

Agenda item 6

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – Work Programme Progress Report June 2023

Report Presented by: Roger Barrett, Programme Lead, Hertfordshire Growth Board

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. This report builds on the previous paper presented at the Growth Board meeting that took place in March 2023.

2 The Growth Board Work Programme and Priorities

- 2.1 The Growth Board is currently reviewing its priority themes and work programme and item 5 on this agenda proposes a refreshed set of priorities for the period 2023-25.
- 2.2 A review of the Growth Board workstream leads and chairs was discussed at Herts Leaders Group on 7 June. Herts Leaders are expected to finalise chairs and representation of Leaders on the relevant groups ahead of the next Growth Board in the autumn.

Work Programme Updates

- 2.3 Full updates from active projects are attached at Appendix A.

Reinvigorating Town Centres

- 2.4 Re-invigorating Town Centres: Each District / Borough has now selected a specific project, and delivery schedules are in development. the first live project will be commencing with Broxbourne focussing on Waltham Cross. A meeting was attended with some local traders mid-June and steps are now being taken to support the group with a view to pave the way for a formal Traders Association to be set up.

Joint Review of Temporary Housing Accommodation Provision

- 2.5 Homeless people with Complex Needs: Development of an accommodation facility for homeless people with complex needs is linked to submitting a funding bid to the Single Homelessness Accommodation Pathway fund,

based on the targeted local authority in Hertfordshire. The evidence base focusses on North Herts, on people aged 18-24yrs. A governance group exists for this joint work led by North Herts District Council, a delivery partner for the scheme has been identified enabling a bid to SHAP by 15 September 2023 and to finalise the business case.

- 2.6 Out of Hospital discharge for homeless people (Hospital step down): There is system wide consensus on the need for an accommodation pathway to aid the discharge of homeless people from acute health care settings. The best available data suggests a pilot facility in the west of the county is viable. To provide governance and oversight of the final stages of activity required to deliver such a facility (funding and site), a task and finish group will be set up, in the autumn, within the remit of the Hertfordshire Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) Strategy Group¹.

Towards Digital growth

- 2.7 There is a range of activity underway across a number of workstreams in the Towards Digital Growth Programme. Key recent activities include working with Central Government to improve Full Fibre coverage in harder to reach areas in the county. Up to 2,000 addresses are being targeted in one lot, with up to 5,000 being targeted in bids currently under evaluation.
- 2.8 Officers have also pulled together and submitted an Expression of Interest with Essex County Council, the Digital Innovation Zone, and other potential partners for a DSIT 5G Innovation Fund. The outcome of the bid is awaited, and this joint approach will also provide a good foundation for future bidding opportunities.

Hertfordshire Planning Resilience and Capacity Task and Finish Group

- 2.9 The second Planning Symposium will be held on the 30 November 2023 at the Fielder Centre, interested parties are requested to save the date. Additionally, there has been 28 successfully matched mentors with mentees, and joint working on a shared services review is underway to explore potential opportunities.
- 2.10 Aligned to this work is the (Estates) Chartered Surveyor apprenticeship scheme developed through the Hertfordshire Property Partnership (HPP). Excellent progress has been made over the past few months, taking the project from inception to design and implementation at pace. Five

¹ The MEAM approach aims to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for adults experiencing homelessness and multiple disadvantages. It requires partners to follow guided principles, to develop a joined up, person centred approach, creating a system that is effective for people with multiple needs

participating local authorities have committed to the scheme, with further partners expressing an interest to join next year. Working to tight deadlines, a successful joint recruitment campaign has taken place and work is continuing to ensure robust frameworks are in place to manage our joint working and the operational aspects of the scheme. Current expectation is to onboard apprentices into the scheme and University course in September 2023.

Creative and Screen Industries: Hertfordshire Film Office

- 2.11 A Skills Forum was launched with all further education (FE), and higher education (HE) partners as well as industry representation in May 2023.
- 2.12 Work is ongoing with film funds, education, local authorities, and studios to explore the feasibility of establishing a Film and TV Production Sector training facility, industry to support real world work experience, placements, and employment opportunities.
- 2.13 Raise awareness with SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) of the opportunities within the Film and TV Production Sector event held with the University of Hertfordshire, Royal College of Art and ESTU Global.

Resetting SE Herts Economy

- 2.14 Park Plaza West Film studios construction now in progress onsite with no anticipated problems. The Brookfield Planning Committee sat on 20 June 2023 and resolved to grant permission for all three elements subject to conditions. The Enterprise Centre is now complete with the fibre due to be commissioned at the end of June 2023 at Maxwells [Theobalds Business] Park. Waltham Cross Renaissance Levelling Up funding of £14.3 million secured for the public realm and other elements. Works and skills hub improvements under way. Skate Park works commenced.

Growing Science and Technology

- 2.15 This workstream is established including preparation of a high-level framework for Gunnels Wood Road (GWR), Stevenage. The draft baseline has been circulated to the working group, and further engagement is due to be carried out over the spring / summer 2023. The vision once finalised would support as a blueprint for other cell and gene areas across the county such as in Hatfield, Hemel and Broxbourne. It will also be used to assist in lobbying central government to secure future funding.
- 2.16 The early-stage design for the GWR roundabout has been finalised and the report was passed through Hertfordshire County Council's Highways and Transport Cabinet Panel in March. The project is now part of the current

planning application being submitted by Reef as master developer. It will be considered by Stevenage's Highways Development Management team and decision made by Stevenage Borough Council.

Climate Change and Sustainability

- 2.17 Please note the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) have requested that interested parties save the date for a HCCSP Annual Conference on 7 November 2023 at the Hertfordshire Development Centre. Calendar invites to follow soon.

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 Growth Board.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 That the Board notes the progress with the work programme, workstream projects and the overall priorities as set out in the paper and at Appendix A.
- 4.2 Following consideration by the Hertfordshire Chief Executive Co-ordinating Group it is recommended that the locally specific projects that are currently listed as Hertfordshire Growth Board workstreams are removed from formally reporting into the Growth Board, including the following: Hemel Garden Communities, Harlow and Gilston Garden Town and Watford Junction Quarter. It is proposed that updates will be presented to the Growth Board over the course of these projects and when appropriate. This is in line with the proposed refresh for the Growth Board to take a more focused and impact driven approach on addressing countywide challenges to support good, sustainable growth.