these meetings.

Joint Housing Protocol

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) amended the Housing Act 1996, introduced significant new duties for local housing authorities and partners, particularly concerning joint working in relation to care leavers. A *Joint Housing Protocol* is designed help children's services and housing authorities deliver the local accommodation

DRAFT

offered to care leavers and prevent homelessness. It sets out commitments as corporate parents, and how these will be delivered in practice.

A Local Offer

Local authorities are required under section 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to publish a local offer, which sets out the services and the support available for care leavers. The local offer should include information on how care leavers are supported to access suitable accommodation, including the support available from housing services. Joint housing protocols should be aligned with the local offer and can help to ensure that the commitments to support care leavers to access and sustain accommodation are met. Local authorities should consider providing a link to the joint protocol within a local offer so that care leavers, advocates and other professionals can have access to the document.

Care Leavers Accommodation and Support Framework

Bernardo's and St Basils, with support from MHCLG and DfE, developed an Accommodation and Support framework for care leavers which draws on expertise from across local government, the voluntary sector and care leavers, to outline best practice in providing suitable accommodation and support pathways for care leavers. It outlines the following 5 stages in supporting care leavers to independent living:

- Preparing for the reality of housing options;
- Planning care leavers' accommodation and support options with them;
- Reducing housing crisis;
- Accessing housing and support as needed;
- Accessing and successfully managing longer term move-on and support options.

To help ensure best practice the framework is used by commissioners and local providers of housing support in consultation with care leavers, to map existing services for care leavers care leavers.

DRAFT

Hertfordshire response

All 10 Hertfordshire authorities (Stevenage, North Herts, Welwyn Hatfield, Dacorum, East Herts, Watford, Three Rivers, Broxbourne, St Albans, Hertsmere) and Hertfordshire County Council work within the Protocol, to ensure the even distribution of resource across the county in meeting challenged faced by groups in which the district or borough council do not owe a duty and must be addressed by the County Council. These main groups are 16/17-year olds, Care leavers, Families with no recourse to public funds and those found Intentionally Homeless. This protocol is effective in ensuring that the upper and lower tier authorities are clear on what is expected from them and the legal responsibilities. There has also been work to identify all young person's temporary accommodation and ensure that there is agreement that each LA has the nomination rights for their areas but that where demand varieties there is flexibility across the county.

APPENDIX 6: PROGRAMME DELIVERY STRUCTURE

Alignment to Growth Board and Hertfordshire Property Partnership

The programme, initiated through the Hertfordshire Property Partnership (HPP), is being led by the Hertfordshire Homes and Communities Group (HHCG), a sub-group of the Hertfordshire Growth Board. The group has accountability for developing housing strategy and policy, working in support of the aims of the Growth Board that has identified delivery of homes and communities as a Hertfordshire-wide priority. HHCG works in partnership with HPP, Housing Associations representing the Build East strategic development consortium and all Hertfordshire's Las, along with NHS, Police, One Public Estate and the LEP.

Programme Work Themes and Deliverables

It is anticipated that this programme will deliver its objectives through completion of the following activities/deliverables. These activities were developed through the output of a series of workshops held with key stakeholders from the county's local authorities.

Work Theme	Function and Outputs	Key Organisation & Stakeholders	Anticipated Input (H/M/L)
Phase 1			
Finalise Strategic Case for Change *Strategic Focus*	Support gaining approval of the SOC to progress to the OBC – specifically focussed on developing the financial and legal framework that enables delivery of volume and decent quality of accommodation to households requiring temporary accommodation.	Growth Board Homes & Communities Group Programme Steering Group (including district & borough reps)	L
Phase 2			
Financial & legal framework *Strategic Focus*	Review implications for LA's (including HRA). Impact of Govt. 'rough sleeping services budget'. Identify sources of funding	Chief Finance Officers representation Heads of Housing representation	M

Work Theme	Function and Outputs	Key Organisation & Stakeholders	Anticipated Input (H/M/L)
	Develop options for funding new developments that all Local Authorities can sign up to. As required, develop strategic agreement that accounts for Local Authority statutory responsibility Consider the role of Housing Associations / Registered Social landlords in future arrangements		
Data/Intelligence *Tactical/operational Focus*	Develop baseline data for KPI's Benchmarking the approach other authorities/agencies across the country are taking. Influencing method of data collection to enable access of post code level data Review of available stock Identification of further land across the county that could be used for temporary accommodation Develop potential options to produce trend forecasting (including impact of the removal to the cap on no fault evictions	District / Borough representation Adult / Children Social Care representation MHCLG Homelessness & Prevention Team	M
Housing – policy & operations *Tactical/operational Focus*	A shared vision around quality standards using agreed best practice across Hertfordshire. This could include drafting an Out of Area Placement Policy between Local Authorities in Hertfordshire with guidance for targeted vulnerable groups including Care Leavers, unaccompanied asylum seekers & ex-offenders Current capital development, including hostels Implications of COVID-19	Heads of Housing & Property representation Other authority representation	H
Recommendations /Options development	Depending on output of other work themes but will include: • Future strategy • Future governance • Potential benefit realisation • Options for construction	As required	M

DRAFT

Project Role and responsibilities

It is recognised that any collaboration project will require the support and engagement of staff across from all the county's local authorities.

Role in Project	Name/s	Key Responsibilities
Programme Sponsor	**Simone Chinman Russell**	The role of the Project Sponsor is ultimately responsible for the project and its success. They ensure that the project is focused throughout its life on achieving it objectives and delivering the benefits outlined. They also ensure that the project gives good value for money and that it continues to be aligned to key organisational strategy.
Programme Lead	**Roger Barrett**	The role of the Programme Lead is primarily responsible for ensuring the project's success by chairing the Project Working Group to ensure that the project is focused throughout its life on achieving it objectives and delivering the benefits outlined. They communicate directly with the Project Sponsors and provide updates to other key stakeholders within the project, with the support of the Accountable Senior Manager and Project Manager as required.
Programme Manager/s	**Tobias Barker**	The role of the Programme Manager is to provide key guidance and decision-making to enable the effective delivery of the project. They act as the key link between the Project Working Group, Project Governance and Project Sponsor. They have general oversight of the project and the Project Manager reports directly to them.
Programme Senior Users (Heads of Housing)	**Senior Users: Sian Chambers, Natasha Beresford, Emily Dillion, Hannah Morris**	The role of the Senior User is to oversee and champion the project and the key objectives and benefits to be delivered. The group will receive project updates, provide guidance and advice and support key strategic decisions. It will also be the escalation point for significant risks and issues that threaten the successful delivery of the project objectives. They are also responsible for: • Making key decisions to assist towards the achievement of the project vision and objectives. • High level monitoring of project progress against plan. • Definition of acceptable risk and the overview of the management of risks and issues. • Define and oversee the realisation of programme benefits and change resulting from the programme. • Recognise the need to ensure compliance with organisational strategy and policy.

DRAFT

Role in Project	Name/s	Key Responsibilities
		• Monitor progress against objectives and benefit realisation. • Ensuring adequate resources are available for successful delivery of benefits. • Assist with change management within the business and champion implementation as necessary.
Project Manager	**George Soderberg**	The role of the Project Manager is to run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Project Sponsor, Accountable Senior Manager and Project Governance. They have the following responsibilities to: • Ensure the project produces the required outcomes and benefits. • Develop and maintain a project plan. • Manage all project controls, including issue logs, risk logs, lessons log and highlight reports. • Engage with and assign work to members of the project working group to deliver the project.
Lead Data/Intelligence Officer	**District / Borough representation** **Public Health representation** **Adult / Children Social Care representation** **MHCLG Homelessness & prevention team**	The role of Data/Intelligence colleagues is: • Analysis of current trends in terms of need & other relevant material (e.g. domestic violence). • Develop baseline data for KPI's. • Benchmarking the approach other authorities/agencies across the country are taking. • Include Housing Related Support.

DRAFT

Programme Assurance

Input and assurance will continue to be drawn from several independent county groups during the business case development process. These include:

- Heads of Housing
- Heads of Planning
- Heads of Property
- Homeless & Rough Sleeping Cell formed as part of the response to COVID-19
- Hertfordshire County Council resources

Risk Management

If the SOC is approved, a comprehensive Risk Management Strategy will be developed to effectively manage and monitor risks and issues as they are identified during the further investigation of the potential options. However, an initial high-level risk assessment has been conducted, with a summary provided below:

Risk Reference	Description of Risk	Severity (H/M/L)	Mitigation
R1	There is a lack of buy-in from Local Authority's to the proposals identified through the work of the programme	**High**	A cross organisational steering group has been established to ensure that all LAs are effectively represented. The final proposals made as a result of the options appraisal will be passed through local decision-making structures to obtain approval
R2	A financial or legal issue is identified through the investigation of options available, which impedes the development of a more central approach	**High**	Specialist external bespoke support has been procured to identify any issues at an early stage of the investigation
R3	The financial model developed to support the delivery of a central approach does not deliver a fair balance of investment for all local authorities	**Medium**	A cross organisational steering group has been established to ensure that all LAs are effectively represented. The final proposals made will passed through local decision-making structures to obtain approval from individual LA
R4	There is a risk that postcode level data may not be accessible or available around TA demand and household placement to accurately inform analysis and subsequent proposals for change	**Medium**	The project team is working with the county's local authorities and MHCLG to access post code level data to support the development of options
R5	The programme does not obtain the required funding or backing in order to deliver the identified programme benefits	**Medium**	Funding has been successfully obtained from the LGA Housing Advisors Programme and Hertfordshire Property Partnership to fund the cost of an external consultant to offer bespoke advice. One Public Estate have indicated that the programme may meet the criteria to apply to a future funding round This work falls within the remit of the Growth Board Affordable Housing

DRAFT

Risk Reference	Description of Risk	Severity (H/M/L)	Mitigation
			programme and will be aligned to future bids for funding as required

Constraints and Dependencies

During the workshops we identified the following key constraints for this programme:

- Postcode data may not give information required around original demand / placement;
- Lack of land restricts ability to be more creative with future developments;
- Inconsistencies in use of data and different systems being used (identified 5 separate systems with no cross-working interface);
- London out of Borough and other neighbouring county placements in Hertfordshire reducing available accommodation;
- Different costs in different areas may be a challenge of pooled resource because of differing property prices, nightly cost of accommodation etc.;
- Access to funding;
- Use of Modern Methods of Construction may lack political / residential support;
- Political viewpoint will vary between each Local Authority, particularly in areas where there there's not an issue with provision;
- Meeting local homelessness demand must be resolved within District/Borough area. Statutory and politically mandated;
- Cross boundaries a challenge with meeting needs of existing residents;
- The rise in complex client needs requires work to be done with all LAs to provide a model of how this work will provide a suitable provision for them.

Change Management

The strategy, framework and plan for dealing with the management and delivery of change, including communications and engagement, will be developed if the SOC is approved.

Programme Procurement Strategy:

The identified procurement strategy will be determined if the SOC is approved, allowing more detailed analysis and design to be completed on the preferred options. Analysis will also be undertaken in order to consider factors such as the state of the market, impact of Brexit on procurement regulations and any other local procurement considerations applicable to particular district partners which may impact the project.

External backing and Funding

Grant funding bids were submitted to the Housing Advisors Programme (HAP) and Hertfordshire Property Partnership which were successful. This funding will help the programme to fund the provision of bespoke support and advice in order to fully understand the legal and financial considerations/issues associated with developing a collaborative approach to managing the provision of temporary accommodation. This funding

DRAFT

should also enable the identification of any key risks/issues at an early stage which can then be effectively managed and mitigated.

Hertfordshire's One Public Estate regional partners have expressed interest in the programme and recommended that the programme explores the options of submitting a bid at a future funding round.

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda item 8

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Investment into Hertfordshire Programme Next Steps

Report Author: Patsy Dell Hertfordshire Growth Board (Tel: 07949 887794)

1 Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose to the Board that:

- Further work should be undertaken to complete Hertfordshire's investment strategy and associated actions agreed at the exploratory investment workshops held in May 2021.
- The work should be led by the Growth Board Officer Steering Group, with support from the LEP and s151 officers including exploring how a regional investment fund could work for Hertfordshire and play a part in enabling the delivery of the strategy, reporting back to the Board in the Autumn.

2 Background - Hertfordshire Investment Ready Workstream

2.1 Over the months of April and May 2021, a short programme of work was undertaken which included two workshops with Leaders, representatives of the LEP and Chief Officers. The slides from the final workshop are attached at Appendix A.

2.2 Hertfordshire has a track record of attracting public and private finance into certain schemes, but others are stalled in what is a challenging funding environment. The workshops provided the opportunity to discuss Hertfordshire's approach to investment, to reflect on what is possible, and assess the practical implications that these bring.

2.3 The workshops considered the learning from other places that have been successful in attracting new models of investment, and the features that they have established to be recognised as investor ready. They also assessed the potential role of Private Sector investment alongside Government and Local funding. Leaders concluded that several aspects of Hertfordshire's approach to investment should be developed further as follows:

- Finalise a strategy for investment into Hertfordshire including for major, long term, infrastructure.
- Scope Investor development work to get better as a place at helping businesses, and Government, think about investing in Hertfordshire.

- Undertake further appraisal of the investment pipeline schemes, including the pump prime funding needed to accelerate business case development and further planning for the timing of major decisions.
- Explore the potential for maximising existing funds e.g. top slice apprenticeship levy; allocation of existing funds; and others.
- Consider the potential and practical considerations of a Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire.
- Design of an investment framework including the appropriate governance and an investment advisory panel to provide investment appraisal and fund management capabilities.

These are considered below.

3 Hertfordshire's Investment Strategy

3.1 Hertfordshire has a clear ambition to secure public and private sector inward investment into the region to support jobs and communities. There has been recent Government investment of over £450m including Local Growth funding, HIF/HIG at Harlow Gilston, Stevenage Town Deal, Accelerated Construction in Welwyn Hatfield, Salix sustainability & carbon projects; and capacity funding for Garden Towns/Communities. There has also been substantial private sector investment such as Elstree by Sky/Comcast, and at Warner Bros, GSK in Stevenage, and MACE investment in SG1 in Stevenage Town Centre.

3.2 While this level of investment is significant, the overall response to the objective of maximising inward investment has lacked clear market messaging. There has been a focus on tactical decision making, with the potential for much greater recycling of investment, stronger measures of impact and greater efficiency.

3.3 Looking forward, a clearly defined investment framework, with agreed objectives, rigorous governance processes and consistent investor messaging will all enable Hertfordshire to get to where it wants to be. The starting point is the development of a compelling investment strategy. Work undertaken so far identifies that the core features of the Hertfordshire strategy will be to:

- Leverage real sector strengths:
  - Cell and Gene
  - Life Sciences
  - Film & Media
  - Modern Methods of Construction
- Focus on regeneration; large settlements and major infrastructure opportunities;
- Demonstrate joined up, strong, visible, consistent, and pro-active political leadership, the value of this has been confirmed through the

cluster work and giving clear messages to central government that the Board are looking to be innovative in its funding approach;
- Provide investors with a clear vision, strategy, planning landscape, and decision-making processes;
- Invite access to Officers – Chief Executives, Heads of Planning and knowledgeable core team; and
- Offer flexibility and creativity, transitioning from strategy to implementation.

3.4 An Investment Strategy will provide a basis to assess projects for potential investment and when making recommendations for investments. It will include several underlying principles:
- All investments must be made against agreed investment criteria; align with relevant Local Plans; and reflect Hertfordshire's economic priorities.
- Investments will be selected on the basis that the project is viable; carries appropriate risk and the terms are equal to or above the Hertfordshire minimum level of return.
- All investments will be subject to appropriate risk, business case assessments and due diligence by an appointed Fund Advisor and must fulfil the requirements of the Investment Strategy.
- The Fund will not provide grants and the investment criteria are reviewed annually.

3.5 It is envisaged that the Investment Strategy will evolve as a better understanding of the type of projects in the area is garnered, it will flex to meet changing local priorities and to reflect changes in the public and private sector funding landscape. The Board are invited to consider that further work should now be undertaken to complete the development of the investment strategy - a high-level document setting out principles of the Board's ambition and approach, expected to be no more than 12 pages, a document that will be aimed at the investment community and Government.

4 Making Hertfordshire Investor Ready

4.1 Building on the approach and principles outlined in the emerging investment strategy, three core themes have been identified that will enable Hertfordshire to become a highly attractive region for investors. These are each summarised in the paragraphs below:

- A programme of Investor Development Work. The aim of this activity would be to address the loss of commercial floorspace that is inhibiting the growth potential of existing businesses and SMEs and may be contributing to inward investors looking further afield to deliver their expansion plans. It would also enable Hertfordshire to respond to major investment enquiries originating via Department for International Trade, as well as leading investment generation, helping potential

investors source business opportunities and running targeted promotion, advertising and public relations campaigns. The service offer would include Investment and Investor development programmes to help developers and overseas businesses and provide a centralised (single point of contact) for developers and businesses, offering access to key influencers and stakeholders to further the developer's and investor's objectives within the county. This work could be anchored and aligned to the work of the LEP who will lead in pivoting greater focus on inward investment, development of the core cluster opportunities and co-ordination of activity across key sectors.

- Building a pipeline of investable projects and schemes. Hertfordshire's strategic growth corridors have provided the basis for identifying and capturing several major projects. Further analysis of these schemes demonstrates that a framework is needed to manage the development of the investable propositions through the business case process. This will require the skills and capacity in Hertfordshire to prepare and evaluate project propositions collectively and ensure the projects have a compelling narrative and context. The Growth Board needs to evolve to a collective system and process for this area of work.

- Maximising the use of existing funds. There are several potential sources of funding that could be brought together especially if they aligned to economic, social, and environmental objectives. Further work needs to be undertaken to consider these, and the flexibilities and freedoms that Government might make available to Hertfordshire (for example, Tax Incremental financing, Strategic Infrastructure Tariffs) in the way that has been offered to Mayoral Combined Authority areas. The potential to secure running cost revenue, as well as capital funding, also needs to be considered.

5 A Regional Investment Fund

5.1 Several places in the UK (including Manchester, Sheffield, Belfast, Cardiff) have developed and introduced regional investment funds. They exist where there is a requirement for public sector intervention to unlock commercial schemes that would otherwise remain stalled. The concept of the Fund would be to provide a framework and mechanism for making multiple investments into real estate and infrastructure on a co-ordinated, transparent, and commercial basis. The primary objective of the Fund would be to support regeneration and economic growth across the Hertfordshire region. All investments and returns will be fully repayable and re-invested in further projects in accordance with an approved Investment Strategy. The Fund would enable local development schemes to be unlocked or accelerated, delivering immediate economic outputs. Experience elsewhere suggests that they require an upfront commitment of £30 - £50m. This would be provided through contributions from across

Hertfordshire partners. This could include sources such as LEPs legacy funding as well as from each local authority. This initial commitment would provide access to a breadth of investment opportunities and demonstrate a firm commitment to the wider market and central government that there is a clear alignment between partners and a joint commitment towards growing the sub-regional economy. Once initial investments have been made, Hertfordshire may seek to attract additional public sector investment to support the growth of the Fund. An earlier market assessment demonstrated a healthy pipeline of schemes that could be brought forward.

5.2 The creation of a fund requires a specific focus that needs its own attention. This could build on the experience the LEP has acquired from the Enterprise Zone and that it has within its existing board membership. Ultimately, having a fund will:

- show government the strength of local intent tackle stalled sites / opportunity areas / priorities within Hertfordshire.
- enable schemes to be brought forward that deliver new jobs and support the growth of the local economy, that would otherwise be at risk and potentially move to other locations; and
- enable HGB to play its part in accelerating delivery and give leverage with regards to other government schemes or gap funding.

5.3 To attract investment Hertfordshire will need a strong, transparent, and easily understood framework for receiving, assessing, and managing potential investments. These arrangements will be underpinned by four clear features/principles:

- Hertfordshire Growth Board will provide the governing body, agree the investment strategy, and its objectives. It will agree an annual plan and receive reports on progress;
- Hertfordshire's Investment Advisory Panel would be established as a subgroup of HGB with the responsibility of providing oversight of investment priorities and the delivery of the annual investment plan and its objectives;
- Fund management, would be a recognised function of the HGB, undertaken by a regulated fund management and assurance partner, working to the Hertfordshire Investment Advisory Panel; and
- There would be a rolling series of investments that allow for capital to be deployed and recycled on an ongoing basis.

6 Implications

6.1 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. Full financial risk analysis and risk management assessment

will be undertaken as part of the detailed development of this work as it progresses.

7 Next steps

7.1. The need to secure investment into Hertfordshire remains a key economic priority for the LEP and the Growth Board. The areas identified through the workshops give a focus to the workstream and actions that will support greater investment and investor activity. The proposed next steps will be incorporated into the overall work programme for the Growth Board and progress reported back to each board meeting.

8 Recommendations

8.1 The Growth Board are invited to:

- Agree the contents of the report and the areas identified for further development.
- Agree the intention to undertake further work to complete the Hertfordshire Investment Strategy.
- Agree that the Growth Board Steering Group and s151 Officers be commissioned to look at how a regional investment fund could operate within this area (scope to include principles, aims / rules), drawing on best practice from elsewhere.

Hertfordshire Growth Board

Investing in Hertfordshire

Investing in Hertfordshire

Workshop 2 Friday 30th April 2021

Welcome from Cllr David Williams

Recap from Workshop 1

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment

The pipeline of investable projects

The potential to maximise existing funds

A Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Investment Framework

Investor development work

HGB

Introduction

Three main objectives:

Share learning, best practice, understanding of the art of the possible

Shape an investment strategy tailored to Hertfordshire

Identify and agree the practical features and implementation

Approach:

Recap from Workshop 1

Our ambition:

Secure public and private investment into Herts to support jobs and communities

Situation analysis:

Agenda Pack Page 96

Where are we?	Where do we want to be?	How do we get there?	What could stop us?
▪ Tactical decision making	▪ Agreed investment priorities	▪ Defined Investment Framework	▪ Partners objectives not aligned
▪ Limited recycling of investment	▪ Clear investment framework	▪ Agreed objectives	▪ Inconsistent market message
▪ No clear market messaging	▪ Sharing of risk and reward	▪ Rigorous governance processes	▪ Clarity of fund objectives
▪ Scope for greater efficiency	▪ Clearly defined (sub) funds	▪ The right advice	▪ Risk not being understood
▪ Recent Government investment	▪ Robust governance	▪ Consistent investor messaging	▪ Lack of Government support
▪ Large scale commercial investors in Herts	▪ Strategic partnerships	▪ Defined investment funds	▪ Lack of quality deal flow
▪ Difficult to measure impact	▪ Innovative delivery structures	▪ Clear project selection criteria	▪ Competing regions

Recap from workshop 1: Agreed next steps for development…

- Investor development work
  - get better as a place at helping businesses, and Government, think about investing in Hertfordshire
- Further appraisal of the investment pipeline
  - schemes, pump prime funding, decisions sought
- Develop a strategy for investment into major, long term, infrastructure e.g. MRT
- Explore potential for maximising existing funds
  - e.g. top slice apprenticeship levy; allocation of existing funds; others
- Regional Investment Funds – an opportunity for Hertfordshire?
- Design of the investment system
  - Governance (including an investment advisory panel); Appraisal; Fund Management

Investing in Hertfordshire

Workshop 2 Friday 30th April 2021

Welcome from Cllr David Williams

Recap from Workshop 1

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment.

The pipeline of investable projects

Maximising existing funds

A Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Investment Framework

Investor development work

HGB

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment

The core features of the strategy will be to:

- Leverage real sector strengths:
    - Cell and Gene
    - Life Sciences
    - Film & Media
    - MMC
- Focus on regeneration; large settlements and major infrastructure opportunities
- Demonstrate strong, visible, consistent and pro-active political leadership
- Provide investors with a clear vision, strategy, planning landscape, and decision making processes
- Invite access to Officers – Chief Executive, Head of Planning and knowledgeable core team
- Offer flexibility and creativity, transition from strategy to implementation, and stickability

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment

An Investment Strategy will provide a basis to assess projects for potential investment and when making recommendations for investments.

The underlying principles of the proposed Investment Strategy will include:

- All investments must be made against agreed investment criteria; align with relevant Local Plans; and reflect Hertfordshire's economic priorities.
- Investments will be selected on the basis that the project is viable; carries appropriate risk and the terms are equal to or above the Hertfordshire minimum level of return.
- All investments will be subject to appropriate risk, business case assessments and due diligence by an appointed Fund Advisor and must fulfil the requirements of the Investment Strategy.
- The Fund will not provide grants.
- The investment criteria are reviewed annually.

The Investment Strategy will evolve throughout the life of any Fund, as a better understanding of the type of projects in the area is garnered, the local priorities vary and as the public and private sector funding landscape changes overtime.

Investing in Hertfordshire

Workshop 2 Friday 30th April 2021

Welcome from Cllr David Williams

Recap from Workshop 1

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment

The pipeline of investable projects

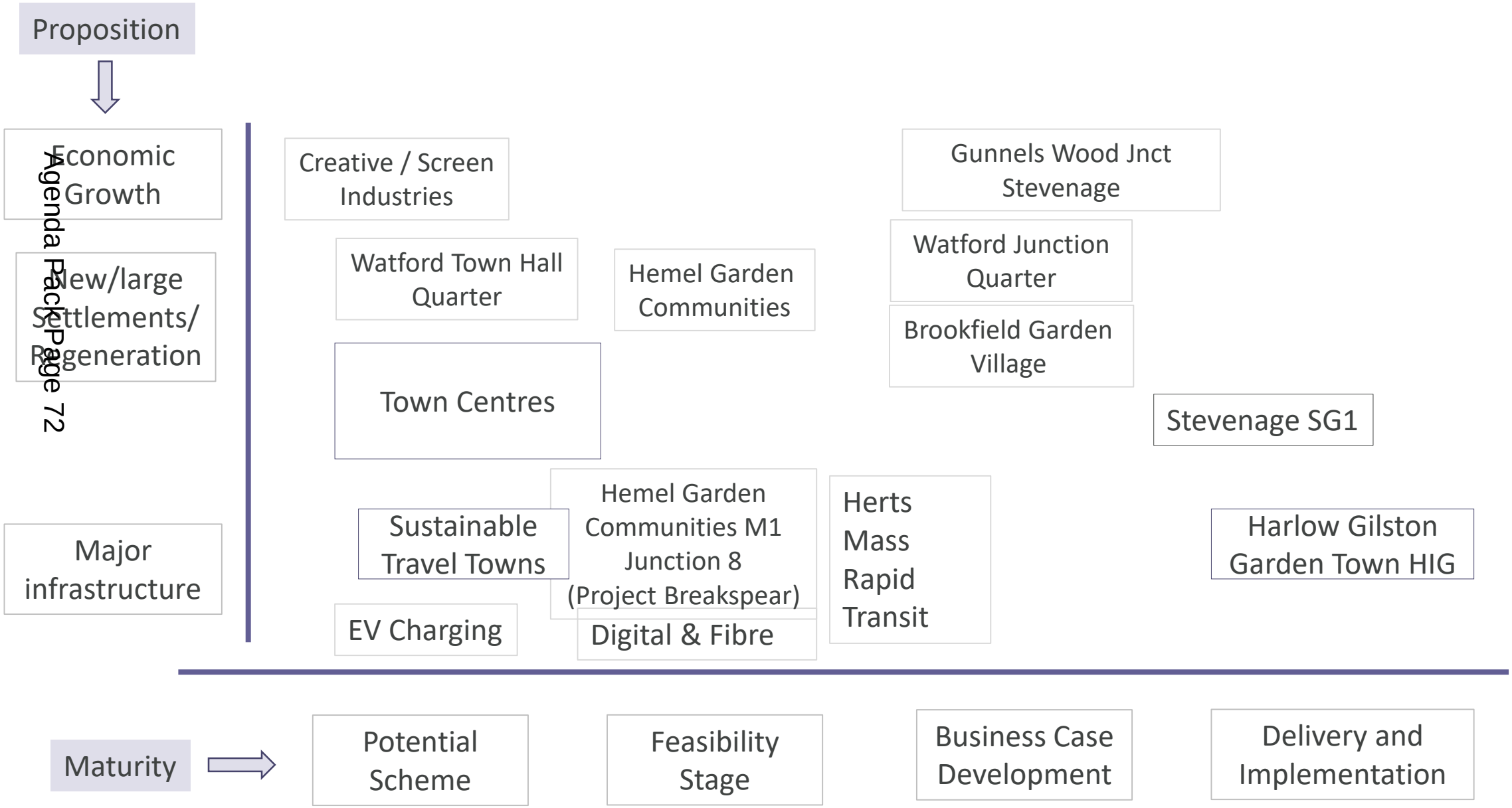
Maximising existing funds

A Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Investment Framework

Investor development work

The pipeline of investable projects (current)



Hertfordshire Investment Pipeline

- Our key projects need uptodate Strategic Business cases
- We need the skills and capacity in Hertfordshire to prepare and evaluate our project propositions collectively
- Projects need a compelling narrative and context
- Our Growth Board work needs to evolve a collective system and process for this area of work

Homes & Communities

Infrastructure

Environment

Economy & Jobs

Investment

Positioning with Government

Investing in Hertfordshire

Workshop 2 Friday 30th April 2021

Welcome from Cllr David Williams

Recap from Workshop 1

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment

The pipeline of investable projects

Maximising existing funds

A Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Investment Framework

Investor development work

HGB

Potential fund sources

- S106, CIL
- NHB
- Borrowing under prudential code
- Capital receipts from sale of assets
- Land identified for investment
- LEP Legacy Funding
- Apprenticeship Levy
- UK Infrastructure bank (when available)

Principles to discuss…

- Councils keeping their own investments in Hertfordshire
- Pooling / top slicing interest/appetite
- Red lines to consider

We won't attract private sector funding if they don't think we are serious about investing in Herts

No easy decisions or low hanging fruit

Are there any areas you would like to investigate further?

Investing in Hertfordshire

Workshop 2 Friday 30th April 2021

Welcome from Cllr David Williams

Recap from Workshop 1

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment

The pipeline of investable projects

Maximise existing funds

A Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire Investment Framework

Investor development work

Regional Investment Funds

GRANT FUNDING

- High risk
- Limited or no return
- Lack of alternative funders
- Output driven

REGIONAL INVESTMENT FUNDS

- Managed risk and return
- FOCUS ON STALLED SCHEMES
- Where public sector intervention is required to unlock
- Output driven

COMMERCIAL FINANCE

- Clear and understandable risk profile
- Strong rationale and case for commercial finance
- Commercial return

Hertfordshire Regional Investment Fund

What is it…

The concept of the Fund would be to provide a framework and mechanism for making multiple investments into real estate and infrastructure on a co-ordinated, transparent and commercial basis.

The primary objective of the Fund would be to support regeneration and economic growth across the Hertfordshire region. All investments and returns will be fully repayable and re-invested in further projects in accordance with an approved Investment Strategy.

The Fund would enable local development schemes to be unlocked or accelerated, delivering immediate economic outputs,

Hertfordshire Regional Investment Fund

What could be the anticipated fund size and from where would funds be sourced?

Experience elsewhere suggests that they require an upfront commitment of £30 - £50m.

This would be provided through contributions from across Hertfordshire partners.

This initial commitment would provide access to a breadth of investment opportunities and demonstrate a firm commitment to the wider market with a view to leveraging further inward investment.

The Fund would be capitalised based on contributions from each Hertfordshire local authority partner.

The proposed approach presents a strong message to the wider market and central government that there is a clear alignment between partners and a joint commitment towards growing the sub-regional economy.

Once initial investments have been made, Hertfordshire may seek to attract additional public sector investment e.g. local pension funds, to support the growth of the Fund.

