



# Creative Hertsmere

Think... Develop... Act...

## Economic Development Strategy

**A plan for prosperity in Hertsmere**



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This document is available electronically and in large print  
Published in July 2014



# Foreword



Hertsmere is a great place to live and work and has a diverse and relatively strong economy with enormous potential to grow further.

Creative Hertsmere sets out the council's vision to ensure we have a thriving, vibrant and prosperous economy, underpinned by creativity and enterprise.

The area hosts a wide range of business and enterprise with a particular emphasis on creative industries and niche pharmaceutical activity. There are a number of major employers across different sectors in the borough and these include for example, Soundcraft and Studer and Canada Life in Potters Bar, Pizza Hut and Cardif Pinnacle in Borehamwood, and Costco and Porcelanosa in Bushey, and Cancer Research UK and Bio Products Laboratory in South Mimms.

The borough also has a rich film and television heritage and is home to BBC Elstree and the world-famous Elstree Studios which the council owns. It is also home to the Elstree University Technical College which has a special focus on the technical skills, trades, crafts and technologies that support the entertainment, film, television, theatre, visual arts and digital communication industries.

The council has an important role to play in shaping our local economy but cannot achieve this in isolation and therefore a crucial element of our strategy will be to work in partnership to support and grow new and existing businesses and to attract inward investment. We wish to see the economy grow and prosper generating employment opportunities and we need to ensure we have a valued local skilled workforce in place to take advantage of those opportunities.

This strategy has been informed by feedback received from stakeholders across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors. Feedback has been very positive and supportive and I would like to thank all those individuals and organisations who took time to review and comment on the consultation draft.

*Councillor Seamus Quilty*  
Housing and Economic Development Portfolio Holder  
Hertsmere Borough Council

# Introduction

The economic crisis of recent years has placed significant pressure on local economies, communities and residents.

The purpose of Creative Hertsmere is to present, as the basis for delivery, the council's aims and proposed actions for improving economic prosperity across the borough so that residents and businesses can thrive and contribute to creating sustainable communities.

Creative Hertsmere presents a vision that outlines the aspirations for what the borough's economy will look like in 2026 and a set of priorities for action to 2016 as the first steps to achieving the vision. The strategy will be considered alongside the comments of other local and strategic stakeholders as part of the council's Local Plan process.

In developing this vision, the council recognises the importance of considering all aspects of community life and champions the concept of 'smart growth' (as promoted by the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership) that embraces and responds to the dynamic relationship between the borough's economy and its diverse communities and places. To this end, this strategy has been informed by a combination of data analysis, policy reviews and stakeholders discussions, all of which together have ensured an intelligence led approach to agreeing the vision, strategic priorities and action plan.

The council cherishes the area's economic heritage in the creative industries and will make sure that the traditional values of innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship are embedded in all aspects of community life and as a driver for local economic development.

