

## Hertfordshire Growth Board

Baroness Taylor of Stevenage  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State  
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

## **Cllr Jeremy Newmark** **Leader Hertsmere Borough** **Council**

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19 August 2024

Dear Baroness Taylor of Stevenage,

### **Hertfordshire leading the way for strategic planning and New Town opportunities**

Writing on behalf of the Hertfordshire Growth Board, which brings together public sector leaders from the ten borough/district councils, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Futures, the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Herts & West Essex Integrated Care Board, to lead the ambitious growth agenda for our county, we are pleased to see the government pressing ahead with its proposed reforms to the planning system. We look forward to offering our comments on the consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in due course. Of key importance is the role that strategic planning can play, and we welcome the renewed emphasis on this for the long-term future of functional economic areas.

Hertfordshire is already committed to strategic planning and over the past two years has been working to make this happen, including exploring options for new settlements with established teams and governance. Working together we have determined a set of guiding principles, are well advanced with growth and spatial options studies to look at future options for sustainable growth that in turn will inform strategic and local plan preparation.

The Growth Board would welcome the opportunity to meet with Ministers and senior civil servants to discuss the potential for Hertfordshire to become a trailblazer for strategic planning. We would welcome exploring options to deliver the government's growth and housebuilding agenda in Hertfordshire in ways that deliver affordable, high quality and sustainable homes in the right locations.

You will be very aware that Hertfordshire pioneered the first garden cities and first new town, and we were delighted to see that you, Minister Pennycook, and Sir Michael Lyons launched the New Towns Taskforce here in Stevenage. We have already committed to building an additional 100,000 homes and generating 100,000 new jobs over the next 10 years ensuring residents and businesses thrive. We are working with Homes England and other partners to deliver 24,000 new homes at Harlow-Gilston Garden Town and 10,000

new homes at Hemel Garden Communities. We have also published a [Development Quality Charter](#) to encourage higher quality design and sustainability standards in new buildings.

We have the appropriate political governance arrangements in place, with the full engagement of all council Leaders. Our early work could be used to test what legislation is needed to progress strategic plans to consultation, examination, and adoption. It could also be used as a testbed for strategic location studies, strategic green belt and grey belt reviews and associated infrastructure work. This process could also consider the optimum scale for strategic planning and explore options for a new town in this part of the country.

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 Leader of Watford  
Vice Chair of Hertfordshire Growth**

**Cllr Richard Henry**



**Leader of Stevenage Borough Council  
Vice Chair of Hertfordshire Growth Board**

**Cllr Mark Mills-Bishop**



**Leader of Broxbourne Council**

**Cllr Adrian England**



**Leader of Dacorum Borough Council**

**Cllr Ben Crystall**



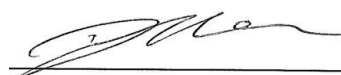
**Leader of East Herts District Council**

**Cllr Richard Roberts**



**Leader of Hertfordshire County Council**

**Cllr Daniel Allen**



**Leader of North Herts District Council**

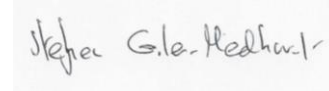


**Cllr Paul de Kort**



**Leader of St Albans City and District Council**

**Cllr Stephen Giles-Medhurst**



**Leader of Three Rivers District Council**

**Cllr Max Holloway**



**Leader of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council**

**Adrian Hawkins OBE**



**Chair of Hertfordshire Futures**

**Rt Hon. Paul Burstow**



**Independent Chair at NHS Hertfordshire and  
West Essex Integrated Care Board**

**Jonathan Ash-Edwards**



**Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner**

Copied to:

Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP, Deputy Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Matthew Pennycook MP, Minister of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government