



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
Via Email

Jeremy Pocklington CB
Permanent Secretary

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2 December 2022

Dear Dame Meg,

Thank you for your letter of 30 August 2022 and following up on the evidence session on Wednesday 6 July. I am writing with further detail on the points you raised on levelling up.

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The 12 levelling up missions are central to the government's plan to address the UK's spatial disparities. Each mission is quantifiable and supported by a suite of metrics that can be found in the technical annex of the Levelling Up White Paper. As outlined previously to the committee, missions aim to break down silos and encourage collaboration. The government has established a mission governance and delivery framework to support the realisation of these benefits, provide clear lines of accountability and facilitate interdepartmental cooperation.

In this framework, departments and Senior Responsible Officers have been agreed for each mission to drive progress, which includes identifying and working with supporting departments that are critical to successful delivery. To enable this collaboration, lead departments have established cross-departmental Senior Mission Boards and Mission Working Groups, or repurposed existing structures where appropriate to avoid duplication. These arrangements are now in place for all 12 of the levelling up missions. A table of the lead and supporting departments is attached.

While the governance and delivery framework empowers lead departments to take strategic responsibility for the missions, Accounting Officer responsibilities for component projects and programmes remain within the relevant department. For example, while DLUHC is the departmental lead for the Pride in Place mission, DCMS would retain Accounting Officer responsibilities for arts funding that may support the mission.

To facilitate cross-departmental coordination of levelling up at the ministerial level, a dedicated Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) on Levelling Up has been established that will be chaired by the DLUHC Secretary of State. Decisions that require collective agreement will be made through the usual Cabinet Committee framework.

MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK FOR DLUHC-LED MISSIONS

The Levelling Up White Paper's technical annex sets out the measurement framework for how the government plans to measure progress against the levelling up missions. This framework involves a combination of 'headline' and 'supporting' metrics for each mission, which will provide a rich source of information on the evolution of spatial disparities in a broader levelling up context.

Since the white paper's publication, DLUHC has been working closely with government departments and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to address the data gaps identified in the technical annex. For example, DLUHC is working with the ONS and Government Office for Science to produce new measures of R&D spending at the regional level and supporting the ONS to improve UK-wide statistical coherence.

DLUHC has made significant progress in agreeing the specific measurement framework for missions the department leads, in alignment with the approach outlined in the technical annex. We have been working with government departments to refine the definitions of these missions and make sure we have a set of metrics that can be used to measure progress in a meaningful way.

LEVELLING UP ANNUAL REPORT

The Levelling Up White Paper committed to establish a statutory duty to publish an annual report analysing progress against the missions. Given this will be a statutory duty, timings for the annual report will be subject to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, but assuming the Bill gains Royal Assent by mid-2023 the first statutory annual report would be required in 2024.

In the meantime, the metrics we are using to track the levelling up missions were set out in the Levelling Up White Paper's technical annex and were based on data that is publicly available. The ONS have used this data to build a [Subnational indicators explorer](#), which allows the public to assess local authorities in the context of each metric and to compare outcomes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeremy Pocklington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

JEREMY POCKLINGTON

Annex: Lead and supporting departments for levelling up missions

| Mission | Lead Department | Supporting Departments* |
|----------------------|------------------------|--|
| Education | DfE | DHSC, DCMS |
| Skills | DfE | BEIS, DHSC, DWP, Defra |
| Health | DHSC | DfE, DWP, Defra, DfT, BEIS |
| R&D | BEIS | MoD, DHSC, DfT |
| Local Leadership | DLUHC | DfE, DfT, DWP, BEIS, HO, DCMS, DHSC, Defra |
| Digital Connectivity | DCMS | DfT, Defra, HO, CO |
| Transport | DfT | Defra, BEIS |
| Crime | HO | MoJ |
| Living Standards | HMT | BEIS, DWP, DfE |
| Well-being | DLUHC | DWP, DHSC, DCMS, Defra, DfE |
| Housing | DLUHC | BEIS, DWP |
| Pride in Place | DLUHC | DCMS, Defra, DfT, HO |

* DLUHC, HMT and No. 10 are supporting departments for all missions. Supporting departments may be updated over time.