

Rishi Sunak  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

23rd November 2020

Dear Chancellor,

Re: Government Spending Review

I'm writing to you in anticipation of your Spending Review on 25<sup>th</sup> November to highlight the chronic underfunding of local services and the potentially devastating funding gap caused by the Covid pandemic.

The combination of a decade of Government austerity and the costs of Covid means that Councils across the country now face appalling choices that cut right to the heart of essential local services.

The huge gaps in funding mean that all across England

- the jobs of vital key workers are being lost, now
- local facilities such as community centres, libraries, leisure centres and children's centres are being earmarked for closure, now
- those services upon which many of our most vulnerable residents rely are at risk, now

**At a time of national crisis, when residents and businesses in our communities so desperately need economic and social support, the cuts that are coming will be catastrophic. I'm urging you to change course.**

Even before Covid hit our communities and local economies the Conservative-led Local Government Association (LGA) reported that by 2020, local authorities suffered a 'reduction to core funding from the Government of nearly £16 billion over the preceding decade. That means that councils have lost 60p out of every £1 the Government had provided to spend on local services in the last eight years.'



**Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre  
Councillor for Castle Ward**

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Over those years, Nottingham City has already made over £250million of budget savings due to year-on-year Government funding cuts and increases in demand of our care services for older people and vulnerable children.

The Conservative Chair of the LGA recently said: “Many councils were in a difficult financial position before the pandemic hit after a decade of central government funding reductions. They will continue to face demand pressures on day-to-day services - some pre-existing and others made more significant by the impact of COVID-19 – amid substantial income losses, such as from local taxation, fees and charges.”

Although recent additional Government funding to help with the costs of Covid is welcome, here in Nottingham we are trying to cope with over £21million of unfunded Covid costs in this financial year and a Covid budget gap of over £47million in the next financial year.

I would urge you to use your Spending Review to

- stick to the clear pledge that your Government made, to cover the costs of Covid
- give Councils a 3 year funding package so they can plan over the medium term
- properly fund our local key workers, local public facilities such as parks, libraries and leisure centres and fund the additional demands on care services for older people and vulnerable children
- help local economies to recover rather than impose yet more austerity cuts

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Webster', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Sam Webster  
Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre