

Leader of the Council



Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP

Secretary of State for Housing
Communities and Local Government
Ministry of Housing
Communities and Local Government
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Steve Jarvis

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4 November 2025

Dear Secretary of State,

Hertfordshire's Ambition for a Mayoral Strategic Authority

We wish to formally express Hertfordshire's ambition to progress towards the establishment of a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA), as soon as possible. This is in line with your Government's vision for devolution and local government reform as set out in the English Devolution White Paper (December 2024) and the subsequent English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill (July 2025). This letter has the support of the Hertfordshire Growth Board, comprising of the leaders of all eleven Local Authorities, Business, Academia, Health and Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Government has outlined an ambition for all parts of the country to benefit from devolution and Hertfordshire can deliver this at pace. Hertfordshire is a high-performing county with one of the largest, most productive local economies in the country. Our GVA of £50bn is almost as large as Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire combined, and we have global capabilities in seven of the eight Industrial Strategy growth sectors. It is truly an asset for UK Plc.

In order to unlock the full potential of Hertfordshire, we share your view that a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) will provide the coherent governance and strategic capacity to go further and faster. The prize is to secure greater inclusive growth, drive innovation, and deliver better public services across our 1.2m residents and 60,000 businesses here in Hertfordshire. There would also be consequential growth and benefits across the wider sub region, driving up the net contribution to the Exchequer and reducing demand on hard pressed public services.

We will shortly be publishing our Economic Strategy, Get Hertfordshire Working Plan, and Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Next year we will be progressing a new Local Transport Plan, Digital/AI Strategy and developing our Spatial Development Strategy. These are the foundations that will equip the new Mayor with the tools they need to develop Hertfordshire's Local Growth Plan and investment priorities as soon as they take office.

In support of our Economic Strategy, we will be allocating significant resources (circa £30m) through an Investment Fund to deliver our growth ambitions and capitalise on key opportunities that can be realised at pace, ahead of devolution. We believe that over the next two years, this will lever the potential for nationally significant investment in Hertfordshire, both from our local industry partners as well as national and international investors. This is crucial to progressing our growth plans and we would welcome a dialogue over co-design and potential co-investment as we progress towards an MSA and Mayor for Hertfordshire.

Aligning our proposals for an MSA with the current Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme and the associated timelines makes economic and practical sense. This would require the MSA to have its vesting day on 1 April 2028, alongside the new Unitary Authorities, with Mayoral elections in May 2028. It would enable the seamless continuation of the alignment of our economic strategy with the emerging local growth plan. The Mayor, can quickly build on the investment pipeline created, moving into implementation at pace as well as driving scale and conglomeration across the region. This timeline will minimise disruption to service delivery, particularly to critical services such as Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue, whose staff would otherwise face two TUPE transfers. It would also support a smoother transition to new arrangements alongside LGR. Furthermore, it will align with the term of office for the Police and Crime Commissioner allowing the Mayor to take up the full breadth of their public safety and other responsibilities.

An MSA for Hertfordshire is a win for Hertfordshire and for UK Plc. Until that is in place, our residents and businesses are missing out on growth opportunities, and UK Plc is missing out on the fiscal and social benefits of more jobs and commercial activity. We are ready to move at pace and have the capability and collective leadership ambition to do so. We ask for your support in enabling this next step in Hertfordshire's evolution and the UK's prosperity.

We welcome the opportunity to work closely with your department to co-design the scope, powers, and governance arrangements in relation to devolution and have dedicated senior officer resource to manage the transition programme. This will ensure that Hertfordshire's proposals are consistent with national policy objectives and local aspirations.

We are copying this letter to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury James Murray MP, Baroness Taylor of Stevenage, Miatta Fahnbulleh, the Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities and the Minister for Building Safety, Fire and Democracy Samantha Dixon MBE MP. We will also share this with our Hertfordshire MPs.

Yours sincerely,

County of opportunity



Steve Jarvis

Leader of Hertfordshire County Council



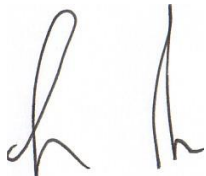
Mayor Peter Taylor

Chair, Hertfordshire Growth Board



Adrian Hawkins OBE

Chair, Hertfordshire Futures



Professor Gurch Randhawa

Acting Chair
Hertfordshire & West Essex Integrated Care Board



Professor Wendy Wills

Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of
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Jonathan Ash-Edwards

Hertfordshire Police & Crime Commissioner