

## Agenda Item 11

**Report to:** HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN JOINT COMMITTEE

**Title:** HGGT Programme Management Report

**Report Reference:** JC-011-2024/25

**Date:** 10 February 2025

**Report Author:** Osian Evans - Acting Director Harlow & Gilston Garden Town

**Enclosures:** Appendix A – 2024/25 HGGT Programme of Work

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### Recommendations/Decisions Required:

#### The HGGT Joint Committee is asked to:

- A. Consider and comment on the Programme Management Report, as set out in Appendix A, providing progress updates against the agreed HGGT 2024/25 annual work programme.

#### Executive Summary:

The purpose of the Joint Committee is to provide unified leadership to deliver the ambitious spatial growth proposals set out in the Local Plans of Epping Forest, East Herts and Harlow District Council, supported by Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils and to align and maximise opportunities for new and existing residents and communities.

The HGGT Joint Committee holds the responsibility to deliver the agreed HGGT Vision to promote healthy, sustainable communities and co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of 16,000 new homes in the HGGT by 2033, and 7,000 new homes in the years after that, along with associated transport, community, and environmental infrastructure.

This report provides the Joint Committee with oversight of progress against its agreed programme of work for 2024/25 which aims to progress delivery of its HGGT Vision.

#### Reasons for proposed Decision:

To adhere to governance procedures set out in the Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee for the HGGT Joint Committee to have oversight of the HGGT programme.

## Other Options for Action:

Not to receive programme reporting information. This option as a course of action is not recommended. Oversight is required to mitigate risks and maintain quality of decision-making and delivery amongst the five Council partners and the HGGT Team.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides the HGGT Joint Committee with key reporting benchmarks setting out at Appendix A the progress of the 2024/25 work programme noting the baseline programme agreed at the Joint Committee meeting held on 22 July 2024.

1.2 This approach to programme management will enable the Joint Committee to meet its formalised governance and audit responsibilities and to respond to key issues and emerging risks.

## 2. Background

2.1 The overarching strategic objective of the HGGT Work Programme is to co-ordinate and enable the delivery of 16,000 homes by 2033, along with associated infrastructure, delivering the Garden Town Vision, principles and guidance that has been agreed by the five Council partners.

2.2 The HGGT Work Programme is developed from across the five Council HGGT partnership in line with the **strategic objective, delivery aims, and programme priorities** agreed by the Joint Committee as set out below:

### 2.2.1 2024/25 Key delivery themes:

- Delivering the Garden Town Vision of quality, beautiful and sustainable places
- Enabling the Infrastructure Foundations for Growth
- Maximising and Accelerating Delivery with a focus on outcomes by 2025
- Ensuring our Governance is Fit for the Future

### 2.2.2 2024/25 programme priorities for the HGGT partnership:

- Enabling the HGGT Strategic Sites to come forward
- Enabling Achievement of HGGT Modal Transition Target
- Demonstrating and engaging with the community on the benefits of growth
- Delivery of the long-term stewardship arrangements

## 3. Delivery Highlight Updates

3.1 The following updates are provided for the HGGT strategic sites; the Housing Investment Grant (HIG) and the 2024/25 HGGT Programme of Work:

## 4. Strategic Site Updates

- 4.1 **Latton Priory** – There is an allocation in the EFDC Local Plan for a minimum of 1,050 homes, as well as a primary and secondary school, local centre and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). The Strategic Masterplan Framework and Latton Priory Design Code have been endorsed by EFDC Cabinet. Work by HGGT on the STC Connector Route Study is complete for the STC connector from Latton Priory Masterplan Area to Commons Road. An Outline Planning Application was submitted to EFDC in September 2024 for up to 1,340 dwellings, 5 traveller pitches, and associated infrastructure.
- 4.2 **Water Lane** – There is an allocation in the EFDC Local Plan for a minimum of 2,100 homes, a new primary school, local centre and strategic natural greenspace. A Planning Performance Agreement for masterplan work is complete and has been signed by developers, EFDC, HDC and ECC. Work is complete on the STC Connector Route Study for the STC connector from Water Lane Masterplan Area into the Pinnacles. The site developers are working on a programme of stakeholder engagement to enable the master planning process to progress.
- 4.3 **East of Harlow** – There is an allocation in the HDC Local Plan for 2,600 homes and an allocation in the EFDC Local Plan for 750 Homes. HGGT partners have drafted an East of Harlow Masterplanning Guidance Supplementary Planning Document which was adopted by EFDC on 28 May 2024 and HDC on 12 September 2024. The site continues to await appointment of a lead master developer.
- 4.4 **Gilston Villages** – Subsequent to the resolutions of the East Herts Development Management Committee to resolve to grant outline planning permissions (in early 2023), the details of the associated Section 106 Agreement has now been published. The Section 106 agreement is being finalised, signed and the decision notices giving outline planning permission for the Gilston area, released. Masterplanning activity previously paused whilst the priority was to complete the Section 106 Agreement, has now started to recommence to enable these to be moved ahead with speed once the decision notices are issued.
- 4.5 **Harlow Town Centre – Arts & Cultural Quarter** – The Ex-Occasio House site demolition has been completed, and site cleared. Secured delivery partner of site via Harlow Regeneration Partnership. Full planning permission granted in April 2024. Further detailed designs have resulted in design changes. Procurement for the rest of the site is currently underway with expressions of interest complete and tender exercise via National Framework Partnership progressing with appointment expected early in 2025.
- 4.6 **Harlow Town Centre – Broadwalk** – Contractor appointed, and works have begun. Construction to take place from August 2024 and scheduled completion June 2025. DLUHC had approved project adjustment request, confirming £1.6m funding for Market Square. Market Square proposals public consultation completed and informing detailed design, RIBA Stage 3 designs completed Autumn 2024 and start on site Spring 2025, complete December 2025.
- 4.7 **Harlow TC Interchange & Hub STC Work** – Demolition of toilets, kiosk and Terminus House footbridge completed. Negotiating terms for full Design and Build JCT Contract, due to complete Winter 2024. Value engineering complete, s.73 application submitted Summer

2024 and due to be determined Winter 2024. Planning application for temporary bus station approved in September 2024, construction is underway and operational from December 2024, which will include temporary stands and an information kiosk. Construction to start early in 2025 and complete Spring 2026.

4.8 **Walking and Cycling** – Construction on a new pedestrian and cycle route from the Town Centre to Pinnacles is due to be completed by November 2025 (ahead of schedule). Another route from the Town Centre to Churchgate Street/East of Harlow is currently in the design phase.

## 5. Housing Investment Grant (HIG)

5.1 **Gilston HIG programme** - As part of the Garden Town delivery programme, Hertfordshire County Council is overseeing the delivery of £171 million of Homes England Housing Investment Grant funding to deliver transport infrastructure that mitigates the impact of the Gilston Garden town villages development on Harlow and the surrounding areas and enables wider Garden Town development to come forward. This provides early enabling and delivery of key transport and other supporting infrastructure to start mitigating the impact of the development.

5.2 **Stort Valley Crossings** – As part of the HIG delivery programme, there are two key projects to mitigate any increase in traffic across the Stort Valley between Gilston and Harlow due to housing growth across the Garden Town. The first one, called the Central Stort Crossing will enhance the existing A414 River Stort crossing with a significant increase in capacity for sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and buses. The second one, called the Eastern Stort Crossing, will increase general traffic capacity and provide an additional link into the Templefields area.

5.3 **North to Centre STC** – Work has commenced on the North to Centre (Sustainable Transport Corridor) STC. The programme is estimated to last approximately 18 months with completion expected in late 2025. It is the first stage of a wider network of enhanced routes to provide more sustainable modes of transport across the Town. It will link up with the new Central Stort Crossing and provide the opportunity for quick journeys on sustainable travel modes between Gilston and the Town Centre, as the most direct route into Gilston will be a sustainable only mode access.

5.4 **Cambridge Road Link** – The Cambridge Road junction is the first project to be delivered as part of the HIG programme and is both an early enabler for the Eastern Stort Crossing, but also provides the benefit of providing an alternative route for HGV and other traffic using the Templefields industrial area, diverting traffic away from Edinburgh Way. Work on Cambridge Road junction is now complete; it is expected to open permanently in the near future following resolution of land transfers.

