Dear [your MP’s name]

Councils cuts are unsustainable: Since 2010 there has been an unprecedented average cut of 40% to councils’ funding. Since June 2010, local government has lost over 760,000 jobs (ONS, December 2016). Those workers left behind face increased workloads, pressure and stress – on top of shrinking pay packets. As a result, local services, and those reliant upon them, suffer.

That is why I am asking you to support better funding. On September 9, cities across the UK are holding rallies for public services, before core city leaders present their paper Invest – Reform – Trust to the DCLG on 12 September. Please let me know if you will be supporting the rallies, and also please meet with the city leaders on 12 September, or arrange to at another date.

There is not a single area of council services that are not overstretched, yet demand is only increasing. A recent report from the University of Nottingham predicted an extra 71,000 care places will be needed by 2025, yet there is will be a funding gap in care alone of £2.3bn by 2020. Far from being on our way to dealing with this problem, the number of care places is actually falling. This is just one example of why the government needs to change course now to avoid total breakdown in our local services.

There is now a significant funding gap in local authorities: The LGA’s own interim report predicts that the funding gap in local government will grow to £10.3 billion by 2018/19. To maintain the same level of service councils provided in 2014/15, a funding gap of £6 billion opened up in 2016/17 alone. Under the LGA’s assumptions, authorities will have to use £3 billion of their reserves in the five years to 2019/20. Similarly research by the New Policy Institute shows that by 2020, current and capital spending combined will be lower than at any time since before 1948.

With pay comparing so badly with the rest of the public and private sectors, 71% of councils unsurprisingly report recruitment and retention problems (LGA, 2017). This has led to a marked increase in the use of expensive agency workers to plug the gaps - an increase from 8% to 13% from 2010-2015 (NIESR report to the OME in 2017)

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With this in mind I hope you will support the rally on 9 September and then help make the case to the government to accept the Invest – Reform – Trust paper recommendations, so that our towns and cities can go on getting even better. The alternative is a threadbare public realm and more suffering, which I am sure you do not want to see.

Yours sincerely

YOUR NAME