



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt. Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
2 Marsham Street,
SW1P 4DF

30th September 2021

Dear Michael,

Re: Erdington High Street's bid to the Levelling Up Fund

I'd firstly like to welcome you to your new role and hope that we can work constructively to improve the lives of Erdington residents.

I am writing to you regarding Erdington's bid to the Levelling Up Fund. As you will be aware, the fund was created to improve infrastructure in the places that need investment most, including deprived towns. Few places are more in need of this investment than Erdington.

I always say that Erdington may be one of the poorest constituencies in the country, but we are rich in talent. The determination, innovation, and passion of local people, especially in the face of adversity as we have seen recently, never ceases to amaze and inspire me. However, without investment we will never realise this potential to its fullest.

Erdington High Street sits at the heart of my constituency. This once fine High Street, like many across the country, has been in decline for some years. Many businesses have left the High Street already, and there are fears that more will follow in the coming months and years if action is not taken.

That's why, along with Birmingham City Council and local stakeholders, I have been seeking investment in the High Street for some time. Last year, we made a bid to the Future High Streets Fund that would have provided a much-needed boost to Erdington High Street. However, this was rejected on Boxing Day and came as a bitter blow to all of those who had worked so hard to write and submit the bid.

Despite this disappointment, we in Erdington were not deterred and were determined to secure the funding our High Street so badly needs.

We have now made an ambitious bid to the Levelling Up Fund and are currently waiting on a decision to be made over whether the bid has been successful. It is vital that this

imaginative and solid bid that would transform the High Street and offer new housing, cultural, leisure and social activities for the local community is approved.

Since coming into your new role, you have made clear that 'levelling up' is a key part of your agenda. If the Government is serious about levelling up, then ensuring places like Erdington, which is the 5th most deprived constituency in the UK, receive the necessary support and investment must be a priority.

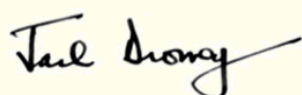
A condition of the Levelling Up Fund is that successful bids must be able to 'begin delivery on the ground in the 2021-22 financial year'. However, we are now approaching the halfway point of this financial year and we are still waiting on a decision to be made. Clearly, the longer we are forced to wait for a decision on the bid, the more difficult it will be to ensure delivery will begin this financial year.

I am therefore urging you ensure a decision is made on Erdington's Levelling Up Fund bid as soon as possible to allow Birmingham City Council to get on with the job of delivering the improvements to infrastructure Erdington so desperately needs.

I sincerely hope Erdington's bid to the Levelling Up Fund is approved. I am eager to see the economic and cultural benefits this investment will have on our community, and I am determined to give the people of Erdington a High Street they can be proud of once again.

I look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jack Dromey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jack Dromey
Member of Parliament for Birmingham, Erdington