

Leader of the Council
Town Hall, Rose Hill,
Chesterfield,
Derbyshire S40 1LP

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The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
Local Government
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government
2 Marsham Street
Westminster
London
SW1P 4DF

Please ask for Cllr Tricia Gilby
Direct Line 01246 959650

Our Ref TG/SB

13 October 2020

Luke Hall MP
Minister for Regional Growth & Local Government
2 Marsham Street
Westminster
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Secretary of State / Minister

Vision Derbyshire – a new model for local government in Derbyshire

We write as the Leaders of all eight District and Borough Councils in Derbyshire to voice our shared concerns and opinion that now is not the time for structural reform of local government in Derbyshire.

Our councils enjoy a very productive working relationship with Derbyshire County Council, which has served us and the public that we jointly represent well through this unprecedented period and at times of earlier crises such as that at Toddbrook reservoir. We can also point to many other fine examples of effective two-tier collaboration.

We note the recent decision of Derby City Council to write to you requesting an audience to present the potential benefits of local government reorganisation to a wider Derby City area. We also note that Derbyshire County Council has given approval for a letter to be sent to you requesting an invitation to submit a proposal for a single tier of local government for the county in the event that its preferred approach, Vision Derbyshire, does not find your support.

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At a time of national crisis, we believe the priority must be to focus our efforts on supporting our residents, businesses and communities especially now a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic is upon us. This must also be where Government, the National Health Service and our other response partners would expect us to be placing our energies and resources. Instead, as has been seen elsewhere, we risk entering a phase of bitter acrimony and open hostility between councils and councillors, which will serve only to distract and take valuable resources away from the frontline services that our communities rely on.

As evidenced in the letter that we sent to you on 4 September 2020, co-signed by ourselves and the Leader of Derbyshire County Council, we believe there is a viable alternative to local government reorganisation in Derbyshire. Vision Derbyshire seeks to build on the productive working relationship to which we refer above and to construct a new collaborative model of local government in Derbyshire.

We also believe it to be a concept that doesn't detract from Government's ambition to devolve more powers and funding to regional and sub-regional bodies whilst retaining local accountability and democracy.

We do hope that you'll find the time to respond to our 4 September 2020 letter. We would very much welcome the opportunity to introduce to you alongside the Leader of Derbyshire County Council the outcomes of the cross-party work that our councils have taken forward over the past eighteen months.

We believe there to be considerable merits in the Vision Derbyshire approach, indeed it is already attracting interest from other areas of the country. Our plans will secure better outcomes for Derbyshire people and our places. This must be our priority for today and tomorrow.

To repeat, this is not the time for structural reform of local government in Derbyshire.

Yours sincerely



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tricia Gilby".

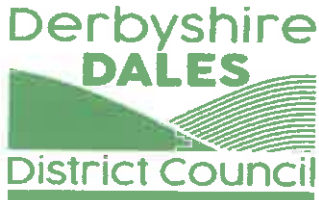
Cllr Tricia Gilby
Leader of the Council

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Emmas-Williams".

Cllr Chris Emmas-Williams
Leader of Amber Valley Borough Council



Cllr Steve Fritchley
Leader of Bolsover District Council



Cllr Garry Purdy
Leader of Derbyshire Dales District Council



Cllr Carol Hart
Leader of Erewash Borough Council



Cllr Anthony Mckeown
Leader of High Peak Borough Council



Cllr Alex Dale
Leader of North East Derbyshire District Council



Cllr Martyn Ford
Leader of South Derbyshire District Council