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Dear David

Transport for the North – Sub-National Transport Body Proposal

I write with reference to the Sub-National Transport Body proposal which was endorsed by Transport for the North's (TfN) Partnership Board and the Association of Rail North Authorities on the 9th June. I am now pleased to confirm, on behalf of Cheshire East Council, our support for the submission of this proposal to Government and we welcome the further opportunities for consultation on the draft regulations in the autumn.

Through Rail North and collaboration with DfT, transport authorities across the North have recently demonstrated the economic successes and improvements for transport users that can be achieved through a co-ordinated approach to strategic transport planning and investment, informed by local expertise, analysis and decision making. We firmly believe that the establishment of Transport for the North will provide the region with the necessary tools to realise further transformational enhancement for transport networks across the North and drive economic growth and productivity.

The prize for the North and the UK as a whole is significant; a better performing, more unified economy that is able to compete with the most successful global regions. As the recent Independent Economic Review has identified, with the right investment and focus on the region's prime economic capabilities, and development of the strategic transport infrastructure to support them, we could collectively add 1.56 million new jobs by 2050 and an expected productivity (GVA) improvement 15% higher than currently which, in itself would represent a major step-change for the North. To do so will require long term planning and investment periods, robust and stable governance, supported by funding commitment from HM Treasury.

From the perspective of Cheshire East, the key pan northern transport issues that support the economic ambition and should be influenced through cooperation with TfN and the group of pan-Northern local authorities include;

- HS2 Crewe Superhub
- HS2 Northern Gateway Growth Strategy, including strategic road links to M6 at Junctions 16, 17 and 18 and improved regional rail connections
- A SEMMMS re-refresh linked to Airport growth and access plans
- Support on cross-boundary dialogue with Midlands Connect (the sub-national transport body for the Midlands) and,
- Support on negotiations for strategic rail franchises including Intercity West Coast, London Midland and Wales franchises.

We look forward to continued support in pursuing the prioritisation of these strategic transport matters.

We look forward to a continued strengthening of the partnership between the region's transport authorities, through the formation of Transport for the North as a statutory body, and the opportunities this affords to identify to Government, the strategic transport investment priorities that will benefit the region's businesses and local communities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Brown', written in a cursive style.

Councillor David Brown
Deputy Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure and Highways