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7th September 2018

Dear Elizabeth

The Future of D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership

Thank you for your letter of 4 September 2018.

Congratulations on your appointment as the new Chair of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). I look forward to meeting you in October. If diaries permit, I would welcome the opportunity to show you around Chesterfield's regeneration schemes and to introduce you to some of the town's business leaders.

I'm sure Sajeeda will have already briefed you on our £1bn regeneration programme and referenced the Chesterfield Waterside, Peak Resort, Northern Gateway and Markham Vale schemes. It would also be good for me, in my role as Chair of the HS2 Chesterfield and Staveley Delivery Board, to show you, at first hand, our emerging master planning work with regards Chesterfield Railway Station and the HS2 Infrastructure Maintenance Depot at Staveley. You'll also be aware that Chesterfield is in the final running to land a major inward investor; Talgo. The Spanish rail company will make their location decision for their new UK manufacturing facility at the end of October. Should this investment be realised, Talgo will create 1,000 high quality manufacturing jobs within Chesterfield and North Derbyshire and a further 6,000 supply chain jobs.

Chesterfield Borough Council is therefore an important partner for D2N2 LEP.

I'm happy to confirm that we remain committed to being part of the D2N2 LEP area but our agreed position is for Chesterfield borough to also remain part of the Sheffield City Region LEP area, i.e. for the 'overlap' to be retained.

We see no reason for HM Government to end 'overlap areas' between LEPs. Chesterfield Borough Council works the 'overlap' very well and to the full advantage of the borough's residents and businesses.

You set out in your letter and in the accompanying papers various facts and figures about the D2N2 economy and Chesterfield's place within it. I'm not going to challenge that intelligence; I thank you for it. However, I have available to me an equally compelling, if not more so, set of facts and figures that make the case for Chesterfield also being part of the SCR functional economic geography. And to further illustrate the point I make about how well the Council works the 'overlap', I can evidence for you not just potential investment of Local Growth Funding (LGF) (for which I'm very grateful to D2N2 LEP)

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but actual investment of £14.5m of SCR LEP LGF in the afore-mentioned regeneration schemes. We have also accessed through SCR LEP £14m of capital grant for Markham Vale on the basis of parts of the site falling within the SCR enterprise zone.

I would particularly welcome the opportunity to discuss with you how D2N2 LEP can better engage with and involve Chesterfield Borough Council. But as I said to Matthew and Sajeeda when they met with Huw Bowen, the council's Chief Executive and I on 22 August 2018, a periodic meeting of council leaders and yourself doesn't do it. We have a lot of expertise in economic development, skills and apprenticeships, housing and planning, place marketing etc. that D2N2 should be taking maximum advantage of. And whilst I wouldn't expect to sit on the D2N2 LEP Board, I would want to see myself and senior officers invited to be part of policy making and decision taking LEP sub-Board and officer meetings.

My concern about this governance matter is also heightened by a similar lack of commitment from the upper tier authorities to engage and involve district / borough councils in the emerging Strategic Alliance proposals.

Whilst I note the statement that you make with regards recognising existing SCR LEP funding commitments to Chesterfield Borough and pledging to develop an ongoing collaboration agreement with SCR LEP, your officers were also unable to give Huw and I any real comfort with regards a critical funding commitment. SCR LEP has confirmed to Chesterfield Borough Council its commitment to make a substantial multi-million pound investment towards delivery of Talgo's new UK manufacturing facility; subject of course to Talgo making the right location decision.

There are also good examples that I can cite of where SCR and D2N2 LEPs have both committed funding to our 'overlap' area, e.g. LGF investment in Markham Vale North, and revenue for HS2 master planning and business support.

It is for these and other reasons that my political colleagues and I have come to the considered view that our best option, at this point in time, is for Chesterfield Borough Council to remain part of both D2N2 and SCR LEPs and to continue to work the 'overlap' to the full advantage of the borough's residents and businesses.

I would therefore respectfully ask that you have regard to this agreed position when developing the D2N2 LEP's response to HM Government's LEP review.

I am now on annual leave until 24 September 2018 but Huw is available should you or Sajeeda wish to speak with him during this period.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Tricia Gilby
Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council

cc Huw Bowen