



Ministry of Housing,
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Dear Andy,

Thank you for all your engagement to date with Government on the COVID-19 response and preparing for economic recovery. In these difficult times, it is more important than ever that we work closely together to do the best for people, businesses and communities across the country. I know the Prime Minister was pleased to meet with you, the other M9 Mayors and the Chair of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority recently, and we and other Ministers have been grateful for your constructive engagement in a range of fora.

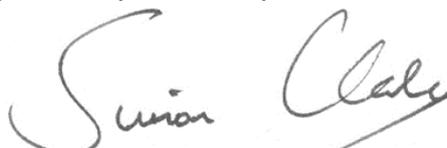
As you discussed with the Prime Minister, an urgent priority now is to work together to restart the economy as we begin gradually to refine the economic and social restrictions. Thank you for sharing your initial ideas and considerations on this matter. Your local leadership, as an elected Mayor, is essential here.

We are therefore clear that we expect you to lead economic recovery planning in your region. We look forward to seeing how you plan to use your powers and funding to support recovery over the coming months. We encourage you to continue to develop evidence-led thinking, collaborating closely with Local Enterprise Partnerships and other local partners.

We also want to learn from your experience to help ensure that our future national approach works for all places. The Economic Recovery Working Group will be one key forum for you to inform our national approach and we encourage you to use it both to reflect M9 priorities and to share information across the M9. This will supplement our continued engagement with you all over the coming months, as we would welcome further discussions on this crucial topic both as a group and bilaterally. At official level, the Cities and Local Growth Unit will also continue to engage your teams on a regular basis.

As the Prime Minister set out in his first speech on taking office, great changes are possible in our towns, cities and regions when local people have more of a say over their own destinies. The huge challenges we now face make this agenda more important than ever. We must level up opportunity across the country and give local people more of a say over the decisions that affect their daily lives. We are determined not just to recover, but to renew our economy and society.

Effecting this kind of change makes a constructive partnership with the M9 and other local leaders across the country all the more crucial. We look forward to working with you through the upcoming White Paper on devolution to deepen this partnership as we look towards recovery and renewal.



SIMON CLARKE MP