



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
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25th July 2024

Dear Colleague,

You will have seen the letter from the Deputy Prime Minister last week inviting you to partner with Government to deliver a new programme of devolution in England. As the DPM set out, the Government sees huge advantage in the mayoral model and looks forward to working with Mayors in the Council of Nations and Regions to, amongst many other things, develop Local Growth Plans.

I wanted to set out further detail on how officers can engage with MHCLG to kick start this process. In short, I'm attaching a very simple expression of interest template to this email. We would be grateful to receive responses by the end of September at the latest – earlier entries are of course welcome! The template is deliberately designed to be very light touch. In the past, colleagues have occasionally felt the need to submit detailed proposals on their asks. I want to be clear that we don't need that at this stage.

We would however be interested in understanding your preferred geography for devolution, following consultation with your neighbours. This should obviously be informed by the need for devolution agreements to be tailored to sensible economic geographies, taking into account available data such as travel to work and advanced travel to work areas. Existing public service and partnership arrangements are another relevant factor. We would further welcome your initial views on adopting the mayoral model, noting the case that the Deputy Prime Minister made for its significant advantages.

As you know the Government will, in due course, publish a new devolution framework that defines precisely the powers and flexibilities available to areas entering into an agreement. These will be put into legislation via the English Devolution Bill, which we intend to introduce in the first session. I do appreciate that many of you will want to understand that fully before making a final decision. Much of the content is covered in the Labour Party manifesto and other pre-election documents, but my team and I would be happy to talk you through our more detailed provisional thinking, if helpful.

More widely, we stand ready to work with you in partnership to take forward discussions in the coming days and weeks. In the first instance, please reach out to colleagues in the Cities and Local Growth Unit who you work with closely. We look forward to continuing to work with you.

Yours sincerely,

Will Garton
Director General of Local Growth,
Communities and Devolution