**Articulating the benefits of Mayoral Combined Authorities**

**Introduction**

This paper has been prepared for the M10 Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) Chief Executives group[[1]](#footnote-1). Although MCAs have now been established for some years, the development of a robust quantitative evidence base which looks at their impact and additionality is only now starting to emerge. Alongside this quantitative data, there are also a range of more qualitative benefits which it is important to articulate in fully capturing the benefits of devolution and communicating the added value that the work of the MCAs create. The paper therefore draws on a series of qualitative case studies to provide a narrative which highlights how and what MCAs are doing differently to maximise outcomes for local communities.

The evidence presented aims to answer some of the key questions highlighted below but specifically **how devolved freedoms and powers are enabling MCAs to shape and deliver more efficient and effective activities and services for the benefit of residents, businesses and their operating environments.**



While the operational context for both MCAs and the Government continues to change and respond to ever greater UK and Global challenges, the need for strong local accountability remains a constant and particularly important given tightening public resources and the need to prioritise spending. This was noted by the new Prime Minister in his first address to the country when he warned of difficult decisions ahead but promised to work with integrity, professionalism, and accountability at every level. The ongoing development of this benefits framework and collection of evidence will therefore remain a key priority for the M10, as it will provide a more structured way of describing MCA impact and provide a compelling case for the continued importance and relevance of devolution.

**Benefits Framework**

A high-level benefits framework has been developed to identify how regional coordination of - and local accountability for - investment, commissioning, service delivery and civic leadership can deliver better outcomes for local residents, because it enables:

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| **MCA outcomes:** * Better decisions and better projects
* Faster and more efficient delivery
* More ambitious, larger and more diverse activities
* Greater local accountability
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The case studies presented and summarised in the remainder of this report, have been selected to provide tangible examples of these benefits. They focus on what Combined Authorities are doing, why it is different and how this is helping to create better outcomes. They provide quantitative evidence where this exists, but also present a strong and clear narrative that describes and brings to life the benefits Combined Authorities are creating.

At this stage, the report largely focuses on projects, programmes and activities that are unique to each MCA area, and will depend for example on their devolved powers. However, it is also recognised that there are a number of other programmes and activities that are common to more than one MCA, where authorities are piloting new approaches or tailoring provision to maximise opportunities and/or the characteristics of the area (e.g. Adult Education Budget (AEB), Citizens Voice/Panels). Where relevant, a few joint case study examples are presented to illustrate this. This analysis could be expanded to explore the different approaches in more detail and any variations in levels of impact and value for money, but this would need to be carried out as a follow-on piece of work.

A review of the case studies provided by the MCAs (full details of which are included in Appendix 1) highlights the consistent ways in which the MCAs are realising benefits regardless of their devolved powers or the policy/intervention type (i.e. Transport, Employment and Skills, Land and Housing, Public Services, Finance). These are described below.

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| **MCAs are realising benefits by:*** Maximising the profile and influence of the **Mayor** and their ambitions for the area
* Providing stronger **leadership** and governance
* Delivering greater and more effective **strategic thinking** and development - vs local level delivery
* Regional **convening** **and co-ordination** and ability to transcend organisational, geographical and policy boundaries; and share best practice more widely
* Leveraging **funding, capacity and more robust operational partnerships**
	+ Designing more tailored projects and programmes that are underpinned by **local knowledge and intelligence**
	+ Strengthening channels for **citizen participation** and potential to influence decision making
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While there has been some attempt to group the case studies, by benefit type, it should be noted at the outset that there is considerable overlap. A number of projects for example, combine multiple benefits, i.e. delivery of more ambitious projects at a faster pace; greater accountability and more tailored projects; and faster delivery on a larger scale.

For each case study included in Appendix 1 a brief overview is provided, alongside a summary of the role of the CA at each stage of the project lifecycle (inception, design and development, delivery, benefits realisation, legacy) and a summary of the benefits of devolution. These projects, and a precis of their benefits and how these been achieved are presented in the following sections.

**Better decisions and better projects**

The case studies illustrate the numerous ways in which MCAs are delivering ‘better decisions and better projects’ as a result of:

* Alignment with the Strategic Vision for the City Region and related policy framework
* Their ability to bring stakeholders together, build consensus and agree shared priorities across their areas.
* Tailoring project and programme development to reflect local needs, opportunities and strengths.
* Developing deliverable and realistic projects which truly reflect local conditions – with resources built in for project and pipeline development.
* Securing local commitment and ownership, which drives forward and accelerates delivery.

Five examples are provided in Appendix 1 and referenced below, which demonstrate how MCAs have implemented better decision making and the delivery of better projects. They emphasise design which reflects local needs, opportunities and strengths which is also aligned with strategic priorities and mayoral commitments; and the use of new powers agreed through devolution. A further example is also provided to describe how AEB is being used flexibly to inform decision making and tailor provision to the needs of MCA areas.

1. **Integrated Transport for London – Greater London Authority**

The devolution of responsibilities for rail in London has been one of the biggest success stories for transport in recent years, having **led to greater investment, higher levels of passenger satisfaction, and more reliable services**. Since TfL’s establishment in 2000, London has achieved an 11% modal shift from car to walking, cycling and public transport; and a 7% increase in passenger satisfaction (up to 77%) on London Overground since it was introduced in 2007. It has also helped embed heavy rail services within wider public transport networks and broader plans for housing, economic development and decarbonisation in London.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Mayoral powers and control from an early stage has helped to convene key stakeholders and build consensus on strategic priorities
* Integration of sustainable transport at the planning stage as a result of devolved powers for both transport and planning
* Alignment of rail service provision with the transport strategy and wider housing, economic development and decarbonisation policy/plans for London
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1. **Bus Franchising in Greater Manchester**

GMCA has taken on the political, legal, and financial risk of being the first MCA to franchise local buses, using the powers in the Bus Service Act 2017. Once operational, Bus Franchising will give GMCA a significant new lever to deliver a more integrated, reliable, and affordable transport system. The introduction of franchised services will allow Greater Manchester to plan and integrate the transport network in new ways, providing customers with **better, more frequent services and a more consistent offer** across different routes.

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| **How will the benefits be achieved?*** New powers to franchise buses – and therefore greater control over integration of fares, ticketing and journey planning across transport modes
* Ensuring design and delivery of new provision is tailored to needs – i.e. the need for better, more frequent, consistent services across the network
* Delivery of a more ambitious solution for GM, aligned with the strategic vision for the City Region, which will facilitate integration and journey planning across the whole network
* Ability of the CA to bear the financial risk relating to fares
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1. **Unified Model of Public Services in Greater Manchester**

Greater Manchester Combined Authority’s (GMCA) unified model of public service delivery is creating **public services fit for the 21st century** that focus on people, how they live their lives in communities, and their aspirations. The model is focused on addressing the specific needs of people and places, recognising that the interconnected and reinforcing nature of issues means services typically have a shared user-base and a siloed approach would not drive long-term change. The GM Model is the culmination of a number of years work in Public Service Reform, drawing on learning and good practice gained from delivery of the ‘Troubled Families’ programme. It has 6 key features to guide the delivery of public services which in turn offer **the following benefits**:

* Geographic alignment
* Leadership and accountability
* One workforce
* Shared financial resources
* Co-ordinated programmes, policy and delivery
* Tackling barriers and delivering on devolution

An independent peer-reviewed study (see case study 13) suggests that there are now tangible outcomes that demonstrate the impact of the GM model. The report concludes that following devolution, life expectancy in Greater Manchester was 0·196 years (95% CI: 0·182 to 0·210) higher than expected in comparison to areas with similar pre-devolution trends, which has been attributed in part to GM’s integrated model of public service delivery.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Political leadership and strategic vision – providing a single narrative and commitment to public service reform
* Specialist team within GMCA with time and expertise to design a model that could achieve transformational change (in line with the strategic vision for public services)
* GM convening role and ability to bring stakeholders together to deliver shared services, at scale, and disseminate good practice more widely among partner agencies
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1. **Liverpool City Region Film Production Fund**

Culture and the creative arts are an important aspect of LCR’s identity as demonstrated by LCR being the first CA in the UK to commit at least 1% of its annual Investment Fund to support cultural activities. The flexibility of the LCR Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) enabled the CA to target the film/TV production sub-sector and build on the area’s existing assets and strengths; and emerging opportunities/market demand within the Digital and Creative Sector. CA support ensured that the benefits extended beyond Liverpool City Centre, improving the profile and reputation of the City Region as a whole. To date, six productions are expected to deliver **a higher return on investment** of 6.7:1, compared with 3:1 for independent films and 5:1 for high end TV. Two productions have secured two BAFTAs each; and two **productions have been recommissioned for a second series**.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Alignment with the Strategic Vision for the City Region (and Mayoral commitment to spend a minimum of 1% of the SIF on cultural developments)
* Design and delivery of a fund that builds on local intelligence and maximises sector strengths/key assets within the local area
* Expansion of the project outside the City Centre to benefit the whole Liverpool City Region
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1. **Digital Growth and Innovation Programme, North of Tyne Combined Authority**

