



**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**

Dan Jarvis
Sheffield City Region Mayor

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Mayor Ros Jones CBE
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Cllr Chris Read
Leader, Rotherham Council

Cllr Julie Doré
Leader, Sheffield City Council

Sheffield City Region Combined Authority,
11 Broad Street West
Sheffield
S1 2BQ

Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities
and Local Government*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and
Local Government**

4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3450

Email:
james.brokenshire@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/mhclg

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Unlocking the Sheffield City Region Devolution Deal

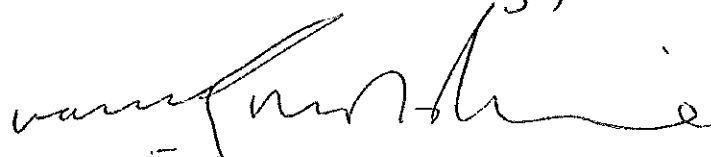
Thank you for the letter of 25 March which you jointly sent to me about how we might together move forward to unlock the Sheffield City Region (SCR) devolution deal.

I welcome your commitment to the SCR deal, and that you all have come together and put forward what you believe to be a pragmatic solution for now implementing the deal and bringing investment to the area. That has always been a priority for us in Government. We are ready to consider a localist approach to devolution elsewhere across Yorkshire, if that is wanted locally, and I recognise the strength of Yorkshire identity.

I also recognise that your proposal for councils in the SCR being free after 2022 to join an alternative devolution group is broadly in step with the approach envisaged by my predecessor in 2017. This was that in future, subject to certain provisos, councils would be free to leave the City Region and join an alternative wider Yorkshire devolution deal.

In principle, if you and all your councils now consent, we are prepared to implement the deal with an understanding that after 2022 those councils that do not see their future in the City Region should be free to join an alternative wider Yorkshire devolution group, leaving the SCR with a commensurately reduced devolution deal, and with such provisos as for example there remains an effective integrated transport system.

All of this is subject to the statutory tests and processes being met, to Parliamentary approval of any necessary secondary legislation, and to our being able to work through and agree with you details for putting such arrangements in place. My officials are already working with your officers on these details, and I would suggest the early meeting which you have in mind with Treasury Ministers would be helpful; I will ask Jake Berry the Northern Powerhouse Minister to join any such meeting.

Yours sincerely,


RT HON JAMES BROKESHIRE MP