



East of England All Party Parliamentary Group

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Dear Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer

Budget Submission – the East of England: An Engine for Growth

We are writing to you as Co-chairs of the East of England APPG officers to request that you consider, when preparing your March Budget statement, the submission the APPG agreed in advance of the anticipated (and ultimately delayed) Spending Review - [An Engine for the Nation's Prosperity](#).

We also trust you will have in mind Cambridge Econometrics' report – [An Economic Strategy for the East of England](#) – about which the APPG was briefed when it held its inaugural meeting last week. Like the UK Innovation Corridor APPG's report - [Local Industrial Strategy Growth Prospectus](#) – these documents are complementary, and we endorse their findings.

In fact, the very well attended APPG meeting - including ten Parliamentarians, representatives of LEPs and local government as well as business and university leaders - demonstrated the high degree of consensus across the East of England regarding what all agree are the opportunities, challenges and priorities for Government support for this region's cities, market and coastal towns, and villages and, of course, to support its private, public and third sectors.

We would therefore wish to emphasise our emerging collective *vision* for the East of England, which is:

- as a network of dynamic high growth corridors, linking key regional clusters and institutions, connecting Cambridge with significant coastal assets and global gateways to the east and CaMkOx to the west as well as via the innovation corridor running through Stansted Airport to the London commuter belt in the south
- as a global leader in R&D investment, with more people employed in scientific research and development than any other UK region; the East of England has excellent prospects in the increasingly important sectors such as high tech, agri food, bioscience and AI and data

- as a frontrunner in contributing to meeting the UK's net zero carbon target through its potential for innovation and solutions for renewables including off shore wind and nuclear power generation as well as clean growth technology; innovation here will assist the UK's endeavours towards net zero

You will also see that the documents outline significant challenges. Again, we would emphasise three of these:

- Coastal communities, including Clacton-on-Sea (where Jaywick is the most deprived neighbourhood of all 32,844 in England), Colchester, Felixstowe, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich, Lowestoft and Kings Lynn require *levelling up* support every bit as 'left behind' towns in the north and midlands.
- There are growing concerns about whether the region can generate and retain - through its education, skills and apprenticeship offer and provision - the required skills, including for STEM related as well as lower skilled employment, that will be needed to support ambitious plans for economic growth post Brexit.
- Lack of quality transport and digital connectivity is frustrating the potential of the region with, for example, the need for better connected ports and airports as well as journey time improvements on the West Anglian Mainline and other rail and road linkages between the main employment clusters, supply chains and affordable housing.

We look forward to the Budget addressing each of these six bulleted issues above. We also have some more specific "asks" – six were highlighted in 'An Engine for Growth' but again we emphasise here three that the meeting made clear are the most urgent:

- Invest in urgent transport schemes and empower the two sub national transport bodies: for example, we are aware, and support, fellow MPs who have written separately regarding much needed improvements to the A14, A47, A120 and the West Anglian Mainline but there is also a need for multi-modal transport schemes. Raising transport investment per head of population to the England average is we believe crucial and overdue.
- Make the East of England a leader in digital connectivity: as one officer of the APPG said we need twenty first century solutions to twentieth century problems. Our lack of infrastructure would be greatly alleviated if, for example, the Government supported our ambition to lead through 5G coverage, Local Full Fibre Networks and the eradication of mobile "not spots"

- The first step towards wider and deeper devolution, an agenda we support, should be greater funding for local government so councils can become genuine place makers and shapers again, for example building – or commissioning – affordable homes and working with businesses to facilitate economic growth and where appropriate help drive forward coastal town regeneration.

In conclusion, as one of the fastest growing UK regions and a net contributor to the Exchequer, investing in the East of England allows the UK to prosper more and generates extra revenue for the Government, which can then be spent on its priorities including levelling up. However, to realise its potential the East of England still requires some specific, limited, but no less urgent Government support and we trust that you will consider our requests for the Government's support fully and favourably.

Yours sincerely



Daniel Zeichner MP
Co-Chair, EE APPG



Peter Aldous MP
Co-Chair, EE APPG



The East of England APPG is kindly supported by:

