



**Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities**

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

*Secretary of State for Levelling up Housing &
Communities*
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations
2 Marsham Street
London
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Cllr Barry Wood
Leader
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House, White Post Road
Bodicote, Banbury
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18 January 2023

Dear Cllr Wood,

Thank you for your letter dated 31 October setting out the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Leadership Group's proposal for formally establishing a pan-regional partnership as your preferred model for regional collaboration from the Levelling Up White Paper.

I understand that the Group has worked to agree these arrangements over many months, and I would like to thank you and your members for the dedication you have shown in pursuing the right tools to deliver for the communities you serve.

I welcome these proposals and the initial priorities for the partnership, recognising that realising the region's economic potential will be supported by a strong regional brand that can compete for investment on the global stage. By bringing together public and private sector partners under independent leadership in the pursuit of sustainable growth, I believe the partnership will be well placed to shape and deliver on the economic vision for the region.

I also recognise your continued focus on the environment and sustainability. The 25-year Environment Plan remains central to this Government's ambitions to leave our environment in a better state than we found it and I welcome your continued collaboration with Defra and the Environment Agency to test and embed its principles across the region.

I am therefore pleased to confirm my support for the establishment of an Oxford to Cambridge Pan-Regional Partnership by 31 March 2023. Subject to annual business cases, I am prepared to support your partnership with up to £2.5 million in total over the remainder of this Spending Review period.

Thank you again for your continued collaboration across the region and I look forward to hearing about your work and how it is delivering for your communities.

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
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