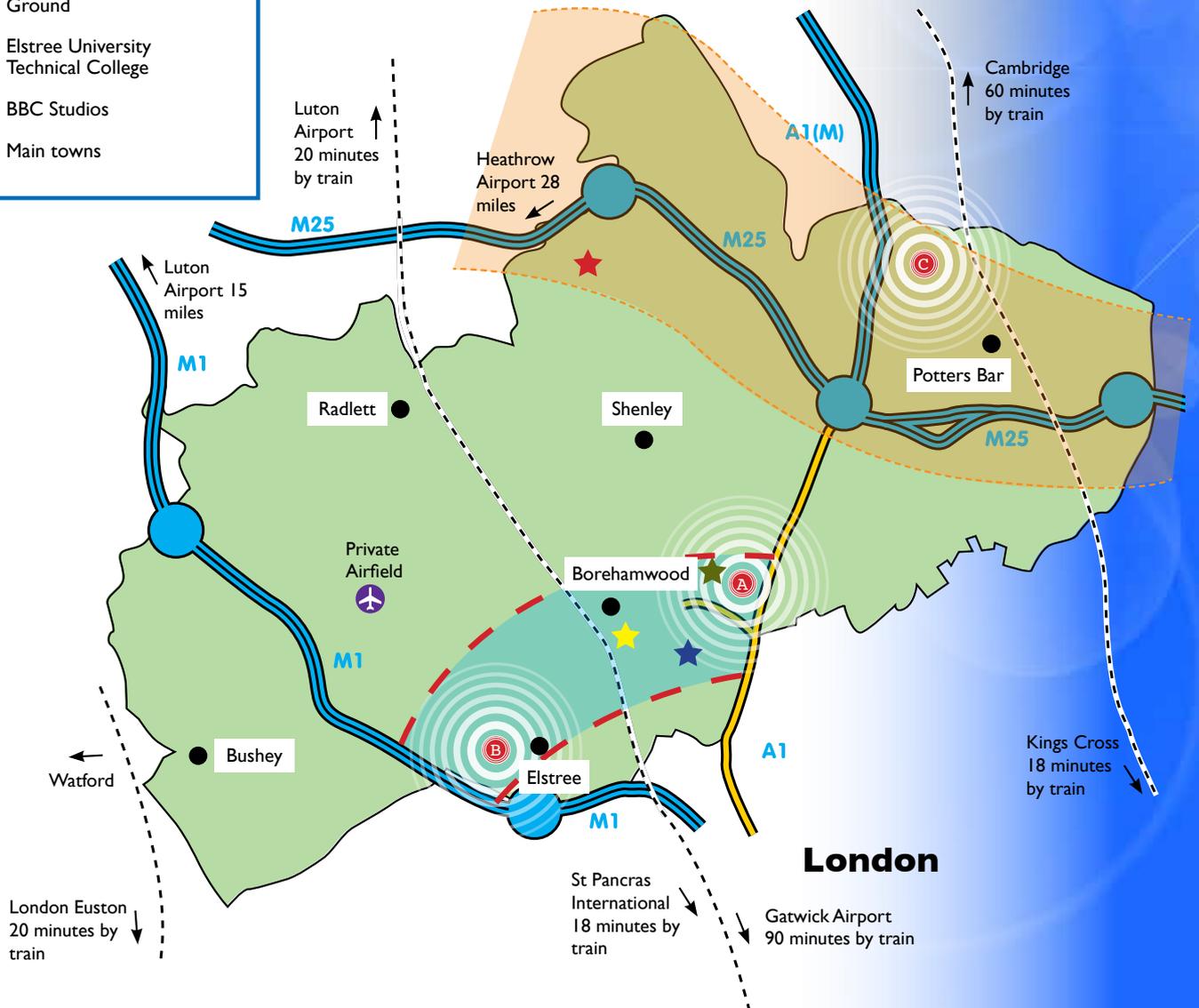
The council will use Creative Hertsmere to underpin joint working with partners and build better relationships with businesses in Hertfordshire and the wider economic geography to optimise the benefits of collaboration and unlock the full potential of the area's resources.

## **This document is structured by the following sections:**

- **Strategic context** highlighting the borough's assets, challenges and opportunities along with the external factors faced.
- **Vision and priorities** presenting the long-term policy position and basis for short-term actions.
- **Making it happen** detailing governance, joint working and resourcing arrangements.
- **Measuring success** detailing performance management arrangements to support delivery. This includes identifying the headline targets and providing a narrative as to what success will look like in 2016, 2020 and 2026.
- **Action planning** detailing the headline actions that will drive delivery to 2016 and underpin the detailed work that will be taken forward through several work streams.



