

## Hertfordshire Growth Board

Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP  
Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing,  
Communities and Local Government  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

## Cllr Jeremy Newmark Leader Hertsmere Borough Council

Hertsmere Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Elstree Way  
Borehamwood, Herts  
WD6 1WA

T: 0208 207 2277

E: [cllr.jeremy.newmark@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.jeremy.newmark@hertsmere.gov.uk)

Tuesday 30 July 2024

Dear Angela,

### **Hertfordshire: a catalyst for growth**

Congratulations on your election and appointment as Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

We welcome the Government's commitment to re-set the relationship with local government, to empower more areas with a new wave of devolution and with the long-term funding settlement needed to continue to provide quality services and deliver economic growth locally.

Hertfordshire's public and private sector leaders are keen to seize these opportunities for the benefit of our residents and businesses, and as an engine of growth for the UK economy, we stand ready to trailblaze a Local Growth Plan. We would appreciate early engagement with you and your team and be delighted to welcome you to Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire is an economic powerhouse and critical to Government's plan to power up Britain. With a GVA of £46bn per annum boasting a larger economy than many major cities and city regions, we have a strong track record in innovation with world leading economic clusters. The county is home to Europe's top cell and gene cluster as well as a significant proportion of UK's film and tv production industry. We pioneered the first garden cities and new towns in the last century with more in train.

But not all our communities have benefitted from the county's successes. We have limited affordable housing with house prices 12 times as high as annual earnings in the region, limiting options for young people and lower income households. This is further exacerbated by issues with deprivation relating to skills, work, and health in some of our communities. These challenges are compounded by inadequate transport infrastructure.

Despite this, Hertfordshire has faced significant underinvestment from successive governments including for key infrastructure – with a funding gap of £3.6 billion for current growth plans. This poses substantial risk to our growth potential, as well as the successful delivery of our existing commitments to build an additional 100,000 homes and create 100,000 jobs over the next decade.

Your Government could unlock these barriers by giving us more local powers, flexibilities and joined up funding, as well as a strong devolution deal as noted in the letter from Leader of Hertfordshire County Council Cllr Richard Roberts dated 17 July. We will deliver a Local Growth Plan to boost productivity and improve living standards through access to good jobs, skills, getting high quality, sustainable housing growth in the right places, and by protecting our outstanding natural landscapes including our globally significant chalk streams.

We hope we are given every chance. Together, we can support the Government to deliver an ambitious industrial strategy for our great country and fulfil the county's economic potential, building a brighter future for our residents, businesses, and communities.

We would be delighted to meet with you and your team, and working with our many new local MPs host a visit to our great county to see first-hand the significant quality housing schemes underway and world leading innovation in our key sectors.

We look forward to working with you.

With best wishes,

**Cllr Jeremy Newmark**



**Leader of Hertsmere Borough Council**

**Chair of Hertfordshire Growth Board**

**Mayor Peter Taylor**



**Elected Mayor of Watford**

**Vice Chair of Hertfordshire Growth Board**

**Adrian Hawkins OBE**



**Chair of Hertfordshire Futures**

**Cllr Richard Henry**



**Leader of Stevenage Borough Council**

**Vice Chair of Hertfordshire Growth Board**



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