

Agenda item 5

Hertfordshire Growth Board – Vision and Priorities 2023-25

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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report updates on progress in refreshing the ambitions for the Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB). In conjunction with a presentation to Leaders, it sets out a recommendation to HGB on establishing a vision for Hertfordshire and refreshed set of priorities (missions) to take forward together, building on and elevating existing strategy and work underway at county-wide level in confronting the strategic challenges facing the county.

2 Background

- 2.1 In 2019, the Hertfordshire Leaders Group and chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership, working as the Hertfordshire Growth Board spent time developing their shared agenda for the leadership of Hertfordshire. In identifying the key areas of collaboration, common cause and focus this then developed into a joint work programme and shared ambitions for Hertfordshire the place. The table below summarise the key drivers for this shared ambition that were the outputs of the original 2019 work and were translated into work programmes that HGB has since been sponsoring to date.

Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing sufficient forward funding to put 'infrastructure in first• Reducing our carbon footprint, mitigating climate change and planning for electrification of vehicles...
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market failure to deliver the housing we need...• Building sustainable communities and places into the future (good and inclusive growth)• Accommodating housing and economic growth in a way that doesn't compromise the attractiveness of our existing places
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unlocking the potential of our key sectors now and in future• Creating local jobs for local people so they don't have to commute into London, local wealth creation initiatives
Strategic Planning for Good Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing a strategic planning approach to overcome some of the problems with the current local plan system• Responding to pressures from London driven growth

2.2 During 2022-23 financial year, it became apparent that the joint ambitions of the Growth Board needed to be reviewed and priority areas of focus over the next three years refreshed. The post pandemic period was felt to have had an impact on the external political, policy, economic, environmental, and social landscape. A range of key strategic leadership matters facing Hertfordshire and the Hertfordshire system have been identified already including:

- Delivery of long-term place ambitions around the economy, environment (net zero, climate change), healthy lives, sustainable responsible growth and infrastructure provision and public service reform.
- The need for an impactful prevent agenda across health, deprivation, crime, community protection and homelessness.
- Optimising joint approaches to implement public sector efficiencies, health sector reform, care sector reform, SEND and planning reforms.
- Moving from post-COVID economic recovery to establishing a long-term economic strategy for Hertfordshire, building on the work of the LEP in supporting businesses and closing the skills gap to leverage greater employment in our key sectors.
- Effective collaboration and joint working with system partners
- A delivery model to develop a strategic approach to infrastructure funding, investment funding, bidding, business case preparation and delivery.

2.3 Early work on this priority refresh commenced toward the end of 2022 but paused over the recent election period for Districts & Borough partners.

3. Emerging findings

3.1 Building on the work of the Hertfordshire Growth Board to date, and as a result of a range of workshops, interviews with Leaders, Chief Executives, other key strategic stakeholders and taking account of robust data sets, the following critical strategic areas of challenge facing the county have emerged as the suggested areas of focus to support inclusive and sustainable growth:

- Housing – affordable and of good quality
- Transport connectivity
- Economy (access to skills, good jobs and growing key sectors)
- Healthy and active environments

- Digital connectivity
- Climate Change
- Marketing Hertfordshire as an attractive place to invest; developing an ambitious place narrative

3.2 In order to facilitate activity that has the greatest opportunity to address the impact of these challenges for the benefit of residents, communities and business, the following ‘principles for action’ are considered important:

- The current partnership approach to meeting county wide challenges should continue
- That this leadership of the county is strengthened through review and strengthening of linkages between partner organisations and structures
- Develop a clear vision and place narrative for Hertfordshire that will guide future strategy and areas for investment
- Develop a clear set of mission statements to focus the priorities of Hertfordshire Growth Board, which are ambitious yet achievable, identifying there is world class capability in Hertfordshire and a desire to be competing with the best. An example mission is set out below:
‘Digital Access for All – every Hertfordshire resident has access to good connectivity, basic digital skills, and the device / support that they need to be online by 2030’.
- Engage residents, communities, businesses and other key partners in creating and supporting a Hertfordshire Vision.

4. Next Steps

4.1 In order to deliver the proposed vision and mission statements the following timeline is proposed:

- **20 July 2023:**
HGB: secure approval to the proposed approach to establish strategic missions and key actions / next steps
- **July onwards**
Establish working group
Engagement with HGB Leaders and officers to further refine the vision and strategic missions
Establish an approach for consultation with key stakeholders, communities and residents

- **10 October 2023**
Informal Growth Board: approve draft missions and consultation process
Launch consultation and engagement activity
- **17 January 2024**
Formal Growth Board – consultation outcome and draft vision and missions document for approval.
- **February 2024**
Publish final vision

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That members of the Growth Board agree the proposals contained in this report and note the contents of the associated presentation.