

***On behalf of the Heart of the South West***

Cllr John Osman, Leader  
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Taunton TA1 4DY

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4 September 2015

For the attention of:

The Rt Hon George Osborne MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer

The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP  
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Dear Sirs

**Heart of the South West Devolution – Statement of Intent**

Our Statement of Intent, from all Heart of the South West local authorities, our National Parks and the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, represents a significant milestone for our area. We are united in our ambition to pursue a new relationship with Government that will rebalance powers, and give us greater freedom to shape our own destiny. In return, the Heart of the South West will deliver a step change in its contribution to the prosperity of the nation, fulfilling the enormous potential of our area.

Our highest priority is to raise productivity levels and skills so that we have an economy that performs alongside the best. A thriving economy will provide jobs, services and life opportunities our residents deserve, and address the low wage economy.

We are known for our self-sufficiency, self-help strategies and working together to deliver better outcomes for our communities. We are convinced that the key to success is greater autonomy and devolved powers have the potential to revolutionise the way we operate. We

know and understand our communities and we ask for the opportunity to demonstrate that locally tailored approaches are not only more effective, but can also generate savings.

The cornerstone of our proposal is a package of measures to accelerate economic growth by re-engineering the whole system, from careers advice to apprenticeships, business support to major investment.

Our second opportunity is around continuing to integrate commissioning between health, social care and wellbeing across our communities, at pace, to meet local needs. We want to learn from each other to transform services across the whole of the Heart of the South West. As the most significant and growing proportion of public sector spend it is absolutely crucial that we are given the freedom to implement new approaches that reduce demand, deal with complex needs, and ensure early intervention and prevention are at the heart of what we do.

Our third theme is physical infrastructure, including developing greater resilience, for example in flood and coastal defence, and creating confidence through longer term investment programmes for transport and housing.

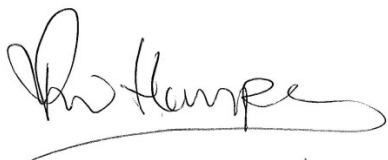
This is a balanced and coherent set of proposals that will bring substantial benefits to the Heart of the South West and the nation. Whilst our proposals are fiscally neutral, we also call on the Government for the opportunity to jointly review national funding formulas to ensure that our baseline reflects a fairer distribution of public money.

We have a shared commitment and the capability to deliver. We are eager to start a dialogue with Government, open a new chapter and build a strong and productive relationship.

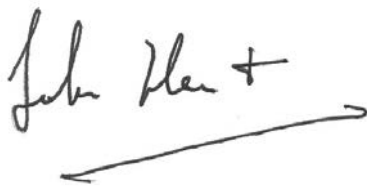
We have collectively agreed a set of principles to underpin our statement and these will also shape the governance and accountability that will be required to administer new devolved powers. We are determined to take up the Government's invitation and negotiate an ambitious deal.

We invite you to work with us and explore the national opportunity offered by devolution for the Heart of the South West.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Harper', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Peter Harper  
Chairman of Dartmoor National Park

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Hart', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

CLlr John Hart  
Leader of Devon County Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Diviani', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

CLlr Paul Diviani  
Leader of East Devon District Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Edwards', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

CLlr Peter Edwards  
Leader of Exeter City Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrea Davis', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

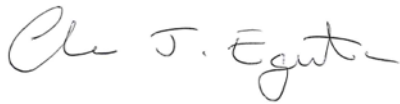
Andrea Davis  
Chairman of Exmoor National Park



Steve Hindley  
Chair of the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership



CLlr Harvey Siggs  
Leader of Mendip District Council



CLlr Clive Eginton  
Leader of Mid Devon District Council



CLlr Des Brailey MBE  
Leader of North Devon District Council



CLlr Tudor Evans  
Leader of Plymouth City Council



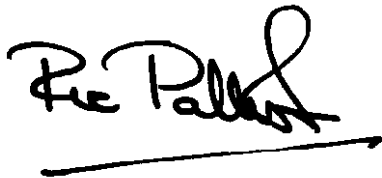
Clr Duncan McGinty  
Leader of Sedgemoor District Council



Clr John Osman  
Leader of Somerset County Council



Clr John Tucker  
Leader of South Hams District Council



Clr Ric Pallister  
Leader of South Somerset District Council



Clr John Williams  
Leader of Taunton Deane Borough Council



Clr Jeremy Christophers  
Leader of Teignbridge District Council



Gordon Oliver  
Mayor of Torbay Council



Clr Jane Whittaker  
Leader of Torridge District Council



Clr Philip Sanders  
Leader of West Devon Borough Council



Clr Anthony Trollope-Bellew  
Leader of West Somerset Council