# Strategic context



# The borough of Hertsmere...

## ...has significant assets:

- Excellent strategic location abutting London. Direct access to motorway (M25, M1 and A1(M)) and rail networks including an 18-minute rail journey to London St Pancras (and onward international and southern rail services) and excellent connections to Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton and Stansted Airports.
- High quality homes and countryside, a private airfield and places of interest, making the area an attractive location to invest, live, work and learn in and to visit.
- Existing employment sites at Elstree Way, Centennial Business Park and Cranborne Road Industrial Area.
- Home to Elstree Studios, BBC Elstree and Arsenal Football Club's training ground.
- Proactive council which saved Elstree Studios by acquiring and investing in the site.
- Strong socio-economic profile of the borough.
- Schools, both public and private, are some of the best in the country.

## ...is determined to overcome challenges:

- To encourage growth which reinforces the principles of London's Green Belt whilst promoting the borough as a place to invest and do business.
- To work with the rail companies to deal with issues of overcrowded and congested trains.
- To promote infrastructure programs to deal with high levels of congestion on main transport routes
- To find ways of opening up key employment sites in order to tackle poor access e.g. Cranborne Road.
- To revitalise town centres in Borehamwood, Potters Bar and Bushey with a concerted and cohesive approach.
- To address poor gateways and entrances to generate a sense of place and arrival.
- To enhance those areas suffering from a poor quality built environment and public realm.
- To ensure that there is access to a variety of further education provision to upskill local people whilst meeting the current and future needs of businesses.
- To tackle the pockets of deprivation characterised by low skills, high unemployment, low incomes and poorer living conditions.

## ...is presented with a number of opportunities:

- Several development sites strategically positioned along the A1 and M25 corridors that will help achieve

the economic growth ambitions of the borough and the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. In particular, the borough has sites that are suited for locating niche pharmaceutical industries and major sports developments.

- A New University Technical College to help promote the creative sector and provide young people with the skills to keep Hertsmere at the cutting edge of film, television and creative media.
- The chance to capture the untapped footfall associated with transport connectivity and the film and television industry.
- To build on the emerging evening economy.
- An enterprising dynamic local authority willing to work in new ways and provide strong strategic and community leadership.
- A pivotal location for knowledge-based industries: creative sectors associated with Elstree Studios and the BBC in film and television, Arsenal FC in top level sport, science and pharmaceutical sectors or financial and business services in Centennial Business Park.
- A chance to lead on the development of a stronger creative sector work programme, maintaining and building on the area's extensive film and television heritage.

## There are several external factors that will need to be considered and monitored if the borough's assets are to be fully harnessed to grasp the challenges and opportunities faced:

- Increasing globalisation that exposes local economies to international shocks, competition and markets with particular threats/opportunities from emerging economies in China, Russia, India and Brazil.
- New agile working arrangements changing the accommodation needs of business.
- Increased focus on high value knowledge-based industries.
- Rapid advances in technology that are changing industrial processes, communications and access to markets.
- Increasing security threats.
- Implications of climate change on businesses and investment decisions.
- Changing relationship between the UK and the European Union.

All of these factors are detailed in the Hertsmere 'State of the Borough Report' and will be monitored through the annual Hertsmere Economic Report.

# The vision

**To grasp the challenges and opportunities faced and unlock the full potential of the borough's assets, Creative Hertsmeres's vision is that:**

**By 2026 the borough will have a thriving, vibrant and prosperous economy that is underpinned by creativity and enterprise which:**

- drives innovation and business growth to deliver the 8,000 jobs cited in the Hertsmeres Core Strategy.
- has a well-educated and skilled population willing and able to compete in the local and global economy.
- supports creative driven economic development within the borough and across the wider area with a particular focus on the film and television industry.
- targets support for the most vulnerable.
- leads and champions town centre improvements to improve the retail and leisure offer across the borough.
- creates a labour market where the educational institutions (connected from early years to higher education) meet the current and future needs of the economy.