## 6. 2024/25 HGGT Work Programme Updates

6.1 The 2024/25 HGGT work programme is set out at Appendix A annotated with key updates. Highlights include:

- 6.1.1 **Modal Transition Plan** – The 5 Council Partners agreed to work together to continue to develop an overarching programme plan of key activities required to deliver modal transition, informed by the Framework. A progress update will be reported to the Joint Committee in Q1 2025/26.
- 6.1.2 **Parking Guidance** – The Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) Parking Guidance documentation has been approved by EPOA Chief Officers and sent to all Essex LPAs who will make their own decisions on adopting the guidance. The Parking Guidance has now been published in the Essex Design Guide.
- 6.1.3 **Data Dashboard** – The prototype data dashboard was recently presented to EOG (Executive Officers Group) and received positive feedback. Development has also commenced on a Quality of Life (QoL) Data Dashboard and User Guide, which has been reviewed by the QoL team. The project is now looking into incorporating some data sets such as pedal power GPS data and some Modal Shift monitoring data sets.
- 6.1.4 **Bike Hire Scheme** – An external advisor has been appointed to carry out the Phase 2 feasibility study to inform the ambition to introduce a bike hire scheme across the Garden Town area, piloting initially in Harlow, subject to approval.
- 6.1.5 **Harlow Train Station Study** – Weston Williamson have been commissioned to develop an opportunities and constraints study that examines the potential to make the Grade II Listed Station and its environs suitable for an expanding community with the sizeable housing and employment growth anticipated by the development of HGGT. The study has commenced and is forecast for completion by Q1 of 2025/26.

**Implications:**

**Resource Implications:**

Central Government Funding has been made available to date to support the work of the HGGT partnership. This is the result of annual bidding rounds and while the funding is both welcome and essential, this approach creates uncertainty in planning for enabling and delivery work. Officers of HGGT will continue dialogue with HGGT partners and Government for future arrangements in an attempt to establish multi-year revenue funding agreements. Each council partner considers contribution to the HGGT partnership as part of the annual budget setting.

**Equalities and Diversity:**

**Equality Impact Assessment:**

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?	No
Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy or decision	To provide budget and programme information to deliver the aims of the HGGT Joint Committee

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What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (i.e. decommissioning or commissioning a service)?	Provide oversight of HGGT programme and progress.
Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• service users</li> <li>• employees</li> <li>• the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?</li> </ul>	Yes - contributes to the delivery of the HGGT project to deliver over 20,000 new homes and associated infrastructure in and around Harlow which will affect existing and future residents.
Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?	No
Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	No
Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?	No
What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	N/A
Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?	N/A
If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:	The work of HGGT has been subject to public consultation and will continue to be so in the future.
<b>Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.</b>	
Age, Disability, Gender, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy/maternity, Marriage/civil partnership, Race, Religion/belief, Sexual orientation	N/A



Does the EqIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high	No	See comment above
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## HGGT Vision Assurance

1. What principles of the HGGT Vision does this seek to achieve?

The objective of the HGGT Programme is to deliver the HGGT Vision.

2. What steps have been taken to ensure the HGGT Vision is embedded into the project?

The HGGT Programme ensures that the individual projects remain aligned to the HGGT Vision.

## APPENDIX A

### 2024/25 HGGT Programme of Work – progress

Programme Item		2024										2025		
		April	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Sustainable Mobility	LCWIP Refresh													Scoping
	Bus & Operational Services - Enhanced Bus Partnership						Bus Summit				Develop Operational Plan			
	Shared Mobility - Bike Hire	Feasibility report finalised							Feasibility Stage 2					
	Future Transport Review Group						Procure				TRG Recommendations			
	Active Travel Behavioural Change (Sustrans)		Onboard	Embed										
	Modal Transition Delivery Framework	Take forward prioritised initiatives as per delivery framework												
	Parking Guidance for Garden Communities and Large Scale Development							Present to EPOA						
	Harlow Town Rail and Access Improvements							Procure			Develop			
Policy and Strategy	IDP Update 2024	Endorsed												
	IDP Refresh 2026 Scoping												Scoping procurement brief	
	Design Guide Refresh									Procure	Prepare Report			
Infrastructure and Delivery	Land Assembly and CPO	Continued Delivery of the Land Assembly Programme												
	HGGT Stewardship Charter	Consult			Joint Committee	Embed								
Placeshaping & Community Engagement	HGGT Strategic Stewardship Options	Umbrella Body Update & Options Report			Review and Refine									
	Communications	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Endorse Plan	Publish	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	
	HGGT Data Dashboard and Insights (Local Digital Fund)	Testing Digital Dashboard Solution			Implementation						Supplier Procurement	Consultation & Guide		
	Citizenlab Engagement Platform	Continued Monitoring and Evaluation of the Citizenlab Platform and Adjusting Where Needed												
	QRP	Ongoing drumbeat of QRPs												
	East of Harlow		SPD EFDC & HDC Adopt											
	Latton Priory	Publish Design Code												
Governance	HGGT Joint Committee	Establish Joint Committee				Operationalise Joint Committee								
	PMO & Master Programme	Scope Milestones			Maintain									

