

The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
Secretary of State
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

22 November 2018

Dear *Secretary of State,*

In my letter of 16 November I committed to updating you following the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Board meeting on Thursday 22 November.

After a full and positive discussion, I am delighted to report that the Board reiterated its preference of 30 September to create a new LEP covering the whole of West Yorkshire, York and North Yorkshire. We believe this puts our area in the best possible place to realise extraordinary economic growth and sustained social transformation for all our communities.

Our initial submission included compelling evidence about why this geography best represents a functional and functioning economic area. To that I would add a further point from the LEP Board's discussion: we are proud of the impact LEPs have delivered since 2012, however the communities of West and North Yorkshire still have incredible untapped potential to offer the UK economy.

By combining forces across our diverse but connected rural, coastal and urban places, we will be in an even stronger position to take ambitious public investment decisions that are accountable to local stakeholders. We will also ensure that our area is at the heart of discussions on future local industrial strategy and maximise access to the UK's Shared Prosperity Fund for the benefit of our residents and businesses.

We are clear that any new LEP which results from a merger will operate differently to both existing LEPs, taking full account of the recommendations in *Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships* and building on the best elements of each current LEP. We have a clear plan to deliver a new, merged LEP by April 2020. Both LEPs have agreed to work together through a West and North Yorkshire transition working group to bring forward recommendations by March 2019. These recommendations will require

approval of both existing LEP boards to proceed to implementation of the future arrangements.

I trust this confirmation of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board's position, alongside similar commitment from the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP, means the question of geography is now resolved. I would therefore ask Government to confirm the allocation of capacity funding so that we can achieve a smooth transition to new LEP arrangements while also developing an ambitious local inclusive industrial strategy for our area.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that these new arrangements realise Government's ambitions for strengthened local enterprise partnerships, which play an even greater part in an economically thriving UK that works for all parts of the country.

Yours sincerely



Roger Marsh OBE
Chair, Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership

cc: *David Kerfoot MBE, Chair York, North Yorkshire & East Riding LEP*