# The strategic priorities

**To translate this vision into action the following priority projects will be pursued:**

- **Creating certainty for investment** through strong leadership that will put in place critical infrastructure, a coherent and robust policy framework and a joined up "can do" approach to deliver the following work programmes:
  - PP1 - 'Invest Hertsmeres' to develop key sites, to improve both physical and digital connectivity of the area and to market what Hertsmeres has to offer.
  - PP2 - 'Vibrant Hertsmeres' to increase the attractiveness of the borough.
- **Nurturing employment and enterprise** through providing tailored support, promoting exports, providing high quality "fit for purpose" accommodation, developing key sectors and driving effective networks, all of which will be provided by delivering the following work programmes:
  - PP3 - 'Enterprising Hertsmeres' to support local businesses with advice and infrastructure including modern flexible accommodation.
  - PP4 - 'Hertsmeres Connect' to provide business engagement and support delivery.
  - PP5 - 'Hertsmeres Business Charter' to ensure council services support and nurture the local economy.



- **Championing learning and skills** through working with employers and training providers to deliver the following work programme:
  - PP6 - 'Skilling Hertsmere' to promote apprenticeships, traineeships, work placements and entrepreneurship which will reinforce the existing strong skill base.
- **Generating quality places** that will focus on unlocking the economic potential of the borough through:
  - PP7 - 'South Hertfordshire/North London Creative Corridor' focuses on the M25 corridor and is currently being explored with neighbouring authorities.
  - PP8 - 'Elstree Creative Corridor' covering the east/west corridor stretching from the M1 through Borehamwood and Elstree to the A1 and encompassing the Elstree Way Employment Area, Centennial Park Industrial Area, Borehamwood town centre and other commercial opportunity sites.
  - PP9 - 'Town Centre Improvement Strategies' which will look at improving the vitality and viability in Borehamwood, Potters Bar and Bushey.
- **Driving a sector approach** to support all types of businesses across the borough with a particular emphasis on creative industries, scientific research and development, and niche pharmaceutical activity.
  - PP10 - Sector strategies to profile sectors, facilitate sector focused networks and deliver sector based action plans.



# Making it happen

## Partnership working

**It is proposed that a Hertsmere Economic Board is established to provide strategic direction and monitoring and challenge to the delivery of Creative Hertsmere. It is proposed that membership consists of representation from the following organisations/groups:**

- Hertsmere Borough Council
- Local businesses
- Business support
- Further Education
- Education providers (from 0 to 19 years old)
- Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Hertsmere Connect (Watford and West Herts Chamber of Commerce)
- Jobcentre Plus
- Landowners/developers/agents
- Young people
- Voluntary and community sector

**It proposed that the board has no more than 10 members to focus discussion and enable agile and decisive action. The current thinking regarding other elements of the board includes:**

- meetings to be held every three months
- council to chair the meetings
- secretariat to be provided by the council's Economic Development team
- reporting lines to Local Strategic Partnership and LEP

The Economic Board will ensure slippage in delivery is identified at an early stage and appropriate action is taken via membership organisations and/or sub groups to address any issues raised.

It is envisaged that sub groups will be established to take forward each of the work streams. These will include representatives from those organisations sitting on the board as well as others dictated by the particular work streams. A Creative Hertsmere Skills Group will be the first sub group set up to agree and take forward an action plan for the Skilling Hertsmere priority project (PP6).

An investment plan will be developed as part of each work stream to consider current resourcing from across all partner organisations against the resource requirement. This will enable a gap analysis to inform bids for further resources from both partner organisations and external sources.

