

Dear Prime Minister

Securing Devolution Across Yorkshire

Many congratulations on your recent election, and we look forward to working with you and your Government to take forward our shared ambitions.

In recent months we have had very constructive talks with Ministers and their officials to secure meaningful devolution in Yorkshire. We hope that your arrival can allow devolution across Yorkshire to become a reality and complete the missing part of the jigsaw in the devolution map in England. The proposal, which provides the opportunity to add £30bn a year to the economy, demonstrates the commitment and cross party support to deliver transformational benefits across the region.

Devolution in Yorkshire is critical to deliver our shared objectives, which cross political divides and are about growth in a post-Brexit world. It aligns to your stated priorities of more investment in desperately needed transport and full fibre digital infrastructure, increase inward investment and help our companies export, deliver more houses to meet the acute shortage across the county, quicken the progress we are making in sustainable energy generation and carbon capture, better address the skills shortages in our workforce, and critically, help tackle deprivation, both urban and rural, wherever it exists in our communities.

Our previous proposal to Government in 2018 was turned down. We have listened to the reasons given for this Government decision, and have revised our approach so that it keeps true to our ambition for a Yorkshire deal, while securing interim arrangements to allow the benefits of devolution for our communities in cities, towns and rural areas to be felt more immediately.

Our proposal is twofold.

- For you to agree to joint work between your Government and ourselves that aims to have a Yorkshire deal in place in 2022. We are asking you to share a joint aim to achieve it, pursue meaningful negotiation and undertake the work necessary to make that a reality. Your agreement to this would, in a stroke, unblock the impasse that has existed between many of our authorities and your predecessor Governments and add up to £30 billion to the regional economy.
- For you to commit to the necessary interim arrangements within each sub region to allow meaningful devolution within Yorkshire between now and 2022. This would allow the Northern Powerhouse to fully realise its potential in the short term and for you therefore to have devolution deals in place across the major metropolitan areas of the north and the vital port and energy infrastructure in the east of the County, ensuring we are well placed to take advantage of the post-Brexit opportunity and ensure that no part of Yorkshire is left behind.

Your commitment would allow:

- The South Yorkshire Deal powers and funding unlocked, in place and used, in interim until the end of the current mayoral term in 2022, when those authorities who wish to do so would become part of the wider Yorkshire deal.

- An interim deal to be done in Leeds City Region (based on a model involving full and associate member councils) commensurate with those in other large metropolitan areas.

- Interim deals to be done across each sub region to maximise the post Brexit opportunity and the impact of the Local Industrial Strategies.

We have already worked through much of the detail of these propositions with your officials in the Treasury and in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Growth. We welcome further dialogue with them, and your championing of this devolution proposal is critical to make these plans a reality and make its delivery a priority in those Departments.

We hope that you will consider our proposal favourably, and we would of course welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters with you. It would send the clearest signal of intent to the people of Yorkshire to receive confirmation of your support for our proposal on or before Yorkshire day on 1 August. Together we can unlock the potential for Yorkshire!

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Sir Stephen Houghton, Leader, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Leader, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Cllr Tim Swift MBE, Leader, Calderdale Council

Cllr Richard Foster, Leader, Craven District Council

Mayor Ros Jones CBE, Doncaster Council

Cllr Richard Burton, Leader, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Cllr Richard Cooper, Leader, Harrogate Borough Council

Cllr Stephen Brady OBE, Leader, Hull City Council

Cllr Shabir Pandor, Leader, Kirklees Council

Cllr Judith Blake CBE, Leader, Leeds City Council

Cllr Carl Les, Leader, North Yorkshire County Council

Cllr Angie Dale, Leader, Richmondshire District Council

Cllr Keane Duncan, Leader, Ryedale District Council

Cllr Steve Siddons, Leader, Scarborough District Council

Cllr Mark Crane, Leader, Selby District Council

Mayor Dan Jarvis MP, Sheffield City Region

Cllr Peter Box CBE, Leader, Wakefield Council

Cllr Keith Aspden, Leader, City of York Council