



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing & Communities

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

Our Ref: MC2024/05627

Tracy Brabin
Mayor of West Yorkshire
West Yorkshire Combined Authority
40-50 Wellington Street
Leeds
LS1 2DE

1 March 2024

Dear Tracy,

Thank you for your letter of 30 January 2024 confirming West Yorkshire Combined Authority's (WYCA) interest in Level 4 devolution. As set out in the Level 4 framework, agreement to Level 4 devolution is contingent on meeting Government's eligibility criteria – providing confidence in the capacity, governance and culture of the institution. Having considered your application, I can confirm that, as one of our most mature devolved institutions, WYCA meets the eligibility criteria for Level 4 devolution.

The offer from Government

Level 4 devolution provides you with new levers covering funding, housing, skills and transport, among others. With this offer Government expects MCAs to demonstrate the most robust accountability and scrutiny, such as via Mayor's Question Time and, in future, MP sessions as in Greater Manchester and the West Midlands.

As you know, our Level 4 offer also represents a new way of doing devolution. We are moving on from a deals-based approach, whereby devolution deals have sometimes led to an uneven spread of responsibilities for you and your mayoral counterparts. Via this exchange of letters, we have simplified and streamlined how you can apply for new levers and functions. As part of this, the offer is standard, as published at Autumn Statement. Having taken on board feedback from MCA officers in the process of discussing the offer however, my colleague the Secretary of State for Transport and I have agreed some amendments to the transport offer. The Secretary of State for Transport will write to you separately on this matter.

I recognise your ambitions for further devolution to West Yorkshire. I am clear that this does not mark the end for deepening devolution and I look forward to continuing to discuss this with you and fellow mayors.

Nor does this represent the limit of the partnership between Government and WYCA. In addition to the £38 million per year Investment Fund agreed through the original devolution deal, we are providing £83 million through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and £41 million for a Bus Enhancement package through the Levelling Up Fund. We are developing with you an Investment Zone, which will see £160 million released, starting in 2024-25, to boost the HealthTech and digital sector, create highly productive jobs and support the region's economic growth. And, we are supporting your ambitions for your local transport networks, including the development of a Mass Transit system, via £830 million of long-term sustainable transport funding.

Conditions of this offer

As set out in the framework, beyond meeting the initial eligibility criteria, there are conditions to this offer:

- The implementation of this agreement and, therefore, the transfer of these levers to WYCA is contingent on continued compliance with the eligibility criteria.
- The final transfer of individual policy commitments will be subject to demonstrating WYCA has met the readiness conditions set by Government.
- WYCA will report to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on its progress in implementing the scrutiny protocol by **March 1 2025**.
- WYCA will follow the procedure as set out in legislation for conferring specific functions to the combined authority.

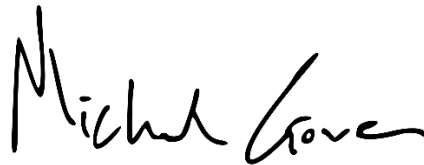
Technical adjustments and access to powers devolved elsewhere

As part of the updated devolution framework, Government has also offered local leaders the opportunity to submit proposals to make adjustments to historic statutes or guidance and for devolution of powers devolved elsewhere in England. Thank you for your proposals. I am keen to work with you and your mayoral counterparts to gather more of these ideas, which have the ability to rid you of unnecessary obstacles to delivering for your areas. Therefore, I have asked my officials to work with yours to consider your proposals and other proposals from the mayoral combined authorities to assess which of these can be rolled out across the board.

Next steps

My officials will now work with yours to implement Level 4. I look forward to hearing how this progresses, and of the new opportunities it helps you to unlock in West Yorkshire.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

RT HON MICHAEL GOVE MP

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