The North of Tyne Digital Growth and Innovation Programme (DGIP) is a cluster of different investment packages which support the digital sector as both a key growth sector and an enabler for the region. This ranges from building a pipeline of digital businesses, enabling business growth through digital adoption and cluster development; developing digital skills and providing a future talent pool; and attracting major Inward Investment projects. Devolution has enabled the North of Tyne CA to convene stakeholders from a range of sectors to develop a cohesive digital narrative by streamlining engagement with key partners across the region. This is **minimising duplication and maximising impact by cumulative investment in complementary initiatives**.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Extensive consultation with the sector to secure local commitment and ownership
* Use of local intelligence to improve the offer and greater alignment of funding and development of a cohesive narrative/brand
* CA convened partners and synthesised their inputs – around shared priorities
* Delivery of a more agile response in response to local needs
* Harnessing national/regional assets and strengths
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**Tailoring the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the needs of local areas**

The AEB from the Department for Education has now been devolved to all M10 Combined Authorities (including the GLA), while the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) continues to manage and distribute AEB to those areas outside MCA boundaries. Since August 2019 devolved authorities with responsibilities for adult education and associated budgets have published their own funding rules for providers in receipt of devolved AEB funding. This devolved responsibility is in turn, enabling MCAs to test out new approaches to ensure that funding is tailored to the needs of the local area. For example:

1. **Liverpool City Region**

LCR’s Test and Learn pilots promote innovative delivery to alleviate a market failure highlighting an employer / industry need or failure to address the learning needs of a particular cohort of learners. Over the last 3 years around 5 per cent or circa £2m per academic year of the LCR’s devolved AEB has been invested with colleges, Local Authority community learning providers and other training providers to support different methods of delivery and learner engagement in English and maths, ESOL and digital skills. This Test and Learn method of trialling innovative delivery alongside other adult learning opportunities has been recognised by Government as a key success of promoting flexibility; and highlighted as a model of good practice by external organisations such as the Local Government Association, the Heseltine institute and the Learning and Work Institute.

1. **Greater Manchester**

GMCA’s priority for the devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) aims to ensure all adult education has a connection to the local labour market. Since devolution in August 2019, over 148,000 GM residents have accessed over 320,000 devolved AEB funded courses. Following devolution of the funding, the CA has:

* **introduced a range of policy changes** and flexibilities to widen eligibility of the AEB resulting in c.17,000 more residents enrolling on a total of over 28,000 learning aims than wouldn’t have been able to under national eligibility
* **streamlined the number of skills providers** - by removing funding from providers that could not evidence their responsiveness to GM employers’ needs or strategic priorities. This led to a reduction from over 300 lead providers plus 175 sub-contracts to 33 lead providers (and c.40 sub-contractors) – all of which are now rated Good or Outstanding;
* **introduced contract clauses** to reduce the heavy use of tactical subcontracting late in the academic year to avoid having contract values reduced due to under-delivery;
* **improved the responsiveness of training** by establishing and convening a local strategic provider board with all providers, the college & local authorities around the table discussing need & provision;
* **incorporated the use of real-time sector skills intelligence** to align the level 3 offer with the needs of employers locally.  Approx. 1,100 GM residents have taken advantage of this opportunity since its launch in April 2021.
* **introduced flexible responses to meet local demand** – for example additional HGV driver provision which was introduced in February 2021 in response to gaps flagged by providers (some 7 months earlier than the national initiative in Sept 21);
* **implemented a Local Authority Grant programme** to support alleviating barriers to accessing adult and digital skills, worth £1.5m per year for Local Authorities (non-provision based activity)
* all GM residents can access a range of **fully funded digital qualifications** up to and including Level 2 irrespective of their employment status or income, compared to the national offer which is only up to a Level 1.  To date 2200 GM residents have taken up this opportunity.
* **developed a GM-wide ESOL Advisory Service** to centralise local authority area waiting lists and standardise assessment with over 6,000 residents engaged in the service and approx. 3,800 to date referred onto ESOL provision.
1. **Greater London Authority**

The delegation of AEB has allowed the Mayor of London to respond rapidly to emerging challenges, including delivery of his priority to support economic recovery in London after the pandemic. The £318m programme of skills training is delivered through London’s FE sector, including both colleges and independent training providers across the capital. The 2022 Skills Roadmap provides the plan to support all Londoners to acquire the skills they need, to either get back into work or secure better-paying jobs – through retraining, upskilling and enhancing employability. It sets out the flexibilities that devolved powers have allowed, enabling the Authority to maximise impact, including:

* introduction of a **13.5% London funding uplift** for all provision at Level 2 and below, unlocking more funding per learner to increase the quality of provision and reflect the higher delivery costs in London, whilst also supporting the FE workforce to manage rising costs;
* **extending the financial eligibility threshold for AEB learners** to London’s Living Wage (£11.95 p.h);
* **enabling AEB grant providers to use 10% of their AEB formula funded allocation for non-formula funded provision**;
* **fully funding L3 qualifications** for unemployed learners/those earning below the Living Wage;
* **funding non-prescribed vocational and technical qualifications at Level 4** (from 2022/23 AY); and
* for the first time, the **funding of license to practice accreditations** as part of skills training packages in the construction and hospitality sectors.

**Faster and more efficient delivery**

In addition to being able to deliver better and more tailored projects, MCAs are using their new powers and devolved funding to speed up the planning and delivery process leading to faster and more efficient delivery/use of public funding. This is being achieved through:

* Greater collaboration with partners and better local co-ordination is streamlining project delivery - minimising the duplication of effort and resources and maximising impacts.
* The design of more deliverable projects that build on local knowledge and the needs/strengths of the local area.
* Economies of scale - resulting from greater regional co-ordination vs local delivery; and the delivery of activities that go beyond organisational, geographical and policy boundaries.

The case studies which demonstrate expediated and more efficient delivery are provided below. A further example is also provided which demonstrates the how MCAs have used their Investment Funds flexibly during the pandemic to bring forward projects in response to local business needs.

1. **Bristol Temple Meads Station Eastern Entrance – West of England Combined Authority**

The new entrance to Bristol Temple Meads railway station is part of a much wider and strategically significant Temple Quarter regeneration programme within the City. Coordination and leadership by the Combined Authority has enabled the delivery of the entrance **at least two years earlier** than would otherwise have occurred, and interim funding provided by the CA also facilitated **a cost saving in the region of £2m**. It has also ensured accessibility and cycling provision remain central to the design of the project, to meet the needs of local residents and increased usage expected as a result of the development.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Community engagement and consultation provided intelligence to shape the design of the entrance and integration with the wider regeneration programme
* Greater collaboration and partnership working with Network Rail and the University (i.e. joined up timetables, collaboration agreements) enabled the development to be brought forward, saving time and resources
* CA influence/powers and ability to overcome landholding constraints
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1. **Affordable Homes Programme – Greater London Authority**

Powers over affordable housing investment in London were a core part of the previous Mayor’s case for greater devolution in 2010, and since the powers were devolved in 2012 the Mayor has been able to shape the Affordable Homes Programmes to better meet the needs of households who are homeless, overcrowded or in other forms of housing need in the capital. Since 2016, the Mayor has integrated planning powers with housing investment to **increase the amount of affordable housing delivered through the planning system** while making the **system faster** and more certain for applicants.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Powers over planning policy and housing investment – led to higher quality design, safety and sustainability embedded at the procurement stage
* Greater Mayoral control of funding and powers to respond to the needs of Londoners and demand for affordable homes
* Development of a ‘threshold approach’ to viability and publication of supplementary guidance enabled a quicker journey through the planning system
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1. **Homelessness Taskforce West Midlands Combined Authority**

The Homelessness Taskforce was established in 2017 to design out homelessness. It builds on a collaborative model developed by WMCA, to shift the collective focus from reactive problem-solving approaches to prevention and designing out inequalities through co-creation. WMCA has facilitated the taskforce through the provision of cross-directorate innovative policy development which has complemented the operational expertise and experience of partners to deliver more efficient services across the whole regional geography. **To date, less than £500,000 of investment has leveraged over £15m of external funding and transformed the lives of over 1,500 people.**

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** The Mayor’s promotion of the Taskforce secured greater buy-in and commitment and collaboration with partners across the City Region
* CA cross directorate policy inputs have complemented operational expertise leading to more efficient delivery
* Greater local coordination has helped to lever other devolved responsibilities (e.g. removal of the freeze on Local Housing Allowances; securing free travel passes for individuals in crisis)
* CA expertise and funding have also leveraged additional funds and faster delivery
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1. **Climate & ecology strategy & action plan, West of England Combined Authority**

The West of England climate and ecology strategy and action plan sets out the region’s plans to achieve net zero by 2030 and to get nature into recovery. By integrating a wide range of actions and convening partners from across different policy fields, the plan provides **a framework for long-term action** that would not have been possible without the involvement of/strategic leadership provided by the CA. The framework is facilitating action at the most appropriate level, whether regionally or locally, and targeting funding where it will have the most impact. There is a strong partnership in place and local buy-in to proposals, which will be crucial to maintaining progress and delivering challenging behaviour change in future.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** CA involvement has facilitated greater coordination and planning across a range of policy fields
* Economies of scale – the delivery of activities at the most appropriate geography
* Engagement, consultation and buy-in from local residents and partners – are leading to more deliverable activities
* CA Green Recovery Fund is accelerating progress and development of a pipeline of projects
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**Covid Recovery Funds introduced at pace by MCAs**

