

Appendix A

The Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

12 October 2016

Dear Secretary of State,

Meeting to discuss devolution to rural and non-metropolitan areas

As Chairman of the Local Government Association's People and Places Board, I would like to introduce myself and affirm that the Board looks forward to working with you and to quickly establishing a strong relationship underpinned by trust and mutual respect.

I and the Board's lead members would be delighted to meet with you and to invite you to a future meeting of the Board to discuss a range of issues. For reference, I attach dates of these meetings.

The People and Places Board represents non-metropolitan and rural councils. Its members are ambitious to see further devolution to their communities and greater growth in their local economies, but they are conscious of the particular risk for both these priorities arising from the pursuit of a national policy approach.

We have been struck by the progress made in devolution to cities and city regions across the country and we welcome the Prime Minister's recent announcement that she remains personally committed to this process. However, we seek clarity on the government's approach to devolution to rural and non-metropolitan areas.

In particular, we note that of the 34 proposals submitted last September, only 2 non-metropolitan areas – Greater Lincolnshire and Cornwall – have been able to strike a devolution deal with national government. Moreover, beneath this headline figure rests the sense amongst Board members that more might be done to agree deals in rural and non-metropolitan areas on a scale that matches our ambitions.

I along with lead members of the board would therefore welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with you at the earliest opportunity in the hope that we might agree a practical way forward. I would also like to invite you to a future meeting of the full Board so that we might discuss the full range of issues specifically affecting rural and non-metropolitan areas.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Mark Hawthorne MBE