



**Local London**

London Borough of Redbridge  
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Friday, 02 October 2026

**Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP**  
Prime Minister

**Rt Hon Louise Haigh MP**  
First Secretary of State, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Minister for the Cabinet Office

**Number 10 North**  
Heron House,  
Manchester city centre

**Dear Prime Minister, First Secretary of State,**

**Re: Rewiring the State**

We welcome your commitment to "rewire the state" and devolve power away from Whitehall. If this agenda is to deliver faster growth, stronger public services and greater opportunity, London's boroughs must play a central role in shaping investment, infrastructure and public service reform.

Local leaders are closest to residents, businesses and communities. We see first-hand both the barriers that constrain growth and the opportunities that could be unlocked through more coordinated, locally led decision-making. We therefore welcome the Government's commitment to devolution, but this should not simply result in a further concentration of powers at the London-wide level. Greater powers and responsibilities should be devolved to boroughs as the tier of government closest to residents, communities and businesses, so that the benefits of good growth can be realised in every postcode.

Local London is the borough-led partnership representing nine boroughs across northeast and southeast London. The partnership is home to 2.7 million residents, more than 105,000 businesses and over half of London's developable land. Our sub-region is one of the capital's most significant growth opportunities, already contributing over £60 billion annually to the UK economy.

Yet despite these strengths, our communities continue to experience lower productivity, lower household incomes, higher economic inactivity and significant infrastructure constraints. Unlocking the potential of this part of London would not only benefit our residents and businesses but make a substantial contribution to national growth.

To support the ambitions set out in your *Rewiring the State* programme, we believe there are several areas where deeper devolution would enable stronger outcomes.

## 1. Multi-year funding for skills and employment

We welcome the ambition to bring together education, employment, health and local support services to create clearer pathways into work for young people and adults.

The Trailblazer programme, which we have delivered in partnership with the Mayor of London, has demonstrated the value of devolved employment support, enabling local areas to test innovative approaches to reducing economic inactivity and youth disengagement. However, short-term funding limits impact. Without clarity on funding beyond March 2027, there is a real risk that specialist staff, local partnerships, referral networks and delivery infrastructure developed through Trailblazers will be lost.

**We need continued multi-year funding settlements and greater local flexibility to design and deliver employment support through trusted local partnerships.**

## 2. Unlocking infrastructure to better connect communities and businesses

Transport remains one of the greatest barriers to growth across our sub-region. Greater local influence over transport investment decisions would help ensure infrastructure keeps pace with growth. **Strategic investment at Stratford, Walthamstow Central and through the proposed Elizabeth Line extension to Ebbsfleet would unlock substantial housing, employment, regeneration and inward investment opportunities.**

High-quality digital infrastructure is now fundamental to economic competitiveness. Yet significant gaps in broadband and mobile connectivity remain across parts of London, constraining productivity, investment and future growth. **Government support should place greater emphasis on urban areas where targeted intervention can leverage substantial commercial investment into fibre and mobile infrastructure. Accelerated delivery of Project Gigabit**, alongside action to address barriers to mobile infrastructure deployment, would help ensure London's businesses, growth zones and transport hubs have the connectivity they require to compete internationally.

## 3. Fiscal devolution

Fiscal devolution is essential if local government is to become a genuine engine of growth rather than simply a delivery agent for centrally designed programmes. **The design of any new devolved fiscal arrangements should be worked through jointly with London boroughs and the Mayor** to ensure the capital thrives for decades to come, strengthen the long-term financial sustainability of local government, reduce bureaucracy and bring decisions closer to the communities they affect.

We welcome the commitment to provide greater local control over revenues and investment, including Business Rates and Income Tax. **The Government should move towards 100% retention of business rates as soon as possible**, building on the agreed principle that shares of business rates should reflect the respective funding responsibilities of London boroughs and the Greater London Authority.

We support London Councils' proposal that **boroughs retain at least 50% of revenues generated through the Overnight Visitor Levy**. This would provide local authorities with the resources needed to

support the visitor economy and invest in services that sustain growth, including public realm improvements, community safety, business support and destination management.

We also urge Government to ensure that any future fiscal settlement reflects the realities of London's inequalities. While the capital is often viewed through the lens of its strongest-performing areas, significant deprivation persists across many communities. Three Local London boroughs, Barking and Dagenham, Newham and Enfield, remain among the most deprived local authorities in England.

As Government develops the next phase of devolution, borough leaders should have a formal role in shaping the design and delivery of devolved programmes, funding settlements and investment decisions that affect their communities. Effective devolution requires not only the transfer of powers, but governance arrangements that ensure local democratic leaders are fully involved in key decisions.

Deeper devolution would enable a more coordinated approach to skills, employment, housing, regeneration, infrastructure and business growth. It would reduce fragmentation, accelerate delivery and ensure public investment achieves greater impact.

We strongly support the ambition to rewire the state. However, meaningful devolution must extend beyond existing structures in London and provide local authority leaders with the powers, resources and flexibility needed to shape their own future. Boroughs are the institutions closest to residents, communities and businesses and should be central to the next phase of devolution in the capital.

Local London stands ready to work with Government, London Councils and the Greater London Authority to demonstrate how borough-led growth and reform can unlock opportunity, reduce inequalities and deliver better outcomes for residents and businesses. As one of the country's most significant growth corridors, our sub-region can help show what successful devolution looks like in practice.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these proposals further and explore how Local London can support the delivery of your growth and devolution agenda.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Cllr Kam Rai**

Leader of the London Borough of Redbridge and Chair of Local London



**Cllr David Leaf**

Leader of the London Borough of Bexley and Deputy Chair of Local London

