

# Hertfordshire Growth Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 25 January 2022



**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, 25 January 2022

## Attendance

### Council Leaders (11 Voting Members)

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

### Co-opted Members

M Bretton, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Chairman  
C Amies, Homes England

## 1. Minutes

- 1.1 The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 7 September 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 January 2022

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

- 4.2 Members heard that work had continued on the set workstreams and that a workshop had taken place on 14 January 2022 to review the work programme. Members noted the work of the Board to date and heard that an update on the draft 2022 Work Programme would be circulated prior to the March 2022 meeting. Members heard that the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board (HIDB) held its inaugural meeting on 11 November 2021 and its focus was on networking with just under 30 organisations signed up to work with the Board. The next meeting was due to be held on 10 February 2022 with a focus on policy, capacity and resources. In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that the HIDB would report back to the Growth Board.

Patsy Dell

- 4.3 The Board heard that one matter not covered in the paper was around quoracy for the Hertfordshire Growth Board. It was noted that this was set at 9 voting Members, as it was felt important to have a high turnout of Leaders from across the county and that to change this it would need to go back through each council's democratic process. However, it was noted that the timeframe to request a substitute could be shortened from 5 working days to 1 hour before the start of a meeting, bringing the Board in line with other Hertfordshire County Council meetings. Members shared their considerations on the matter, and it was agreed that a report would be brought to the March 2022 meeting.

Patsy Dell

- 4.4 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 00:02:40 [Item 4 - Work Programme 2021 Progress Report January 2022](#).

## RESOLVED

- 4.5 The Board noted the progress with the work programme and the overall priorities to March 2022, as set out in the paper and in Appendix 1 and 2.

## 5. Towards Digital Growth – Hertfordshire Digital Framework and Priorities

- 5.1 The Board received an update on the completion of the framework to accelerate the provision and utilisation of digital technologies in Hertfordshire. The Board previously received a presentation on the draft Framework back in June 2021.
- 5.2 The Board heard that the proposition was to confirm the Governance to take forward the project and secure a Member lead for the development of Digital Board, secure resources to take forward project management and once at capacity re-engage with industry. Since November 2021, progress had been furthered towards bidding for project Giga Hub (the capacity for capability in Public Authority areas) and project Gigabit (extending digital access into predominately rural areas). The LEP had secured some project management resource to take this project forward until a permanent position was in place.
- 5.3 Members noted that the FTTP (Full Fibre to the Premise) for Hertfordshire was considerably lower than for peer authorities. It was noted the figures were from 2021 and it was advised that there had not been any significant changes since the last benchmark.
- 5.4 The Board noted that a main focus of investment had been transport infrastructure schemes but acknowledged that digital connectivity was another key investment priority for the county. It was noted that in hosting creative and science and technology businesses across the county, high quality IT and technology was required. Members noted the opportunity to catch up and get ahead with digital provision as it was clear that other counties were beginning to leap ahead.
- 5.5 Members welcomed the need to move forward with the digital agenda and it was agreed that Cllr. Morris Bright would provide the political lead.
- 5.6 The Board noted and approved the request for funding for the project from the Growth Board growth fund and officers advised that a budget report would be presented in March 2022, which would confirm that the proposed funding was available.
- 5.7 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 00:18:25 [Item 5 - Towards Digital Growth – Hertfordshire Digital Framework and Priorities](#).

## RESOLVED

- 5.8 The Board approved the final Digital Framework and Priorities as attached at appendix A.
- 5.9 The Growth Board’s financial contribution to the work by the LEP and Hertfordshire County Council was agreed as a commitment from the Growth Board Growth Fund budget.
- 5.10 The Board agreed the other implementation steps as set out in the Framework, including establishment of a digital oversight Board.

## **6. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Investment into Hertfordshire Investment Strategy**

- 6.1 The Board received a report which provided an update on Hertfordshire’s Investment Strategy.
- 6.2 Members heard that obtaining greater investment into Hertfordshire had been a key part of the work of the Growth Board, with a number of key actions approved by the Board in June 2021. Members noted the actions as set out 2.3 of the report.
- 6.3 The Board noted that investigation into a potential Regional Investment Fund for Hertfordshire had not yet commenced. It was noted that areas such as Manchester and Sheffield had taken this initiative forward, and Hertfordshire would need to find funding locally to support infrastructure and other local strategic investments in the absence of future public funding being available from HM Government. It was noted that borrowing rules for public sector investment had changed and that the Fund was a consideration for the future, with external expertise being brought in to advise on options where needed.
- 6.4 Members noted that at time the time of producing the report in October 2021, there was the ambition to attend the new Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiiF) in Leeds in May 2022, however the work on the Investment Fund was unlikely to be complete before May 2022 and could be an ambition of the Board to showcase investment opportunities in 2023. Members agreed that we would send representatives to UKREiiF this year.
- 6.5 In response to a Member question regarding who borrowed the money (i.e. the Growth Board or each individual County Council) for the Fund, officers advised that as the investigation work had not been undertaken on the options for how the money would be raised to create or guarantee the fund, it was not possible to supply detailed information at that stage. Officers advised at this stage they were seeking support from Members to explore the possibility of a fund and what would be involved in pursuing this type of initiative for Hertfordshire.