Investing in Hertfordshire

Workshop 2 Friday 30th April 2021

Welcome from Cllr David Williams

Recap from Workshop 1

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment

The pipeline of investable projects

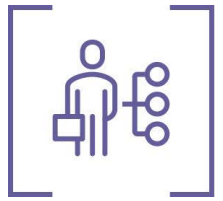
Maximising existing funds

A Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Investment Framework

Investor development work

Hertfordshire Investment Framework – Principles and Components



Governance of any Hertfordshire Investment Fund via HGB voting partners

Hertfordshire Investment Advisory Panel

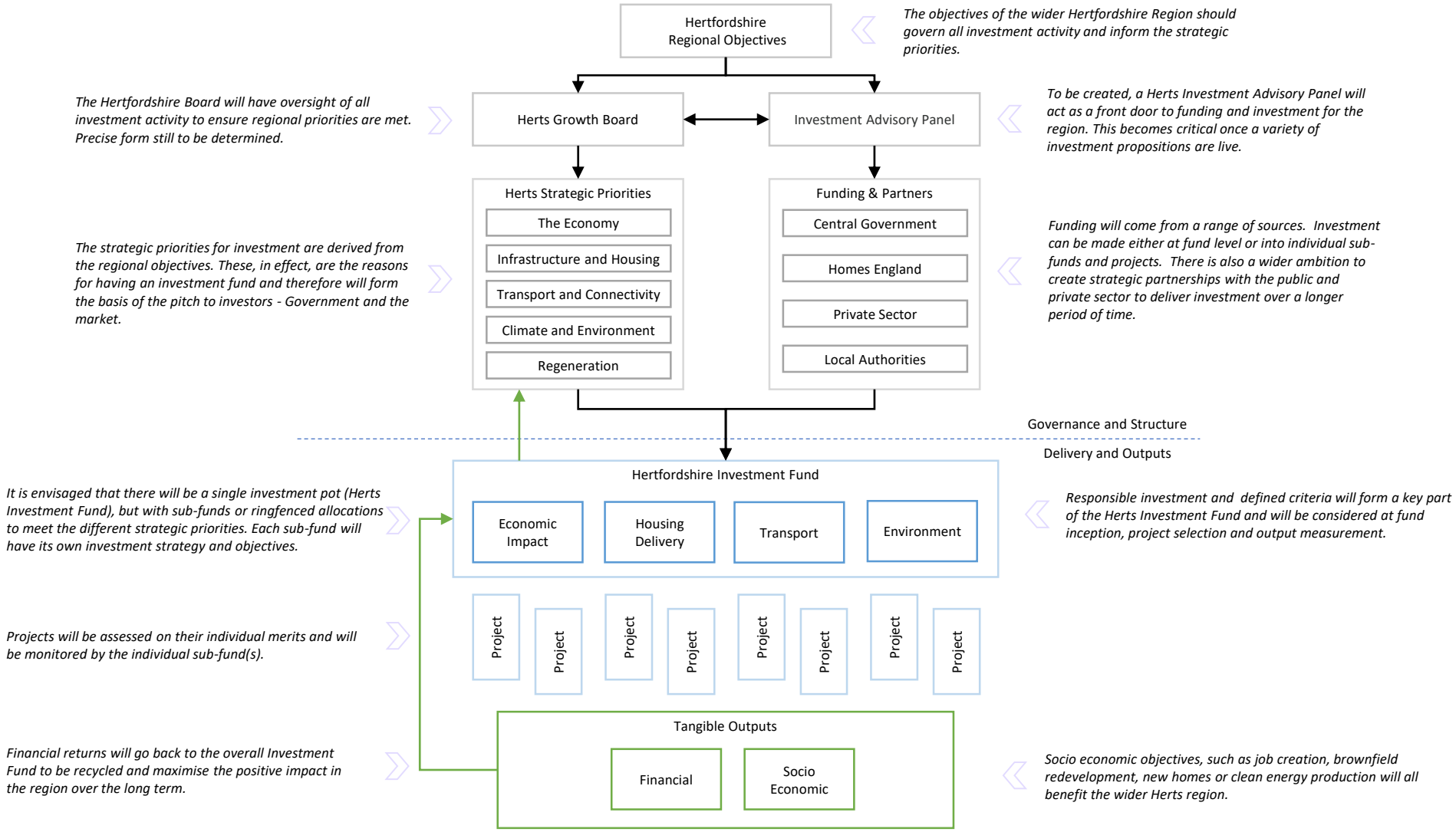
Objective oversight of investment priorities that makes recommendations to the HGB

Fund Management and Assurance – Manage the fund for the Councils

Rolling Investments so the fund is used again and again and again

HGB

Hertfordshire Investment Framework…



Investing in Hertfordshire

Workshop 2 Friday 30th April 2021

Welcome from Cllr David Williams

Recap from Workshop 1

Hertfordshire's strategy for securing investment

The pipeline of investable projects

The potential to maximise existing funds

A Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Investment Framework

Investor development work

Developing an Investment Development programe

The loss of commercial floorspace is inhibiting the growth potential of existing businesses and SMEs and may be contributing to inward investors looking further afield to deliver their expansion plans.

E.g. Carl Zeiss (Welwyn Garden City to Cambridge); Heptares Therapeutics (WGC to Essex); Merck Sharpe and Dohme (Hoddesdon to Kings Cross); Dixons/Carphone Warehouse (Hemel to London)

The deteriorating image of ageing stock and the lack of grade A space may be creating a perception that Hertfordshire is “closed for business”

The reduction in the amount of floor-space may be creating operational difficulties for businesses and may limit their potential to achieve productivity improvements

Inability to service major investment enquiries originating via Department for International Trade (e.g Airbus; US Pharma company; Netflix)

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Foreign Direct Investment "wins"	12	21	27	19	15	14
Total enterprises	55,490	58,305	63,685	61,765	65,640	63,930

Hertfordshire Investor development…

Core Development Activities

Key components:

- Lead investment generation e.g. the identification and targeting potential investors
- Investor servicing/facilitation to help potential investors source business opportunities
- Targeted promotion, advertising and public relations including marketing materials and collateral
- Knowledge management, data aggregation and analysis
- Policy, advocacy and influence to ensure a positive outcome for Hertfordshire

Service Offer

- Investment and Investor development programmes to help developers and overseas businesses (and also indigenous businesses) hear about local opportunities
- Centralised (single point of contact) for developers and businesses, offering access to key influencers and stakeholders to further the developer's and investor's objectives within the county
- Provide business friendly assistance and support including local intelligence and information services to help secure investment and attract internationally mobile investment funds
- Proactive local relationship management services for existing investors
- Connectivity to local networks, industry groups, and relevant membership bodies

Hertfordshire Investor development – key deliverables

A ‘soft landing’ programme – develop a functioning welcome package of support for new investors

Investor Development programme (i.e. aftercare) which will support the retention and growth of investors already in the County

Coordinate the capacities and capabilities of the eleven Local Authorities in Hertfordshire to support the inward investment activity and incoming investors through the ‘Soft Landing’ programme

Establish a small central team to deliver the inward investment agenda, build the County’s relationships with key sources of enquiries and coordinate activity with local authorities and partners

Strengthen **Accountability, governance and scrutiny structures** to maintain focus on investment

Next Steps

A paper to the Hertfordshire Growth Board capturing the main features identified through the two workshops, seeking approval to develop and implement.

Hertfordshire Growth Board

www.HertfordshireGrowthBoard.com
@hertsgoodgrowth
Room 204, Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8DE

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda item 9

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Establishing a Hertfordshire Development Forum

Report Author: Patsy Dell, Hertfordshire Growth Board (Tel: 07949 887794)

1 Purpose of report

1.1 The work programme for 2021 identified the desire to explore the options and potential benefits from establishing a joint Development Forum for Hertfordshire.

1.2 At the present time, the Growth Board does not have a process of engagement with the development sector that is active in Hertfordshire. Previous arrangements operated by a number of our District and Borough Councils have reduced over time and are now more limited to ad hoc and periodic events in the main. The LEP has sector discussions through its Strategic Infrastructure Board (SIB) but also recognises that a combined approach with the Growth Board might be beneficial in future.

1.3 Achievement of the Board's work programme priorities and support for development and construction sector activities, including the delivery of the homes that Hertfordshire needs, and the type of sustainable growth wanted, will be assisted by introducing more regular and focussed engagement with key stakeholders and operators. It is also a recognised best practice approach to have on-going engagement with the sector in terms of any place-based intervention and funding support arrangements secured with HM Government.

1.4 The last Growth Board agreed that scoping and exploration of options for the engagement should continue, with clear feedback preference for a co-designed partnership model but where the sector leads the on-going delivery. Officers are currently engaging with four potential partners who bring experience in delivering similar arrangements elsewhere. An oral update will be given on progress at the board meeting.

2 Shaping a Development Forum for Hertfordshire

2.1 The Growth Board agreed that it wants a reference group which will provide a forum for more focussed engagement between the Growth Board partners with house builders (both private and RSL), Infrastructure providers, developers, investors and their consultants.

2.2 There are a number of different models across the UK. The links below provide details of a range of examples from the more standard planning agents type forum (from Hove BC, Cambridge City and Cornwall Councils) to the more industry focussed Essex and Kent Developers Groups.
https://www.housingessex.org/essex-developers-group/
https://www.locateinkent.com/khdg
https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-agents-area/planning-agents-forums/
https://planningagentsforum.co.uk/
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/planning-agents-forum

2.3 At the meeting in March 2021, the Board clarified a number of the principles that it is looking for from the arrangement:

- The Growth Board is looking for relevant, regular market intelligence, feedback and sector advice,
- the ability to take soundings on growth board and partners work e.g. joint and local plans,
- positive engagement and influence with the sector in the delivery of sustainable, good growth and placemaking (and growth board programmes),
- feedback from the sector on barriers to delivery and closer working with the sector on joint advocacy with/to HM Government,
- opportunity to co-design the arrangement for Hertfordshire, agree any relevant communications, terms of reference, meeting agendas and content, forward programmes, scope of participants and representative groups involved,
- Frequency of meetings – depending upon the form that is chosen for Hertfordshire, meetings could start on a six-monthly basis and move to quarterly or a different frequency over time and if that was considered desirable,
- attendance – board members and appropriate officers from across Hertfordshire depending upon the agenda, there is also an opportunity for the members of Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership to play an appropriate leading role in this engagement as the representative planning leads from across the councils,
- a partnering approach that provides a fully funded secretariat and support/administrative functions (potentially through a membership approach managed and administered by the providing partner).

2.4 In turn, but still to be clarified, the sector is likely to also want information about the work of the board and also better on-going access to senior officers and members of the board.

2.5 There has been sector feedback that this initiative would be welcomed and offers of support to help in getting it established have also been made. Meetings with potential delivery partners are taking place on 16 June 2021,

and further discussion are being held with the LEP to explore the benefits of merging SIB into the new arrangement.

3 Conclusion and next steps

3.1 Officers expect to conclude the discussions with potential partner organisations over coming weeks. With the Board's delegated approval, it is suggested that a simple memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Growth Board and the preferred organisation is drawn up to clarify expectations and commitments in the creation of a Hertfordshire Development Forum (or resulting name). The MOU could form the basis of the informal partnership arrangement. The first forum could then be planned take place in September 2021.

4 Implications

4.1 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.

5 Recommendations

5.1 That the Board agrees:

- to the implementation of a Hertfordshire Development Forum (or alternative name if required) in accordance with the principles set out in this paper;
- delegates to officers the selection of the preferred partner organisation and the completion of the partnership memorandum of understanding and any associated arrangements necessary to bring the Forum into being (in accordance with the principles set out in this report), and
- That the first Forum meeting should be planned for September 2021.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda item 10

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Evolving the Growth Board Governance

Report Author: Patsy Dell Hertfordshire Growth Board (Tel: 07949 887794)

1 Purpose of report

1.1 Following the work undertaken in 2020, the Growth Board is now established and successfully operating as a statutory joint committee. The ambition for the Growth Board has always been to ultimately extend the membership of the board to include additional co-opted members. This was envisaged from the outset in 2018 and reflects the arrangement seen elsewhere e.g. with the Oxfordshire Growth Board – extract below.

About the Oxfordshire Growth Board

The Growth Board is a joint committee of the six councils of Oxfordshire together with key strategic partners. Following an extensive public review in 2020, the Board has adopted a new purpose which is to:

- Coordinate local efforts to manage economic, housing and infrastructure development in a way that is inclusive and maximises local social and environmental benefits;
- Support the development of local planning policy that meets the UK Government's stated aim of net zero carbon by 2050, and contributes towards biodiversity gain whilst embracing the changes needed for a low carbon world; and,
- Seek to secure funding in the pursuit of these aims and oversee the delivery of related work programmes delegated to it by the Joint Committee's constituent local authority members.

1.2 This is the link to the Oxfordshire Growth Board Terms of Reference, these were reviewed in 2020 and covers co-opted members at paragraph 2.2 – extract below
https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Terms-of-Reference-August-2020.pdf

2.2 It also includes co-opted associate members from those organisations listed below:

- Chair of OxLEP
- Chair of the Oxfordshire Skills Board
- Universities Representative
- OXLEP Business Representative-Bicester
- OXLEP Business Representative-Oxford City
- OXLEP Business Representative-Science Vale
- Homes England Representative
- DEFRA Agencies Representative
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group Representative

2.3 When considering transport infrastructure matters, Network Rail and Highways England will have the right to attend as associate members.

1.3 Broadening the membership of the Growth Board to include partners such as NHS/Health, Higher and Further Education, Government Agencies and Homes England would be advantageous in extending the reach and influence of the Board. Working closer with these partners (and any others that Leaders consider should be approached) could also support implementation of our work programme and improve joint working.

1.4 At the last meeting, the principle of extending the co-opted membership was agreed but the Board wanted to consider a range of options first

2 Evolving the Growth Board membership

2.1 The adopted integrated governance framework allows for additional co-opted members to be invited to join the Board, as and when the HGB chooses to.

HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD STANDING ORDERS

1. Membership

1.1 The HGB will have a voting membership of eleven, each Council being entitled to appoint one voting member.

1.2 The HGB may agree to co–opt other non-voting members to its membership where it is considered conducive to the effective consideration of any matter.

2.2 At the meeting in March 2021, the discussion identified three key considerations bearing on extending the co-opted membership:

- There were different ways that there could be meaningful engagement than inviting wider stakeholders/partners permanently onto the Growth Board – e.g. through occasional task and finish types groups, committees of investigation, broader contact groups

within the orbit of the Board. This could include bodies such as the Police (Blue light services), Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer networks, Housing Associations etc

- There was a need to avoid duplication with the work of the LEP. The LEP focus on skills and business support (including what may emerge from the current LEP review) means that involvement of Higher and Further education on the Growth Board could be duplicating existing activity and distracting capacity away from those areas
- The Growth Board's Place-based focus (paired with the LEP's lead on skills and business support) could mean that involvement of such bodies as Health/Wellbeing, Homes England, Department for Transport, Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) , the Environment Agency and specific utilities representatives might be more appropriate.

3 Next steps

3.1 Officers were asked for a further paper on this matter and it was agreed that any new co-opted members would be asked to join from September 2021.

3.2 The three key points identified in the March 2021 discussion are helpful and some of which can be picked up in on-going communications and engagement planning. Avoiding duplication with the LEP focus on skills and business support also makes sense other than where this is a specific Growth Board work area.

3.3 The Board are asked for a steer on their preference for extending the co-opted membership at this time. Using the Growth Board forward work programme as a guide, the areas where an extended Growth Board governance approach would appear to be of immediate benefit would be in our engagement with HM Government and its agencies. In that respect extending an invitation to Homes England, Department of Transport and MHCLG could help strengthen the current relationships and visibility of the Boards work on housing and infrastructure delivery, economic recovery and the strength of our collaborative working as a place.

3.4 Leaders had also previously identified the need for close working with the health sector with the delivery of the Hertfordshire Integrated Care System (ICS), and to ensure appropriate health and wellbeing related infrastructure is secured to support growing communities. Clearly through the pandemic response there has been significant collaborative working across the sectors and there is now a joint officer workstream ensuring alignment on planning, developer contributions and strategic development activities. Building on this by putting in place a strategic alignment between the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Growth Board may be advantageous.

3.5 Finally, there is always the option to keep the governance under review and revisit any proposed change later this or next year should the Board prefer that.

4 Recommendations

4.1 The Board are asked to indicate their preferences.

Agenda item 11

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Growth Corridor Programme Boards Work Programme Updates

Report Author: Patsy Dell Hertfordshire Growth Board (Tel: 07949 887794)

1. Purpose of report

1.1. This report provides a short update on the overall progress of the Growth Board work programmes and projects since March 2021.

1.2. Attached at Appendix 1 are the updates from the latest Growth Corridor Programme Board meetings. The Growth Corridor Programme Board Political leads will provide highlights from each board at the meeting.

2. Updates on Corridor Growth Delivery Programmes and workstreams – March to June 2021

2.1 Both Growth Corridors have established programme board governance arrangements and are overseeing the development and implementation of the 2020 and 2021 work programmes, working to a set of agreed key deliverables and milestones. All projects have political and CEx/Senior Officer leads.

2.2 Appendix 1 has an update from each of the corridor projects showing the most recent milestones and current project status. The majority of projects are making good progress (green rated), the small number of amber or red rated projects (or sub-components of projects) are generally rated so because of matters outside the projects control. Oversight of the projects allows the programme boards to review any actions at a Growth Board level where these would assist the project to move forward.

2.3 New workstreams from the 2021 work programme (e.g. Investment into Hertfordshire) are being incorporated into the existing HGB programme management architecture as they develop and are agreed by the Board. The overall Growth Board Programme Architecture Map have been included as an appendix to item 7.

