

Agenda item 5

Hertfordshire Draft Digital Strategy

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 This paper presents the **Draft Digital Strategy** for consideration and approval by the Hertfordshire Growth Board.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Digital Strategy has been developed to provide a clear and up-to-date framework for how digital connectivity, adoption and capability can support Hertfordshire's economic growth ambitions. The draft builds on the Previous Digital Framework, published by HGB in 2022 and developed by the (then) Herts LEP and reflects the rapidly changing nature of the digital agenda, including the increasing importance of digital infrastructure, data, innovation and digitally enabled public services.
- 2.2 The Strategy has been reviewed and refined to reflect the work of the Digital Connectivity Board and ensure it aligns with current policy priorities, such as securing AI Growth Zone status and complements the wider aims contained in the Hertfordshire Economic Strategy published earlier this year.

3 The Draft Digital Strategy: Appendix 1

- 3.1 Sets out a clear rationale for why digital matters to Hertfordshire's economy and communities.
 - Identifies the key challenges and opportunities facing the county, including infrastructure, skills, business adoption and public sector transformation.
 - Establishes a small number of strategic priorities and actions designed to maximise the economic and social benefits of digital investment.
 - Provides a shared framework to guide future activity, partnership working and investment decisions across Hertfordshire.
- 3.2 The Strategy is designed to be flexible, recognising the pace of change in digital technologies and markets, while providing sufficient clarity to inform near- and medium-term action.

4 Implications

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 Endorsement of the Strategy carries no legal or financial commitments.
- 4.3 Any future proposals requiring financial support will be brought to HGB for consideration as individual projects are developed.

5 Recommendations

The Hertfordshire Growth Board is asked to:

- **Approve the Draft Digital Strategy** as the agreed strategic framework for digital activity across Hertfordshire; and
- **Endorse its use** to inform future programme development, partnership activity and engagement with external stakeholders.

Subject to approval, the Strategy will be finalised by the Digital Growth Team in Hertfordshire Futures before publication.