

Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority
11 Broad Street West
Sheffield, S1 2BQ

25th March 2019

Dear Secretary of State

Unlocking the Sheffield City Region Devolution Deal whilst achieving our wider Devolution ambitions.

We write further to previous correspondence between us individually and collectively. We have had productive conversations between us and now record in this letter how we believe we might together move forward to unlock the Sheffield City Region devolution deal whilst furthering our wider devolution ambitions. With your help and that of your officials we believe we can make significant progress. Our position is:

- We all support the greater devolution of powers and funding from Westminster and Whitehall to local government and combined authorities, albeit that we have different views as to how that should happen.
- We are all clear that we should and will actively support each other in the achievement of our individual devolution ambitions. Each council has the right to make its own choices about its devolution arrangements, including the right to join, or not to join, a wider Yorkshire grouping from the outset if that is what individual places wish to do.
- None of that should be to the detriment of any individual council that wishes to remain in the current devolution arrangements.
- We all want to see the SCR deal powers and funding unlocked, in place and used up until the end of this current mayoral term in 2022. Our view is that Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield Combined Authority (SCR MCA) should remain in its current form until the end of this term.
- At the end of this current Mayoral term, those councils that do not see their future in a South Yorkshire arrangement must be free to join an alternative devolution group. The residual Mayoral SCR CA (which is comparable in scale with Cambridgeshire / Peterborough and larger than Tees Valley MCA) must benefit from the retention of powers as provided for by the current SCR deal and proportionate resources

calculated pro rata, accounting for current and future funding arrangements. This is what we refer to above as “no detriment”.

- We understand that this will require your officers to draw up a Sheffield City Region Combined Authority Order, which provides relevant powers and related governance arrangements. Such an order would require the consent of each of us.
- Your officials previously received correspondence and legal advice from Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield City Region Mayor’s office which indicates that moving to such an order can be achieved without the necessity and expense of duplicate consultation and we invite you to consider this. In parallel, Barnsley, Doncaster and the Mayor would expect their consent to the draft order to coincide with assurances and meaningful negotiations towards our differing post 2022 devolution arrangements and ambitions.

Clearly, all of the above will require significant work between our respective officials.

We believe the pragmatic solution we have set out above enables first and foremost, the unlocking of the Sheffield City Region deal, without hindering individual long-term devolution ambitions. This solution also gives effect to the mandate upon which Mayor Jarvis was elected last year and is in line with the community poll held by Barnsley and Doncaster, coupled with a guarantee for all of us that in working together pragmatically, collaboratively and with purpose, no detriment will ensue.

We hope that the Government will see this as a constructive and creative approach out of the current impasse and will feel able to support it.

Yours sincerely



Mayor Dan Jarvis MBE MP
Sheffield City Region
Mayoral Combined
Authority



Cllr Julie Dore
Leader, Sheffield City Council



Cllr Sir Stephen Houghton CBE
Leader, Barnsley Council



Cllr Chris Read
Leader, Rotherham
Council



Mayor Ros Jones CBE
Leader, Doncaster Council