

Appendix 3

Dear Deputy Prime Minister

East Sussex - Devolution

Thank you for the invitation to submit an Expression of Interest in a devolution deal which is attached. We, the leaders of all the Councils in East Sussex and the Group leaders of all the parties on the County Council, welcome the Government's enthusiasm for devolution and the opportunity this gives us to build on existing relationships and strong foundations. We are proud of the strong collaboration between upper and lower tier councils that this letter reflects and are committed to using all possible vehicles to improve the quality of life of our residents, health of our businesses and vibrancy of our communities. This means we are particularly interested in greater local control to increase good job opportunities, skills, transport and infrastructure to support growth of suitable housing, action on climate change and resilience, our ability to increase the effectiveness of spatial planning and to explore innovative ways to meet the needs of our distinct local population. We await with great interest the Government's framework of powers to be devolved, and associated governance requirements.

We also await your view of "sensible economic geographies" for devolution and for future spatial planning and locally, we remain open to conversations with a range of partners about that. In East Sussex we have a proven strong network of partnerships that we have created, sustained and evolved. In seeking to develop our local economy the longstanding Team East Sussex and its supporting partnerships including Skills East Sussex and Business East Sussex provide strong and well-established broad partnerships with local stakeholders. We have a robust, recently renewed, economic evidence base and the new economic strategy will be agreed in September. We also have a proven track record of working at larger geographic scale when the issue makes that the most appropriate level.

Our experience and planning as a group of councils about how best to meet the needs of the residents, businesses and communities of East Sussex, all place a huge premium of the strength of the partnerships.

We know you are aware of the high level of pressure currently faced by councils particularly in relation to social care, special needs and homelessness, this means capacity to engage in work that does not have a short-term impact, however valuable in the medium term, is very limited.

East Sussex provides the best platform for devolution to be delivered at pace, with certainty and opportunity for future growth and we look forward to discussing this with you.

Yours

Cllr Keith Glazier
Leader of East Sussex County Council

Cllr Julia Hilton - Leader of Hastings Borough Council

Cllr Stephen Holt - Leader of Eastbourne Borough Council

Cllr Rachel Millward - Leader of Wealden District Council

Cllr Zoe Nicholson - Leader of Lewes District Council

Cllr Doug Oliver - Leader of Rother District Council

Cllr Chris Collier - Leader of ESCC Labour Group

Cllr Johnny Denis - Leader of ESCC Green Group

Cllr Stephen Shing - Leader of ESCC Independent Democrat Group

Cllr David Tutt - Leader of ESCC Liberal Democrat Group