



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

**Dehenna Davison MP**  
Minister for Levelling Up  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
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Our reference: 23489816

Peter Aldous MP & Daniel Zeichner MP  
Co-Chairs, East of England APPG

Cllr Matthew Hicks  
Chair, East of England LGA

30 JAN 2023

*Dear Peter, Daniel, and Matthew,*

Thank you for your email of 20<sup>th</sup> December to Rt Hon Michael Gove MP about the East of England's progress and challenges towards achieving the government's twelve levelling up missions. I have been asked to reply as this matter falls within my ministerial responsibilities.

Thank you for sight of the joint APPG and EELGA report *Levelling Up the East of England 2023-2030: The East of England's Progress Towards Achieving the Government's Twelve Levelling Up Missions*. I was pleased to see the wide-ranging engagement and collaboration you achieved for this, and the in-depth and considered approach to the Levelling Up Missions in the East of England. Levelling Up is a high priority for the government in all areas of the country.

I agree that the East of England is a great example of an economic success story. This government has placed economic stability and confidence at the heart of its agenda, and we are keen to help boost areas like those within the East of England. Your work shines a light on the region's strengths, such as in energy and offshore wind, life sciences and in exports and global trade. But for all its many strengths, as your report highlights, the East of England faces its own challenges too.

As you rightly point out, a strong and financially sustainable Local Government sector is a top priority, and given the global economic pressures we are facing, it is essential that Local Authorities are able to reliably predict their spending powers. We have taken steps towards this through the provisional Local Government Financial Settlement for 2023/24, which makes available up to £59.5 billion for local government in England, an increase of up to £5 billion or 9% in cash terms on 2022/23. Taking 2022/23 and 2023/24 together, we have increased the funding available to local government in England in real terms.

But, I agree, this is not solely about funding, that is why we have taken great strides towards devolving further powers to areas across the UK that are willing, and able, to take them forward. Additionally, we are setting up the Office for Local Government (OFLOG) which will collate data from Local Authorities to understand performance in relation to value for money and will be publishing its conclusions in an annual report.

I would like to thank you for your kind invitation to meet. As you'll know, I am scheduled to speak to the East of England APPG on 22<sup>nd</sup> February and I look forward to discussing these important proposals then.

Thank you for writing on this important matter.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dehenna', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**DEHENNA DAVISON MP**