In response to the recent Covid-19 pandemic, a number of Combined Authorities repurposed existing funding allocations or set up new dedicated capacity funds to assist businesses, individuals and community and voluntary sector agencies within their localities. Where evaluations of these schemes have been undertaken, the speed at which the Combined Authorities were able to allocate funds, has been recognised as a key strength in supporting beneficiaries. A snapshot from two MCAs is provided below, although these are similar to a number of the funds provided by the other MCAs:

1. **North of Tyne Combined Authority**

NTCA provided £4.5m of funding to the three local authorities (Newcastle; North Tyneside; Northumberland) through a flexible and responsive COVID Capacity Fund providing councils with the resource to respond to the unique needs and challenges in their locality as the pandemic unfolded. An independent evaluation of the programme identified both the flexibility and the rapid speed at which funding was made available by NTCA (and at which LAs developed and began delivering at) was a key strength of the fund. The fund focused on:

* Business support – grants, advice, digital support, tourism marketing, town centre activities
* Employability support -jobs hub advice, back to work service, digital devices, wellbeing service
* VCSE support – community buildings support, resilience grants, neighbourhood help schemes

**ii) South Yorkshire Combined Authority**

The Culture, Arts and Heritage sector in South Yorkshire generates approximately £200m GVA and employs 6,400 people. In keeping with the national picture, this sector was particularly badly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, and many freelancers and micro businesses struggled to access government funding. In response therefore, SYMCA allocated £1m of funding from the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) to provide micro grants, hold events or deliver art installations and cultural activities.  The funding was distributed to freelancers and small businesses by the four local authorities in South Yorkshire, alongside a package of business support to help safeguard the future of the sector.  The funding has led to the establishment of a new skate and park tour festival; new public art and exhibitions; light installations in town centres; as well as supporting artist residencies and a series of creative, music and dance workshops to be held for young people, vulnerable adults and individuals with long-covid.

**More ambitious, larger and diverse activities**

Local accountability for investment, service delivery, commissioning and civic leadership has enabled a number of MCAs to bring forward more ambitious, larger and diverse activities, including:

* More complex projects which build on local insight and knowledge - and seek to overcome the constraints of existing rules and regulations; often involving a diverse range of partners, interests and funding
* Different delivery models and new ways of working – which involve a variety of stakeholders and require strong partnership working
* Driving forward strategic/transformational projects with local support

The following four projects provide examples of these more ambitious activities and demonstrate how MCAs have piloted new innovative models, which have the capacity to be rolled out to other areas of the country.

1. **Teesworks – Tees Valley Combined Authority**

The South Tees Development Corporation was the first Mayoral Development Corporation outside of London and was established as part of the Tees Valley devolution deal to convert disused industrial areas into opportunities for business investment and economic growth. Its work is focused on the Teesworks site, the biggest economic regeneration project in the UK, providing 4,500 acres of land to the south of the river Tees which includes the former Redcar steelworks site. The area has been **reimagined as a cluster of excellence in clean energy and net zero manufacturing, already unlocking 775 jobs and delivering £393m of capital investment**. It is also now the focal point of the UK’s largest Freeport, a policy initially developed on Teeside.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Mayoral influence and convening powers - facilitated effective engagement with the private sector and national government regarding policy objectives (Freeport)
* South Tees development Corporation (first Mayoral Development Corporation outside London) provided a new delivery model, underpinned by strategic leadership and vision for the Teesworks site
* Scale of the site has enabled the delivery of a comprehensive offer (land, financial incentives, skills, net zero) and piloting new ways of working
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1. **LCR Connect Joint Venture**

LCR Connect is a £30m Joint Venture (JV) that will deliver **212km worth of full-fibre, gigabit-capable network infrastructure across the City Region.** The project was developed as the foundation for achieving the Metro Mayor’s ambition of creating a digitally connected LCR and using the region’s digital assets to drive economic growth. The convening powers of the CA have enabled the coordination, facilitation and funding of the large, complex and transformative project; and the **innovative ‘Dig Once’ approach** of installing digital infrastructure at the same time as highways and other capital works to save time, money and disruption, has been recognised as part of the UK Government’s “barrier busting” toolkit for digital infrastructure.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Mayoral commitment and ambition for the City Region has transformed digital infrastructure in the City Region
* CA convening powers, local coordination and clarity about the business case/potential benefits secured by-in from local partners (LAs and other stakeholders) and accelerated the timetable
* Innovative ‘Dig Once’ approach – was facilitated by the scale of the project and strong partnership working between the CA and the local authorities
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1. **Tyne Taskforce - North of Tyne Combined Authority**

Tyne Taskforce is an enhanced partnership working approach to development along the River Tyne recognising the fundamental role the river plays in the economic future of the region. It is supporting industrial growth, net zero transition and new opportunities for housing, jobs and skills. The Taskforce builds on **the river as a** **key economic asset for the offshore and energy sectors making the River Tyne a globally competitive resource.** As the River spans several administrative boundaries, collaborative working facilitated by the Combined Authority with key partners south of the river is helping overcome previous barriers to progress and minimising the risk of missed opportunities.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** CA funded early-stage research and consultation with local stakeholders; and provided core funding to kickstart the establishment of a new delivery model – The Tyne Taskforce
* The Taskforce will maximise the role of the River as a key regional/economic asset
* CA facilitated collaborative working and brought together a diverse range of partners working along the Tyne – to provide a single voice with strong ‘Tyne’ branding
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1. **Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Devolution**

The health and social care achievements seen in GM in recent years are inextricably linked to devolution and the new ways of working which this has stimulated and facilitated. While progress on the key themes of work has been varied and, undoubtedly, affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, arguably the **greatest progress has been made in population health and transforming community-based care and support**, through work in localities and neighbourhoods.

A study undertaken by the University of Manchester[[2]](#footnote-2), published in the Lancet, assessed the impact of the devolution of health and social care powers to Greater Manchester between 2014 and 2019 and found **a slight increase in life expectancy**. Encouragingly, these gains also seem to have reduced health inequalities to a certain extent, with larger gains for males and areas with high income deprivation and lower life expectancy prior to devolution. Whilst the study was unable to determine the exact mechanism for the increase, the authors suggest it may be due to: “coordinated devolution across sectors, affecting wider determinants of health and the organisation of care services”.

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| **How have the benefits been achieved?*** Political leadership and longstanding history of collaboration across local government (AGMA) and other public services – led to devolution of powers for Health and Social Care integration
* New powers and ways of working has led to the transformation of community-based care and support
* Delivery of the new unified model for public sector reform is driving change (see case study 4)
* Strong partnership working with the voluntary sector is providing local insight and knowledge
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**More Local Accountability**

Achieving greater citizen participation and interest, through the provision of defined routes into decision making process for specific interest groups is particularly important in ensuring that new policies, projects and programmes are designed to address key issues and build on opportunities and strengths within an area. Gaining this local ownership and buy-in, will in turn facilitate better decision making and the development of interventions that are built on consensus and shared priorities.

MCAs are held accountable through the democratic process and are scrutinised and held accountable locally with input from the elected members and portfolio holders of their constituent local authorities. Alongside this, the directly elected Metro Mayors also bring with them a level of personal accountability which is an important element of devolution. Alongside this, the MCAs have developed a range of consultation and engagement mechanisms to promote the ‘Citizens Voice’ which are securing greater local influence and control at an early stage in the design and planning process. Examples are provided below:

**North of Tyne**

NTCA’s Citizens’ Assembly on Climate Change was independently facilitated by non-profit ‘Shared Future’ CIC and brought together fifty citizens to discuss how the region could combat climate change. Participants were randomly invited through a mail ballot of 10,000 addresses, and respondents were selected to ensure a mix of demographics, relative deprivation, and attitude towards climate change. Eight sessions were delivered (30 hours) in total at which the Assembly members shared ideas, deliberated issues, and then came up with a set of thirty recommendations. Together with colleagues from Newcastle, North Tyneside, and Northumberland councils, the recommendations were presented to NTCA Cabinet in a report championed by the NTCA Mayor.

In response, NTCA has designed and deployed a range of interventions which respond to the recommendations of the Citizens’ Assembly. These activities include raising awareness of low carbon opportunities and supporting low-carbon decision making through a young persons’ climate change pilot and sponsoring ‘Bring it on’, a school competition with a Net Zero North East theme; the launch of a Green New Deal Fund, an £18m flagship programme to help finance carbon reduction projects and create good green jobs; and commissioning research into the scale of housing retrofit needed within the City Region.