2.4 Of note over the last period was progress on a number of workstreams, highlights include:

- The Creative and Screen Industries group is commissioning research, to enable better understanding of the extent of new screen floorspace that is needed in Hertfordshire and to support the growth of the cluster,

- The Science and Technology (Cell and Gene focus) has agreed to start work on the development of a Framework/masterplan for the Gunnels Wood Road area in Stevenage, to support the Cell and gene cluster work
- The Town centres group has been working with the Institute for Place Management and local stakeholders and has developed and published a 10-point checklist for the opening up of Town Centres and High Streets was (this is attached as appendix 2).

3. Next Steps

3.1 Priorities for the coming months are to continue to move forward with the work programme, provide support for submission of funding bids where feasible (Levelling Up Fund, Community Renewal Fund and Growth Deal) along with the roll forward of the ongoing corridor programmes and project work.

4. Implications

4.1 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.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That Leaders note the project updates in Appendix 1 and 2 and overall progress across the Growth Board programme and individual workstreams since the last meeting.

Project	Project Lead/s	Red / Amber / Green Status	Description
Southern Growth Corridor Programme Board Update			
Accelerated Housing	**Lead Leader:** Andrew Williams **Chief Executive:** Claire Hamilton **Programme Lead:** Simone Chinman Russell	Green	**Accelerated Housing Delivery** The work on the Hertfordshire housing pipeline has continued and initially identified 30 potential sites for short term delivery of general needs housing. These sites all need deeper investigation to ensure that they can be confidently put forward to MHCLG and Homes England (HE) as part of any housing submission and request for HM Government Funding support. The Local Authority Strategic Partnership Expression of Interest with HE was investigated using external consultants but was ultimately considered to be too risky for the partnership at this stage and Leaders were recommended not to proceed with an expression of interest at this time. **Off-site manufacturing** A number of sites are progressing, with Dacorum, St Albans, Watford Community Housing and Herts Living being most advanced. An OSM guidance manual and pattern book are in production, both being developed with key stakeholders. The documents will set out operating principles and design, to help facilitate delivery of OSM in the county and provide an agreed range of standard specifications. **Temporary Accommodation Collaboration - County wide review** The strategic outline business case is under development, with the support of Campbell Tickell, who have recently been appointed, utilising the LGA Housing Adviser Programme funding recently awarded. The outline business case will consider the financial, technical and legal implications of a collaborative county-wide approach to providing temporary accommodation.
Creative & Screen Industries	**Lead Leader:** Morris Bright **Chief Executive:** Neil Hayes (LEP) **Programme Leads (current):** Jane Briginshaw, Adam Wood (LEP)	Amber	Property audit: Markides Associates have been jointly commissioned and funded by HGB and the LEP to carry out research into: Towards a Pipeline of TV and Film Studio Sites for Hertfordshire. Study due for completion **end June**. Industry engagement exercise underway which will feed in to the LEP's emerging sector action plan **(due end June/July)** - highlights will be presented to HGB on 22/6. LEP sector action plan will include commentary on **creative and screen industry skills** needs, from special effects training to carpentry, and the Markides study will inform and be informed by it.

Harlow & Gilston Garden Town	**Lead Leader:** Linda Haysey **Chief Executive:** Richard Cassidy **Programme Lead:** Tom Dewey	Green	Planning application proposals for the 10,000 new home development at Gilston (as part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town) remain under consideration by Harlow and East Herts Councils. Committee meetings to consider the proposals are scheduled to take place in June/July this year. The Councils and applicants continue to work together to secure a development related funding package (through s106 Agreement) that will deliver a full range of supporting infrastructure and other service provision – transport enhancements, education provision and significant affordable housing delivery chief amongst them. In parallel, the £171m Garden Town partners HIG contract with MHCLG is now in place. This will allow the delivery programme for the funded infrastructure (enhanced A414 river Stort crossing, additional river Stort crossing and a Sustainable Transport Corridor between the Gilston area and Harlow) to move to the next stage of surveying and detailed design and contractual delivery work.
Hemel Garden Communities	**Lead Leader:** Andrew Williams **Chief Executive:** Claire Hamilton **Programme Lead:** Tom Dewey	Green	• Tom Dewey, the Interim Programme Director is now in place. The team has recruited a Senior Programme Delivery Officer starting end of June and has a Communications and Engagement Officer in place. • The Communications and Engagement Officer is leading on developing the launch of the Spatial Vision. • Transport Plan commenced in November 2020, expected to be finalised by the end of the summer 2021.Work commenced in March on the HGC Framework Plan SPD, where The Crown Estate, Bloor Kitewood and Pigeon are the strategic landowners commissioning the work - draft outputs are expected in October 2021. • The team continues to align its programme plan with the DBC draft Local Plan, SADC's Local Plan schedule and The Crown Estate's (TCE) schedule for delivery. Partners are also working with TCE to develop a Memorandum of Understanding.
Mass Rapid Transit	**Lead Leader:** Richard Roberts/Phil Bibby **Chief Executive:** Mark Kemp **Programme Lead:** Darren Granger	Green	• Engagement activity is planned for Summer 2021 to showcase the MRT project including a soft launch of the name/branding and website, and to promote consultation later in the year. The HGB on 22/6 will receive an early viewing of material. • Formal consultation on Strategic Outline Business Case planned for Autumn 2021. This will be a chance to get views on a short list of MRT route corridor options, the type of MRT system and how it could operate. • Completion of Strategic Outline Business Case by Mar 2022.
Resetting the SE Herts economy in response to	**Lead Leader:** Lewis Cocking **Chief Executive:** Jeff Stack	Red	**Project 1 Park Plaza West** • The prospective developer has now appointed a development team which is working on a revised master plan and delivery plan for the development of the proposed business park. Initial discussions have taken place with the Council.

COVID-19 and climate change	**Programme Lead:** Kevin Clark	Amber	**Project 2 New Park Lane Railway Station, Waltham Cross** • The initial Strategic Outline Business Case for a new station, which focused on the strategic and economic case for the scheme, is now complete. The station provides a BCR of 1.7 based on the assumptions and calculations made, which is considered 'Medium' Value for Money by DfT. Key stakeholder views will be sought Spring 2021 to help scope and take forward the scheme. The footbridge design will be refreshed as part of the rail halt development scheme given their impact on each other.
		Green	**Project 3 Development of a new Business Park and hi-tech starter Centre – Maxwells West** • The Council has submitted the planning application for its Business and Innovation Centre to provide 34,000 sq ft of B1 and B2 space to encourage start-ups and small businesses in the area. The procurement for the construction has commenced and construction will start on-site early September, with completion in the first quarter of 2023. The access road construction is underway and should be completed in the early part of 2022.
		Green	**Project 4 Brookfield & surrounding infrastructure** • The highways modelling is complete and will shortly be shared with the LPA and the Highways authority. Planning applications are in the process of being prepared for all elements of the development, to be submitted jointly in December 2021. A public exhibition is programmed for September/October 2021. Joint Member Boards are still at present occurring monthly but intended to be rescheduled to bi-monthly shortly. The Garden Village strategy has been narrowed to three options and is dependent on the applications for funding of the infrastructure. There is no impediment to the progress of the planning application.
		Green	**Project 5 Waltham Cross Town Centre Regeneration** • Presentations have been made to the Councils Cabinet and also the Cheshunt and Waltham Cross Development Group with favourable outcomes. A full public consultation is programmed for June and July of this year. In the meantime, the Council is promoting an application to the Levelling Up Fund to finance the Public Realm and other projects across the town centre.
Watford Junction Quarter	**Lead Leader:** Peter Taylor **Chief Executive:** Donna Nolan **Programme Lead:** Julian Hart	Amber	**Station** • Network Rail and Kingshott are close to agreeing the business case for station concourse improvements; • Detailed design work to start imminently with 6-month programme; • Start on site in 2022; • Network Rail appears to be reviewing the business case for the pedestrian link, in light of revised passenger predictions in post-Covid world.

		Green	**Systra work on transport interventions** • Technical and pre-strategic outline business case - now completed; • Stage 2 work to look at more detailed design feasibility of key interventions are almost complete.
		Green	**Planning Policy** • Watford draft Local Plan – Council reviewing consultation responses in preparation for reporting to inspectorate.
		Green	**Funding** • Funding request will be submitted with Herts Growth Board proposition - for £131m; • Stakeholder engagement with key landowners on-going; • Conversations on-going with Homes England to provide some revenue funding to pay for funding and development strategy work.
		Green	**Funding and Development Strategy** • Deloitte has been appointed to progress strategy work; • First stage of work has been commissioned and commenced – this involves making contact with all landowners and carrying out baseline analysis in order to review overall work programme and deliverables.
Northern Growth Corridor Programme Board Update			
North, East and central Herts Joint Planning collaboration	**Lead Leader:** Linda Haysey **Chief Executive:** Richard Cassidy **Programme Lead:** Sara Saunders	Green	Recruitment has been successful for an officer to support the strategic planning work. This will commence with preparation of the contract brief and joint tendering of the growth study work, anticipated to be late summer.
Community Wealth Building	**Lead Leader:** Sharon Taylor **Chief Executive:** Matt Partridge **Programme Lead:** Rob Gregory	Green	**Community Wealth Building** • Pilot activities continue to be identified and these will be included in a Community Wealth Building plan. • Joint work with the University of Hertfordshire continues, focused on procurement. • A pan-Herts CWB officer working group has been established and will review experience from the pilot in Stevenage and elsewhere **UK Community Renewal Fund** • An expression of interest has been submitted on behalf of all Hertfordshire Districts for funding to support a Community Wealth Building proposal. This was an agreed action as a result of the CWB Pilot meeting of interested Hertfordshire districts/boroughs on 29th April.

Delivery Models for New Settlements	**Lead Leaders:** Linda Haysey **Managing Director:** Anthony Roche **Programme Lead:** Ian Fullstone	Amber	A new scoping session for the Delivery Models for New Settlements workstream has been arranged for late June to agree a work programme going forward. This date will also allow the officer secondment to be agreed for the JSP workstream, to ensure dovetailing between the two work areas.
Reinvigorating Town Centres	**Lead Leaders:** Tony Kingsbury, Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg **Chief Executive:** Ka Ng **Programme Lead:** Jane Briginshaw	Green	Reopening High Streets Safely, 10-point recovery checklist was launched on HGB website **27/04/21** (funded by HGB) and sent to all Herts Councils, the County Council and to March 17th workshop participants. Districts were invited to respond in early June with the following information: • Top 10 priorities for 'vitality and viability'- the evidence gathering exercise contained in the checklist • Information on Welcome Back Fund spending priorities and projects or ideas that could be helped by working collaboratively county-wide • Contacts to help build the Reinvigorating Town Centres network • Case studies
Growing Science and Technology (Cell and Gene Focus)	**Lead Leader:** Sharon Taylor **Chief Executives:** Jeff Stack, Neil Hayes **Programme Lead:** Jane Briginshaw	Amber	There has been good progress on **Gunnells Wood Road future place framework** Representatives from HCC, HGB, Stevenage BC and the LEP met to progress the commissioning of a new framework that will set the context for the future of the GWR area. the meeting on 19 May set out briefing principles and partnership approach to resourcing and to confirm timelines and deliverables. At this meeting it was agreed to ask consultants with local knowledge to draw up the brief. Instruction meeting was held 20/05/21 and Markides Associates will complete a draft brief within four weeks (w/c 14/06/21). **The LEP's Sector action plan** is completed in draft but has some redacted elements and still needs sign off from companies that are the subject of some of the case studies. Highlights from that work will be presented to Leaders at the Growth Board on 22/6.
Climate Change & Sustainability	**Lead Leader:** Linda Haysey **Chief Executive:** Matt Partridge **Programme Lead:** Julie Greaves	Amber	The feedback and recommendations arising from the meetings held with all Portfolio Holders and lead officers were presented to the HCCSP meeting in April. The Partnership agreed that additional resources were needed and that officers would prepare a scope for a Project Manager role to ensure the implementation of the actions within the plans, once approved, prepare bids for grants and funding opportunities and undertake any research needed to prepare evidence documents, future action plans, reports and presentations. The HCCSP website is now up and running and can be viewed here: www.hccsp.org.uk At present the webpages are hosted by East Herts DC, it is hoped that in the near future the pages will be 'standalone' HCCSP. The

			website will be used to promote the work of the Partnership, implement the actions and support/promote shared campaigns. A summary update concerning the themed action plans is below. • The approved **Water** Sustainability Action Plan was presented to the Hertfordshire Planners (Development Plans) Group – the action plan was well received, and officers were given until the end of May to provide comments on implementation. • **Biodiversity** Baseline procurement process was approved, and the associated work will commence in the new financial year. The approved Biodiversity Action Plan was presented to the Hertfordshire Planners (Development Plans) Group – the action plan was well received, and officers were given until the end of May to provide comments on implementation. Planners have expressed a wish for support with planning policy wording and the sharing of any supplementary planning documents/guidance. HSOG, in consultation with HPG, are now looking into developing training for planners on climate change and sustainability. • **Carbon** Emissions and Reduction draft action plan was presented to HCCSP in April. The document was well received and is now being shared with independent organisations for a critical friend review. • **Transport** Action Plan, draft to be presented to HCCSP in June. • **Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy** – Inception meeting held on the 15th April with consultants LUC (Land Use Consultants Ltd) to discuss the project plan and next steps. Consultations will be conducted in late May/early June 2021 with various stakeholders.

Hertfordshire Growth Board

Institute of Place Management

Manchester Metropolitan University

Re-opening High Streets Safely

Ten Point checklist for Hertfordshire Stakeholders

April 2021

Placemanagement.org

Introduction

The volume of news about the decline or even death of the high street has grown exponentially in recent months as a result of the pandemic. The media is full of stories about major retailers closing, towns being left behind, growing levels of retail vacancy, and the rapid growth of online retailing. Although this decline is part of a long-term trend on the high street, changes in consumer behaviour have been accelerated by the pandemic and are profoundly impacting our centres. As we look to the future, we have to consider additional economic and environmental impacts from the climate emergency as well as further technological developments. In this current climate, local place management and leadership are more important than ever before. In addition to combatting the pandemic's short-term impact, all stakeholders need to proactively consider the longer-term future of their locality, identifying ways to adapt and change as the 'new normal' begins to take shape.

On 17th March 2021, Herefordshire Growth Board (See appendix 1) invited a team from the Institute for Place Management (IPM) (See appendix 2) to lead a workshop supporting 35 Hertfordshire stakeholders. This brought colleagues together to develop local knowledge about placemaking and place management and highlight different actions stakeholders can take at the local level in a post-covid era.

Following the workshop, IPM produced some additional guidance to help colleagues develop a strategy for reopening the county's town centres in a consistent, evidence-based way. This ten-point checklist will guide stakeholders that have a role to play in delivering town centre measures, on safely reintroducing footfall. The checklist identifies small interventions that can be made at a local level, enabling and empowering stakeholder to improve their own places.

Every place has different resources, political landscapes, economies and people: what works for one high street may not work for another. One of the focal points for the discussion was the Institute for Place Management's 25 priorities for town centre vitality and viability[1], a framework which stakeholders can use to improve town centre performance over the long-term.

