



26 November 2025

Miatta Fahnbulleh MP  
Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities  
Baroness Taylor of Stevenage  
Lords Minister for Housing and Local Government  
By Email

Dear Miatta,

I am writing to you and ministerial colleagues following the third reading of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, with some thanks and questions.

### **Environmental health determinants**

First, I want to sincerely thank you and the Secretary of State for making changes to the health determinants set out in clause 43 (Health improvement and health inequalities duty) to include clean air and access to green space. I have been working with Rosamund Adoo Kissi Debrah and the members of the Healthy Air Coalition to make sure air pollution is recognised by every new Mayor, and this positive response from the Government to our proposals is very welcome.

During the report stage debate, I raised a question about whether the description in the amended clause of: “environmental factors, including air quality and access to green space and bodies of water,” is intended to include the kind of contamination of land that led to the sudden death of Zane Gbangbola when floods brought poison gas from landfill into his home in Chertsey, Surrey in 2014, as well as the contamination of water and its impacts on health.<sup>1</sup>

You were unable to answer during your summing up at the end of the debate, but I should be grateful if you could provide a written reply to me with this reassurance.

### **Local authority committee systems**

I also want to thank you again for listening to the voices on the ground in places where councils have chosen to operate the committee system of governance and wish to continue with it. This includes Sheffield, Bristol and Worcester which I mentioned during committee stage while proposing amendments on this issue, but also many other areas including several London boroughs.

I am very pleased that areas choosing to operate these more collaborative governance systems before the commencement of this part of the Bill will now be able to preserve their choice if they wish, following the Government’s changes.

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<sup>1</sup> Zane’s Law campaign, from his parents: <https://zaneslaw.co.uk/updates/>



## Climate, nature and clean air duties

During the report stage debate, where I proposed new clause 29 to add devolved climate, nature and clean air duties, it was encouraging to hear several cross-party MPs speak up for these duties alongside me, citing the wide cross-party support within local government for new duties in these areas, including from councillors through the Local Government Association, the UK100 and the letter signed by over 450 local councillors and council leaders.<sup>2</sup>

I understand it would be almost unprecedented for the Government to adopt an amendment from an opposition member directly during report stage. I remain very hopeful that ministers will bring forward new amendments to introduce new environmental duties during consideration in the House of Lords, and should be grateful for an update on whether you will do this.

I want to stress again that all three aspects of amendment NC29 – climate, nature and clean air – are essential, and must be integrated together in the work of local government to be truly effective. This reflects the description of our “intertwined crises” in the recent State of Climate and Nature statement by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.<sup>3</sup>

I look forward to receiving your reply and the answer to my questions above,

Yours sincerely,

Siân Berry MP  
Green Party, Brighton Pavilion

Cc

The Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government  
Katie White OBE MP, Minister for Climate

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<sup>2</sup> The number of councillors signing the UK100/Climate Emergency Campaign letter is still increasing:  
<https://localclimatepledge2024.uk100.org/>

<sup>3</sup> House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS817), Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, Jul 2025 <https://commonsbusiness.parliament.uk/Document/96618/Pdf?subType=Standard>