6.6 Members commented on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and it was noted that there may be an update in the Levelling Up White Paper when that is published.

6.7 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 00:35:19 [Item 6 - Hertfordshire Growth Board \(HGB\) – Investment into Hertfordshire Investment Strategy](#).

## **RESOLVED**

6.8 The Board:

- Agreed the contents of the report and the draft Investment Strategy attached at Appendix A.
- Agreed the areas identified for further development to complete the Hertfordshire Investment Strategy and next steps as set out in section 7 with updates on progress to March and May 2022 HGB meetings.

## **7. Hertfordshire Growth Board – Community Wealth Building Project**

7.1 The Board received a presentation on the Community Wealth Building Project from Rob Gregory, Stevenage Borough Council. The presentation slides can be viewed here: [Community Wealth Building Project Slides](#).

7.2 Members welcomed the update and thanked officers for their input in achieving bid from the Community Renewal Fund and the University of Hertfordshire who had supported the project and would play a role in evaluating it. Members noted the opportunity to reach all areas of Hertfordshire and welcomed the engagement seen from all districts/boroughs across Hertfordshire.

7.3 The Board noted the testament of Hertfordshire achieving bids and the benefit of 10 years of partnership working.

7.4 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 00:56:30 [Item 7 - Hertfordshire Growth Board – Community Wealth Building Project](#).

## **RESOLVED**

7.5 The Growth Board noted the information shared within the presentation.

## **8. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Review of Temporary Accommodation Provision (Outline Business case)**

8.1 The Board reviewed a report that provided an Outline Business Case (OBC) (Appendix 1), which investigated the joint 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.

8.2 Members heard that the move to a Full Business Case was sought, with six options selected for review. Each option would enable a different level of joint working dependent on each authorities' own policies.

8.3 In response to a question regarding Member involvement prior to reports being presented to the Board, Members heard that it had been proposed that a sub-group of leaders was set up to oversee developments.

8.4 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 01:12:40 [Item 8 - Hertfordshire Growth Board \(HGB\) – Review of Temporary Accommodation Provision \(Outline Business case\)](#).

## **RESOLVED**

8.5 The Growth Board approved the Outline Business Case including further detailed investigative work on each of the six options to inform final recommendations for the preferred options in a Full Business Case (FBC). The FBC will contain a detailed appraisal for each option:

- including evaluating against criteria designed to assess each option's alignment with the vision and outcomes sought for this work;
- preparing a financial model and financial appraisal of each option;
- identifying funding streams and assets as required for each option (capital and revenue);
- the level of involvement by authorities in Hertfordshire for each option;
- a delivery programme for each option recommended to be adopted.

8.6 The Board agreed that a sub-group of the Leaders of St Albans, Stevenage, Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield be created, to oversee the development of the Business Case.

## **9. Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Growth Corridor Programme Boards Work Programme Updates**

9.1 The Board reviewed a report which provided an update on the overall progress of the Growth Corridor work programmes and projects since June 2021.

9.2 Members heard that dedicated officer capacity had been allocated to the North-East and Central region Joint Strategic Plan and that the brief for the Growth study had gone out for tender with four positive

tender responses received back. Interviews with tendering parties were due to be held 27 January 2022 and it was hoped that an award for the brief and that work that needed to be undertaken on the Joint Strategic Plan would commence.

- 9.3 The Board heard that clear milestones had been agreed for the new settlements project and welcomed the work to date on permitted development as part of the Reinvigorating Town Centres project. There had been advances in the Science and Technology work stream and Autolus were welcomed to Hertfordshire creating a future 300 high quality jobs in Stevenage. A further 200 jobs were being advertised by Airbus in Stevenage and GSK were working to secure a development partner which would bring 4000 jobs to the area and further aid efforts to promote and expand the cell and gene cluster within the town and the rest of Hertfordshire. The Board noted the updates in relation to Climate Change & Sustainability.
- 9.4 Members noted the letter at appendix 2 of the report and were informed that it had been sent to the Minister/Department for Levelling up. Members commented on the level of growth and investment in the County and discussed the possible economic damage caused if industrial areas were used for residential space and noted the very poor quality of some residential developments delivered through the permitted development route.
- 9.5 The full Board discussion on this item can be viewed here at 01:20:50 [Item 9 - Hertfordshire Growth Board \(HGB\) – Growth Corridor Programme Boards Work Programme Updates](#).

## **RESOLVED**

- 9.6
1. The Board noted the project updates in Appendix 1 and overall progress across the Growth Board programme and individual workstreams since the last meeting.
  2. The Board noted the letter at Appendix 2 which had been submitted to the Minister/Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities.

## **10. Standing Items**

### **South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan**

- 10.1 The Board heard that a recent workshop had taken place to discuss the South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan and that officers were looking at the structures of the plan. Members heard that a further update would be given at the March 2022 meeting.

## **11. Proposed Dates for 2022 Growth Board meetings**

The Board noted the proposed meeting dates for the remainder of the 2021/22 meeting cycle.

**12. Date of next meeting**

12.1 The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, 8 March 2022 at 9:30am.

**13. Other Part I Business**

13.1 None.

**CHAIRMAN**.....



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