[1] https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/frameworks/25-vital-and-viable-priorities/

Welcome back fund

Although other funds may be allocated, one of the principle sources of funding to deliver measures to encourage town centre footfall across the summer of 2021 is the Government's £56m Welcome Back Fund. Allocations for the boroughs of Herts are shown below:

Welcome Back Fund Allocations: Hertfordshire

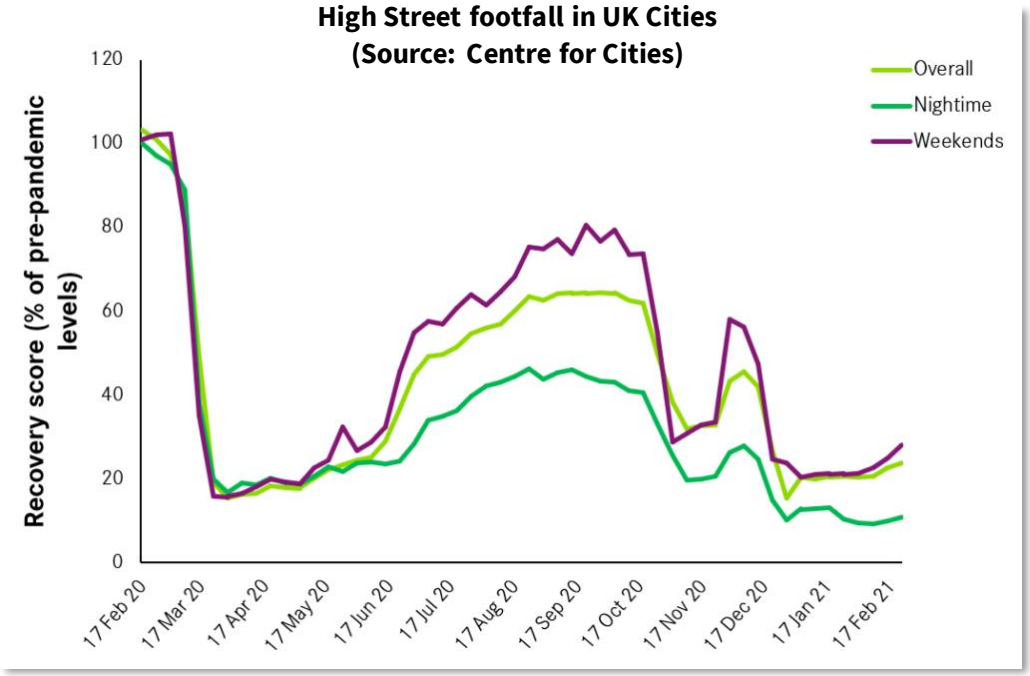
Broxbourne Borough Council	£85,548
Dacorum Borough Council	£137,473
East Hertfordshire Council	£132,170
Hertsmere Borough Council	£92,495
North Hertfordshire District Council	118,251
St Albans City and District Council	£130,464
Stevenage Borough Council	£77,818
Three Rivers District Council	£82,174
Watford Borough Council	£85,636
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council	£109,901
TOTAL	**1,051,930**

With a total allocation of over a million pounds, it may be cost effective to work collaboratively County-wide on those measures which can be appropriately introduced in all town centres. Such interventions might include marketing collateral, safety barriers and signage. Measures which address the important but under-resourced common priorities (see appendix 3 for examples of workshop participants' priorities) may also be suitable for co-funding, although will have to meet the eligibility criteria for Welcome Back Funding.

What is happening to footfall?

Whilst footfall nationally declined by 5% between 2015-2019, in part due to the rise of online shopping and out of town retail centres, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a very profound impact on high streets and town centres, causing a massive and unforeseen further reduction. Following lockdown in March and April 2020, footfall volumes in UK high streets fell by 84% compared to the same period in the previous year, and by over 90% in larger city centres.

The Centre for Cities graph below shows how footfall has affected UK cities overall, at night time and at weekends, though there are additional disparities from place to place which can be understood only with consistent footfall data. Disparities may come about due to the uses in town centres – for instance, shopping destinations may recover footfall more quickly than office-heavy commercial centres.



Springboard, data partner of the High Streets Task Force, has been measuring footfall for ten years and has recently forecast an increase in high street footfall of nearly 48% across the UK when retail reopens. The recent report states:

"The forecast increase in footfall means that footfall will be +128.5% higher than in the same week in 2020, although it will remain -61.8% below the 2019 level"

This provides an additional pressure on local authorities and other stakeholders to ensure the safe management of this increase, particularly as we move into the warmer months. Luckily, we can learn much from efforts in the late summer of 2020, in relation to the easing of lockdown measures for retail and hospitality, with tactical urbanism, temporary signage, positive messaging and considered activation of our town centres. This means collaborating with key stakeholders, including local business, property interests, and communities. Places that work together will be in a better position to recover quickly and drive footfall back to the high street.

The 10-point checklist

The checklist takes into account some of the key factors identified above, considers some best practice examples and makes suggestions for other projects and programmes that are deliverable via the Welcome Back Fund. It is important to consider the applicability of the ten-point plan in different high streets across the county and this should be the starting point for local conversations.

The principal objective which underpins the checklist is the **safe revival of footfall in Hertfordshire's town centres**. A general High Streets Task Force Learning Journey on Driving Footfall to the High Street is available to provide context.[2]

The Checklist is below. Go through it and tick the relevant box. If you have answered 'no' or 'don't know' on any of the points, read the relevant part of the 10-point plan listed in the section below.

Tick the relevant box for each of these tasks		Yes	No	Don't know
1	Do you have an effective recovery plan?			
2	Do you have the right partnership to deliver the plan?			
3	Do you have a communications strategy that will encourage people back to the high street?			
4	Do you have the evidence you need to take remedial action quickly?			
5	Are you doing all you can to make the town centre experience the best it can be?			
6	Do you have the necessary place management capacity and expertise to coordinate town centre delivery?			
7	Are you supporting your evening economy and other vulnerable businesses?			
8	Will your long-term plans for transformation build on your recovery?			
9	Are you engaging landlords and developers?			
10	Does your recovery effort strengthen place identity, participation and inclusion?			

[2] https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=5b2fae26-44b4-4967-8255-2e1b2405c237

The 10-point plan

1. Develop or improve your recovery plan

The High Streets Task Force provides a wealth of resources and best practice examples for town centres looking to develop a recovery plan, which can also be funded by the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund until June 2021, and likely by the Welcome Back Fund. This plan will provide some pointers but there is more detail to be found on the website.[3] The immediate recovery of town centres is distinct from longer term transformation but immediate plans should pave the way for this (see step 7).

Footfall will increase sharply from 12th April but measures still need to be in place to manage social distancing. This involves the collaboration of businesses and a clear strategy - which they are signed up to - to manage a system enabling a balance of queuing, deliveries, space to walk and expanded hospitality. This needs to be delivered safely and in a welcoming manner.

Partners including Business Improvement Districts, Chambers of Commerce, local authority officers and others can assist in developing the reopening plan and may be able to lead on important recovery activity such as:

a. Ordering and installing floor decals, providing welcome ambassadors, and liaising with businesses.
b. Running campaigns which encourage shoppers to return to 'shop small' or 'support the high street'
c. Developing a town centre strategy for the temporary expansion of hospitality sector businesses, allowing them to trade outside
d. Using markets and 'pop-up' as a way to strengthen the town offer and replace any key traders that might be temporarily or permanently closed (see Point 4).

According to MHCLG communications, The Welcome Back Fund can help councils boost tourism, improve green spaces and provide more outdoor seating areas, markets and food stall pop-ups – giving people safe options to reunite with friends and relatives. The funding can also be used by councils to:

- Boost the look and feel of their high streets by investing in street planting, parks, green spaces and seating areas to make high streets as beautiful and welcoming as possible
- Run publicity campaigns
- Hold events like street markets and festivals to support local businesses and encourage new ones
- Install signage and floor markings to encourage social distancing and safety
- Improve high streets and town centres by planting flowers or removing graffiti.

An effective recovery plan will boost the town centre's *attractiveness* – one of the issues that was identified in the Herts workshop as an important but under-resourced priority. You may want to

[3] https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/

cross check your recovery plan against the priorities in Appendix 1 to see how many your plan can address.

Best practice and resources

- Maldon's Covid19 Recovery Strategy: https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=dbaddca0-93b5-46cc-b7de-4ae216091c3c

2. Form or refresh a partnership to deliver the plan

Strong partnerships were made in the summer of 2020 as plans for the easing of the first lockdown were drawn up. These consortia are now being reformed to address the latest easing of restrictions, using many of the lessons learned in 2020. The focus of the reopening plan requires some or all of the following partners:

- County Highway Authorities
- Borough Regeneration / Economic Development Team
- Parks and open spaces
- Communications (County / Borough / DMO / BID)
- Relevant service delivery partners (e.g. Ambassadors / street cleaning / refuse collection)
- Enforcement (parking, health and safety, licensing)
- Police and security professionals (e.g. incl. Pub Watch)
- Community leaders (where they can mobilise volunteers)
- Business representative groups

A Terms of Reference should be drawn up which provides clear lines of reporting and enables the plan to be delivered expediently. Where roles and responsibilities are confused or overlap, the situation should be clarified and agreed to ensure that every agency is aware of their role. You may consider establishing working groups to address specific themes within the overall plan, which are attended by relevant leads and contributors. Recovery requires a much more lateral approach than many local authorities are accustomed to and this involves entrusting external partners with the power to take action.

It is advisable to set a general structure which ensures that specific tasks such as campaigns/communications, streetscape modifications, security etc are organised by sub-groups, with an executive body (including key partners) retaining an organisational overview and able to address obstacles.

An effective partnership will lead and deliver the recovery – which goes a long way to addressing the '*adaptability*' priority in Appendix 1.

Best practice and resources

- Town Centre Partnerships, Association of Town and City Management https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=b2b095eb-f534-4266-9cd6-0dbd551c890e

3. Agree a communications strategy

Communications is a complex but vital part of the recovery strategy. There are several channels for communication, including:

a. Communications between bodies responsible for delivering the strategy
b. Practical communications between the responsible authority (including where responsibilities between different delivery authorities are not necessarily clear) and town centre businesses, transport operators, service providers and contractors
c. 'Positive message' multichannel campaign to the general public to encourage a return to the town centre
d. 'Safety message' multichannel campaign to the general public ensure rules are understood and adhered to, including in situ signage, local media and household email.

Public messaging is an opportunity to reassert (or launch) the place brand and must be both positive and place-specific. BID Leamington's proactive campaign at the end of lockdown in 2020 saw the installation of floor decals across the city centre which featured floral imagery intended to provide a welcoming and considered message to encourage social distancing. Other places have printed and distributed maps showing new layouts, promoting independent businesses or providing download codes for shop local campaigns (see *Shop Appy* as an example of an 'online high street' provider, one of many that can help develop a 'shop local' campaign[4]).

This is also an opportunity to consider whether the use of merchandise can encourage a return, linking pride of place and place identity to useful products which facilitate the experience – maps, masks, umbrellas and tote bags are being introduced in some places to welcome visitors back.

With potential problems such as queue clash or crowding at hospitality venues arising quickly and in unforeseen locations, the public should be aware of the channels they can use to raise any safety concerns, including on-street ambassadors, or relevant hotlines or online forms. Such services should be adequately staffed to enable rapid reaction.

Good communications can address many of the important but under resourced priorities in Hertfordshire. They can augment and reinforce a positive *experience*, through *merchandise*, and they can promote the *retail offer*, *necessities* and *diversity* in the town.

[4] https://shopappy.com/

4. Build a robust evidence base

Evidence is a vital tool to assist those responsible for delivering the recovery to assess the efficacy of the strategy and adapt it, where necessary. There are three key measures that can be used, and these are described below.

- *Footfall*
  Monitoring footfall is key to understanding and improving performance. This can be done through automatic footfall counts (e.g. those provided by Springboard), or through a manual footfall counting regime.

  The manual footfall counting regime is for local authorities and other place management organisations like BIDs or community groups, who do not have automatic footfall counting technology but who want to use footfall as an indicator of the health and attractiveness of their town centre. The High Streets Task Force has published a guide to manual footfall counting regime.[5] Footfall counting was funded by the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund and it's expected this will remain the case for the Welcome Back Fund, however confirmation is awaited via official guidance.

- *Vacancy*
  As lockdown is eased and furlough and other forms of business support are scaled back, many industry commentators predict a new wave of retailers and other high street businesses entering administration. As a result, it is important to monitor vacancy in your town centre, for two reasons. First to see if any important parts of the offer are likely to be missing. For example, perhaps your local butcher has gone out of business. Whilst there may be plenty of packaged meat available in the supermarket, or local convenience stores the butcher may have been part of a 'linked trip' with a greengrocer, local deli and so on. With no butcher available then people shop elsewhere, somewhere where they can still fulfil all the elements of their 'linked trip'. This obviously has a very negative impact on the businesses that are still trading. Monitor specific sites to see if your town is at risk of losing any key traders. You can check Google maps to see which businesses may be listed as temporarily or permanently closed.

  Secondly, you should compare your vacancy rates against regional and national averages and town types, to help develop an informed strategy for inward investment where retail continues to contract. The British Retail consortium and the Local Data Company publish a Retail Vacancy Tracker[6]. Springboard also have a quarterly vacancy survey and monitor, that you can join free of charge[7].

- *Sentiment*
  Well run town centres with plenty of activation, welcoming messaging, managed queues and good facilities attract positive social media comment which can be recorded and measured, including via the use of sentiment analysis as used by companies such as Maybe*.[8] This is a useful tool to understand whether changes to town centre management regimes are needed, to measure shopper demand, perceptions of safety at night etc. Over

[5] https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=6f3927fa-cff9-457d-a93e-980fba22ef4e
[6] https://www.localdatacompany.com/blog/topic/vacancy-rates
[7] https://www.spring-board.info/faqs/vacancy-rate
[8] https://www.maybetech.com/social-media-sentiment-analysis-tool/

time it will be possible to measure changes in overall positivity or negativity about the town centre and attribute this to measures in the recovery plan.

A robust evidence base is a foundation for all the under-resourced and important priorities across Hertfordshire towns.

5. Use what levers you have to improve the town centre experience

Although there are limited powers to create a particular mix of uses within the town centre, local authorities may wish to consider the levers they have in their areas to effect change, including through events, local plans, reorganised services, small parcels of public land, derelict buildings and underused assets. Recovery and longer-term transformation plans should include consideration of the methods public bodies can use to improve the town centre experience (one of the IPM's 25 priorities identified by the Herts team[9]), with some examples below:

- *Ambassador welcome*
  Many local authorities and BIDs have developed or modified existing street warden services, including providing training to act as welcome teams or ambassadors. With reconfigured streets, relocated facilities and some apprehension among town centre visitors (some of whom will have been shielding since March 2020), a friendly face may prove an important investment, even if a temporary one. The resources section below includes an article detailing Croydon BIDs use of volunteer ambassadors, successfully rolled out in 2020.

- *Artwork and visual appeal*
  Street art, shutter painting schemes, shopfront renewal and town centre sculpture trails have been used to great effect to draw people back into the town centre in a controlled fashion. Bristol's Light Festival launched for the first time during 2020 lockdown and its considered execution ensured that the flow of people was managed and predominantly outdoors. Such interventions also provide an appealing motivation to return to the town centre where the retail offer has diminished. Greening, street furniture and general improvements can also improve the visual appeal of the town centre and reinforce the perceptions of a managed environment, safe for visitors to enjoy.

- *Events, markets and animation*
  The Welcome Back Fund can pay for temporary interventions that enable food concessions and small events to take place in the town centre. The recovery delivery group would provide a useful discussion body to develop the right interventions to ensure the town centre is activated safely and meets demand without unduly competing or interfering with the offer of local hospitality or retail. Consultation with local businesses, via a BID and/or directly, is vital to ensure that concerns are taken on board before delivering measures of this kind. Also consider how the community can be involved in running or leading on the delivery of such initiatives. West Norwood Feast market is a useful case study to illustrate the power of community driven markets.

  Markets are also a good way of addressing barriers to entry, one of the key issues identified by Herts colleagues, as they provide low cost low risk access to a sales

[9] https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=7f3570a3-de84-433f-ab22-99815def84d5

environment for new businesses.

- *Accessibility and facilities*
  Another of the issues identified for Herts town centres is the issue of accessibility. Depending on control of bus services and other transport modes, there may be powers to improve, even on a temporary basis, access to the town centre. Park and ride, limited free parking, cycle facilities and mapping for walkers are all being used to encourage access. Reopening plans must have consideration for those in wheelchairs, with sight, hearing or other impairments, or with prams, particularly as a familiar town centre may be reconfigured. The planning process must also consider *necessities* for these groups and others accessing the town centre – facilities such as access to toilets, improved wayfinding and access to information.

Best practice and resources

- Croydon BID ambassadors
  https://croydonbid.com/news/street-ambassadors-debut-croydon
- Bristol Light Festival
  https://bristollightfestival.org/
- Toolkit for Parish Councils considering opening a market
  https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=139d6e59-a993-4418-96b5-c82ee6231470
- West Norwood Feast
  https://westnorwoodfeast.com/
- Five fantastic parklet designs and why we need more of them
  https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=438cc9f4-4698-4d31-bdd5-13cb27c2fb98

6. Increase place management capacity, coordination an expertise

In working collaboratively on a bespoke town centre delivery group, many local councils have been able to increase place management capacity, to understand how public services interface, particularly in parallel with other services delivered by volunteers or via BIDs (such as graffiti removal, street wardens, deliveries, litter collection, door security and camera surveillance). A pooling of resources can ensure that they are deployed as effectively and efficiently as possible. This can include *necessities*, such as car-parking, cycle storage, even toilets.

Radio link schemes run by borough-wide Business Crime Reduction Partnerships are a good example of the pooling of resources and knowledge. In parts of London and elsewhere, pubs and/or retailers hold radios that link both to police radios and local wardens' radios, ensuring that security concerns such as problems with queuing outside shops or overcrowding at pubs can be addressed by the nearest available resource. The schemes are supported by robust reporting systems and a committee of businesses and public bodies to oversee activity, training and news.

