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Robert Napier
Chairman

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Dear Jim

Housing Market Renewal

Firstly can I thank you, your colleagues at Bridging Newcastle Gateshead and from the local authorities. As chairman of the HCA I found it extremely heartening to see all the work to which HCA funding is contributing and the schemes that are making a real difference to people’s lives in Newcastle and Gateshead.

The discussions we had also gave me a real sense of some of the challenges that you face. I was also interested in how different some of your issues were from those facing many of the other Pathfinders, who I have previously visited. However, as I mentioned, there are a number of questions that I would like to bat back for the considered views of your Board:

- How can the HCA add value to the work you are doing - especially how can we develop the single conversation for the sub-regional level and align the different funding streams that we hold?
- How do you see the structure of the pathfinder developing to make the most effective use of resources and to cope with future challenges?
- As the next Comprehensive Spending Review is likely to be tight what metrics should we be measuring so that both Bridging Newcastle Gateshead and the HCA can demonstrate value for money?
- Related to that, I would be interested in whether you could give me figures on the number of people who have been positively impacted on by your programme and what this has cost per person.
- Can you demonstrate how HMR has leveraged both public and private funding into your pathfinder area? And, as we are likely to have tight public finances over the next few years, what thoughts you have on increasing the ratio between HMR and private sector funding?

- What is the rationale for continuing post 2011? :-
 - What would be the impact on existing projects if no more funding was available?
 - Can you articulate a wider vision for why we need to continue funding the wider programme which goes beyond ensuring that existing projects are completed?

I believe if, together, we can provide responses to these questions that not only will we be able to put forward a strong argument for the continuance of integrated housing market and economic regeneration, but that we will be able to deliver more effectively, with obvious benefits for the people we seek to help.

I am about to leave the office on two weeks' leave and, in those circumstances, I hope you will excuse this letter being signed on my behalf by my Assistant in my absence.

Yours sincerely

for Robert Napier