

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 3 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: None

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### **Purpose/Summary of Report**

- To invite the Executive to approve the attached Hertfordshire Growth Board - Memorandum of Understanding setting out the objectives, principles, and scope of the collaborative work undertaken through the Hertfordshire Growth Board.

<p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION:</u></b> That the Executive agree the Hertfordshire Growth Board - Memorandum of Understanding set out as Essential Reference paper B to this report.</p>
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### 1. Background

- 1.1 Since September 2018 the Hertfordshire Leaders and Local Enterprise Partnership Chair have been collaborating through the Hertfordshire Growth Board. Together they have undertaken the Growth Board Development Programme, which has allowed the leaders to identify their key growth challenges, emerging programmes of work, and key features of an emerging proposition to government. Work is now taking place to move those programmes into implementation and to deepen our ongoing collaborative ways of working and engagement with central government.

- 1.2 The Leaders of the District Councils, County Councils, and the Local Enterprise Partnership agreed at the September 2019 Hertfordshire Growth Board meeting to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to be considered by the Hertfordshire Growth Board at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October. The Memorandum of Understanding attached to these papers as Essential Reference B, has now been considered by the Growth Board and is recommended for agreement by all the Hertfordshire Councils and the Local Enterprise Partnership Board.
- 1.3 In terms of scope and content, the Memorandum of Understanding sets out the core objectives and aims of working through the Hertfordshire Growth Board and the principles of partnership between the parties to the agreement. It also makes clear what is in and what is not within the scope of the work of the Hertfordshire Growth Board:
- The objectives of the collaboration focus on taking a broader place-based approach to strategic planning for development, infrastructure, transport, climate change, and economy. The aims of the collaboration expand on the work that the parties might undertake through the Hertfordshire Growth Board to help achieve these objectives.
  - The principles set out some of the benefits to be achieved through partnership working, using the two-tier system at its best, responding to wider challenges, providing leadership of place and increasing impact. It also sets out the principles of how the parties will work together, how they will undertake place-making in Hertfordshire, and approaches towards governance.
  - The scope of the Memorandum of Understanding makes clear that any council exercising any particular function shall continue to do so – including local plans, housing, and development management.
- 1.4 The Memorandum of Understanding has a number of legal terms and conditions, which are summarised as follows:

- It is not enforceable in law and cannot override existing statutes;
  - Parties are free to withdraw individually at any point, and the Memorandum of Understanding shall wholly terminate if the growth board dissolves; and
  - It is amendable only by the unanimous written consent of all its members.
- 1.5 Drafts of the Memorandum of Understanding have been circulated through the Chief Executives' and Leaders' groups and amended as a result of feedback. The attached version has the support of the Growth Board to go forward through individual Councils' democratic processes.
- 1.6 The draft Memorandum of Understanding, if adopted by the Councils and the Local Enterprise Partnership, will give a very clear signal to Government and partners about the Hertfordshire joint working ambition. It will also demonstrate how the Growth Board's members are providing place-based leadership and governance across Hertfordshire and is maturing as a body that government can talk with about an enhanced collaborative relationship in future.

### Background Papers

ERP B – Growth Board – Memorandum of Understanding.

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