

Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall CH316
Hertford SG13 8DQ

30 October 2015

Business Rates
Department for Communities and Local Government
2nd Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION TO FORM BUSINESS RATES POOL

Please accept this letter as our formal proposal to form a new Business Rates Pool in Hertfordshire with the following members:

Hertfordshire County Council
Broxbourne Borough Council
Hertsmere Borough Council
North Herts District Council
Three Rivers District Council
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

If the new Pool is approved, members of the existing Pool (Hertfordshire, Broxbourne, Stevenage, North Herts, Three Rivers and Welwyn Hatfield) have agreed that this should be dissolved. If the new Pool is not approved, the existing Pool will continue.

The S151 officers and lead members of each authority have approved the principles of acting as a Pool, and the attached Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed. The application is also supported by Hertfordshire LEP, who will if required provide written confirmation of their support.

The key objectives in setting up a Pooling arrangement are to build capacity to invest in local developments that promote economic growth, working in collaboration with the LEP; and to develop joint working across administrative boundaries, supporting the planning of economic growth across the geographic area. Pool members represent key centres of economic activity in the county, where opportunities for growth are clearly identified. They have been chosen to maximise the resources available to support further economic development within the county of Hertfordshire.

From the retained resources, the County Council will set up an Economic Growth Fund that will be used to support specific projects developed with the LEP, for example by providing revenue match funding for LEP growth fund projects. These are expected to include projects in Hertfordshire districts that are not Pool members.

Other retained funding delivered from the pool will support joint projects to promote economic growth. These include:

- Broxbourne Borough Council /LEP – development of Enterprise Centre, to support the creation of new businesses
- Hertsmere Borough Council/LEP - Further development to Elstree Film Studios Limited to build additional stages and workshops which will bring significant business opportunities, not only to the Studios but also will provide additional opportunities for local employment with resulting economic regeneration.
- North Herts District Council – projects within the Economic Development Strategy, including marketing of District and identifying and developing areas for employment regeneration.
- Three Rivers District Council / LEP – development of Rickmansworth Work Hub; joint work with LEP / County Council / University of Hertfordshire on inward investment and Growth Hub.
- Welwyn Hatfield District Council / County Council/LEP – further cross-partner working for regeneration of Hatfield town centre, and launch of a revised Economic Development Strategy, including a Business Forum.

In accordance with DCLG process, this proposal is subject to the details contained in the draft Local Government Finance Report, and any conditions added or amended by the Department.

Yours faithfully,

Claire Cook
Assistant Director- Finance,
Hertfordshire County Council

Sandra Beck
Director of Finance,
Broxbourne Borough Council

Norma Atlay
Strategic Director Finance, Policy & Governance
North Herts District Council

Sajida Bijle
Director of Resources,
Hertsmere Borough Council

Joanne Wagstaffe
Director of Finance

Pam Kettle
Director (Finance and Operations)

Three Rivers District Council

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

