

Video Transcript

North East Devolution

At the moment, a large proportion of decisions about what happens in the North East are taken by the government and its departments.

The leaders of local North East councils have agreed a devolution deal with the Government. Meaning more powers and funding for the region.

The deal will now be the subject of a public consultation and will be formally considered by each council before the legal measures necessary to put the deal into practice are taken.

This is a deal that guarantees long term funding that will allow us to invest in public transport, support business, improve skills and living standards while tackling the climate emergency.

The deal, which is subject to a governance review and public consultation, offers a potential £4.2 billion of investment into the region, made up of elements including:

- An investment fund of £1.4 billion, or £48 million a year, to support inclusive economic growth and support our regeneration priorities
- An indicative budget of around £1.8 billion, or £60 million a year, for adult education and skills – to meet local skills priorities and improve opportunities for residents
- A £900 million package of investment to transform our transport system, with £563 million from the City Regional Sustainable Transport Fund, on top of funding already announced for our buses and metro system
- £69 million of investment in housing and regeneration, unlocking sites to bring forward new housing and commercial development
- It is expected to create 24,000 extra jobs, deliver 70,000 courses per year to give people the skills to get good jobs, and leverage £5 billion of private sector investment

The seven local authorities already work closely with each other, with two combined authorities currently existing in the area. The devolution deal represents the next step forward in that partnership working.

One of the changes will be the creation of a directly elected Mayor for the entire region, who will take decision with members of the new combined authority for the North East.

The Government believes the public should be able to directly elect a mayor to ensure accountability for the additional powers and funding made available through devolution deals.

The Mayor will be elected by residents living in the seven constituent local authorities. They would be responsible to voters and re-elected every four years.

The first mayoral election is expected to take place in May 2024.

As part of the devolution deal, funding has been secured to meet the additional costs of the new arrangements.

The new arrangements are an expansion of the powers held and area covered by the North of Tyne Combined Authority's elected mayor.

This role will cease to exist and the new directly elected mayor will be elected to represent the entire region, meaning no increase in the number of political positions held in the region.

Councils will continue to have the responsibilities they do now, providing vital services to their communities and championing their towns, rural communities and cities.

This is about moving the powers and money from central government to the North East for the benefit of all our communities.

A summary of consultation responses will be compiled and shared with Government, who will then decide whether or not to go ahead with establishing a Mayoral Combined Authority covering the seven local authority areas.

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