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for Transport

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7 May 2024

Dear Roger,

Thank you for participating in the debate on the case for a coherent plan to address the failings of the transport system tabled by Lord Snape on 25 April. I am grateful to you for raising the important topic of potholes. You suggested that the Government lacked a coherent plan for highway maintenance and that recent funding increases were too little too late and would not be enough to undo the damage caused by earlier funding reductions. You said that you had seen the impacts of this in Cumbria in particular.

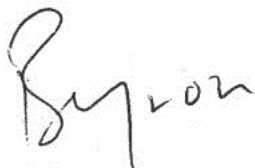
The Government agrees that potholes are the bane of motorists' lives and that a long-term plan is needed to tackle them. The Prime Minister's Network North plan, announced last October, included an unprecedented £8.3 billion funding uplift for local highway maintenance over the next decade. The long-term funding certainty that this provides will enable local authorities in Cumbria and elsewhere to plan ahead and to take a preventative approach rather than the short-term reactive approach that many have taken in recent years.

Authorities in the North and the Midlands will receive a greater proportion of the funding uplift than authorities elsewhere, with Westmorland and Furness, for example, set to receive an increase of around £150 million over the next decade and Cumberland around £130 million. These are very significant long-term funding increases, and the Network North plan makes clear that they will be in addition to what local authorities were expecting to receive over the period in question.

With this additional funding come additional responsibilities. The Government is requiring local authorities to publish plans for how they will use the funding in their areas. Virtually all authorities have now published the first of these plans on their websites, allowing the public to see for themselves how the funding is being used. The Government has also made clear that all

authorities will need by March 2025 to publish long-term plans for transforming their local roads using the additional funding that is promised over the entire period to 2033/34. These plans will require local authorities to have a coherent long-term plan for the management of their local roads.

A copy of this letter will be deposited in the libraries of the House of Lords and House of Commons.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Davies', is centered on the page.

**LORD DAVIES OF GOWER**