



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP
Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth
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Dear Harry,

Thank you for your letter dated 16 December, to the Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP, regarding your Green New Deal plans. The Secretary of State has asked me to respond. I sincerely apologise for the delay in response, your letter has only recently been brought to my attention.

I am grateful to you for sharing the Resolutions from your meeting of 15 December. The Government recognises that Local Authorities can, and do, play an essential role in driving local climate action, with significant influence in many of the national priorities across energy, housing, and transport, which will be needed to achieve net zero. Across the UK, many of our Local Authorities have already made great strides towards our net zero future and throughout the UK there are brilliant examples of local action, innovation, and excellence. I was delighted to read about the work that your Council has resolved to undertake in this area.

The Government is proud to lead the world in ending our contribution to climate change, not just because it is the right thing to do, but because we are determined to seize the unprecedented economic opportunity it brings. We want to build back better from the pandemic by building back greener and levelling up our country with new high skilled, high wage, sustainable jobs in every part of our United Kingdom.

The transition to net zero also presents a real opportunity to support communities impacted by climate change and drive levelling up across the country. We are working closely with other Government departments and local partners to ensure that local places benefit from the economic growth opportunities generated by the transition to a low carbon economy and that communities across the country can adapt to the impacts of climate change and build back greener with the skills needed for new green jobs.

The Government's Net Zero Strategy outlined our intention to continue the Local Net Zero Programme. Almost £19 million has been invested in the programme to date for local places to build capacity and capability to deliver on net zero. This includes provisions to continue the Local Net Zero Hubs to support all areas of England to reach net zero, supporting Local Authorities to develop net zero projects attracting commercial investment and increased knowledge sharing to demonstrate successful net zero system solutions.

We also recognise that longer-term and more co-ordinated funding streams can enhance innovation and investment, reduce bureaucracy, and encourage more efficient decision making. The Net Zero strategy outlines the Government's intention to explore how

we could simplify and consolidate funds which target net zero initiatives at the local level. We will also work across departments to explore how we can give certainty to investment in longer-term programmes supported by regeneration initiatives.

As announced in the strategy, we also intend to establish a Local Net Zero Forum. Chaired by BEIS, the forum will be cross departmental and bring together national and local government senior officials on a regular basis to discuss policy and delivery options on net zero. It will support the establishment of clearer roles for local government and provide a single engagement route into HM Government in a coordinated and coherent way.

As you may be aware, the Government has agreed a short pause to implementing the Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone. This is to provide Greater Manchester authorities the opportunity to provide revised proposals by 1 July 2022 to ensure nitrogen dioxide compliance is achieved as soon as possible.

The Secretary of State is grateful for your invitation but regrets that he is unable to accept as his diary is heavily committed for the foreseeable future.

Thank you again for writing. I hope you will find this reply helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G Hands', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

THE RT HON GREG HANDS MP
Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change