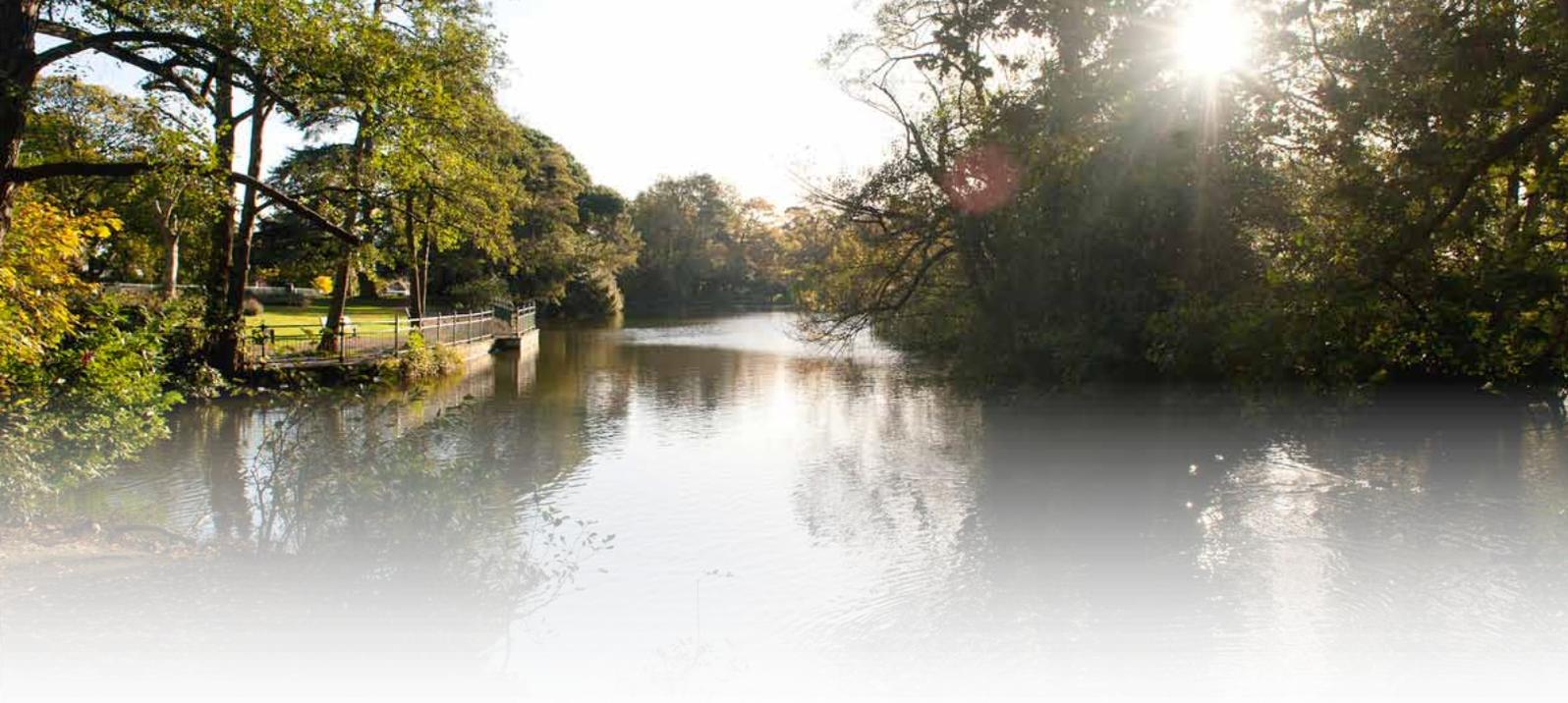
# Measuring success

An annual Hertsmere Economic Report will be produced to consider progress in terms of reviewing headline indicators (presented below - identified in the Hertsmere State of the Borough Report), spotlighting successes, highlighting challenges and refining the action plan accordingly, thereby ensuring that the strategy is agile and flexible and, as a result, remains fit for purpose. The table below presents the initial proposed headline indicators that will enable performance to be measured.

