

Devolution deal for Metro Mayors

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Devolution in England has resulted in a number of devolution deals with combined authorities created, certain powers developed and local mayors elected. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) was the first to benefit from devolution in the North West. Other regions have followed suit with devolution deals being agreed and mayors elected for the following regions:

- Liverpool City Region
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- North Tyne
- West Midlands
- West England, and
- Tees Valley.

The powers given to each combined authority and metro mayor vary. However, the devolution deal achieved by the GMCA is thought to be the most advanced in terms of the powers that it provides including some funding being devolved.

It is reported that the mayors of each region listed above have been formally offered devolution deals similar to that of the GMCA. The purpose of these offers is reported to level up all mayors to Greater Manchester level as that is the most advanced. Powers over public health and social care functions has been excluded on the basis that the mayors have indicated that they do not want responsibilities in that area.

At a time when 'taking back control' and local decision making seems to continue to dominate our public discourse, positive developments in respect of devolution deals are important and timely.

Levelling powers devolved through the various devolution deals to what has been granted to the GMCA presents real opportunities to develop local industrial strategies, as well as consolidate budgets and strategies in respect of education and skills, housing and planning, transport and for some health and social care.

In addition, these arrangements not only devolve political and fiscal powers but also have the potential for local combined authorities and mayors to address economic inequality by pooling resources to address particular challenges or linking development of skills towards industries targeted through local industrial strategies.

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