**Greater Manchester**

GMCA have established the Greater Manchester Equality Panels to advise, support and challenge political leaders and policymakers to tackle the discrimination and disadvantage that cause injustice and inequality in society, to champion GM as an inclusive city-region. The Panels provide insight into the needs of communities, support communication as trusted sources, and enable public services to work collaboratively with citizens, maximising use of local assets and targeting resources where they will deliver greatest impact. Examples of work carried out by various Panels includes:

* the development of [**Our Pass**](https://ourpass.co.uk/)(by the Youth Combined Authority) – which is a public transport scheme to provide free bus travel across Greater Manchester for 16–18-year-olds. The Mayor and TfGM approached the YCA ([Greater Manchester Youth Combined Authority | Local Government Association](https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/greater-manchester-youth-combined-authority)) to support the scheme’s development;
* the creation of a Charter for Race Equality in Schools (designed by the Race Equality Panel) which has been recognised and endorsed by the [Greater Manchester Learning Partnership](https://www.gmlp.org.uk/Race-Equality/) (GMLP); and
* the [GM Big Disability Survey - Covid19](https://gmdisabledpeoplespanel.com/2020/07/09/gm-big-disability-survey-covid19/). – one of the first in the country, delivered by the GM Disabled People’s Panel to understand the impact and challenges faced by disabled people in the City Region. A second 2022 [Big Disability Survey](https://gmdisabledpeoplespanel.com/gm-big-disability-survey-2022/) has just been undertaken focusing on the impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis

**Liverpool City Region**

Meaningful engagement with communities is a key principle embedded within the CA’s Corporate Plan.  The LCR recognises that including citizens and communities in the policy-making process, is the only way to truly maximise the benefits of devolution, by taking decisions closer to the people they affect.  Successful examples of this approach in action include:

* the LCR’s innovative consultation to inform the first phase development of the Spatial Development Strategy, which won a prestigious national planning award in 2020.  Of 2,500 respondents engaged, more than 42% were young people; over half were from deprived neighbourhoods (worst 10% in the country); and 18% were from BAME communities;
* development of ambitious Race Equality programme, which has delivered ground-breaking, collaborative projects such as ‘Generations for Change’ - a culture-led approach to engaging marginalised groups in relation to racial inequality in the fields of employment, culture and business support; and a new Race Equality Hub due to be launched imminently;
* the establishment of a Climate Partnership, comprising representatives from academia, business, local government, sector specialist groups and other community and voluntary sector partners - to steer the development of a ‘Pathways to Net Zero’ strategy.  Successful consultation with over 1,200 citizens in summer 2021 has heavily influenced the city region’s approach to meeting the objective of net zero by 2040; and
* development of a range of citizen networks to engage people from diverse backgrounds. These include the Youth Combined Authority, Ageing Better in the LCR, and the Community Suppliers Network (over 300 CVS organisations through which the CA can engage).

**Conclusions**

This report has highlighted how MCAs are delivering a range of qualitative benefits and outcomes for residents, businesses and local communities, resulting from better decision making; faster delivery and more efficient services; the delivery of more ambitious projects and diverse activities; and greater local accountability. They are being realised through the convening powers of the Combined Authorities and Mayoral ambitions for the area; strong leadership and governance; strategic thinking and development; regional coordination and an ability to transcend boundaries; delivery that is tailored to local needs and opportunities; and more effective mechanisms to engage local residents and businesses.

Where quantitative data to evidence the impact of devolution does exist, from the more mature MCAs in Greater Manchester and Greater London for example, the results are positive; suggesting that devolved powers and local accountability for investment, service delivery and commissioning are contributing to the achievement of better outcomes for local citizens. These benefits clearly take time to deliver and require vision and long-term commitment to investment and change; strong partnership working and collaboration with a range of stakeholders (including local residents and businesses); and sufficient freedoms and flexibilities to overcome challenges and capitalise on the strengths of the local area.

As funding decisions become increasingly difficult in response to the cost of the living crisis, evidencing how we can do more with less and ensuring public resources continue to maximise impact, is arguably even more important and should remain a key priority for MCAs in demonstrating their local accountability moving forward.

**Better Projects and Decisions**

| **Case Study 1: Integrated transport system across London: Transport for London** |
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| **Overview:** Transport for London (TfL) runs an integrated transport system across London and is responsible for every mode of transport in the capital except for some suburban rail. TfL is a statutory body created by the Greater London Authority (GLA) Act 1999 that gave the Mayor of London a general duty to develop and apply policies to promote and encourage safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services to, from and within London.  |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** Transport for London and the Greater London Authority were both established on 3 July 2000. Prior to the inception of the GLA, London Transport was responsible for most of the public transport network in London and reported to the Secretary of State for Transport.  |
| **Design and Development:** TfL has transformed customer service through a broad programme including simplified fares, Oyster and contactless ticketing, improving customer service, staff development, investing in new trains and upgrading stations. Complementing traditional fares income with congestion charging and developer income, TfL has become one of the few transport authorities in the world to be largely financially self-sufficient pre-pandemic. The world-leading congestion charge and Ultra Low Emission Zone have brought transformational benefits to London’s environment and health. TfL has also delivered extensions to the network – on the DLR, Overground, Tube and Elizabeth line – to enable London’s sustainable development. Through station and train investment, as well as improved security, staff availability, information and fares policy, the accessibility, inclusivity and affordability of travel in London has been improved. TfL has supported the levelling-up of some of London’s (and the UK’s) most deprived areas, notably the transformation of east London through DLR extensions and the creation of the London Overground.   |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** The benefits of devolving control for London’s transport system to TfL are evident in the performance data which shows increased usage and improved customer satisfaction. Two illustrations of the benefit to customers are set out below:***London Overground***Over the years, railways in north and west London had suffered significant neglect. The aim of London Overground was to integrate these older networks into new routes in east and south London to create a fully orbital network to serve the Capital. The pioneering concession model developed by TfL ensures tight monitoring of performance in respect of standards of security and customer service. This model has now been adopted by national government for contracting rail services.  Since its launch, the train fleet has been renewed, there have been increases in service frequency and new routes which have provided further network coverage and connections to other rail links. Total journeys per annum have increased from c30 million when LO started to 90 million pre pandemic and customer satisfaction scores increased from 70 per cent when the Overground started to up to 77 per cent, demonstrating a significant improvement in customer perceptions.  ***Barking Riverside***In July 2022, TfL opened Barking Riverside station, a new step-free station on the London Overground. The station will significantly reduce journey times and provide better transport links for those living and visiting the area. Barking Riverside is one of the fastest growing areas of east London. With around 3,000 homes built or under construction, the new railway will help unlock more than 7,000 further homes as well as new leisure facilities, schools and riverside walks. Barking Riverside station is an intrinsic part of the development, which is being delivered by Barking Riverside Limited, a joint venture between L&Q and the Mayor of London. Being part of the GLA family ensures growth areas like Barking Riverside see sustainable transport plans embedded into any development proposals.  |
| **Legacy:** TfL is guided by the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) and its target that 80% of all journeys will be made on foot, by cycle or using public transport by 2041. Since TfL’s establishment in 2000, London has achieved an eleven percentage-point mode shift from car to walking, cycling and public transport. In the coming years, this shift must accelerate. A series of action plans have been published, which detail how the proposals set out in the Transport Strategy will be achieved.  |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** The devolution of responsibilities for rail in London has been one of the biggest success stories for transport in recent years, having led to greater investment, higher levels of passenger satisfaction, and more reliable services. It has also helped embed heavy rail services within wider public transport networks and within broader plans for housing, economic development and decarbonisation in London. |

|  **Case Study 2: Bus franchising, GMCA** |
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| **Overview:** GMCA has taken on the political, legal, and financial risk of being the first MCA to franchise local buses, using the powers in the Bus Service Act 2017. Once operational, Bus Franchising will give GMCA a significant new lever to deliver a more integrated, reliable, and affordable transport system. But the CA must also take on the farebox risk (on top of the farebox risk already borne in relation to the Metrolink system). |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** The current bus system in GM is fragmented and difficult for the public to use. A range of factors make it very difficult to plan a network that meets the future needs of local residents and the economy.* Fares and ticketing are complex. There are more than 150 types of ticket, an individual journey can cost up to £4.00 and tickets often aren’t accepted by other operators.
* There is no single brand or source of travel information and bus routes can compete with other public transport modes (like tram).
* Bus operators decide which routes to run, meaning some routes are well served while others are under-provided.

