



South East England Councils
Room 215 County Hall
Penrhyn Road
Kingston
Surrey
KT1 2DN

3 August 2019

020 541 7553

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing on behalf of South East England Councils to congratulate you on your appointment as Prime Minister. A successful South East is an essential ingredient of a successful United Kingdom, more so as we enter a new era of international trade as the South East is the Country's second largest exporter and a main gateway to international markets. The Government's ambitions for increased spending on essential public services and infrastructure will also be well served by over £100bn of tax revenues generated in the South East. It is in everyone's interest for the South East to reach its full potential in terms of growth, productivity and skills. That is a challenge that we embrace, working with partners in the private and public sectors.

South East England Councils is a cross-tier and cross-party membership body for local authorities across the area. We trust that the positive relationships we have had with Ministers across Departments will continue, and we look forward to making constructive contributions to the development of Government policy as details are announced.

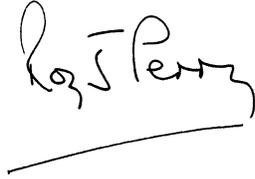
In the meantime, I would like to make two brief observations. We applaud efforts to advance the economies in other regions and support your announcement of further infrastructure investment. As the former Mayor you of course aware of the transformational benefits that such investment has had in London, and the resultant increases in economic growth. We urge the Government to recognise the importance of making similar investment in the South East so that it can match increases in economic growth and productivity, and in doing so protect British exports. To aid understanding of what is required to achieve growth we hope that Ministers and officials will avoid grouping London and the South East together as there are important differences between the areas including trends in economic performance and the standard of infrastructure such as public transport and broadband.

We also welcome the Government's commitment to tackle the crisis of social care for the elderly. The South East not only has the largest number of people aged 75+ in the Country but is also facing an exponential increase over the next two decades. Residents in the South

East will therefore be looking to the Government and to their local Members of Parliament to be bold in protecting the interests of those who rely on social care or are concerned about having to in the future, as well as local taxpayers and the users of services such as education which have been impacted by budget decisions taken to keep the social care system afloat.

Once again, please accept our congratulations on your appointment. We would welcome the opportunity to provide you, Ministers or officials with further information or ideas.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roy Perry', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Councillor Roy Perry
Chair, South East England Councils