

Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee



Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

Scottish Affairs Committee

Welsh Affairs Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

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

05 June 2020

Dear Robert,

Shared Prosperity Fund

As you will be aware, the UK currently receives around £2.1 billion of European Structural Funding per year, which is due to be replaced by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from January 2021. European Structural Funding has been used to boost various aspects of economic development across the four nations of the United Kingdom.

Given the impact of COVID-19 on the UK economy, a smooth transition to an effective Shared Prosperity Fund is now more vital than ever. However, with just months to go, the Government has yet to publish any firm proposals. Ministerial updates, both in the Chamber and at Select Committees, have lacked some of the details which we would have hoped for.

Whilst we acknowledge the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on capacity across Whitehall, we are also conscious of the need for timely decisions on the Shared Prosperity Fund to be made so that a smooth transition can take place on 1 January 2021. We note [the letter from the Minister for Local Growth to the Chair of the European Scrutiny Committee](#), dated 3 June 2020, which states that decisions about the Fund will not take place until after the next Spending Review. To allow for our effective scrutiny of this work, we would be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions by Friday 19 June.

- What is the current timetable for bringing forward proposals for the Shared Prosperity Fund?
- Will the Fund be ready to go live from January 2021 and, if not, what kind of interim arrangements will be necessary?
- Will the economic impacts of COVID-19 be reflected in the Fund's financial allocations? On what principles will financial allocations be decided?
- Will areas that would have qualified for EU funding, had we remained in the European Union, still receive the same or a greater level of funding?
- What impact has COVID-19 had on the number of civil servants working on the Fund and who is currently working on it?

- What consultation has the Government held with stakeholders since the impact of COVID-19 has begun to emerge? How will you ensure that the findings of engagement work undertaken prior to the pandemic are updated?
- Has there been agreement with the devolved administrations and with metro mayors about where competence will lie in the administration of the Shared Prosperity Fund?
- What length of funding period is being considered to allow for sufficient financial planning?

We look forward to hearing from you.

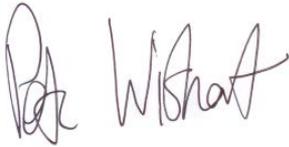
Yours sincerely,



Clive Betts MP
Chair, Housing Communities and Local
Government Committee



Simon Hoare MP
Chair, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee



Pete Wishart MP
Chair, Scottish Affairs Committee



Rt Hon Stephen Crabb MP
Chair, Welsh Affairs Committee