

3 July 2015

Rt Hon Greg Clark MP
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Department for Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear

LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE: DELIVERING GROWTH TOGETHER

You will remember that we last met in March to discuss our ambitions for growth in Leicester and Leicestershire. Since then we have made significant progress and we have pleasure in submitting the attached proposal for your consideration.

By working in partnership we have we have already delivered a significant number of development and growth projects across the city and county that collectively have delivered 5000 new jobs and supported 3,000 new businesses to grow within the last three years. We have developed an effective framework to manage and commission our £100m Local Growth Fund which will unlock a further £160m of investment and create at least a further 2500 jobs and 1300 homes.

All of this has been delivered through effective partnership working between the private and public sector. However we believe that we can build upon our successes by strengthening these partnerships further. In particular we want to explore actively how the local authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire can work more closely together with Government and the Leicester Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership to enhance our collective impact on economic growth.

Our key proposal is to create a combined authority for Leicester and Leicestershire. The proposed combined authority (working with the LLEP) would have responsibilities for

- Strategic land use planning
- Strategic transport planning and investment
- Setting the strategic direction for the commissioning of local skills' programmes

To enable the combined authority and LLEP to work effectively we are asking government for:

- Long term funding commitments for transport investment
- Devolution of funding and the ability to commission skills programmes locally
- Enhanced funding and finance powers through the establishment of new Enterprise Zones to help deliver priority growth areas including at Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Parks, Leicester Strategic Regeneration Area (City Centre/Waterside) and East Midlands Enterprise Gateway.

A combined authority with devolved funding would create an integrated strategic framework to enable the delivery of investment plans for planning, transport and skills, and would create a clear and effective platform for accelerating economic prosperity in Leicester and Leicestershire.

We met with all seven of the district council leaders last Thursday at the Economic Growth Board for Leicester and Leicestershire and this proposal received unanimous support. This proposal is also fully supported by the LLEP Board.

We firmly believe that we have the knowledge, confidence and expertise to deliver significant growth in Leicester and Leicestershire and we look forward to working with Government to make that happen.



Sir Peter Soulsby, Mayor
Leicester City Council



Cllr Nick Rushton
Leader, Leicestershire County Council