



Margaret Carney
Chief Executive Sefton MBC
Town Hall
Southport
Merseyside
PR8 1DA

Directorate of Transformation

**Bob Livermore FCIH Assistant Director
Housing and Regeneration**

**Elson House, 49-51 Westgate, Sandy Lane
Centre, Skelmersdale. WN8 8LP**

Telephone: 01695 577177

Website: www.westlancls.gov.uk

Fax: 01695 572331

Email: bob.livermore@westlancls.gov.uk

Date: 6th September 2013

Your ref: ML/TB

Our ref: BL/CC

Please ask for: Bob Livermore

Direct dial no: 01695 585 200

Extension:

Dear Margaret,

Re: Combined Authority

I am writing in relation to your email about the Liverpool City Region Strategic Governance Review. I have taken soundings from both political groups within the Council and they are unanimous in their view. The Council considers that any moves to enhance the working arrangements between the City Region authorities leading to:

- Better transport infrastructure
- Economic growth
- Improved strategic planning of Housing
- Better co-ordination of employment and skills across the region

should be welcomed.

The Council has considered the four options that have been tabled and for the reasons set out in the review, fully support the establishment of a Combined Authority which it believes will bring with it the best outcome for the City Region.

West Lancashire has a desire to have a greater involvement within the City Region given its role within the functional economic geography of the City Region, based on travel to work patterns, housing and employment market linkages, common planning and transportation issues and the overlapping visitor economy. We see this as complementary to our work with Lancashire Authorities, and the Lancashire L.E.P.

As part of the City Region MAA discussions it was understood originally that the Borough Council might benefit from 'observer status' within the City Region Cabinet, however this relationship was never fully developed.

West Lancashire was functionally placed within the Liverpool City Region through the former Regional Spatial Strategy. Following the identification of the Liverpool City Region boundaries, officers from the Council established working relationships with their

counterparts within the Liverpool City Region to discuss common issues and still attend a number of joint officer meetings. As a result of this collaboration, we have in recent years jointly worked with Merseyside authorities on housing, employment land and renewable energy studies, and have had discussions with Merseyside authorities about future infrastructure provision. We have also been involved in discussions relating to the future of the Green Belt around Merseyside and worked on a joint methodology with our Merseyside neighbours. The Council has worked with Sefton Council in securing DoT Community Rail designation for the Ormskirk to Preston rail line and more recently on the VISIT project utilising LSTF monies. It is also currently working with Merseytravel and Lancashire County Council to commission further study work in relation to the future linking of Skelmersdale to the Merseyrail system.

Looking forward there are many areas that we will want to work jointly with the City Region on in the future – in particular to understand how we can assist with Superport through the provision of suitable sites and look to work jointly with our neighbouring City Region authorities on transportation, economic development and planning issues. We are currently in discussions with the Liverpool City Region LEP about how we may develop better working relationships to tackle important cross border issues.

This Council is therefore supportive of the formation of a Combined Authority and would request that any new Combined Authority recognises the important links that it will need to have with West Lancashire and that consideration be given to the Borough Council having some form of observer status role or other more formal link with the Combined Authority. I would hope that our involvement will add value to certain discussions to the benefit of all the Combined Authority, as well as being of benefit to our own Council and possibly the LEP.

I hope that you will be able to consider the points that we have raised and look forward to a response in due course. We would be happy to meet with appropriate representatives from the new Combined Authority to see how this could be taken forward in the future.

Yours sincerely



**R V LIVERMORE
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
HOUSING AND REGENERATION**