



Core Cities UK
C/O Manchester City Council
Level 3
Manchester Town Hall Extension
Lloyd Street
Manchester
M60 2LA

0161 234 5693
s.rainsbury@corecities.com

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street,
London,
SW1A 2AA

26 June 2020

Open Letter to the Prime Minister

Four Priorities for Government to Level Up the UK

The next round of Government economic policy announcements and spending will be a critical moment in setting the future course for the whole of the UK. What we do now will echo for years to come.

The Core Cities city regions deliver 26% of the UK's economy. If we supercharge these economic powerhouses, recovery will be stronger and faster. The right measures delivered now to cities and city regions can reset the dial on our economy, create more inclusive recovery and growth and a greener future.

Cities have the levers to drive growth across their entire city regions. Leveraging Enterprise Zones, skills funding and investment in infrastructure can transform the economic fortunes of urban centres as well as the neighbourhoods and towns which surround them.

You will know from your own time as mayor of a big city that public services have a critical role in supporting the economy, something that has been highlighted by C19. It is therefore essential that local government funding shortfalls are addressed as part of a recovery package. Without this our authorities, particularly those in England, face the very real prospect of being unable to deliver anything like the levels of support cities need. Some cities have recently raised the possibility that they will have to issue Section 114 notices, severely limiting their ability to play a part in recovery.

We support Government moves to create a national stimulus package which we believe should include: a patient Equity Fund to recapitalise business; implementation of the National Infrastructure Assessment including HS2; and support for green industry and digitisation.

We also believe Government needs to think wider than 'traditional' infrastructure. Our cities' world class cultural assets, so important to the reputation of this nation and the wellbeing of our citizens, face a particular challenge and we would urge you to consider proposals to help them.

Evidence also shows that locally delivered solutions, particularly around skills, employment and economic stimulus, are far more effective than nationally delivered initiatives. The costs of any local schemes could be met in part by repurposing existing funds like the Apprenticeship Levy and customising existing instruments like Enterprise Zones.

We therefore propose the following.

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

1. **Addressing local government financial gaps due to C19:** through a sustainable three-year settlement.
2. **Recognition within national policy of the role of cities:** and how to leverage them for wider benefit.
3. **Devolved Skills, Employment and Stimulus Package:** as a pathway to an inclusive low carbon economy.
4. **Financial freedoms and innovation:** using existing resources to unlock new investment.

By working together to align our priorities and investment programmes the potential of the great cities of the UK can be unlocked to play their full part in national recovery. We therefore ask that you join us for a short online discussion on these proposals and how we can work together to enable the recovery, growth and levelling up of our cities and the whole of the UK.

Our paper, appended, sets out further thinking on these priority areas, which we urge you to include in policy and spending announcements. We want to work in partnership with you and your government to use the C19-recovery to radically improve the physical and social fabric of our cities and city regions.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Ian Ward
Leader, Birmingham City Council



Mayor Marvin Rees
Mayor, Bristol City Council



Councillor Susan Aitken
Leader of Glasgow City Council



Councillor Huw Thomas
Leader of Cardiff City Council



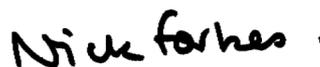
Councillor Judith Blake CBE
Leader, Leeds City Council



Mayor Joe Anderson OBE
Mayor, Liverpool City Council



Councillor Sir Richard Leese CBE
Leader, Manchester City Council



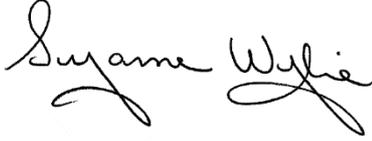
Councillor Nick Forbes CBE
Leader, Newcastle City Council



Councillor David Mellen
Leader, Nottingham City Council



Councillor Julie Dore
Leader, Sheffield City Council



Suzanne Wylie
Chief Executive, Belfast City Council