



Ministry of Housing,
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Dear Ms Azam, Mr Richards and Mr Kennedy,

Thank you for your letter dated 26 May, to the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick, about Covid-19 and local government pay.

I am very grateful for the hard work of all local government workers who are carrying out critical work on our frontline response to Covid-19. Local government has mobilised to help us keep the country moving during the unprecedented national emergency whilst continuing to deliver social care and other vital public services.

We recognise the additional costs and pressures on finances councils are facing as a result of the crisis and we therefore made a commitment to support councils as much as we can in their response. We have now made £3.2 billion available to local authorities through an un-ringfenced grant so they can address pressures they are facing as a result of the pandemic. This demonstrates the Government's commitment to making sure councils have the resources they need to support their communities through this challenging time.

In total, the Government has committed over £27 billion to local areas to support councils and their communities. This includes £300 million to support the new test and trace service, £600 million to support providers through a new Infection Control Fund and £12.3 billion of support through the Small Business Grants Fund and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants. We will continue to work with local government and their representatives over the coming weeks to ensure they are managing as the pandemic progresses.

As you are aware, decisions on local government pay rightly remain with local government leaders in conjunction with staff representatives who are best placed to consider what they can afford. Ministers do not have any formal role in such matters. Consequently, it would not be appropriate for the Department to comment. However, officials will continue to engage with councils and representatives on matters of this nature.

Yours ever,

SIMON CLARKE MP