

Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP

Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

21, July 2026

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, our members and the wider business community, we congratulate you on your election as Leader of the Labour Party, and as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. We know your leadership well, and we wish you every success in this role, with full recognition of the responsibility it carries.

As you know, Greater Manchester Chamber is the leading, independent, business representative body for the Greater Manchester business community. With around 3,500 members and a further reach of 37,000 businesses, we represent the voice of industry in our region quickly, accurately and credibly.

A manifesto that leans into place over party, and problem-solving over point-scoring, needs institutions that exist to serve the places themselves, and we are one of them. As part of the British Chambers of Commerce, a powerful network of Chambers of Commerce, with 51 Chambers covering every part of the UK and further reach internationally, we commit to providing you with critical data and insight to help inform policy, with direct access to decision-makers and business leaders across the region. Our in-house team can supply live, tracked economic, trade and skills data to complement regional narrative and support decision-making.

The growth of the UK is founded on growth everywhere in the country. Cities and city regions are vital in the UK's growth story. The North West has the second largest population growth outside of London and the South East. More people are making the North West their home, and growth in the North West will benefit all the UK.

In 2017, we worked with you to support your Mayoral campaign, presenting you with a blueprint - our 'Campaign for Business' - setting out the priorities we had heard from our member base. This time, as you step into a national role, we stand ready to provide the data, business insight and regional expertise needed to inform national policy, and to ensure the voice of Greater Manchester continues to be heard in Westminster. Our data can provide the regional pulse of business, demonstrating business challenges as reported by the businesses themselves, with suggestions on what will work on the ground as solutions for business.

We are reshaping the 'Campaign for Business' for the incoming Mayor and for the new country leadership in line with the changing needs of business. As resilience and rising cost pressures move

up the agenda, we will continue to communicate the voice of business. These significant challenges businesses are facing must be a priority.

In our recent economic research and Chamber Assembly, we polled our business leaders and owners. The results were:

- 56% said economic uncertainty was the main challenge facing their business.
- 55% were “somewhat concerned” about the impact of rising labour costs on their business.
- 52% said a reduction in employment costs would be the most helpful support for their business.
- 58% supported a reduction in business rates for the hospitality sector, but would prefer broader reform of the system.
- The GM Index has been between 13 and 15 for over one year and mirrors the UK economy, which is also stuck on a low growth trajectory.
- The biggest concern for GM based businesses is rising costs, both cost of employment and materials. If they are forced to then increase prices, it builds inflationary pressure.
- Business is particularly worried about policy uncertainty and the lack of a strategic vision for growth.

Since 2017, in Greater Manchester, we have enjoyed stability of leadership, delivery of policy, and strong engagement with local government which we’re sure will continue.

Nationally, we look forward to seeing clearer, longer-term policy, to greater investment and focus on the North of England, and to the devolution model, proven in Greater Manchester, developed across more Mayoral authorities.

What the country needs now is the excitement, optimism and economic growth you delivered for Greater Manchester. We encourage policy certainty for businesses, this will help unlock business investment and showcase Britain as not just open for business but the best destination for investment and job creation.

We look forward to continuing our relationship and would welcome the opportunity to meet in the coming weeks to discuss how we can support your government’s priorities for Greater Manchester and the North. We also work closely with our Chamber network and would be happy to coordinate a regional CEOs roundtable or similar to give you a direct channel.

With our congratulations and best wishes,



Emma Holt
Chief Executive Officer
Greater Manchester Chamber