

To: Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds, Rt Hon Angela Rayner and Baroness Morgan of Ely

Reply to: Western Gateway Secretariat
E-mail: secretariat@western-gateway.co.uk
Date: 25th October 2024

Dear Secretaries of State and First Minister,

Open letter from Business and local leaders to secure growth in partnership with private industry, devolved nations and regions.

We are writing to you as leaders of industry, academia and business with an offer: to take the brakes off Britain and let us do our part to drive UK growth.

Reaching from Swindon to St David's in Pembrokeshire, the Western Gateway is home to 4.8 million people, across two countries with a £129 billion economy, and 2.6 million jobs. We are a dynamic area with leading industries in green energy, advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, fintech, and creative industries. Our area's potential for growth is unmatched and we are forecast to **grow faster than any UK region** outside London and strengthen the Union.

We're already a self-starting success but we want to, and can, do more.

That's why the Western Gateway Partnership convened and led a collaboration of business, industry, academics and local authorities to create an evidence-based **Plan for Sustainable Growth**. With this plan, we will build on our strengths and success to add a minimum of £11bn of GVA per annum to the UK economy.

This plan includes 13 asks from you, as Governments, to partner with our area to deliver on your mission to spark growth. Most of these are not asking for money. Instead, they are a set of policy and process asks to support and unleash our area; clearing the route for us to drive sustainable growth here and in the wider UK.

The Western Gateway's **Plan for Sustainable Growth** and **Economic Narrative** (which outlines our key strengths) serve as a robust framework to ensure long-term, sustainable economic prosperity for the area, and a massive contributing element to the UK's industrial strategy and Growth plan. At little to no additional cost to the Exchequer, the asks in our Plan for Sustainable Growth, represent a genuine win-win for this area and the wider economy.

We call on you as Government's in England and Wales to commit to working with the Western Gateway Partnership, over the next five years, to deliver on the asks in the attached Plan for Sustainable Growth and unleash our area's potential to drive economic success across the UK.

Sincerely,

Airbus, Emily Merrison, Director Public Affairs

Albright IP, Marc Maidment, Director

Arcitran, Ben Maliphant, Director

Arup, Ben Pritchard, Director and Head of Cardiff Office

Associated British Ports, Ralph Windeatt, Group Head of Business Development

AtkinsRéalis, Zoe Metcalfe, Client Director for Local and Central Government

BBRC, Ed Rowberry, Chief Executive

Bristol Airport, David Lees, Chief Executive

Bristol Port, David Brown, Chief Executive

Browne Jacobson, Laura Hughes, Partner

BusinessWest, Phil Smith, Managing Director

BusinessWest, Andy Bates, Innovation Lead

CBI South West, Ben Rhodes, Regional Director

CBI Wales, Katie Spackman, Associate Director

Connected Cities Ltd, Brian Q Love, Chief Executive

Copper Consultancy, Ronan Cloud, Director of Economic Development

Circularity, Alex Chikhani, CEO & Founder

Fintech Wales, Sarah Kocianski, CEO

Fintech Wales, Owain Roberts, Head of Digital & Creative

GW4 Alliance (bringing together the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter), Dr Joanna Jenkinson, Director

Hyppo, Chris Foxall, Founder and CEO

Institute of Directors Wales, Mr Richard Selby MBE DL, National Chair

Ogi, Ben Allwright, CEO

Renishaw, Chris Pockett, Head of Communications

Wynne-Jones IP, Rachel von Hossle, Marketing Manager

And the **Western Gateway Partnership Board**, including:

Cllr Dimitri Batrouni, Leader of Newport Council

Cllr Huw Thomas, Leader of Cardiff Council

Cllr Jim Robbins, Leader of Swindon Borough Council

Cllr Kevin Guy, Leader of Bath and North East Somerset Council

Cllr Maggie Tyrrell, Co-leader of South Gloucestershire Council

Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader of Monmouthshire Council and Chair of the Cardiff Capital Region

Cllr Mike Bell, Leader of North Somerset Council

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of Wiltshire Council

Cllr Rob Stewart, Leader of Swansea Council

Cllr Rowena Hay, Leader of Cheltenham Borough Council

Cllr Stephen Davies, Leader Gloucestershire County Council

Cllr Tony Dyer, Leader of Bristol City Council

Sarah Williams-Gardener, Chair of the Western Gateway

Richard Bonner, UK Market Director for Buildings and Places at AtkinsRéalis and Business Representative for the Western Gateway board

CC: Ms Tulip Sadiq, Mr Alex Norris, Dame Nia Griffith, Mr Jim McMahon, Rt Hon Stephen Kinnock, Mrs Vera Hobhouse, Mr Nick Smith, Mr Chris Elmore, Ms Carla Denyer, Ms Kerry McCarthy, Mr Damien Egan, Mr Darren Jones, Ms Karin Smith, Ms Ann Davies, Mr Chris Evans, Ms Jo Stevens, Ms Anna McMorrin, Mr Stephen Doughty, Mr Alex Barros-Curtis, Mr Ben Lake, Mr Max Wilkinson, Ms Sarah Gibson, Mr Danny Kruger, Ms Claire Hazelgrove, Mr Matt Bishop, Mr Alex McIntyre, Ms Tonia Antoniazzi, Dame Nia Griffith, Mr Brian Mathew, Mr Gerald Jones, Mr Henry Tufnell, Ms Catherine Fookes, Ms Carolyn Harris, Ms Jessica Morden, Ms Ruth Jones, Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, Mayor Dan Norris, Mr Sadik Al-Hassan, Ms Alex Davies-Jones, Sir Chris Bryant, Rt Hon John Glen, Dr Roz Savage, Rt Hon Dr Andrew Murrison, Dr Simon Opher, Mr Torsten Bell, Mr Will Stone, Ms Heidi Alexander, Mr Cameron Thomas, Ms Claire Young, Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds, Mr Kanishka Narayan, Ms Tessa Munt, Mr Dan Aldridge