



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
*Secretary of State for Communities and Local
Government*

**Department for Communities and Local
Government**

Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Cllr Peter Box
West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Wellington House
40-50 Wellington Street
Leeds
LS1 2DE

Tel: 0303 444 3450
Fax: 020 7035 0018
Email: sajid.javid@communities.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/dclg

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Thank you for your letter of 13 February regarding devolution to the Leeds City Region.

I am keen to see devolution to strong Mayoral Combined Authorities in our major cities. There is clearly enthusiasm for further devolution in Yorkshire, and I hope to see progress made. That is why the Government is committed to supporting leaders – from both local authorities and the business community – to continue to work together in order to come to an agreed position on geography for further devolution in Yorkshire. Any proposal would need to be consistent with a Sheffield City Region Mayoral election in 2018.

While I recognise the effort that has been put into the proposal for devolution to the Leeds City Region, I am not convinced that any geographical proposal at this time enjoys wide support from local stakeholders in Yorkshire.

As in other areas of the country we will only support devolution where there is an elected Mayor who has sufficient power to be properly accountable to the electorate for the outcomes achieved under devolution. The Mayor would work with a single combined authority, because an arrangement where there is one mayor and more than one combined authority dilutes accountability, and risks making the Mayor a figurehead. With necessary local and central government agreement, a proposal could involve creating a Combined Authority area with boundaries different to those of the current West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Devolution has to be locally led. Can I suggest that you now put options to us which meet the criteria we have agreed in all other devolution deals: a single mayor for a single Combined Authority, which has the possibility of achieving wider support from local stakeholders in Yorkshire. If this proves possible, I suggest we then meet shortly to scope out the content of such a deal with a view to concluding a deal as soon as possible this year. I look forward to discussing this with you further soon and working together to capitalise on the many exciting opportunities there are locally.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Sajid Javid', written in a cursive style.

RT HON SAJID JAVID MP