



<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> Jan 2020</b>
<b>Part:</b>	<b>1</b>
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	<b>Hemel Garden Communities</b>
Contact:	<p>Cllr Graham Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b></p> <p>James Doe, Assistant Director, Planning, Development &amp; Regeneration</p> <p><b>Author:</b></p> <p>Nathalie Bateman, Team Leader Strategic Planning and Regeneration – Strategic Sites Delivery</p>
Purpose of report:	To provide an update on Hemel Garden Communities
Corporate objectives:	The proposals for major development at North and East Hemel Hempstead and the transformation of Hemel Hempstead through the Hemel Garden Communities proposals are wide-ranging and relate to all corporate objectives.
Consultees:	Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director (Housing & Regeneration)
Background papers:	<p>Reports to Cabinet on Hemel Garden Communities 30 July 2019 and 14 January 2020</p> <p>Submitted St Albans Local Plan, SADC, 2019</p>
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>HCC – Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>HE – Homes England</p> <p>HGC – Hemel Garden Communities</p>

	<p>HHGT – Hemel Hempstead Garden Town</p> <p>LDF – Local Development Framework</p> <p>LEP – Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <p>MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government</p> <p>PPA - Planning Performance Agreement</p> <p>SADC – St Albans City and District Council</p> <p>TCE – The Crown Estate</p> <p>TCPA – Town and Country Planning Association</p>
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## Introduction

1. Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) is a proposal for a major expansion of Hemel Hempstead to its East and North and accompanying town wide transformation proposals. The proposals have been supported by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government through the award of Garden Communities funding and support with its associated programme.
2. Recognising the exceptional need for growth, the authorities - Dacorum Borough Council (DBC), St Albans City and District Council (SADC), and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), together with the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) have agreed to work collaboratively and proactively to further the aims and objectives of the programme.
3. A report to Cabinet 30<sup>th</sup> July 2019 sets out the detailed background to the project with short-term programme intentions and governance matters.
4. On 2<sup>nd</sup> October a Spatial Visioning Workshop was held for HGC/Hemel Hempstead to engage with Members across the authorities and a wide spectrum of stakeholders. The purpose was to engender creativity and ownership of the garden community potential and to directly understand what hopes participants shared.
5. A Members' briefing was held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019 on HGC by Dacorum Officers to provide Hemel Hempstead Ward Councillors with some background to the project. A further briefing was held on 11 November 2019 for East Hemel Hempstead, HGC Phase 1 led by The Crown Estate with Dacorum officers.
6. Earlier this month, a further Cabinet report provided a detailed programme plan, with modified governance structure and supporting Terms of Reference, and Memorandum of Understanding. This work was developed with the support of the newly-established HGC Board and additional HGC team

resource, after considerable partnership working and consideration by the Board on 18 December 2019.

### **Programme Plan and governance changes**

7. To help guide and focus the project, an updated Strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Governance Structure has been drafted between DBC, SADC and HCC (Appendices 1 and 2).
8. The revised MOU now defines HGC as the proposed development of around 11,000 homes and 10,000 jobs, located on the eastern and northern edge of Hemel Hempstead and the accompanying transformation of Hemel Hempstead as a whole. The accompanying mission statements have been combined into one and reads as follows:  
  
*Supported by Garden City Principles<sup>1</sup>, Hemel Garden Communities will take the best of the New Town heritage into the 21st century with over 11,000 homes and 10,000 jobs and Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter at its heart, anchoring the transformation of Hemel Hempstead and the wider area.*
9. The MOU sets out that the principal partners for the delivery of the Programme are the three Authorities and the LEP. A letter of support is required from the LEP to endorse the MoU and this was received in early January 2020.
10. The Terms of Reference for the Programme are set out in Appendix 3.
11. The Strategic Project Plan and operational project plan have been replaced with the Programme Plan (See Appendix 4). The Programme Plan has been developed with layers of information identifying high-level policies that apply to the proposal, a detailed programme, a delivery plan tracker, and risk register.

### **Next Steps**

12. The Hemel Garden Communities team is now resourced with a Lead Officer from each of the authorities and an Interim Programme Manager. The team will be dedicating a day a week to work in the same location together from January 2020.
13. Other key matters include:

*Resourcing a HGC project team* – A permanent Programme Manager will be recruited in early 2020. The funding provided by MHCLG was only part of the overall bid and work will continue to press for the remaining funding to be provided.

*Work priorities* - The team will also be responsible for progressing priority work streams including the HGC Spatial Vision and High Level Infrastructure

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<sup>1</sup> Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), Garden City Principles, <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/garden-city-principles> (last accessed 26/11/2019)

Delivery Plan, both covering Hemel Hempstead and the wider town. These will feed into the HGC New Development Strategic Masterplan and HGC Transformational Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Hemel Hempstead and wider town).

*Engagement Strategy* – A draft engagement strategy is expected by February 2020. The strategy will look at existing, as well as new and innovative ways of engaging with the public, elected members and key stakeholders to ensure everyone has a meaningful say on proposals as they emerge. Engagement with the Local Plans team to ensure the strategy benefits the emerging Local Plan is also essential.

*Local Plan* – The project team will work with the Local Plan teams at both Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to ensure any emerging work on HGC is aligned by means of a strategic policy. Careful consideration will be needed to ensure that the policy meets the test of soundness and is sufficiently effective that it will be able to influence future development proposals across the town.

*HGC Phase 1* – The Crown Estate (TCE) as majority landowners for the initial phase of development on land to the east of Hemel Hempstead (predominantly in the administrative area of SADC) are working with DBC and SADC through a Planning Performance Agreement to develop evidence to inform a future planning application. The planning application for the first phase is expected to deliver c.2,500 new homes and the business park element of the scheme, mainly to SADC as Local Planning Authority later in 2020.

*Herts Growth Board Business Case* – The project team are working with Herts Growth Board to develop a business case for additional government resourcing for HGC as part of a growth bid for the programme supporting Hertfordshire's East-West Southern Growth Corridor.

## **Appendices**

- 1. Memorandum of Understanding**
- 2. Governance Structure**
- 3. Programme Terms of Reference**
- 4. Programme Plan**