



Liverpool City Region All Party Parliamentary Group

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AFTER THE SPENDING REVIEW: DISCUSSION AND AGREEMENT OF 2021 PROGRAMME OF MEETING

NON-VERBATIM MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING HELD FRIDAY 4TH DECEMBER 13:00 – 14:00

Welcome and Introduction, Alison McGovern, Chair of the LCR APPG

Discussion regarding future programme

- **Allison McGovern MP, Chair**, gave an outline of the draft 2021 Programme for the LCR APPG.
- **Kim Johnson MP** suggested adding a Race and Equality review session, following from the LCR APPG session, *Challenging racism: developing a positive agenda*, held on the 2nd October 2020. Kim Johnson MP also suggested the inclusion of a housing and housebuilding focus, with specific reference to homelessness and a session on youth unemployment, with evidence from young unemployed people in the LCR.
- **Dr Aileen Jones, LCRC**, highlighted it may be helpful to incorporate into a session looking at the refreshed National infrastructure strategy after it is published early next year.
- **Alan Southern, Liverpool University**, suggested thinking more broadly on digital issues with focus on AI, the Fourth Industrial revolution and the impacts on the LCR.
- **Lord Heseltine** suggested putting the Devolution White Paper at the top of the agenda in 2021. He also suggested performing a SWOT analysis of Liverpool's economy to identify the strengths and weakness the LCR needs to address. Furthermore, Lord Heseltine put forward that there should be an in-depth focus on education and skills, starting with struggling schools
- **Sue Jarvis, The Heseltine Institute**, kindly offered the support of the Heseltine Institute to support discussions regarding devolution.
- **Steve Barwick, Secretariat**, confirmed that the housing sessions discussed would be incorporated in session 3 and education in the session dedicated to skills, and that a race and equality session would be added for the Autumn. He clarified that the idea agreed with LCRC was that the first four sessions would be written up into a consensus submission to the Spending Review 2021. This would be based around the 'building back better' economic strategy and would identify where Government support is needed.
- Broad agreement of the draft programme as a positive way forward in 2021 for the LCR APPG.

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Reflections on the Spending Review

- **Steve Rotherham, Metro Mayor**, outlined his views on the Spending Review with both strengths and weakness addressed as well as its impact on the Liverpool City Region. Steve highlighted ongoing concerns including council finances post Covid, whether the Green Book reforms went far enough and the public sector pay freeze as well as the lack of support for devolution generally and specifically the lack of Combined Authority oversight of the 'levelling-up fund'.
- **Allison McGovern MP, Chair**, expressed support for Steve Rotherham's analysis and critique of the Spending Review.
- **Lord Heseltine** expressed his view that due to the Covid-19 pandemic and accompanying finances there would need to be a need ultimately to cut public expenditure. Lord Heseltine further argued that both left and right of politics would find it unpleasant but that the UK needs both a strong economy and tax rises as a genuine response.
- **Steve Rotheram and Lord Heseltine** debated various ways to secure the Covid-19 recovery and agreed that there needs to be more devolution and a single pot for devolved authorities allocated by central government. Furthermore, both agreed on the importance of delivering projects on the ground in the LCR.
- **Damian Waters, CBI**, asked for views on changes to the Green Book.
- **Erika Rushton, Baltic Creative**, asked if there was any likelihood of a windfall tax.
- **Steve Rotheram and Lord Heseltine** agreed that there was the need to look at the detail of what is proposed in the Green Book and more investment is needed outside of London.

Close of meeting

- **Alison McGovern MP, Chair of the APPG**, thanked all speakers and contributors as well as sponsors and the Secretariat. She wished everyone a happy Christmas and New Year

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Attendees

Rosie Cooper MP, West Lancashire
Maria Eagle MP, Garston and Halewood
Margaret Greenwood MP, Wirral West
The Rt Hon Lord Heseltine CH
Sir George Howarth MP, Knowsley,
Kim Johnson MP, Liverpool, Riverside
Alison McGovern MP, Wirral South
Derek Twigg MP, Halton

Steve Rotheram, Metro Mayor, Liverpool City Region

Angela Teeling, CWU, Labour Cllr, Halton Appleton
Steve Barwick, Director, DevoConnect (Secretariat)
Elaine Bowker, CEO, The City of Liverpool College
Debbie Caine, Office of Alison McGovern
Andy Dockerty, Managing Director, Adlib
Paul Hadley, Deputy Director, Economic Development, MTC
Fiona Inglis, Senior Corporate Affairs Manager, Scottish Power
Sue Jarvis, Co-Director, Heseltine Institute
Dr Aileen Jones, Interim Director, LCR CA
Gill Morris, CEO, DevoConnect
Bronwen Rapley, Chief Executive, Onward Homes
Dr Alan Southern, Senior Lecturer, Liverpool University
Owen Stratford, Public Affairs Executive, DevoConnect
Jane Townend, Head of Knowledge Exchange, Liverpool John Moores University
Charles Whitford, Associate Director – Strategic Development, MTC

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