



Department
for Transport

Cllr Keith Glazier
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From the Secretary of State
The Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps

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16 October 2020

Dear Keith

Thank you for proposal to Government for Statutory Status that you submitted on 22nd July 2020. You would have received Baroness Vere's letter of 6th August 2020 which states that 'we will not be approving any proposals for statutory status'. I would like to make it clear that did not mean that any proposal would not be considered but was a reflection of the fact that I am content with the relationship the Department currently has with Sub-national Transport Bodies and we are awaiting the outcome of a Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper.

I have nonetheless given careful consideration to your proposal.

Your proposal seeks the transfer of a number of powers related to highways, buses, railways and general transport functions. Some of these powers are seeking a right to be consulted or advise, such as the right to be consulted about new rail franchises. Others are seeking a transfer of power from Government to Transport for the South East, these include the powers to set the High Level Output Specification for Rail, the power to set Road Investment Strategy for the Strategic Road Network and the power to enter into Quality Bus Partnerships.

I have taken the time to consider the proposal and the powers sought and the rationale for statutory status. I have also taken advice from my officials. I do not believe that overall the proposal makes a convincing case for me to take forward legislation to give statutory status for Transport for the South East at this time.

The proposal states that you are 'only seeking those powers and functions that are necessary to achieve your strategy and achieve your vision.' These powers are currently held by Government and I believe that rather than a transfer of powers, economic growth in the region and the country as a whole is best served by concentrating our efforts on continued partnership work with Sub-national

Transport Bodies, including Transport for the South East. The powers to be consulted and advised I believe are not essential as the Department already has a close working relationship with Transport for the South East and my officials seek advice and consult as necessary.

I appreciate Transport for the South East's work in providing leadership on transport issues across the South East and bringing together 16 Local Highway Authorities to speak with one voice. I believe that we currently have a strong working relationship and I trust that you will continue to work closely with Baroness Vere to help achieve our mutual aims that were set out in your Transport Strategy. I trust that you took the recent funding settlement as endorsement of your work.

Yours Sincerely,

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

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT