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House of Commons
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Corri Wilson MP
45a Fort Street
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John Scott MSP
17 Wellington Square
Ayr
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23 January 2017

Re: ZA3866/LC

Dear John

Ayrshire Growth Deal

As the MSP for Ayr, I am hoping you are able to confirm your support for the Ayrshire Growth Deal. Clearly it already has cross party support in the three Ayrshire councils, and the Scottish Government has confirmed its support for the deal. The missing element to date is confirmation of support from the UK Government in terms of finance.

You may be aware that, along with the three other Ayrshire MPs, I recently met with Greg Clark, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to discuss this issue. He was very positive and stated that he believes the proposals will mesh well with his forthcoming Green Paper on Industrial Strategy.

However, while this response was encouraging, I was subsequently disappointed by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, David Gauke, who has appeared to indicate that he views this as a devolved matter, and therefore entirely within the gift of the Scottish Government. This was a view reiterated by the Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, Michael Ellis, when replying to Patricia Gibson MP's debate on the Ayrshire Growth Deal last week. Indeed, his suggestion was that the predicted Barnett consequential from the Autumn Statement could be utilised.

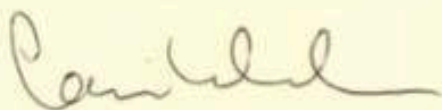
I believe that UK Government funding is required if this proposal is to move forward. If the Ayrshire Growth Deal is successful, then the UK Treasury can expect to make significant welfare savings, and both Governments could benefit from higher tax receipts.

I would appreciate confirmation of your support for the proposals, and the principle of the Ayrshire Growth Deal being publically funded in a tripartite manner between the UK Government, the Scottish Government, and the three Ayrshire Councils. While there is expected to be a substantial amount of private investment, it is vital that we gain the support of the UK Government for this transformative endeavour.

If you share my view that the Ayrshire Growth Deal is crucial to the Ayrshire economy, I would be grateful if you could write to the Chief Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of State for Scotland confirming your support. I would also encourage you to enlist the support of the Leader of the Scottish Conservatives, Ruth Davidson MSP, and request that she enlists the support of the UK Cabinet when attending her regular meetings with them.

I look forward to hearing from you on this issue.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corri Wilson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Corri Wilson MP
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock