



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: MC2024/05633

Oliver Coppard
Mayor of South Yorkshire
South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
11 Broad Street West
Sheffield
S1 2BQ

1 March 2024

Dear Oliver,

Thank you for your letter of 31 January 2024 confirming South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's (SYMCA) 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, SYMCA 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 South 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 SYMCA. Aside from the £30 million per year Investment Fund provided via the original devolution deal, we have invested over £300 million of levelling up funding in South Yorkshire, and more recently collaborated on the South Yorkshire Investment Zone, which will unlock £160 million to drive growth in advanced manufacturing in Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster.

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 SYMCA is contingent on continued compliance with the eligibility criteria.

- The final transfer of individual policy commitments will be subject to demonstrating SYMCA has met the readiness conditions set by Government.
- SYMCA will report to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on its progress in implementing the scrutiny protocol by **March 1 2025**.
- SYMCA 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, the 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 South Yorkshire.

With every good wish,

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

RT HON MICHAEL GOVE MP

Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations