



Staffordshire
Chambers of
Commerce.



The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP, The Prime Minister

21st October 2026

Dear Prime Minister

Re: Devolution in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

We are writing as leaders of organisations from across the public, private, education and voluntary and community sectors to express our collective support for devolution to Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and, in particular, for the establishment of a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) for this area at the earliest opportunity.

We welcome the Government's continuing commitment to extending devolution across England and transferring greater powers, responsibilities and investment to local areas. We share the view that decisions affecting communities, businesses and public services are best made as close as possible to the people they serve, with clear local accountability.

Together, we represent businesses, local government, further and higher education, Members of Parliament and voluntary and community organisations across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. We are united in our belief that a Mayoral Strategic Authority offers the strongest route to achieving our shared ambitions for inclusive economic growth, improved connectivity and public services and greater opportunity for residents, learners, communities and businesses.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is a coherent, credible and established geography for devolution. The area functions as a single economic geography, reflecting how people live, work, learn, trade and travel. With a population of around 1.2 million residents, strong labour-market integration and extensive economic connections, it has the scale required to support a successful Mayoral Strategic Authority.

Approximately 84% of residents work within the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent economy, demonstrating a high degree of economic self-containment and shared interest.

This geography is not an artificial construct created for devolution. It aligns with established public service boundaries, long-standing partnership and delivery arrangements and the area's future local government structures.

It also provides the right scale at which to align strategic transport, skills, employment, business growth, investment and spatial planning. We therefore firmly believe that Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is the most logical, sustainable and effective footprint for devolution.

We recognise that Mayoral Strategic Authorities are central to the Government's approach to devolution. In our view, an MSA provides the clearest route to the powers, long-term funding, strategic influence and democratic accountability needed to deliver lasting change across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. It would provide a strong platform to accelerate economic growth, improve transport connectivity, align skills provision with employer demand, unlock sites and infrastructure, attract investment and support healthier, more prosperous communities. It would also give the area a stronger national voice and enable more decisions about its future to be made locally.

We therefore ask the Government to continue formal discussions with Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent on establishing a Mayoral Strategic Authority and to recognise Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent as the right geography and a priority candidate for the next phase of devolution. Across our sectors, we are united in our ambition, confident in the strength of this geography and ready to work constructively with Government to secure a strong and successful devolved settlement for the people, communities and businesses of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

Yours faithfully,

Signed by leaders and representatives from across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent



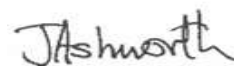
**Martin Murray,
Leader, Staffordshire
County Council**



**Stuart Elford,
CEO- Staffordshire
Chambers of Commerce**

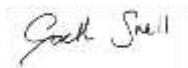


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**Jane Ashworth –
Leader, Stoke-on-Trent
City Council**





**Gareth Snell – MP,
Stoke on Trent Central**



**Jacob Collier – MP,
Burton & Uttoxeter**



Sarah Edwards – MP, Tamworth



**Allison Gardner – MP,
Stoke-on-Trent South**



Leigh Ingham – MP, Stafford



**Adam Jogee – MP,
Newcastle-under-Lyme**



Josh Newbury – MP, Cannock Chase



**Dave Robertson – MP,
Lichfield**



**David Williams – MP,
Stoke-on-Trent North**

Graeme Macdonald-
Chief Executive Officer,
JCB



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Andy Deeks- CEO,
Leek Building Society



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John Howe - Managing Director of
Michelin Tyre plc



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Hancock".

Matt Hancock - CEO,
Port Vale Football Club



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Hickman".

Richard Hickman- Senior
Director of Planning, Indurent



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Lycett".

Peter Lycett- Commercial Director,
amb Insurance





Alex Saint-
Development Director
Bericote



Garry Jones- CEO,Support
Staffordshire



Josie Morris-
Chair, We are Staffordshire



Arthur Barnard

Arthur Barnard- Chair
Local Visitor Economy Partnership



Jonathan Bellamy - Chairman,
Stoke-on-Trent City Centre BID



Steve Tellwright-
People and Quality Director, Capula.





**Professor Kevin Shakesheff-
(FMedSci, FRSB, FRPharms)
Vice-Chancellor, Keele University**



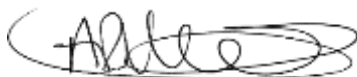
**Phillip Plowden- Interim Vice-
Chancellor and Chief Executive,
University of Staffordshire**



**Hassan Rizvi- CEO, Stoke-on-Trent
College**



**Claire Boliver – Principal,
South Staffordshire College**



**Adam Whitehouse-
Founder of tmt first**



**Angela Henry – Director & Vice
President of Insurance Institute of
Stoke on Trent**





**Josie Morris MBE DL–
CEO, Woolcool**



Karen Woolley

**Karen Woolley– FSB, Regional
business & Stakeholder Manager**

