

Agenda item 4

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Overall work Programme Progress Report June 2022

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1 Purpose of report

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

2 The Growth Board Work Programme and Priorities 2021 – 2022

- 2.1 The priority themes for 2021/2 were:
- 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 The work programme priorities for 2022/3 are to be determined.
- 2.3 Attached at Appendix 1 is the Growth Board Work Programme Plan to July 2022.
- 2.4 The updates that follow in section 3 relate to mainstream growth board programmes. Projects overseen by the two Growth Corridor Programme Boards are covered at item 8 on this agenda.

3 Engagement with HM Government

- 3.1 Since the last Growth Board meeting the Levelling Up white paper and Levelling Up and Regeneration Bills have been published. Clarity on the Government's devolution framework and Levelling Up missions now exist, along with national funding and investment priorities.
- 3.2 The first nine areas identified for new style County Deals are in active discussion with government but the timetable for completion of the County Deal pilot areas and announcements on the timetable for bids for a second tranche remains unconfirmed. No County Deal devolution bids from home counties areas were included in the pilots.
- 3.3 Hertfordshire Councils were unsuccessful with year one Levelling Up Fund bids but round two has been announced for rebidding and a number of councils are preparing round two bids/rebids.
- 3.4 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund has been confirmed and Hertfordshire District and Borough councils will receive allocations of just over £13 million between them, over three years. Whilst the first-year allocation is

likely to be a small portion of the total allocation for most councils, an investment plan has to be submitted and approved by HM Government before funds are released. There are advantages in doing some combined work on the bids to enable a strategic approach to infrastructure and other investments to be considered, along with time and capacity savings on preparation of investment plans and other supporting material. Contact has been made with all Growth Board partners to support joint working and a pan-Hertfordshire approach where this would be beneficial.

4 Housing workstream update

- 4.1 The main output of work from the housing workstream is contained within the Growth and Housing Prospectus which was submitted to DLUHC and HE last year. This work has provided a significant evidence base and understanding of the Hertfordshire Housing pipeline and delivery pathway associated with the 100,000 homes that need to be delivered by the mid-2030's. With the new investment priorities set out in the Levelling Up white paper it is clear that Housing and Growth Deals in the form that the Growth Board was seeking are no longer available.
- 4.2 Given this, work supporting that ambition has been stood down. Individual councils are having continuous market engagement conversations with Homes England (supported by the evidence that the Growth Board work has developed) and funding may be available on a scheme-by-scheme basis, where this will deliver housing pre-2025. Longer term strategic scale sites that will start to deliver post 2025 (of which there are around 60,000 homes allocated for in Herts) are not being supported unless full evidence of market failure can be demonstrated.
- 4.3 A progress update on the Temporary Accommodation joint investigation project is covered elsewhere on this agenda.
- 4.4 Promotion of Off-Site Manufactured units (OSM) as part of diversifying the Hertfordshire housing supply has been supported by the Growth Board's engagement with the offsite consortia and through the new OSM housing guide which is covered elsewhere on this agenda.

5 Hertfordshire Investment Ready Workstream

- 5.1 The Investment strategy was approved in January 2022. Further work on this workstream has been held pending review of the work programme.
- 5.2 Although the Growth Board had decided not to exhibit this year, representatives from Herts LEP, Dacorum BC, Stevenage BC and Watford BC attended the Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiiF) in Leeds in May 2022. The event was felt to be useful in raising awareness of the investment opportunities available in Hertfordshire.

6 Planning Resilience and Capacity Task and finish Group

- 6.1 The task and finish group has now been established with officers from several council planning services, higher and further education, the LEP as

well as sector representatives who volunteered to support this work after the February Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board meeting. Cllr Linda Haysey is the political sponsor with Amanda Foley the CEx lead.

- 6.2 Capacity problems at a number of points on the Hertfordshire growth delivery pathway have been identified as a key issue and the task and finish group are developing an action plan to address these. The action plan and recommendations for initial priorities will be considered at the July 2022 Growth Board meeting.

7 Digital Workstream

- 7.1 The Hertfordshire digital framework was approved by HGB in January and the establishment of a digital board to oversee delivery of the strategy was also agreed. The Board is now in place and will meet early June. Cllr Morris Bright is the political lead for the Board. The board will determine priorities including bidding for further national funding.
- 7.2 As advised at last meeting, a team has been set up to take forward the work, with oversight by a steering group made up of LEP, Growth Board and HCC officers.
- 7.3 Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board (HIDB)
- 7.4 The HIDB held its inaugural meeting on 11 November 2021 and is now meeting quarterly. Subscription levels are very good demonstrating the high levels of industry and sector interest in engaging with this new consultative body. Forty organisations have become members and meeting attendances are now 80+ each time. Cllr Linda Haysey is the chair of the HIDB.
- 7.5 Growth Board members, Chief Executives and Heads of Planning Services have been invited to represent the board and to lead the sector level engagement through the board. The next meeting is on 8th June with a focus on sustainability.

8 Implications

- 8.1 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.

9 Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Board notes the progress with the work programme and the overall priorities to July 2022, as set out in the paper and in Appendix 1.