

The Rt Hon. Sir Keir Starmer MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA



09 July 2024

Dear Prime Minister,

### **Core Cities – Delivering against the Government’s missions**

Congratulations on becoming Prime Minister at a pivotal time in our country's history, as we face many challenges both at home and abroad. As the leaders of the UK's major cities, we stand ready to work in partnership with your new government to deliver together the missions you have set out. We are greatly encouraged by your early commitment to meet with the political leadership across Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, and with Mayors in England. We look forward to the chance to meet directly in follow up to share our ideas and demonstrate the impact we can have in the major cities of all four nations of the UK.

Our biggest cities are central to success across all five missions. First and foremost, our cities provide the best opportunity to lift the UK out of the economic stagnation we find ourselves in, spreading growth around the UK and rebalancing our regional economic inequalities. As our work with the Royal Society of Arts found, reversing the chronic under-investment in our urban areas and matching the economic performance of successful cities around the world could unleash £100bn per annum to the UK economy.

Improving public services within and across our cities is essential to deliver the improvements in health, safety and opportunities that you have identified. If we could match the social outcomes that we achieve in London in each and every one of our cities we could lift 250,000 people out of unemployment, 1.2 million out of poverty and increase healthy life expectancy by up to eight years. This requires us to be smarter in how we deliver these services – prioritising investment in prevention and integrating service delivery in partnership between ourselves as Councils, with our neighbours and as part of Combined Authorities and Devolved Governments, and across the public, private and voluntary sectors. There is a lot that we can learn from previous approaches, such as Total Place, and a more substantive devolution offer. Fundamental to any success here is the need to stabilise local government finances. The commitment to multi-year settlements is welcome but we need to go further in addressing the underlying causes of cost and demand pressures facing council finances, alongside reviewing formulas so that they return to targeting those areas most in need.

Finally, our cities have a significant track record of achievement and continue to deliver, often in partnership with the private sector, our ambitions to reach Net Zero. We have developed innovative finance models that can draw in the private investment at scale to deliver the investment in local energy infrastructure and the retrofit of homes and buildings that we need.

Birmingham, Belfast, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield

In your opening speech as Prime Minister you invited us to join your government of service in the mission of national renewal. We accept that invitation on behalf of our cities and look forward to working in partnership across local government, mayoral and national governments, partners in the public and private sector and with your government to start to deliver meaningful change for all.

Yours sincerely,



**Councillor John Cotton**  
Leader, Birmingham City Council



**Councillor Tony Dyer**  
Leader, Bristol City Council



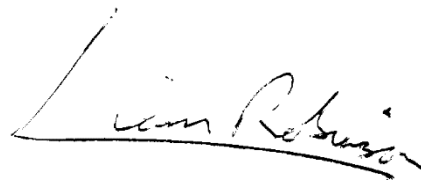
**Councillor Susan Aitken**  
Leader, Glasgow City Council



**Councillor Huw Thomas**  
Leader, Cardiff City Council



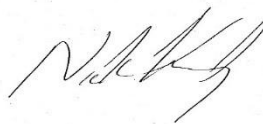
**Councillor James Lewis**  
Leader, Leeds City Council



**Councillor Liam Robinson**  
Leader, Liverpool City Council



**Councillor Bev Craig**  
Leader, Manchester City Council



**Councillor Nick Kemp**  
Leader, Newcastle City Council



**Councillor Neghat Khan**  
Leader, Nottingham City Council



**Councillor Tom Hunt**  
Leader, Sheffield City Council



**Lord Mayor of Belfast**  
Councillor Micky Murray