Priority	Headline indicator	Targets			
		Current	2016	2020	2026
Creating certainty for investment	% of borough covered by superfast broadband	96	97	99	100
	Area in square metres of potential new commercial space based on land supply (accumulative)*	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
	Number of new residential units built (forecast and accumulative )	519	1036	2072	3637
	% change in crime levels	-2.5	-2	-2	-2
Nurturing employment and enterprise	Number of new business start-ups per year	652	670	700	760
	Number of business closures per year	571	550	520	490
	Net change in businesses per year	81	120	180	270
	Number of jobs created (accumulative)	0	1000	4000	8000
	Number of businesses engaged (accumulative)	50	160	390	700
	Number of businesses supported (accumulative)	25	80	195	350
	Area in square metres of new flexible business space (accumulative)*	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
	% of working age residents economically active	75	79	82	86
	Number of residents on key out of work benefits	5720	5300	5000	4500
	Number of residents on jobseeker's allowance	1061	950	850	700
	Gross weekly pay for employees in the borough	537	600	650	750
Gross weekly pay for residents in the borough	559	600	650	750	
Championing learning and skills	Number of apprenticeships supported per year	250	350	450	600
	Number of businesses with apprentices per year	100	120	150	200
	% of residents who are managers and professionals	47	49	51	54
	Number of residents with NVQ Level 4 and above	23,800	25,000	28,000	33,000

This table presents a snapshot of a range of actual and forecasted data as a basis for providing an overarching direction of travel to reflect the council's ambitions. The State of the Borough Report and associated monitoring reports will provide the basis on which to measure progress to gauge the level of success and inform future action planning and delivery.

\*This indicator will be updated when the Hertsmere Sites Allocation Plan is adopted.



## What will success look like?

**Taking the headline indicators alongside the main points in the action plan it is envisaged that in:**

### 2016...

- The Local Plan is well advanced and key commercial and residential sites identified.
- An Inward Investment Programme is established and the key strategic commercial sites are now well positioned in a global marketplace and there is a steady stream of investor interest.
- There is a greater understanding of the impact of planned growth on the A1, M1 and M25 and proposals are being developed to ensure appropriate improvements.
- Rail improvements are in place and further enhancements are being developed.
- There is a strong pipeline of town centre improvement schemes which are already improving footfall and associated trade. As a result, shop vacancy rates have fallen and community safety has improved.
- Programmes are being developed to enhance Hertsmere gateway features and for infrastructure improvements needed to open up key employment areas such as Cranborne Road Industrial Area.
- Most of the borough is served with superfast broadband and plans are underway to increase speeds even further to meet the electronic trading needs of both existing companies and new businesses coming to the area.
- There is an increase in the offer and take-up of apprenticeships which is already resulting in improved skill and occupation levels across the borough with a particular focus on creative industries, scientific research and development, and niche pharmaceutical industries.
- The council is involved with a number of local and strategic partnerships to take forward the economic growth priorities. In particular, many local businesses are becoming engaged through the Hertsmere Connect Work Programme and the council's Business Charter. As a result, council services are becoming more aligned to unlock the potential of the economy.
- There is a strong creative sector grouping to encourage further growth in the UK creative sector and Hertsmere is recognised as the leading place for the film and television industries nationwide.



## 2020...

- The Local Plan has been adopted with delivery well underway and the next review being planned.
- The Inward Investment Programme is well established with investors and businesses secured for the key strategic sites.
- Further improvements along the A1, M1 and M25 are programmed within investment plans ready for delivery.
- Most planned town centre improvement schemes are complete with footfall and trade continuing to improve and, as a result, shop vacancy rates and community safety have both improved further.
- Programmes are being finalised to enhance Hertsmere gateway features and for infrastructure improvements needed to open up key employment areas such as Cranborne Road Industrial Area.
- Most of the borough is served with improved superfast broadband.
- There is a continued increase in the offer and take-up of apprenticeships which is already resulting in improved skill and occupation levels across the Borough with a particular focus on creative industries, scientific research and development, and niche pharmaceutical industries.
- The council is involved with a number of formal joint ventures with local and strategic partners to take forward the priorities. The Hertsmere Connect Work Programme is self-sufficient and more than half of local businesses are engaged. The council's Business Charter continues to evolve and to unlock the potential of the economy and local businesses are enjoying growth through improved networking and support.