Customer standards vary significantly across the city region. GM’s first devolution deal included a commitment to bring forward legislation allowing the introduction of a bus franchising scheme. Franchising will allow Greater Manchester to run a London-style system - contracting with private operators directly. This allows a simplified and integrated fares system, a consistent customer experience and greater value for money that increases patronage and is revenue generative. Critically, it will also allow for meaningful integration of fares, ticketing and journey planning across transport modes; something that has been effectively impossible in the deregulated environment that exists outside of Greater London. Over the coming years, Greater Manchester will integrate its newly franchised bus services with the Metrolink light rail system, the city region’s cycle hire scheme and – ultimately – local rail services, providing a compelling and easy-to-use transport offer to residents and visitors that will help drive modal shift. The Bus Services Act came into force in 2017 and specified a (long and relatively complex) process which places could use to take the decision to franchise their networks. In June 2017 the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) became the first in the country to utilise the powers within the Bus Services Act by instructing Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to prepare a franchising scheme assessment. Based on this assessment, the subsequent consultation and audit required by the Act, as well as a supplementary report and consultation on the potential impacts of COVID-19, in March 2021, the Mayor made the decision to utilise his powers under the Act and proceed with a franchising scheme; the first place in the UK to do so. |
| **Design and Development:** * This was a highly significant decision for Greater Manchester which has enabled the city region to progress its vision for bus services, but one which also carried significant legal and financial risks that the GMCA and TfGM have needed to manage. Under the franchising scheme, the GMCA will be responsible for farebox revenue across the entirety of the bus network, in addition to the Metrolink light rail system, for which it is already responsible.
* In addition, by becoming the first authority to use the powers within the Bus Services Act, the Mayor and Authority recognised that they would be testing a piece of complex legislation and would likely experience legal challenge at points throughout the process. In March 2021, two operators (Stagecoach Manchester and Rotala PLC) submitted claims to a judicial review, however they were unsuccessful.
 |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** * With these stages of the process cleared, the focus now is on the delivery of franchising. Less than three years after the Mayors decision, the first franchised services will launch in Bolton, Wigan and parts of Salford in September 2023, with the north east of the conurbation following in spring 2024 before the entire system is franchised by the end of that year.
 |
| **Legacy:** By going first, GM has paved the way for other MCAs in England to follow suit, testing this important legislation for the first time. |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** The introduction of franchised services will allow Greater Manchester to plan and integrate the transport network in new ways, providing customers with better, more frequent services and a more consistent offer across different routes.  |

| **Case Study 3: Unified Model of Public Services, GMCA** |
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| **Overview:** Greater Manchester Combined Authority’s (GMCA) unified model of public service delivery is creating public services fit for the 21st century that focus on people, how they live their lives in communities, and their aspirations ([link to document](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2302/gtr_mcr_model1_web.pdf)).The model is focused on addressing the specific needs of people and places, recognising that the interconnected and reinforcing nature of issues means services typically have a shared user-base and a siloed approach won’t drive long-term change. Services are delivered at the neighbourhood level (covering 30,000-50,000 residents), which is small enough to enable connectivity to communities but large enough to form the framework for integration of public services. Service provision is connected to the communities they serve. Public services have been unified and integrated through resource-sharing, integrated leadership and decision-making structures. |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** * The Greater Manchester unified model of public service delivery (GM Model) was the culmination of a number of years work in Public Service Reform across Greater Manchester (GM). It drew on learning and good practice gained from delivery of the ‘Troubled Families’ programme across the city region as well as a variety of other programmes that pointed towards a joint problem-solving approach to being both more efficient and effective.
* A number of thematic programmes had inevitably led to the same or similar design principles. Rather than continuing to arrive at the same solutions from multiple policy areas the idea of ‘place-based integration’ was put forward as the overarching approach to bring siloed working together.
* It was very important that local stakeholders saw the genesis of the model in their own work. A purposeful bottom-up approach was taken by GMCA working closely with the 10 local authorities and other key partners such as Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS), Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE), Housing Providers, Health & Social Care Partnership (now Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership) and other partners.
* GMCA worked with local stakeholders to co-design a maturity/self-assessment and it was through this that the six key features of the GM model were arrived at:
* Geographic alignment
* Leadership and accountability
* One workforce
* Shared financial resources
* Programmes, policy and delivery
* Tackling barriers and delivery on devolution
* At an early-stage GMCA’s involvement allowed for the identification of good practice and commonality beyond geographic and organisational boundaries.
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| **Design and Development:** * GMCA hosts a Public Service Reform Team that has been able to provide dedicated capacity at the inception and design stages, as well as ongoing development and implementation.
* The GMCA team has been able to support and bolster local transformation capacity through the provision of project and programme management support, systems thinking capability, facilitation, network convening, and workshop design.
* Leadership and governance has been put in place across GMCA to drive design and development.
 |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** * GMCA has been able to use the project to position what can be achieved locally within devolved arrangements but also highlight where further freedoms and/or flexibilities are required to deliver more, for example pooled budgets and consolidated funding arrangements.
* GMCA involvement has led to a coalition of support around the agenda across a broad range of organisations.
* We use our integrated model of public services delivery to reach a volume of users over and above the mainstream offer: for example, we are creating a range of touchpoints between our residents and public services and VCSE sector organisations like housing organisations, credit unions, Citizens Advice Bureau to maximise the take-up of Multiply (funded by UKSPF).
 |
| **Legacy:** * GMCA continues to maintain a convening role so that local areas can amplify and elevate their own work and learn from each other.
* The GM model has been positioned as a central means of achieving many of the commitments articulated within the Greater Manchester Strategy.
* It is unlikely that a GM Model would have come about without GMCA’s involvement. It was the ability to transcend organisational, geographical and policy boundaries that led to the innovation, as well as the ability to provide a single narrative for public service reform in Greater Manchester.
 |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** * The GM Model has demonstrated what can be achieved within existing devolved arrangements but also highlighted where further change is needed if local ambitions are to be realised (e.g. pooled budgets/consolidated funding arrangements).
* Research suggests that the model and integrated service delivery is now contributing to tangible outcomes – for example an independent peer-reviewed study (see case study 13 for link) concludes that following devolution, life expectancy in Greater Manchester was 0·196 years (95% CI: 0·182 to 0·210) higher than expected in comparison to areas with similar pre-devolution trends, which has been attributed in part to GM’s integrated model of public service delivery.
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| **Case Study 4: Liverpool City Region Film Production Fund**  |
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| **Overview:** The LCR production fund was launched in March 2019, marking 30 years since the establishment of the Liverpool Film Office (LFO). It provides financial support to further develop the film, TV and related digital industries across the LCR, by investing in a diverse portfolio of high-quality content. It comprises two interlinked strands – expansion of the LFO to deliver a service across the whole of the LCR, promoting locations, facilities and services and delivering an improved and optimised service to external investors; and the establishment of a content fund to attract high value projects to film in the LCR and the attraction of key production and facilities companies which will in turn provide opportunities for existing companies to secure work.  |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** * The LFO, based within Culture Liverpool at Liverpool City Council, was responsible for instigating the project. Constrained by resources, and a recognition that the City was losing work due to a lack of support infrastructure for SMEs in the film/digital sector, the LFO approached the Combined Authority (CA) for funding to expand their remit to the wider City Region and provide a fund that would promote content with a Liverpool flavour (i.e. made in LCR or of LCR).
* The project aimed to capitalise on business opportunities within the sector, evidenced by enquiries to the LFO for LCR film and TV locations/production, and growth of the high-end TV drama market (production budgets c£1m per episode) accelerated by Covid; and support needs for the sector, in terms of growth finance.

While Liverpool City Council provided match-funding, the LCR Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) expanded the role of the team, with hub and spoke arrangements in place in the other LA areas, facilitating growth across the wider LCR including through emerging production hubs in Knowsley, Halton, Wirral and St Helens. As the content fund was provided to fill a gap in the market, it has also delivered a high level of additionality |
| **Design and Development:** * The CA was invited on to the Investment Fund Panel that was responsible for the selecting the successful Film/TV investment propositions. In response to the Covid 19 pandemic it approved the repurposing of £250,000 from the production fund to provide development funding for new projects with a strong LCR-based creative element. The project has been designed to recycle funding which can be used to support future productions, with a target to recoup 30% of the capital grant.
* Productions with the following characteristics have been prioritised:
* realistic prospect of generating a financial return and delivery of a high level of local economic benefits relative to the investment
* strong creative and commercial elements
* potential to increase the cultural viability of the LCR to audiences in the UK and internationally
* The CA’s capital and revenue funding has been instrumental in expanding the remit and benefits outside Liverpool and the City Centre – through for example the promotion of cross locational shoots; and ensuring there are effective linkages with other investments in the LCR, for example:
* the Depot, which provides 2 x 20,000 sqft purpose built shoot space for film and TV and is fully let to 2023, with provision to extend the lease to the current production company, Paramount+); and
* the ambition to re-build the Littlewoods building to provide fully functioning facilities and infrastructure for film, HETV and aligned creative industries.
* In addition, the SIF funding is also being used strategically to support growth, through the preparation of a longer-term strategy for the industry
 |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** * To date, the fund has been extremely successful in leveraging additional levels of inward investment, higher levels of spend in LCR, increasing employment, providing new training opportunities and improved terms for potential recoupment of capital deployed. It has also raised the national and international profile of LCR as a filming location and its competitive position amongst other cities, regions and nations.
* LFO has generated revenues from the operation of the fund to sustain its operational costs and assisted in securing fees for the six local authorities.
* Operationally, the fund secured match investment from all major UK broadcasters (BBC, ITV and Channel 4). The six productions that were successful in securing capital funding are projected to deliver a return of £6.73 for every £1 invested against a target of 3:1 for independent films and 5:1 for high end TV. They have supported 455 indirect jobs against a target of 280; benefited 17 LCR companies and safeguarded 43 indirect FTE jobs.
* Two productions, Help and Time, have each secured 2 BAFTA awards – with Help securing best actress and supporting actress and Time winning the best mini-series. Both Time and Responder have also been recommissioned for second series.
 |
| **Legacy:** The LCR production fund has made a significant contribution to raising the profile of the LCR as a highly desirable location for shooting Film and High-End TV (as evidenced by the success of supported productions in the 2022 BAFTAs). The recycled funding will continue to develop indigenous production companies. It will help to maximise demand for, and utilisation of facilities that have been supported to date, underpinning the return on investment and creating demand for the new permanent studio facilities now available at the Depot on Edge Lane. The inward investment generated by attracting productions into the LCR is helping to sustain and strengthen local production crews and support services, and leading to the development of a skilled local workforce – key determinants in helping to secure future demand.   |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** Culture and the creative arts are an important aspect of LCR’s identity as demonstrated by LCR being the first CA in the UK to commit at least 1% of its annual £30m devolution funding to support cultural activities. Given the area’s existing assets and strengths; and emerging opportunities/market demand within the Digital and Creative Sectors (one of the LCR’s identified priority sectors) the flexibility of the CA’s SIF funding has been used to develop a number of sub-sectors including Music and Film/TV production. The CA has been a key driver in ensuring that the benefits of the supporting infrastructure for businesses and local residents extend beyond Liverpool City Centre, improving outcomes and the profile/reputation of the whole City Region.  |