From further afield, Helsinki is proving an exemplar of the 'functional city' model, and the approach is scalable to a town or county level. Functional cities are those in which the different systems work seamlessly together through a combination of the use of smart technology and service design and clear objectives, in Helsinki's case towards inclusion, participation, safety and culture. During the pandemic, a Special Operations Group and a Special Coordination Group have met daily to manage service provision, including managing volunteers from faith groups and

elsewhere for efficient deployment. Daily information sessions are live streamed to the public from the Mayor's office.

What is important is that the place management capacity is understood, mapped and coordinated. Often it is the role of the local authority to coordinate this. Do you know who is responsible for this? Do they have the necessary place management skills, knowledge and expertise to do this effectively? Place management capacity, coordination and expertise provides the bedrock to *adaptability*.

Best practice and resources

- Institute of Place Management Membership www.placemanagement.org https://www.placemanagement.org/membership/
- Helsinki Functional City – Pandemic response https://blogs.worldbank.org/sustainablecities/functional-citys-response-covid-19-pandemic
- BedfordBID RadioLink Scheme https://www.lovebedford.co.uk/retail-radiolink-exclusion.php

7. Support the evening economy

Hospitality is one of the sectors worst affected by the pandemic and alongside government support, many places have established specific measures to protect the presence of evening businesses in their town centres. These measures, many of which can be funded via the Welcome Back Fund, include:

- Relaxation of local licensing conditions to enable trading
- Temporary widening of footways or claiming of parking spaces to provide space for outside tables, and installation of outdoor seating areas with consistent look and feel
- Campaigns, supported by apps and local loyalty schemes to encourage patronage, perhaps not immediately, but once restrictions are lifted
- Additional security staff to provide a presence in the evenings and assist door staff in managing queues or overcrowding
- Additional cleaning staff to manage litter

Some town centres have installed temporary toilets in town centres where local hospitality businesses are unable to provide adequate capacity.

It is recommended that the delivery group develop a specific response to the needs of the hospitality sector in town centres, in consultation with them and their representatives. The approach must be business friendly and developed with the support of all responsible departments, from licensing to highways. Hospitality is one of the key sectors extending the *diversity* of town centres.

There are other vulnerable businesses and sectors. For example, the self-employed and cultural organisations. The Additional Restrictions Grant should help to sustain those businesses not covered by other grant schemes, or where additional funding is needed. According to the guidance "councils have the freedom to determine the eligibility criteria for these grants. However, we expect the funding to help businesses that are severely impacted by the restrictions." This might include market traders and other businesses that add to the town centre offer, but who don't pay

rates. Or nightclubs and other types of businesses that continue to be severely impacted by restrictions.

Best practice and resources

- Liverpool without walls
  https://www.liverpoolbidcompany.com/liverpool-without-walls-pilot-scheme-to-help-restaurants-reimagine-outdoor-eating/
- Cardiff / Yoello campaign
  https://vimeo.com/470576981
- Westminster's typology for outdoor dining
  https://indd.adobe.com/view/e0a8c827-a5a7-44e1-a5fe-3b1019f42008

8. Use evidence base to develop a plan for the longer term

In the context of the longer-term structural issues facing the high street, the IPM has been advising places to consider how the pandemic response gives way to a longer-term plan for town centre transformation (adaptability), and this is being considered in different ways, including:

- Adoption of more integrated technology to enable coordination of town centre functions, the collection of data, and flexible uses
- Use of temporary interventions or modifications to the streetscape as a test bed for making permanent changes, including pedestrianisation of town centre areas
- Maintenance of temporary town centre governance structures on a more permanent basis, with power sharing among the community and better dialogue with businesses and landlords
- Integration of services for greater efficiency

Developing a longer-term plan for the transformation of the town centre relies on having adequate data, strong partnerships and a good understanding of the direction of travel. The IPM has developed a framework which guides places through the process, including an interactive road map that can be jointly developed and widely communicated to achieve maximum buy-in from stakeholders.

The framework is based around the 'Four R's of Regeneration', four strategies for transformation which start with identifying the main barriers to change. For instance, if you have no data or insight about what is happening in your town, how it is being used and what the trends are, you need a repositioning approach, to rectify this lack of information. If your town is not meeting the basic needs of the catchment or visitors, a reinvention approach will help you change this and improve the chances of success locally.

Where you have good data, and a plan for transformation, but it is not understood by enough people, you need to rebrand. Finally, if there are fundamental issues around local governance structures or other structural issues, including the physical configuration of the place, you need to think about restructuring. A template and further resources are provided in the links below.

The Hertfordshire Stakeholders survey suggested there were a few other pressing problems which point the way to a strategy for the future. These include:

- *Mix of uses*
  Herts stakeholders felt in the survey that a greater mix was needed in the town centre, including the desire for a non-retail offer. Many places are grappling with this issue and are establishing good links with landlords to develop a join strategy to meet local need through innovative letting. A best practice resource is included below.

- *Barriers to entry*
  Where many places are improving dialogue with landlords, there are still town centres that provide few opportunities for new entrants, independent shops or services and innovation. There are ways to deal with this, including the development of shelf share schemes, the provision or expansion of markets, or the use of publicly owned property to encourage entrepreneurs to launch with minimal risk.

- *Adaptability*
  Examples like Brixton Market in London have demonstrated that town centres can provide one offer during the day, and flip the offer in the evening, operating from the same premises. Other businesses such as Glitch in Bristol are uncategorisable – outwardly a hairdresser, they also put on gigs and sell pizza and plants. New rules on Use Class E helps businesses like these to come forward, but local authorities must create the conditions to encourage entrepreneurship, including in its messaging, strategy and support mechanisms.

Best Practice and resources

- Make your own Transformation Route Map
  https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=e65cffe8-0923-4943-861c-f47150c55bec
- New Dawn for UK High Streets: Change or Die
  https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=5b2d3a01-130d-4020-a86f-6eeabd20c58d
- Creating resilient town centres
  https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=6374abea-eb0d-45fc-8796-aae55e75083a

9. Involve landlords and developers

One of the missing pieces of the puzzle in recent years has been the involvement of developers and landlords in the strategy-making process for our town centres.

Absent or disinterested landlords are a problem in every town centre. Many shops are owned by opaque, offshore-registered organisations with no presence in the place, or by landlords with no sense of responsibility for the wider economy, even as the high street declines. However, retail landlords - which include our own pension funds - are facing their own existential pressures at the moment and demonising them in public is not a good way to bring them to the table, whatever the political temptation.

There are no easy answers to this but opening a dialogue with those that are interested in helping develop strategy is working elsewhere, particularly as units become more difficult to shift. Shopping Centre owners are noticeably changing in this regard and where local authorities or town centre partnerships have not made contact in a while, the promise of a collaborative town centre strategy making process may bring more to the table than it did a few years ago.

Involving the private sector in discussion will be a learning process. For instance, landlords in shopping centres often understand much about the mechanics of retail and how things are changing. They can help local authorities develop a strategy for the town centre which compliments activity in shopping centres, to ensure a good retail mix. This may help address some of the issues raised by Herts in the workshop.

The Statement of Community Involvement is a key tool for the local planning authority. It sets out clearly what will be expected of developers when it comes to talking locally about what is needed and the requirements of the consultation process should be town centre friendly, even with smaller developments.

Protecting retail frontage where data suggests retail is likely to contract is likely to have the unintended consequence of higher retail vacancy – open dialogue with service providers, institutions such as healthcare and universities to provide for demand. Consider the town centre as an ecosystem, with a range of interlocking systems and interests. Many town centres provide only for shopping at the moment, but the objectives of inclusion and participation (see point ten below), the encouragement of innovation (one of the key issues identified by Herts, which can be addressed through partnership with the private sector), the strengthening of community ownership and the development of an evening economy or culture are likely to be important in years to come.

Better engagement with landlords will improve the *appearance* and *attractiveness* of town centres.

Best Practice and Resources

- Engaging landlords https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=c62adaf0-9f07-4aa5-a0b7-73e6171a472c
- Example of groups connecting arts and culture organisations with empty spaces https://www.artquest.org.uk/how-to-articles/accessing-empty-spaces/

10. Strengthen place identity through participation and inclusion

Long term transformation of the high street must be delivered on the premise that the retail monoculture – itself a relatively new idea – fails to serve the needs of communities. If town centres are to work in the future, they need to be more *diverse*, will need to have a strong identity, supported by the pride of the catchment in their place. A strong identity is based on an agreement on what makes the place unique, and this is often wrongly assumed to be limited to a historic building, a traditional foodstuff or a famous former resident.

But identity can also coalesce around an inclusive outlook, this too can improve the *experience*: St Ives in Cambridgeshire has led the way in developing a place-based approach to dealing with isolation following a spate of suicides, in reinventing itself as a 'CALM town'. In Liverpool, one of the key benefits of a community-owned business there has been the development of social infrastructure, community and local identity. Places are only ever the people that live and work there and their aspirations for their town should form one of the central pillars of the strategy.

Therefore, plans and processes should be underpinned by the principles of participation and inclusion. These terms are subtly different but are often confused. Participation includes the devolution of power and ownership to enable communities to participate in decision making rather than acting as consultees. Processes such as citizens panels and participative democracy as well as community ownership are proving to be successful models in the UK. Inclusion involves the particular process of ensuring that as many voices as possible are heard.

Most of those involved in local consultation will recognise the familiar picture of a room of retired local residents, all highly valued for their experience, but often providing views from a similar position. Engaging communities that are less frequently heard, young people, ethnic minorities, the time-poor and deprived communities provides an essential and much richer picture of the problems that need to be tackled. Where people feel excluded from town centres, excluding them from the process of developing the new strategy compounds the problem. On the other hand, inclusive and participatory processes will help develop a diverse high street which meets the needs of more people in the town and addresses the concerns of the local authority.

Best Practice and Resources

- St Ives CALM Town https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/11/calm-town-st-ives-mental-health
- Impact of Community Ownership https://www.powertochange.org.uk/research-category/impact/
- Youth engagement toolkit https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=23bfd7f2-577d-4600-909c-940c129dca85

Appendix 1 – About the Hertfordshire Growth Board

Hertfordshire Growth Board is the way the county is now working together to manage growth. With the Hertfordshire population expected to rise by up to 175,000 by 2031, at least 100,000 new homes and jobs will need to be created over the same period. This brings opportunities and challenges. Hertfordshire Growth Board is ready to respond.

Hertfordshire Growth Board is made up of the County Council, the 10 district and borough councils and Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Working together is how we continue our 'joint' success and create opportunities for everyone, now and in the future.

Appendix 2 - About the Institute of Place Management and Authors

The Institute of Place Management is the professional body for people involved in making, maintaining and marketing places. As part of Manchester Metropolitan University, the Institute of Place Management is dedicated to supporting people who serve places, providing them with unbiased research, continuing professional development, qualifications, conferences, events and networking opportunities.

Authors

This report has been written by an interdisciplinary team of academics and practitioners from the Institute of Place Management.

Ben Stephenson

Ben is a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Place Management and High Streets Task Force expert. Ben has been involved in place management and development for 15 years. He is former CEO of We Are Waterloo Business Improvement District, has developed a Neighbourhood Plan, and extensive experience of working to develop regeneration strategies.

Professor Cathy Parker

Cathy is Professor of Retail and Marketing Enterprise at Manchester Metropolitan University and Co-Chair of the Institute of Place Management, the professional institute for all those involved in making better places. Cathy is regarded as an international expert and leader in place management and is the research lead for the Government's High Streets Task Force. She is frequently asked to commentate on place and retail related topics and has recently appeared on Radio 4 Today, Newsnight, BBC Breakfast, BBC Wales, BBC Sunday Politics (NW), BBC Radio 5 live and ITV Tonight.

Matthew Davis

Matthew works across the IPM and The BID Foundation, with responsibility for marketing, membership, policy and public affairs. In addition, Matthew is the communications lead for the High Streets Task Force. He has previously worked on a range of communications and policy issues, including UK industrial strategy, carbon reduction and modern slavery.

Copyright information

Copyright © Institute of Place Management. All rights reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of research, private study, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright, Design and Patents Act, 1988, this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted, in any form or by any means, only with the proper permission in writing of the authors, or in the case of reprographic reproduction, in accordance with the terms of licenses issued by the Copyright Lending Agency. Enquiries for permission to reproduce material outside those terms should be made directly to the authors.

All trademarks, registered names etc. acknowledged in this publication to be the property of their respective owners.

Appendix 3 - The 25 Factors for Vitality and Viability in Hertfordshire

In the workshop on 17 March, participants were asked to identify which of the IPMs 25 Factors were a priority in Herts' town centres. We also asked respondents to mark which of these factors were under-resourced. These factors represent areas of delivery for place partnerships, including BIDs, Destination Management Organisations, Local Authorities, LEPs, Town Councils and County Authorities, in addition to individual residents and businesses. A summary of each of the factor is below:

1. **Barriers to entry**
   What can be done to provide opportunities for new businesses to open in town?

2. **Adaptability**
   Places will need to be physically redesigned and strategically adaptable to recover well from coronavirus. What plans are being made?

3. **Experience**
   How do place managers present the correct visitor experience, and how does this change as recovery progresses?

4. **Accessibility**
   With continuing reticence concerning the use of public transport, the challenge for place managers is to increase accessibility, without encouraging a return to polluting private vehicles.

5. **Innovation**
   There is no one-size-fits-all solution to recovery and transformation, but we can learn lessons from other places as they innovate.

6. **Necessities**
   From car parking to public toilets to visitor information, all places benefit from having the right facilities, though these aren't the same in every place. What do Hertfordshire's Town Centres offer and what should change?

7. **Merchandise**
   How can merchandise be used to engender a sense of local pride and support?

8. **Attractiveness**
   What attracts investment and interest in places? What is distinctive that can be capitalised upon to encourage new businesses to establish, new customers to visit and new settlers to put down roots?

9. **Retail offer**
   Town centres these days are not necessarily just about retail, but shopping needs to reinvent and update to stay relevant. How is this being done?

10. **Diversity**
    'Clone Town' syndrome, where one high street looks very much the same as the next is still a reality in too many of our town centres. Strategies for providing an appropriate mix of retail (as well as non-retail offerings) are being put in place.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda item 12

Towards Digital Growth – Draft Framework and Priorities

Report Author: Neil Hayes, Hertfordshire LEP

1 Purpose of report

1.1 This report provides a short update on the development of a framework to accelerate the provision and utilisation of digital technologies in Hertfordshire. The key findings will be covered in the presentation of the paper and draft Framework.

1.2 Attached at Appendix A is the report outlining a framework and initial priorities. This is a draft document which will be finalised over the summer to further refine key recommendations, timescales and associated resource requirements. As such, it will be further returned to the Growth Board for approval.

2 Background

2.1 This document is part of a suite of activity aimed at exploring how Hertfordshire can achieve more responsible growth in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting effect on the economy.

2.2 The themes of 'Digital' 'Clean' and 'Inclusive' growth were originally identified in the development of Hertfordshire's Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) developed by the LEP in 2019.

2.3 This work was put on hold in early 2020 to focus on economic recovery but has now been revisited and all three themes will be considered with the Growth Board as it moves its work programme priorities forward over 2021.

2.4 The work identified that Hertfordshire's provision of next generation, gigabit fibre lags behind that of neighbouring areas and a market engagement exercise with providers recognised that perceptions needed to be improved to secure more investment.

2.5 In benchmarking against areas which had accelerated fibre provision and secured significant funding from HMG, it was clear that a central resource was key to success.

2.6 A series of immediate recommendations are proposed to better inform the future strategy namely:

- Consistency of emphasis in Local Plans & Planning
- Establishing a Market Information Day for providers

- Improved GIS Mapping to identify public sector assets and support funding bids

2.7 In addition, a number of workstreams have been identified that focus on key themes such as:
- Ongoing market engagement
- Removing barriers to development (e.g. wayleaves)
- Using public sector assets to accelerate roll-out and co-ordinating future public sector connectivity requirements
- Addressing digital exclusion and skills gaps,
- Improving business connectivity
- Ensuring digital connectivity is central to town centre regeneration

2.8 Finally, the report proposes that a number of foundations are required to move the work forward including:
- Sponsorship/ownership of this work as a priority for the Growth Board
- Establishing a 'Digital Board' to oversee the development of this work into a wider strategy, work with providers and steer funding bids
- Enhancing the capacity of existing resource (e.g. Connected Counties team) is needed to power this work going forward

3 implications

3.1 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 Hertfordshire Growth Board.