## 2026...

- The Local Plan is going through its third review and new sites are being explored to support current priorities.
- The Inward Investment Programme is embedded and the key strategic sites are developed.
- The A1, M1 and M25 improvements are complete and further improvements are being investigated as part of the Local Plan review process.
- A further phase of town centre improvement schemes has been developed and implemented to sustain vitality and viability and increase the number of social and cultural facilities on offer.
- Gateway features are in place and infrastructure improvements have taken place opening up key sites.
- All of the borough is served with superfast broadband which is critical for sales, marketing and exporting.
- There is a continued increase in the offer and take-up of apprenticeships across the creative industries, scientific research and development, and niche pharmaceutical industries.
- The council is involved with several joint ventures that have unlocked the council's assets to increase revenue and drive economic growth priorities.

# Action planning to 2016

The table below details the headline actions that will underpin the development and delivery of several work streams to coordinate resources and drive delivery.

Priority	Priority projects	Headline actions	Timescale	Lead
Creating certainty for investment	PP1 - Invest Hertsmere	• Attend MIPIM UK (International Property Event) as part of Hertfordshire grouping to promote Hertsmere internationally	Autumn 2014	Partnerships and Community Engagement Team * (PCET)
		• Produce inward investment brochures to market key development sites	Spring 2015	PCET * / Landowners
		• Feed into the Hertfordshire Economic Development Officer Group to lobby for improvements across Hertsmere	Ongoing	PCET *
		• Deliver broadband demand stimulation initiative	2014 to 2015	Hertfordshire County Council
		• Explore establishment of council-owned property development company	Autumn 2014	Chief Executive/ Asset Management *
	PP2 - Vibrant Hertsmere	• Develop Strategies for public realm improvement across main towns	2014 onwards	PCET * /Planning Policy Team*
	• Develop programme for the use of the section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy money in order to deliver improvements	Autumn 2014	Planning Policy Team*	
Nurturing employment and enterprise	PP3 - Enterprising Hertsmere	• Signpost business support networks and programmes currently on offer throughout the country	Ongoing	PCET * / Hertsmere Connect
		• Feed into Asset Management Strategy	Autumn 2014	Asset Management *
	PP4 - Hertsmere Connect	• Develop programme of business meetings and events to improve business networking across the borough including Business Expo in September	Ongoing	Hertsmere Connect
	PP5 - Hertsmere Business Charter	• Publish charter and support through council Business Champions Group	2014 onwards	PCET *

\*Hertsmere Borough Council

Priority	Priority projects	Headline actions	Timescale	Lead
Championing learning and skills	PP6 - Skilling Hertsmere	• Develop and support the roll out of the Dragons Apprentice Challenge across the borough	Autumn 2014	PCET *
		• Set up and run skills group	Summer 2014	PCET *
		• Produce and drive forward skills strategy and action plan	Autumn 2014	Skills Group
		• Encourage and promote apprenticeships internally and externally	Autumn 2014	PCET * /Skills Group
Quality places	PP7 - South Hertfordshire/ North London Creative Corridor	• Put in place joint working arrangements with other local authorities in the corridor	Autumn 2014	PCET * /LEP
		• Agree and deliver joint work programme	2015 onwards	Corridor Grouping
	PP8 - Elstree Creative Corridor	• Consider key sites as part of the review of Local Plan	2014 to 2017	Planning Policy Team*
	PP9 - Town Centre Improvement Strategies	• Consider strategies to revitalise the town centres to make them viable for the modern economy	2015 onwards	PCET * / Planning Policy Team* / Asset Management Team *
Driving a sector approach	PP10 - Sector Strategies	• Produce sector profiles, beginning with the creative sector	2014 to 2016	PCET *
		• Support Creative England film charter	Summer 2014	PCET *
		• Develop sector networks, beginning with the creative sector cluster	2014 to 2016	PCET *
		• Develop and deliver sector based action plans	2014 to 2016	PCET *
Making it happen	PP11 - Partnership Working	• Set up economic board and hold quarterly meetings	Autumn 2014	PCET *
		• Set up sub groups to drive delivery	Autumn 2014	PCET *

\*Hertsmere Borough Council



# At the forefront of creative innovation

Working in partnership...



# At the heart of the film and television industry