| **Case Study 5: Digital Growth and Innovation Programme, North of Tyne Combined Authority** |
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| **Overview:** The North of Tyne Digital Growth and Innovation Programme (DGIP) is a cluster of different investment packages which support the digital sector as both a key growth sector and an enabler for the region. This ranges from building a pipeline of digital businesses, enabling business growth through digital adoption, digital cluster development, to developing digital skills and providing a future talent pool, and attracting major Inward Investment projects. The DGIP is underpinned by a digital connectivity programme aiming to deliver up to 99% coverage for the area. **NTCA Cabinet Report**: [*https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NTCA-Digital-Ecosystem-Support-Call-Final-05.10.20.pdf*](https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NTCA-Digital-Ecosystem-Support-Call-Final-05.10.20.pdf) |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** After extensive consultation with the sector, NTCA Cabinet agreed a digital sector narrative focused on three key priorities:* Boost digital businesses, building on existing clusters, infrastructure and brand.
* Maximise digital adoption across all sectors, improving productivity, innovation and resilience by utilising national assets locally.
* Support digital skills and inclusion of residents.

Stakeholder involvement was critical in identifying issues for businesses, public sector, education, and communities. Individual interviews and stakeholder workshops, working through existing partnerships such as Dynamo (the regional digital network), and Digital Catapult.NTCA’s role has been to convene and to synthesise stakeholder input into a coherent narrative and set of objectives for the investment programme. While some private-public sector collaboration existed prior to NTCA involvement, NTCA’s involvement has increased the geographic scale and the scope of partnership working, to include skills, growth and innovation, and infrastructure.  |
| **Design and Development:** NTCA’s role was to facilitate stakeholder engagement and provide a focal point for a regional digital strategy/narrative. NTCA’s consultation included 1-2-1 engagement of key organisations and network managers, and a series of roundtables/consultation events to refine the programme objectives. The incentive of the NTCA Investment Fund and ability to leverage additional funding provided a catalyst for partner involvement and accompanying interventions. NTCA involvement brought together a disparate range of Government funding sources – Adult Education Budget, Skills Bootcamps, Local Full Fibre/ Project Gigabit, NTCA Investment Fund, UK Research Council spend – which might not otherwise have been aligned. NTCA subsequently issued an open call for projects to respond to the objectives in the digital narrative, ensuring that partners were able to design a response which they felt best matched the opportunities outlined.  |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** NTCA’s involvement has brought numerous benefits to programme delivery:* The approach to development and funding has minimised project and funding duplication and ensured a targeted delivery model which responds to local needs.
* A strong emphasis on partnership working has streamlined the offer to NTCA stakeholders, especially the SME market, and ensured a clear and accessible entry point for beneficiaries.
* NTCA has been able to complement programme delivery through additional communications support, creating a regional digital ‘brand’, reflecting the partnership approach of the programme and simplifying engagement for stakeholders. This has included coordinating marketing and branding materials, embedding the offer in the local Growth Hub support, and sponsoring regional events.
* NTCA sits on local stakeholder groups and partner boards to ensure alignment of strategies will be maintained over the course of the programme delivery, and to encourage greater collaboration and the development of new ideas and activities within the programme.
 |
| **Legacy:** Since the launch of the DGIP, NTCA has worked with the sector to build upon the existing digital narrative and to strengthen the objectives and ambitions. NTCA has recently published a Digital Ambition statement, co-signed by key sector partners, which sets out five high-level targets to which partners are asked to commit. This Digital Ambition is also supported by a Vision for Digital Connectivity, which sets out clear aspirations related to infrastructure and opportunities to unlock the latest advances in 5G and future connectivity. |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** Devolution has allowed NTCA to convene stakeholders from across sectors to form a cohesive digital narrative by streamlining engagement with key partners across the region. This has enabled the North of Tyne to minimise duplication and maximise impact by cumulative investment into complementary initiatives. NTCA investment funding was critical for some of the projects, but it also specifically rooted delivery in the North of Tyne. NTCA has been able to respond with agility to issues and be hands-on in developing a culture of partnership, in a way which national funding/a national approach could not have achieved. The CA-led approach has also been able to harness national/regional assets to work across the area, in a way which locally-led programmes/funds would not have been able to do. Benefits are also being realised by co-ordinating funding across the sector, and the CA’s ability to influence and stakeholder decisions.  |

**Faster and More Efficient Delivery**

| **Case Study 6: Bristol Temple Meads station Eastern Entrance, West of England Combined Authority** |
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| **Overview:** This project is building a new entrance to Bristol Temple Meads rail station which is part of the much wider and strategically significant Temple Quarter regeneration programme. Coordination and leadership by the Combined Authority has enabled the delivery of the entrance at least two years earlier than would otherwise have occurred, and with costs reduced by at least £2m. It has also ensured accessibility and cycling provision are central to the design.The Eastern Entrance will significantly shorten distances to the station from communities in the east of Bristol and will form a gateway into a significant area of regeneration next to the station. The entrance will also increase the station’s capacity, to accommodate expected increases in usage. It involves a partnership between the Combined Authority, Network Rail and the University. Construction began in March 2022 and will complete in mid-2024. |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** The initial proposal for the Eastern Entrance arose from the Temple Quarter regeneration vision established by Bristol City Council. The establishment of the Bristol Temple Quarter regeneration programme in 2019, with a partnership between the city council, the Combined Authority, Network Rail and Homes England, enabled the idea to move into delivery.The Combined Authority led a bid to Government for funding to enable the regeneration programme. By coordinating the partners, the Combined Authority was able to ensure that agreement was reached to proceed. This included brokering agreement between Network Rail and the University of Bristol as the landowner, over transfer of the site and access provisions, and coordinating timings with construction of the university campus. |
| **Design and Development:** The Combined Authority has had a significant influence on the scope and design of the new entrance, ensuring that local priorities are reflected, and that the project will cohere with other transport developments and the wider regeneration of the area. Two specific examples of this include ensuring that accessibility considerations have not been diluted as the scheme progressed, and incorporating an emphasis on cycling provision, with greater consideration of cycle access and parking. This has been achieved through gathering evidence on cycle usage in the area and ensuring that local needs have been fedback to Network Rail and the University.The Combined Authority has also led work with the community, leading communications and engagement, providing tours of the site to students and local people, and planning consultation on the development framework for the regeneration area. This will ensure that residents’ views and priorities are reflected in the final design, and that the project integrates effectively with the wider regeneration programme. |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** The Combined Authority has been instrumental in ensuring that the Eastern Entrance project is being delivered faster and at lower cost than would otherwise have been the case. At an early stage, the CA identified an opportunity to make use of a pre-planned possession of the railway in summer 2021 to carry out the critical work under the tracks, avoiding the need for a costly possession later. The strong partnerships between the Combined Authority, city council, Network Rail and the University meant that this opportunity was identified, and then plans were rapidly put in place to exploit it. Interim funding from the Combined Authority ensured that the project could be brought forward by at least two years – resulting in a saving of at least £2m to the overall final cost.  |
| **Legacy:**The Eastern Entrance project has progressed through strong partnership working, and has helped to build confidence among stakeholders that joint progress can be made while respecting each partner’s varying priorities and interests. This partnership has led to better alignment of interdependent projects, including modernisation of the station and the wider regeneration programme, through joined up timelines and collaboration agreements. The project has strengthened the partnership’s ability to deliver other parts of the Temple Quarter regeneration programme. |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** Coordination of the Eastern Entrance project by the Combined Authority has enabled delivery of local priorities more quickly and at lower cost than would otherwise have been the case. By convening the partners, the Combined Authority has been able to resolve complex construction and landholding constraints in a context with many interdependencies.  |

