



Mayor Tracy Brabin
West Yorkshire Combined Authority
40-50 Wellington Street
Leeds
LS1 2DE

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer,
HM Treasury

30 September 2021

Dear Chancellor,

SPENDING REVIEW 2021

I am writing to present West Yorkshire Combined Authority's submission for the upcoming Spending Review. You asked that our returns deliver opportunities and address actions to provide for the public, finding genuine opportunities to level up. Our submission shows how West Yorkshire can deliver.

We welcome that this Autumn you will set a multi-year budget, but you will see in our submission that in addition to shorter term funding, we require **greater certainty of secure, stable, and fair local government funding and public sector resourcing**, that enables flexibility and innovation. We believe that to enable regional priorities to be delivered and truly level up and unlock the potential of West Yorkshire, we require the transfer of money and powers through greater devolution to local areas.

On 12 March 2020 you visited West Yorkshire to meet our Local Authority Leaders and signed our historic devolution deal. Now as the first Mayor of West Yorkshire, I have a mandate to make a real difference to the lives of people across West Yorkshire. Our record on delivery shows that we are successful and can be a trusted partner best placed to respond effectively to the needs of our communities. This can only be achieved through further devolution that gives greater freedom and certainty. With more flexibility in the use of funds we can deliver common outcomes that achieve national priorities. At present this is lost in short-term funding and bidding allocations, and we hope that your spending review can address this.

The pandemic has had a severe impact, bringing to the fore the difficulties regional economies face, but also the potential we have to utilise our great strengths of partnership working with our Local Authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver during great crises. However, we have seen years of significant underinvestment that, coupled with constraints on public finance, means we do not have the resources required to level up and unlock our potential. Our submission sets out what is necessary, and if fully implemented will improve local, regional, and national outcomes.



In West Yorkshire **levelling up means closing gaps and addressing inequalities, which requires that we act in a systematic way to boost the social mobility of our most disadvantaged people.** A recent submission to government from Yorkshire Universities and Yorkshire & Humber Councils includes an embraced definition of levelling up that is “based on tackling long-standing local and regional inequalities and in particular address the challenges faced by the ‘left behind’ places. With implementation of the asks of our submission, and further devolution of powers and funding, West Yorkshire will be a region that is a net contributor to the UK economy, whilst at the same time levelling up our communities, tackling our inequalities, and delivering inclusive growth and tackling the climate emergency.

To enable West Yorkshire to successfully level-up, our strategic asks for this spending round, are:

- Further **devolution** of funding and powers.
- Flexibility and **long term certainty** of funding allocations to enable strategic long term plans to be realised.
- Certainty, stability and **fairness in Local Government Funding**: a multi-year settlement is required that provides our local authority partners with clarity and certainty and the ability to plan and allocate and manage resources effectively.
- **Delivering strategic rail infrastructure** to connect West Yorkshire, through delivery of schemes such as Northern Powerhouse Rail including a City Centre through Station in Bradford and full delivery of HS2.
- Continue to enable the **business voice to be at the heart of regional economic development** through LEPs.
- **Enable us to deliver the ‘shovel ready’ schemes** included in our submission, such as flood risk management and business support.

I welcomed the opportunity to attend an M10 introductory meeting this week with the new Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing, the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, and hope that collaborative discussion with Government and Mayors continues to enable us to deliver these objectives through empowerment of our endeavours, and with sufficient funding and powers to be devolved to the most local possible level where they can be used to do the most good.

We hope that our CSR submission gives you great confidence that we will utilise our strengths to support delivery of priorities, making a real difference, be innovative and level up.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracy Brabin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tracy Brabin
Mayor of West Yorkshire