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Dear David,

Thank you for the on-going work and commitment of your LEP. The work you have done in recent years demonstrates how business and civic leaders, working in partnership with universities and colleges, can help business to prosper.

LEPs are an essential part of Government's plan for driving local growth and the Industrial Strategy. They will continue to be critical to our future economic success.

As announced at the LEP Network Management Board, we will be leading a review into the future role of LEPs. As set out in our manifesto we want to explore ways of putting LEPs on a more consistent footing legally, whilst still giving you the freedom and flexibility to attract private sector talent to your boards.

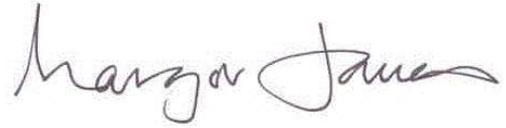
This review reflects our ambition to strengthen the role of LEPs during this Parliament. It is testament to our belief in your institutions and the tangible difference that you have been making on the ground since 2011. The institutional landscape has changed greatly since LEPs were first formed. In many parts of the country, LEPs have now taken on an additional role in voicing the interests of the private sector at mayoral combined authority level.

We want to work jointly with you. This will ensure we arrive at conclusions that will support all local economies, whether urban or rural, and are able to fully capitalise on different strengths and opportunities across the country.

Officials in the Cities and Local Growth Unit will follow up over the summer to set out more detail. In the autumn, we will meet with you and will attend a future LEP Network Management Board to

discuss this further. We also intend to convene a wider advisory board of business voices and we will invite a LEP Chair to join this panel.

We look forward to working with you over the coming months, and thank you again for continuing to drive forward the local growth agenda.

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JAKE BERRY MP AND MARGOT JAMES MP