| **Case Study 7: Affordable Homes Programme, London** |
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| **Overview:** In 2012 responsibility for affordable housing investment in London was devolved to the Mayor. This power covers several different programmes, the most significant of which is the Affordable Homes Programme, which outside London is run by Homes England on behalf of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). In London the 2016-23 Affordable Homes Programme aims to deliver 116,000 starts on site of affordable housing, while the new 2021-26 programme will deliver an additional 35,000 homes, with a greater focus on social rented housing, the lowest-cost form of affordable housing aimed at meeting acute housing needs such as homelessness and overcrowding. These homes will be delivered by housing associations and councils, with councils playing an increasingly large role following the success of the Mayor’s Building Council Homes for Londoners programme. |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** Mayoral control over the Affordable Homes Programme in London stems from the devolution of a range of powers over housing and land investment in London to the Mayor in April 2012, as a result of the 2011 Localism Act. Powers over affordable housing investment in London were previously held by the government (while powers over public land were held by the London Development Agency, which the Act folded into the GLA). The Act was informed by detailed discussions between the Mayor and the government, stemming from the Mayor’s proposals for devolution made in [June 2010](https://web.archive.org/web/20110704115357/http%3A/www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/proposals-for-devolution.pdf). The Localism Act also contained measures to devolve powers to local authorities, and there was broad support from London boroughs and from stakeholders across London for the devolution package as a whole. The Act significantly strengthened the role of the Mayor’s London Housing Strategy in setting out the Mayor’s proposals for investing in affordable housing (as opposed to simply making recommendations for what the government should do, as previously), as part of a strategic framework for housing delivery and the improvement of existing homes. Following extensive consultation with the London Assembly, stakeholders and Londoners themselves, a new London Housing Strategy was published in 2014, with the new Mayor then publishing a replacement strategy in 2018. The additional criteria added to the new 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme (see next section) were also informed by further consultation with stakeholders, notably the London Housing Panel (which is funded by the GLA and Trust for London to provide the voluntary and community sector with a structured way of engaging with the GLA on housing policy, and vice versa). The involvement of the Mayor was crucial in first instigating and helping to shape the devolution of powers to London through the Localism Act, and then in using those powers to shape the Affordable Homes Programme to more closely reflect London’s needs. In the absence of Mayoral involvement, central government would have continued to deliver the programme itself, but inevitably with less engagement with London stakeholders, less direct democratic oversight from Mayor and Assembly, in all likelihood resulting in a programme less targeted to meeting London’s needs. |
| **Design and Development:** Although the overall parameters of the Affordable Homes Programme in terms of budget, overall delivery target and broad tenure split need to be agreed between the government and the Mayor, the Mayor has used his powers to significantly alter the design of the programme to better meet London’s needs. One example is the development of the new London Affordable Rent tenure as a lower-cost form of the government’s preferred Affordable Rent tenure in the 2016-23 programme, which ensured that low-income households in need were able to move into homes that they were more likely to be able to afford. Following on from this, the Mayor ensured that the 2021-26 programme in London would include a significantly larger share of homes for social rent, which again better meets the needs of low-income households. The Mayor has also used his powers to require partners receiving funding through the new 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme to meet more ambitious standards around design quality, building safety, sustainability and equality, diversity and inclusion.  |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** The Mayor has used his joint powers over planning policy and housing investment to develop an integrated approach that optimises the delivery of affordable housing through the planning system while increasing certainty and speed for applicants. This ‘threshold approach’ to viability was first set out in the Mayor’s 2017 [Affordable Housing and Viability Supplementary Planning Guidance](https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance-and-spgs/affordable-housing-and-viability-supplementary-planning-guidance-spg) before being formally codified in his 2021 London Plan. [Analysis](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/affordable_housing_in_planning_applications_referred_to_the_mayor_2011-2021.pdf) of major planning applications for housing that were referable to the Mayor shows that the introduction of this approach resulted in higher levels of affordable housing being provided on these schemes and also a quicker journey through the planning system. These results would not have been possible without the coordination of housing and planning powers under a single directly accountable authority.  |
| **Legacy:**  The Affordable Homes Programme is now firmly embedded as the key plank of the Mayor’s housing powers.  |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** Powers over affordable housing investment in London were a core part of the previous Mayor’scase for greater devolution in 2010, and since the powers were devolved in 2012 the Mayor has been able to shape the Affordable Homes Programmes in London to better meet the needs of households who are homeless, overcrowded or in other forms of housing need in the capital. Since 2016, he has also integrated his planning powers with his housing investment powers to increase the amount of affordable housing delivered through the planning system while making the system faster and more certain for applicants.  |

| **Case Study 8: Homelessness Taskforce, WMCA** |
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| **Overview:** The role of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) doesn’t always involve the direct delivery of solutions to complex issues. In line with the West Midlands’ devolution deals, WMCA has encouraged collaboration amongst partners to achieve greater impact, including for example through the Homelessness Taskforce.* The Taskforce collaborates to develop and implement interventions with the aim of designing-out homelessness
* Less than £500,000 of investment has leveraged over £15m of external funding and transformed the lives of over 1,500 people
 |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** * WMCA wants to shift the collective focus from reactive problem-solving approaches to prevention and designing out inequalities through co-creation. This aspiration is evident in the CA’s work with public services and the voluntary, faith and community sectors, including its efforts to design out homelessness in collaboration with the Police and fire services.
* Established in 2017, the aim of the Homelessness Taskforce is to design out homelessness: through its collaborative model – across the region, sectors and disciplines – tackling the ineffective existing systems that contribute to homelessness and replacing them with preventative approaches.
* WMCA plays a convening role which can mobilise partners from across the region effectively on a formal basis.
* Membership of the taskforce includes all seven constituent local authorities, representation from non-constituent local authorities, key public sector agencies, voluntary, private and charitable organisations; working together to prevent and relieve homelessness.
* It uses its collective resources to tackle homelessness, and recognises that homelessness can occur in many ways, including rough sleeping, sofa surfing, night-shelters, B&B, temporary accommodation, hostels and squatting.
 |
| **Design and Development:** * As well as securing funding and developing projects / programmes, the WMCA adds value through consolidating relevant policy expertise for the benefit of the whole region, and leveraging other devolved responsibilities of the WMCA:
	+ Agreed new regional definition of affordable accommodation linked to income
	+ Removal of the freeze on Local Housing Allowances
	+ Free travel passes to enable travel to appointments for individuals in crisis
	+ Commitment to Collaborate framework with key public and private partners
* The WMCA’s involvement, in particular the press and media attention achieved through the Mayor’s promotion of the Taskforce’s work, ensured greater local awareness, buy-in and commitment.
 |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** * WMCA’s convening of the Homelessness Taskforce ensured that interventions were developed on behalf of partners who could then drive implementation without needing to find significant additional resource for strategy and policy work
* Taskforce members benefit from each other’s experience, advice and networks. This strengthens regional coordination in the delivery of interventions, and supports regional approaches and collaboration in the effort to design out homelessness
* 476 people have been accommodated and supported through the £9.6m Housing First pilot. In addition, £55,000 was allocated from the West Midlands Housing Officers Group to undertake research on the Housing First pilot and families in temporary accommodation – to capture learning and inform the approach going forwards
* 1,211 individuals have been supported through WMCA’s Rough Sleeping Initiative programme – with the CA accessing £1.2m Rough Sleeping Initiative funding and submitting three bids to the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme totalling £5.6m
* The Change into Action scheme (BCC, WMCA, WM Mayor) has been rolled out in six local authority areas, supporting circa 500 individuals to move away from rough sleeping and benefitting from over £177,000 raised by local businesses and citizens which has supported 14 organisations to deliver 21 homelessness support projects.
* Resources have been secured for veterans, faith and community organisations, and businesses (including £91,000 Homeless Veterans funding)
 |
| **Legacy:** The WMCA continues to convene and run the Homelessness Taskforce, as well as provide the strategy / policy input to support and drive the Taskforce’s work. This includes the development of substantial funding bids to secure competitive funding.  |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** * WMCA was able to provide cross-directorate innovative policy development which complemented and made the most of the operational expertise and experience of partners efficiently across the whole regional geography
* Given tight budgets and the need to prioritise operational interventions it is unlikely that the Local authorities and other partners would have been able to provide the equivalent levels of funding and expertise to support work on the development of the homelessness strategy.
* The WMCA also functions as an ongoing repository for consolidating and building upon the lessons learned, gathered from a range of partners across the region.
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| **Case Study 9: Climate & ecology strategy & action plan, West of England Combined Authority** |
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| **Overview:** The West of England climate and ecology strategy and action plan sets out the region’s plans to achieve net zero by 2030, and to get nature into recovery. By integrating a wide range of actions and partners across different policy fields, the plan provides a framework for long-term action that would not have been possible without the involvement of and strategic leadership provided by the CA.The benefits of the plan at a regional level are that it coordinates planning across a wide range of policy fields and stakeholders, at a scale that reflects the behaviour of residents and businesses, cutting across local authority boundaries. The plan covers the key sources of regional emissions, including transport, households, businesses, and local government. The action required to mitigate climate change is enormously complex and diverse. Though no one organisation has the full answer, the development of a West of England strategy and action plan provides a regional perspective which sets out clearly where local ambitions can be progressed. The plan provides short, medium and long-term actions for the region up to 2030 and is clear about the role that government should play and actions that they can take.  |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** The Combined Authority declared a climate emergency in summer 2019, in line with similar declarations by constituent unitary authorities. Following the pandemic, the committee requested an updated plan with greater ambitions. In developing the updated strategy and action plan in early 2022, the Combined Authority worked closely with unitary authority colleagues and a climate emergency panel consisting of senior regional stakeholders. The Combined Authority has helped to level the playing field across the region. In places that have ambition to tackle the climate emergency but not necessarily the capacity to develop local interventions or respond to external funding opportunities, the CA’s planning and funding has helped bring parity of opportunity to make progress.  |
| **Design and Development:** * The MCA was able to coordinate policy over a broad range of topics in a way that would not be feasible without devolution. Having the key policy levers in one place, together with the scale and funding to act, enables a targeted approach to take difficult decisions. This includes setting policies in fields ranging from energy generation to building insulation to transport. the Combined Authority is also operating at the right geographical level to address many of the key issues which exist across the region - for example across nature recovery and the regional transport system, where decisions and delivery have impacts across local authority boundaries.
* In developing the plan, the Combined Authority brought together key stakeholders in workshops and a Climate Action Panel to incorporate different viewpoints and enable local buy-in, given the high level of local interest and ambition. Presenting the evidence on current climate progress helped to highlight the significant gaps that remain, encouraging greater boldness in the assessment of progress and building political support for action.
* The strategy recognises the importance of inputs from a range of different stakeholders and provides a framework for coordinating action. It identifies action to be taken by different actors, to highlight where the MCA can make a critical difference and complement local action, and where gaps remain that require action by government.
 |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** * By coordinating local government and NGO stakeholders, the Combined Authority has provided a framework that coordinates action at the appropriate levels, ensuring activity is complementary whilst reflecting differing responsibilities and capability.
* Establishing a Green Recovery Fund to drive delivery has helped to accelerate progress. It has also provided seed funding that will create a stronger pipeline of future projects and helped to attract additional private-sector funding.
* Action at the regional level has also drawn on local passion to address climate change through a series of smaller scale behaviour change interventions. These include funding for community groups to support nature recovery, awards for businesses, and a mass planting community event. These help to break a seemingly overwhelming challenge into more manageable problems which residents can contribute towards tackling. It involves residents in progress and helps make complex changes accessible.
 |
| **Legacy:** Action on climate change is a long-term process, not a one-off plan. The strategy and the Combined Authority’s partnership working provide a strong foundation for future progress. The plan will require frequent re-visiting to build ambition, but strong stakeholder relationships have been built up which prepare the ground for delivery. By engaging local communities and responding to local priorities, action has more impact and encourages further behaviour change from residents and businesses. |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** The Combined Authority’s climate and ecological emergency strategy and action plan has produced more joined-up policy and stimulated faster progress than would otherwise have been possible. It provides a framework for action at the most appropriate level, whether regionally or locally, and targets funding where it will have the most impact. It has also built a strong partnership and local buy-in to proposals, which will be crucial to maintaining progress and delivering challenging behaviour change in future.  |

