

Dear Prime Minister,

## **Rebalancing the UK's economy – a proposition from the Heart of the South West**

The Heart of the South West is a diverse and vibrant part of the UK with a population of over 1.8 million and an economy worth £35bn – bigger than Birmingham and Liverpool. We are well known for our stunning countryside and coastline but we also have world-class businesses and institutions that are leading the way in clean growth industries and technologies.

Our area is ambitious and has a lot to offer. We have a strong track record of working together to deliver results, but in order to reach our full potential we need government backing.

Despite having some of the highest employment rates in Europe, our productivity is amongst the worst in England due to low wage levels, poor social mobility and a lack of connectivity - both digital and physical.

**If our productivity were at the UK average the economy would be £5 billion more per year. That would translate into every household being £11,500 better off each year. The prize is substantial - for families, communities - and for the Exchequer.**

The Heart of the South West partnership, comprising Council Leaders, the LEP, universities and businesses have worked closely over the last five years to build strong relationships. We have created a shared long-term vision that is clear and deliverable, and a plan for action that will:

- **Create the UK's first net zero carbon economy**
- **Close the productivity gap with the rest of the UK and grow the economy by £5 billion per year**
- **Ensure that inclusive growth is a strategic priority**

We have identified nine areas of focus under our programme for action. These are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transformational opportunities</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Connectivity and strategic infrastructure</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Housing</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Workforce</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prosperity</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Innovation</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Enterprise</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Employment sites</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Funding</b></li> </ul>

We are absolutely committed to delivering this programme, working with partners in the region and nationally where we have common objectives. However, we recognise that we cannot fully achieve this without government support. We want to work closely with the new government to explore the potential for devolved powers and funding, taking on greater local control and demonstrating strong leadership on behalf of the region

We are determined to unlock the economic potential of our area through clean and inclusive growth, raising the prosperity of our communities and thereby helping to rebalance the whole of the UK's economy.

We would welcome an early meeting with you, your Ministers and senior officials to discuss how we can forge a new relationship to jointly deliver on this bold ambition.

Kind regards,

Karl Tucker  
Chair for Heart of the South West  
Local Enterprise Partnership

David Fothergill  
Chair of Heart of the South West  
Joint Committee