4 Recommendations

4.1 That Leaders approve the draft Framework and Priorities as attached, to be further developed into a final version later this year, and

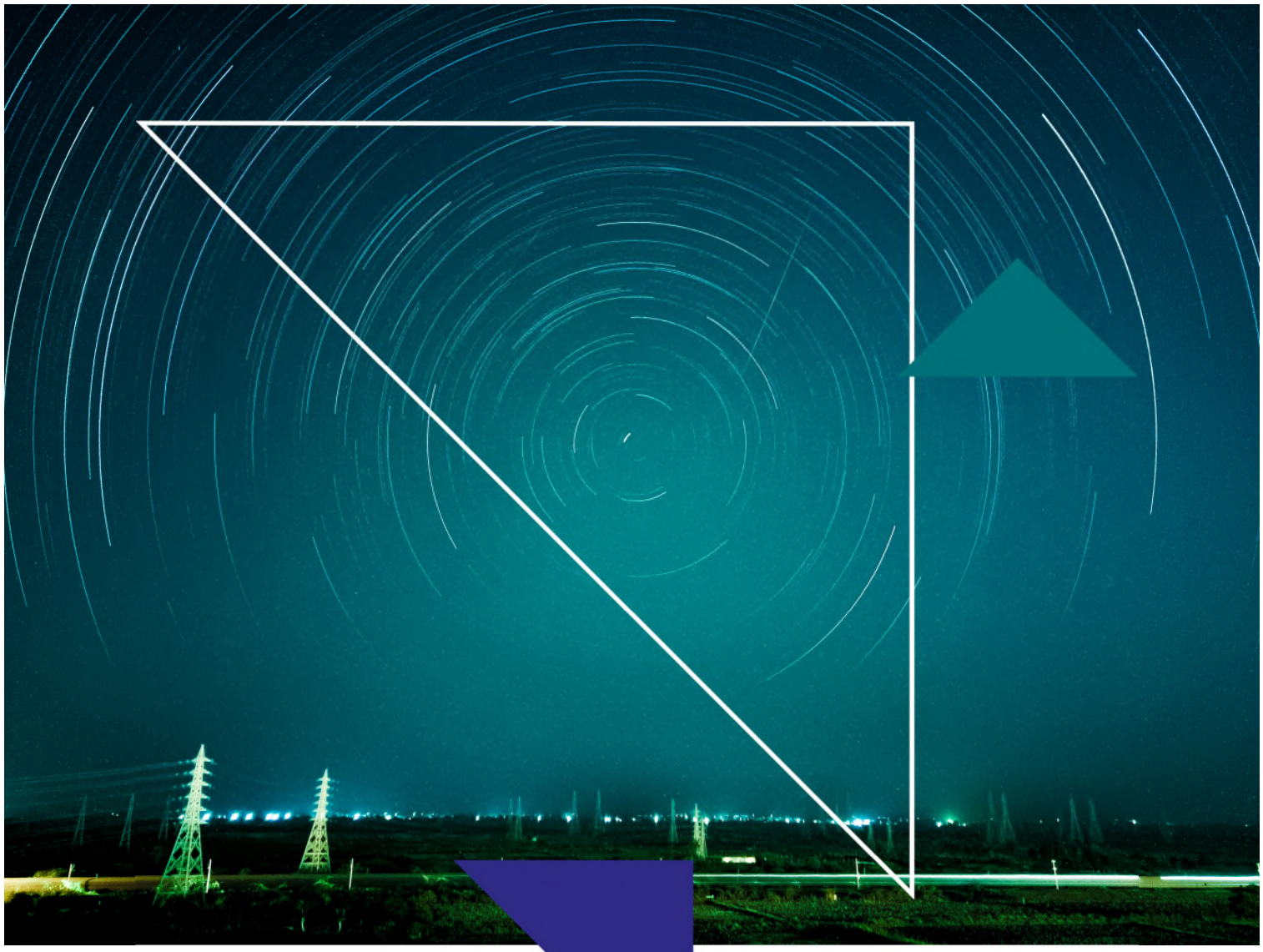
4.2 Options to establish/address the foundation matters identified in 2.8 above be investigated over the summer so approval and implementation can progress late summer/ early autumn 2021.

APPENDIX 1

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Towards Digital Growth – draft framework and priorities for Hertfordshire

June 2021



DRAFT

Executive Report

This paper sets out a framework to accelerate the provision and utilisation of digital technologies in Hertfordshire as part of a suite of activity to achieve responsible growth for its businesses and communities and fast-track recovery from COVID-19.

1. Context

This report aims to build upon the considerable success of Connected Counties in driving superfast broadband investment and uptake across the county *(level of superfast coverage 24Mb plus 98.46% and an uptake of 79%: figures based on Think Broadband and Ofcom data)*. In so doing, it sets out a role for Hertfordshire Growth Board in realising a full fibre vision for Hertfordshire, its communities and businesses, aligned to the Government's gigabit and full fibre infrastructure aspirations.

This vision is real and tangible and will stimulate private sector investment, be a key enabler in driving economic recovery and support the future well-being of its residents. The role of digital technologies in all aspects of our lives has become increasingly important, and has the potential to radically change our expectations and requirements in the future.

With full fibre now a key Government aspiration, it is important to ask why gigabit and why fibre? The Government's target is that at least 85% of UK premises will have access to gigabit-capable broadband by 2025 and will "seek to accelerate roll-out further to get as close to 100% as possible". This target, announced in November 2020, was scaled down from its previous ambition to deliver nationwide gigabit broadband coverage by 2025. In terms of the definition of gigabit-capable broadband, this means a network which can deliver download speeds of at least 1 gigabit-per-second (1 Gbps or 1000 megabits per second, Mbps). To put this into context, a 1 Gbps download speed would allow a high-definition film to be downloaded in under one minute.

Gigabit-capable broadband will be delivered by a range of technologies including full-fibre connections (FFTP – Full Fibre to the Premises) which is viewed at this stage as the preferred option and is attracting the most commercial investment, high-speed cable broadband (Virgin Media) and potentially future 5G networks.

While the UK currently has a high level of availability of superfast broadband (download speeds of 30 Mbps) and superfast broadband, which is available to 95% of UK properties according to Ofcom, the UK's telecommunications regulator. Superfast broadband has been mainly delivered by Fibre-to-the-Cabinet (FTTC) technology, which is a part-fibre, part-copper technology.

Whilst superfast broadband is fast enough for most current individual/household needs, the availability of and demand for data-intensive services such as online video streaming and video calls is increasing. High data demands by many users at one time can push the limits of a superfast broadband connection. To support this growing dependence on and demand for digital services, it is becoming increasingly evident that high capacity internet connections that can support fast download speeds, large amounts of data and many users at one time will be required. The pandemic has further highlighted the need for widely available and reliable digital connectivity.

In July 2018, the National Infrastructure Commission concluded it was uncertain if and when the demand for data would outstrip existing networks but said that a decision to invest in full-fibre networks, compared to upgrading the existing copper network, was a "risk worth taking" to avoid the potential consequences of not having the right digital infrastructure in place to support future needs.

Since 2018 and accelerated by the impact of COVID-19, the importance of high capacity internet connections, whether in the home or office, is starting to place an even greater emphasis on the availability of FFTP. This has been particularly evident not only in changes to

DRAFT

domestic use with the additional demands of home working, but also to strategic planning around the way we will work, move around, shop and spend our leisure time in the future.

Hertfordshire's needs to be prepared if it is to influence policy at a regional and national level rather than play catch up.

While realising such a vision will be multi-faceted, including promoting a 'telecom friendly' planning policy and attracting private sector investment, this report recognises that one of the key and immediate priorities will be access to fibre connectivity.

In addition, while significant investment in telecom infrastructure has already been secured, the current level of full fibre infrastructure to the premises currently remains below the national average with (Hertfordshire 7.99%, compared to 17.39%). This lower level of investment is a matter of concern and could be a potential barrier for future growth.

2. Purpose

It is with this background that Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) working in collaboration with Hertfordshire County Council has undertaken this initial exercise to address the following key questions and issues. These are:

- To understand the current digital landscape in respect to the current levels of full fibre/gigabit and mobile coverage within the county;
- To understand the future plans of the telecom sector to invest in Hertfordshire;
- To compare Hertfordshire with its local authority neighbours surrounding London;
- To understand the market's current interest in Hertfordshire and the extent of any interest;
- To ascertain how Hertfordshire is perceived by the telecom sector; do its policies attract or discourage investment?
- To ascertain what role the public and private sectors can play in attracting further investment.

As part of this digital landscaping an extensive market engagement exercise was undertaken, and this report would wish to extend its thanks to all the carriers, infrastructure companies, services providers and mobile operators who contributed their insight and observations. Their insight was invaluable and contributed significantly to the outlined workstreams and recommendations.

Whilst a number of very meritable schemes, including digital-related planning initiatives, digital pilots and the deployment of a LoRaWAN network (network to support the delivery of the Internet of Things) have been progressed by individual local authorities, this report believes that there is a fundamental need to consider and implement a wider enablement strategy which would have the scale and scope to transform connectivity within the county and help to drive its full-fibre aspiration in a tangible and sustainable way.

DRAFT

This report sets out how, via Hertfordshire Growth Board, a series of workstreams can be set up to implement a series of recommendations, which with sponsorship, would drive economic recovery and realise considerable social benefit for our communities.

Hertfordshire Growth Board was conceived in 2018 as a collective response to managing the scale and pace of growth required over the next decade. The Board is made up of Hertfordshire's 10 district and borough councils, Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Together they are committed to working together to deliver an ambitious growth agenda to support a thriving economy, with affordable housing, a sustainable transport network, excellent schools and healthcare facilities. Through its membership and wider stakeholder community, the Growth Board could and should have a critical role to play in developing and delivering a full-fibre vision for Hertfordshire.

3. Digital Landscape

The following two tables provide a countywide overview and regional insight into the availability and presence of full-fibre and gigabit capable networks as of 22nd February 2021 *(data based on Think Broadband database).*

Table 1

Current coverage overview at county, borough and district level.

Council District	Superfast 30Mb> %	FTTP %	Gigabit Capable %	Virgin Media Coverage %
Hertfordshire	98.06	7.99	8.04	79.44
Broxbourne	99.31	2.98	2.98	87.59
Dacorum	98.08	4.90	4.90	78.31
East Herts	96.11	10.80	10.80	63.87
Hertsmere	98.48	7.01	7.01	82.20
North Herts	97.07	3.89	3.89	75.06
St Albans	98.28	24.33	24.33	85.04
Stevenage	99.61	1.57	1.57	91.09
Three Rivers	98.15	7.06	7.06	77.18
Watford	99.98	2.38	2.38	93.46
Welwyn Hatfield	97.26	7.76	7.76	71.38

To note:

- Openreach is already progressing and/or has announced full fibre investments based on the following telephone exchanges in Hemel Hempstead, Watford, Harpenden, St Albans, Codicote and Rickmansworth;
- Virgin Media has a penetration of 79% across Hertfordshire which will follow the proposed upgrade of its existing network by the end of 2021;

DRAFT

this means that this network will be deemed gigabit capable;

- Other than St Albans, every other district within Hertfordshire is below the national average;

- Some rural parts of Hertfordshire will benefit from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport's (DCMS) 'Outside In' Fund which is focused on addressing those areas which have not been identified by the private sector as areas of potential investment;

Table 2

Comparison of current coverage in neighbouring county/unitary authorities in Southern England.

Council/Area	FFTP %	Gigabit Capable %	Virgin Media Coverage %
Hertfordshire	7.99	8.04	79.44
Berkshire	12.18	63.03	63.43
Bucks	10.26	17.96	33.72
Essex	16.16	21.50	36.82
Kent	18.54	22.43	38.55
Surrey	15.40	17.17	66.15
Slough	19.93	19.93	83.92

To note:

- CityFibre is currently investing in a full fibre deployment in Slough, Reading, Maidenhead and Milton Keynes;

- Openreach is currently investing in a full fibre deployment in Slough;

- Virgin Media has already completed its Gigabit upgrade in Berkshire;

- Hertfordshire is significantly behind other counties within the Home Counties in having access to FTTP (Full Fibre to the Premise) and Gigabit capable networks.

4. Market Engagement

As part of this strategic exercise and to aid greater understanding of the current and future fibre landscape within the county, an engagement of the fibre carrier market was carried out.

A series of individual virtual sessions were hosted by Regional Network Solutions (RNS) in collaboration with Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire LEP during January and February 2021.

The purpose of these sessions was to listen to the market and understand in more detail:

- the current levels of full fibre coverage in Hertfordshire;

- their current and future plans for full fibre investment;

- what would encourage companies to invest in further full fibre deployment?

- how such fibre connectivity could be an enabler for future public sector reform;

- what barriers are there to future investment?

The companies taking part were:

Fibre Carriers:

- Openreach
- Virgin Media
- CityFibre
- Swish Fibre
- Zayo
- Zzoomm
- Hyperoptic
- Gigaclear
- SSE Telecom

Mobile Operators:

- Vodafone
- 3
- EE

(02 Telefonica were invited but hadn't responded a the time of writing this report.)

Whilst mapping of current and future coverage was requested as part of this engagement it

should be noted that such market information was not forthcoming on grounds of commercial confidentiality.

In terms of current fibre and gigabit coverage, please refer to the Think Broadband: https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/index.php?tab=2&election=1#13/51.8509/0.0152/gigaclear/fullfibre/virgin/

5. Key market engagement findings

A summary of these sessions is listed here:

- There is real market desire interest to invest, albeit much of this interest remains commercially confidential.
- There is clear evidence that Hertfordshire would benefit from further investment and would see a significant rise in the level of Gigabit capable networks which is currently below the national average of 34.6%.
- There were no clear signs that Hertfordshire would attract immediate further investment in full fibre, in sharp contrast to other neighbouring authorities. This was reflected in CityFibre's latest roll-out announcement in March, when Berkshire and Essex were included but not Hertfordshire.
- We welcome Virgin Media's planned upgrade of their Data Over Cable Service Interface Specifications (DOCSIS) network which will result in over 79% of residences and business having access to a gigabit capable network by the end of 2021. However, while this will mean that Hertfordshire will move above the national headline average for access to gigabit capable connectivity, it is very apparent that this may have an impact on actual FTTP investment which potentially will reduce competition and limit opportunity. This could place Hertfordshire at a disadvantage.
- A number of Alnets (Alternative Network Providers) remain keen to invest in Hertfordshire however the investment will be influenced by the presence of Virgin Media. However, it should be noted that the presence of Virgin Media has not deterred full fibre investment in Berkshire where the Virgin Media upgrade of its network has already been completed (CityFibre is already delivering in Reading, Slough and Maidenhead).
- There is interest in developing a public sector anchor tenancy model based on public sector connectivity requirements which could accelerate full fibre investment in Hertfordshire across individual councils as well as collectively across the county. This model is based on the principle that a local authority's future connectivity requirements become an anchor on a fibre network delivered through private sector investment (guaranteed rental revenue over a 10 to 15-year period but at a substantially reduced cost to councils). Councils which have adopted such a strategy, such as Southend, have benefited from a subsequent investment which will result in every residential and business address having access to full fibre. Although CityFibre is keen to promote this model, other carriers such as Openreach (Leeds), Zayo and SSE Telecom (Aberdeenshire) are also actively promoting such a model across the UK.
- There was general support for a market information day to be potentially hosted by Hertfordshire LEP and Hertfordshire County Council. This would give the market insight into development opportunities and understand how further market engagement and fibre investment could be promoted.
- It is evident that proactive marketing of Hertfordshire's opportunities will generate further interest and investment.
- Hertfordshire appears to have only recently started to benefit from increased investment in 5G and this investment is primarily focused on 3 and, to a lesser extent, EE. Regrettably, o2 Telefonica and Vodafone do not appear to view Hertfordshire as a priority area for 5G.
- This engagement exercise was welcomed by the market and was viewed as a platform which should encourage further and more extensive future dialogue.

DRAFT

- The work of Connected Counties was recognised and should be seen as a key channel for future engagement in respect to both fibre and mobile coverage.

6. Workstreams and immediate recommendations

Based on the findings above, this reports sets out a series of workstreams which should be aligned to the wider digital aspirations for Hertfordshire. By securing the support of Growth Board members, this will significantly contribute to elevating the importance of digital, attracting investment and enabling opportunities for all communities and businesses across Hertfordshire.

Immediate recommendations

1. Local Plans & Planning

All local authorities within Hertfordshire need to ensure that a full fibre aspiration is incorporated within their draft Local Plans (such inclusion provides a clear statement to developers and the market in respect to the recognised importance of connectivity).

Progress should also be made in supporting the development of respective Local Plans to develop local Telecommunications Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), incorporating fibre and mobile deployment. This could be based on the draft SPD for Ashford Borough Council.

Lead
Hertfordshire County Council with the support of Hertfordshire Growth Board member (Hertfordshire LEP)

2. Market Information Day

Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire LEP to host a Market Information Day this summer with a view to inviting carriers and other key telecom infrastructure companies to hear about Hertfordshire's full fibre vision and the planned opportunities which could be of interest to the market, attracting and acting as a catalyst for further private sector investment.

A similar approach was adopted by Fastershire, a partnership between Gloucestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council to bring faster broadband to the two counties, which was well supported by the market and generated a number of opportunities and further investment.

Key Actions

- Prepare an information pack detailing new developments, regeneration projects and problem areas (coverage) which can be presented to the market.

- Host a Market Information Day and invite representatives of carriers, mobile operators and telecom infrastructure companies to hear about Hertfordshire's fibre and wider digital vision in order to view the county as an opportunity for investment.

Key Objectives

- Raise the profile of Hertfordshire.

- Provide a platform for local authorities to proactively engage with the market and deliver a clear message that Hertfordshire is a county of opportunity for digital investment.

Key Outcome

- To accelerate full-fibre investment into the county benefiting businesses and residents.

Lead
Hertfordshire LEP with the support of Hertfordshire Growth Board member Hertfordshire County Council

3. Mapping

Immediate consideration should be afforded to exploring with all Hertfordshire Growth Board local authority members to utilize the Geographic Information System (GIS) to map all the points of presence, infrastructure, assets and connectivity across the county with all new developments, planned regeneration schemes, social housing, private residential care homes, business parks, hubs and sector clusters.

The purpose and outcome of this mapping would be fivefold:

- provide additionality to existing mapping developed by the Connected Counties team;

DRAFT

- give an overview of all public sector assets which could be an enabler for full fibre and/or mobile deployment;
- give an overview of business related sites and understand how public sector fibre requirements could be a catalyst for further private sector investment;
- give an overview of socio-economic data and how this could help local authorities to focus on specific connectivity interventions;
- contribute to future funding bids. Having supported two successful Wave 3 LFF Bids and two full-fibre public sector procurements, such mapping has proven to be crucial to securing funding.

Lead

Hertfordshire County Council working in partnership with Hertfordshire Growth Board local authority members

Workstreams

1. Future Market Engagement

This would explore in more the detail the options available to maintain and develop market engagement. Based on insight from other LEP and local authority areas, there is value in formalising this process by adopting the following approach:

- Market Engagement – Fibre Carriers: to instigate on a quarterly basis further engagement with a view to seeking an update on current and future plans across Hertfordshire.

Key Objectives

- Regular dialogue with the market.
- Share opportunities regarding major developments/regeneration schemes such as Hemel Garden Communities and Harlow Gilston Garden Town.

Key Deliverables

- Raise the profile of Hertfordshire with the market and ensure that the current level of FTTP coverage in Hertfordshire which is currently below the national average is increased through private sector investment.

Lead

Hertfordshire LEP & Hertfordshire County Council (Potential Role for proposed Digital Board)

- Market Engagement – Mobile Operators: to instigate on a quarterly basis further engagement with the mobile operators with a view to seeking an update on current and future plans across Hertfordshire.

Key Actions

- Arrange quarterly meetings.
- Focus engagement on understanding current and future coverage plans for each of the mobile operators.
- Understand current barriers and obstacles to improving coverage.
- Develop in dialogue with the Mobile Network Operator's (MNO) standard lease templates (based on the West Midlands and Norfolk County Council's model) which could be used by all local authorities.
- Co-ordinate a planning workshop for all including all local authorities to discuss the MNO's planning policy and processes relating to mobile phone installations.

Key Objectives

- Regular dialogue with the market.
- Raise the profile of Hertfordshire, ensuring that Hertfordshire benefits from increased investment (5G Investment).
- Improve mobile coverage – address 'not spots'.

DRAFT

- Identify ways in which Hertfordshire can benefit from the Shared Rural Network Initiative.

Key Outcome

- Improve mobile coverage and ensure that Hertfordshire benefits from future 5G investment.

Lead
Hertfordshire LEP & Hertfordshire County Council (Potential Role for proposed Digital Board)

2. Barrier Busting

A workstream should be developed to explore how local authorities could collectively adopt a proactive approach to wayleaves to secure:

- A consistent and transparent policy toward permit and wayleave fees;
- A practical approach to providing a bulk wayleave process for telecom providers with a view to accelerating deployment;
- Understand what resources each council will require to support a major fibre deployment and how it could leverage a Clerk of Works funded by the private sector.

Lead
Hertfordshire County Council working in partnership with Hertfordshire Growth Board local authority members

3. Public sector assets and infrastructure

Explore a workstream which considers how public sector bodies could compile, through an exercise of due diligence, a schedule of sites (greenfield, rooftop and building) which could be offered to the mobile operators as a means of addressing current coverage issues and accelerating future 5G deployment. Such a strategic approach would be based on a number of core principles as detailed below and would seek to replicate similar initiatives already being delivered in West Midlands, Norfolk and the Sheffield City Region.

- A recognition that as a county council the asset base may be limited, but via the Hertfordshire Growth Board and its co-opted members, it could bring together the public sector. This would create an opportunity to develop a significant and diverse portfolio of assets and infrastructure which could make a significant contribution to accelerating investment and addressing areas of poor mobile coverage. These assets could potentially include fire towers, NHS sites, radio towers etc.
- The focus would be on partnership with mobile operators to attract further investment and improve coverage as opposed to generating revenue from site rental or additional access charges. This strategic decision would require clear sponsorship from Hertfordshire's public sector leaders.
- Hertfordshire Growth Board members and other public sector partners would play a facilitating role in working with the mobile operators to address potential barriers and accelerate deployment.
- Interactions between Hertfordshire Growth Board members and mobile operators should be manageable and should not place unnecessary burdens or barriers on either party.
- Any template lease agreement concluded between Hertfordshire County Council and the mobile operators (to be shared with other Hertfordshire Growth Board members and public sector partners) would need to recognise that work undertaken by mobile operators should not create additional costs for Hertfordshire County Council and should ensure that any partnership remained cost neutral and would not be a vehicle for generating additional revenue.
- In the spirit of partnership all relevant information would be shared freely and openly with all parties.

Lead
Hertfordshire County Council with Hertfordshire Growth Board members and public sector partners

DRAFT

4. Future Public Sector Connectivity Requirements

By exploring future connectivity requirements and accompanying contracts, an opportunity exists for Hertfordshire Growth Board local authority members to work with other public sector organisations, including schools, to undertake a comprehensive review of all their connectivity and associated service layer costs (social care, CCTV, traffic management etc.). This audit would involve each local authority and be wide-reaching to ensure that it goes beyond the responsibility of respective ICT departments.

This will help to ensure that each local authority area has a clear strategic overview of all current connectivity provision and costs (fixed and mobile) as well as associated service delivery costs. This, in turn, would enable each local authority to understand how connectivity contracts and requirements could form the basis of future procurement where a fibre requirement is specified for each public sector site or service. Such a strategy, if adopted, would not only realise potential savings and improvement in service delivery but also ensure that with fibre being taken out to public sector sites, this would extend the reach of fibre into communities which, in turn, would generate greater investment from the market, such as school connectivity requirements.

Such an approach is radically changing how the market views the future delivery of public sector connectivity with various models now emerging in Leeds, Suffolk, Aberdeenshire and Southend.

Before embarking on a collective audit, the Growth Board may wish to consider exploring this option in further detail by engaging with local authorities who have successfully implemented such a strategy as well instigating some further market engagement.

This report believes this approach is worth exploring and could realise very significant long term internal benefits by accelerating the level of FFTP investment that currently does not exist across the county.

Lead
Hertfordshire County Council with other Hertfordshire Growth Board local authority members

5. Digital Inclusion

The impact of COVID-19 and the increasing reliance of access to the internet for work, business growth, education and public information has escalated the importance of digital access, affordability and inclusion. Therefore, in developing and, most importantly, delivering a digital strategy for Hertfordshire it is important that all stakeholders address this issue.

Inclusion can take many forms from reducing isolation in our elderly population to supporting a child studying at home and therefore it is recommended that inclusion is regarded as a separate workstream and should be developed through close collaboration across various public sector bodies and agencies.

As a first phase this workstream would focus on addressing digital inclusion within social housing in which private sector investment is encouraged to deploy a FFTP solution to social housing at no cost to local authorities or housing associations.

Such initiatives have already been successfully delivered in Wandsworth, Thurrock, Newcastle, Salford and Southwark. The aspiration has been to deliver a FFTP service to residents in social housing. This recognises the need to deliver a service which is accessible and affordable to residents (based on flexible contracts and no credit checks) and contributes to addressing social and digital inclusion within our communities.

Other similar projects have demonstrated a considerable benefit (evidenced by estimated take up of between 30-40%) in both aligning itself to a wider full fibre aspiration and enabling residents to be part of digital transformation.

Lead
Hertfordshire LEP and Hertfordshire County Council (potential role for proposed Digital Board)

6. Digital Skills

Promoting digital skills is regarded as a key component in supporting our recovery from COVID-19. Digital skills are multi-faceted, embracing basic skills required to 'get on line', which will help young people to prepare for employment; new skills in an ever changing

DRAFT

workplace and skills supporting more elderly and infirm residents who will benefit from digital based services.

Through Hertfordshire Growth Board and working across the public and private sectors, there is an opportunity to exploit how improvements in and access to connectivity can be a catalyst to support the development of digital skills.

As part of this exploratory workstream, there will be merit in exploring:

- how through public sector procurement social value can be generated with a focus on advancing digital skills funded and promoted by the private sector;
- how improving connectivity into schools could support improvement in digital skills (coding) as well as promoting digital skills within the local community, with schools potentially performing the role of a local digital skills hub;
- how working with commercial operators to leverage access to data could, for example, support coding initiatives in schools.
- the creation of a countywide digital skills initiative which shares insights, collaborates on opportunities and becomes the point of reference for promoting private sector initiatives;
- how working with public and private sector partners, Hertfordshire Growth Board can engage with and encourage those in our communities who are anxious about using digital technology to 'get online'.

Lead
Hertfordshire LEP (potential role for proposed Digital Board)

7. Business Connectivity

Access to improved connectivity (greater capacity and faster speeds) is, and increasingly will be, an integral consideration for many businesses.

While many larger companies already rely upon such connectivity, many medium and smaller sized enterprises still operate on old legacy networks. Although, in some cases, this may be because improved connectivity is perceived as not necessary, in most cases it is more the result of cost or lack of access to fibre connectivity.

To address this apparent imbalance this report is proposing a workstream which explores in further detail connectivity for business and in particular considers the following:

- how to raise awareness about the business benefit of fibre?
- a county based business gigabit voucher scheme potentially sponsored by the LEP.

Building upon the success of the current DCMS sponsored Rural Gigabit Voucher, explore the opportunity of introducing a top up fund to the existing voucher scheme increasing the voucher value from £3,000 to £5,000 until March 2022. Such an approach has already been adopted in West Sussex and West Yorkshire.

Lead
Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire LEP

8. Town Centre Regeneration

Recognising the impact that COVID-19 is and will have upon the future role and scope of town centres across Hertfordshire and to support some of the initiatives already being considered to support town centre renewal and regeneration, this report proposes that a workstream should be progressed which seeks to align the role of digital connectivity with town centre regeneration schemes.

This should cover fixed, mobile, wireless and IOT connectivity and services and how such connectivity can drive and enable identified outcomes and innovation.

A lighthouse project could focus on one town centre which could potentially become a beacon for future investment and private sector collaboration.

Lead
Hertfordshire LEP working with Hertfordshire Growth Board local authority members

DRAFT

9. Government Funding

Although a number of significant Government funding schemes are still ongoing and others are being launched as part of the Government's Project Gigabit Strategy, this workstream would explore the option of developing a sustainable business case to justify the funding of a full-fibre solution to rural public sector buildings, including schools within Hertfordshire. By developing such a proposition this would present Hertfordshire with the opportunity to engage with DCMS and seek to secure funding for a potential pilot for the Public Sector Hub Site workstream which forms part of the Government's project to deliver fast and reliable broadband.

This would enable Hertfordshire to be prepared to bid for any future infrastructure funding where the delivery of digital infrastructure could be considered, such as, for example, the East Herts and West Essex GP Surgeries Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) Project. This £1.7m investment enabled GP services to potentially deliver more health care remotely, online and through digital applications.

Lead
Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire LEP (potential role for proposed Digital Board)

10. IOT Networks

While the market engagement focused on fixed and mobile connectivity, this report notes the increasing impact of the 'Internet of Things' and how this contributes to service delivery, innovation and strategic thinking based on data analysis.

While Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council have already invested in and deployed LoRaWAN networks which can support a wider IOT aspiration, the Growth Board could explore looking at an IOT LoRaWAN countywide investment case delivering benefits for the public (service delivery, highway management), private (innovation and new business) and third sectors.

This would entail exploring the merits of investing in the deployment of a public sector owned and managed LoRaWAN network, a strategy already successfully adopted in Norfolk and Suffolk with the support of New Anglia LEP. This model is now realising a number of significant outcomes in respect to supporting the development of local digital skills, creating a platform for local enterprise and innovation and contributing to how the public sector delivers services and supports communities and businesses.

Lead
Hertfordshire County Council with support from Hertfordshire LEP (potential role for proposed Digital Board)

Strategic Workstreams

Workstreams deemed a priority to create the right level of governance and direction to deliver a digital strategy for Hertfordshire.

1. Sponsorship

In order for a full fibre vision to be realised, there needs to be a clear mandate from senior officers and elected representatives from across the Hertfordshire Growth Board membership. Without this, this vision will remain an aspiration in reports rather than delivering real and tangible outcomes.

Key Actions

- To develop this level of sponsorship via the Growth Board by co-ordinating presentations and/or a workshop to review a digital strategy in a post COVID-19 world and identify both the challenges and opportunities that have emerged and understand how connectivity will be a key enabler to respond to these changes.

Key Deliverables

- To secure sponsorship across the Hertfordshire Growth Board membership which will ensure that digital is at the heart of public sector decision making going forward.

Lead
Hertfordshire LEP working in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council (Growth Board Sponsorship)

2. Creation of a County Digital Governance Board

This report would propose exploring the option of creating a Hertfordshire Digital Board, the role that this could play, its composition and its remit.

DRAFT

Based on insights and experience elsewhere within the public sector where such an approach has been adopted namely Leeds City Council and Norfolk County Council it can realise considerable benefits and will ensure that a clear and focused message is conveyed to the market which would mean increased investment.

As part of this process, it is recommended that serious consideration is afforded to creating a countywide group which explores:

- public sector connectivity (not exclusively local authorities);
- IOT Strategy – opportunities for sharing and developing a countywide IOT network;
- development of countywide planning policies re. full fibre and mobile deployment;
- sharing digital initiatives – public and private sectors;
- co-ordinate responses to national funding bids.

The purpose of this review and potential outcome would be to create a vehicle which could:

- co-ordinate Hertfordshire's collective approach to digital investment
- become the conduit for sharing initiatives and opportunities, ensuring a more holistic and integrated approach towards digital connectivity;
- become the strategic influencer and enabler of IOT and digital projects.
- become the formal channel of digital advocacy into Government.

Lead
Hertfordshire LEP and Hertfordshire County Council

3. Enhanced role of Connected Counties team

The purpose of the Superfast Hertfordshire Connected Counties Team needs to be reviewed with a view to enhancing and strengthening its collective role and responsibility across Hertfordshire, reflecting the increasing importance of digital infrastructure on the local economy.

Lead
Hertfordshire County Council with Hertfordshire Growth Board partners including the LEP

Conclusion

Hertfordshire Growth Board has an exceptional opportunity thanks to the major development and regeneration schemes; the future requirements of local authority connectivity; the proactive approach adopted by Connected Counties and a genuine interest from the telecom market to invest in fibre infrastructure, to deliver a gigabit capable fibre network across the whole county.

The realisation of a full fibre infrastructure delivered through partnership between the private and public sector and a proactive enabling role being adopted by Hertfordshire Growth Board local authority members would provide:

- a vehicle to give real momentum to digital transformation;
- a strategy which is not just dependent upon council funding or public sector intervention;
- a fibre platform which could deliver long term savings for the public sector; attract long term investment from business and put Hertfordshire at the forefront of digital transformation within the UK; and
- positively contribute to Hertfordshire emerging from the challenges and impacts of COVID-19.

DRAFT

One Garden City, Broadway, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire SG6 3BF
01462 244700 | info@hertfordshirelep.co.uk | www.hertfordshirelep.com | Twitter: @HertsLEP

This page is intentionally left blank