**More Ambitious, Larger and Diverse Activities**

| **Case Study 10: Teesworks, Tees Valley Combined Authority**  |
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| **Overview**The South Tees Development Corporation was the first Mayoral Development Corporation outside of London and was established as part of the Tees Valley devolution deal to convert disused industrial areas into opportunities for business investment and economic growth. Its work is focussed on the Teesworks site - the biggest economic regeneration project in the UK - 4,500 acres of land to the south of the river Tees which includes the former Redcar steelworks site. The area has been reimagined as cluster of excellence in clean energy and net zero manufacturing, already unlocking 775 jobs and delivering £393m of capital investment – and is now the focal point of the UK’s largest Freeport, a policy initially developed on Teesside.  |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** The Tees Valley Combined Authority was established in the aftermath of the closure of the SSI Steelworks at Redcar, a regional economic shock which led to the loss of 1,700 jobs and the emotional impact of the end of large-scale steel production on Teesside after 170 years. As part of the Tees Valley Devolution Deal it was agreed that the directly elected Mayor at the head of the Mayoral Combined Authority would have the power to establish a Mayoral Development Corporation to regenerate the site and drive forward its redevelopment to create jobs, secure investment and economically transform the region. |
| **Design and Development:** The Development Corporation is led by a board of directors, chaired by the Tees Valley Mayor, and includes representation from both national and local government and the local business community. The board developed a masterplan which would see the steelworks site reimagined as cluster of excellence in clean energy and net zero manufacturing. |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** To date, the existence of a Mayoral Development Corporation has delivered: * Successful conclusion of negotiations to secure ownership of the site – including face-to-face negotiation by the Mayor in Thailand.
* £124m of government funding allowing the remediation of the site in preparation for investment – including development of a 1km quay designed to serve the needs of the offshore energy sector.
* The development of the UK’s largest Freeport, centred on the site. The Tees Valley Freeport was also the first operational freeport in the UK.
* £52m of national funding allowing the development of Net Zero Teesside, a major Carbon Capture Project – including development of a gas-fired net zero power station. This project will help create the UK’s first fully decarbonised industrial cluster and prevent 10 million tonnes of carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere each year. The project is at the heart of a regional cluster decarbonisation plan aiming to work with the region’s 40 largest emitters to develop a path to delivering a net zero industrial cluster by 2040.
* Development of a Teesworks Skills Academy – bringing together local education providers and employers to make sure local people have the skills to secure the roles being created on the site.
* Current notable inward investment projects on the site include the planned construction of an offshore wind turbine monopile manufacturing facility by SeAH Wind Ltd and Circular Fuels’ new waste to energy plant, creating 250 jobs. The site has been a significant factor in the increase of inward foreign direct investment (FDI) earnings in the Tees Valley during the operation of the Development Corporation, increasing by £86m from £487m in 2018 to £573m in 2019. This represented an 18% increase compared to a 42% decrease nationally. The Tees Valley was one of only two Local Enterprise Areas to see an increase in FDIin this period.

To date the Teesworks development has unlocked 775 jobs and delivered £393m of capital investment.As well as being the UK’s first operational and largest Freeport, the Teesside Freeport illustrates how directly elected Mayors can have a significant impact by developing innovative local policy proposals which are suitable for national consideration and deployment. The Freeport initiative was a policy proposal created in the Tees Valley and put forward to government for use in Teesside alone. At the request of government, the idea has since been developed further, and adopted by eight locations as a key element of national export and regional development policies. Through the ability to set local economic strategy and convene relevant stakeholders and partners, the Tees Valley Mayoral Combined Authority has also offered national government a vital test bed for research benefiting future central government policymaking. A significant example of this is the Tees Valley’s role as a national Hydrogen Transport Hub, a living lab within the Freeport and Teesworks site, piloting hydrogen-fuelled transport projects including HGVs and public service vehicles. Another example of policy developed by the MCA being pursued nationally is the establishment of a world-first centre dedicated to accelerating the digitalisation of international trade, driving the government’s ambition for the UK to become the global leader on digital trade.Working closely with the Freeport, the International Chamber of Commerce’s Centre for Digital Trade and Innovation will provide a focal point to bring together initiatives and expertise to enable industry to develop the latest technologies and approaches to frictionless trade and remove barriers to growth.  |
| **Legacy:**  The success of the South Tees Development Corporation has led to the Tees Valley Combined Authority pursuing the development of new Development Corporations in Hartlepool and Middlesbrough, designed to regenerate their town centres and leverage private sector investment in the town’s economic regeneration. The legacy of the policy development work initiated in Tees Valley will also benefit areas further afield , through for example the roll out of Freeports.  |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** The Teesworks site illustrates how MCAs can provide strategic leadership and ambition which leads to new and innovative policy proposals. It provides a strong example of how an elected mayor can use their influence and role to lead engagement with the private sector and discussions with national government regarding future policy objectives. Partnerships, such as Net Zero Teesside, arising through the development of the site, will deliver national ambitions faster and leverage private capital into publicly beneficial projects.Through its Mayoral Development Corporation, and the convening power of the elected Mayor, the Combined Authority has been able to deliver jobs and investment, drive skills and pursue national Net Zero goals.  |

| **Case Study 11: LCR Connect Joint Venture, LCR Combined Authority**  |
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| **Overview:** LCR Connect is a £30m Joint Venture (JV) that will deliver 212km worth of full-fibre, gigabit-capable network infrastructure across the Liverpool City Region (LCR). The JV is 50% owned by the Combined Authority (CA) with an investment of £15m, and the other 50% is owned jointly by ITS Technology Group (who will manage and maintain the network) and NGE (who will deliver the build and roll out of the network). To ensure that the high- speed connectivity is future-proofed, the LCR Connect project will see the creation of a backhaul network to connect strategic sites across the city region to the area’s unique assets, such as the Hartree Centre at Sci-Tech Daresbury and the Transatlantic Cables in Sefton. The network will reach across all six boroughs of the city region, connecting local ‘access’ networks (which connect individual users to the internet) to the national ‘core’ network (which connects towns and cities) and the transatlantic landing cables in Sefton which connect us globally to both North America and Ireland. The new digital infrastructure will ultimately benefit everyone who lives, works and visits the LCR, and companies who want to do business with the City Region. Equipping businesses with innovative connectivity will boost productivity and competition in the global marketplace, putting the City Region at the forefront of innovative areas such as high-performance computing, infectious diseases, advanced manufacturing, personalised medical care and culture (including e-gaming) – where the City Region already has a competitive advantage. In addition, better digital connectivity will provide Local Authorities and the health sector with an opportunity to explore innovation in public services.  |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** * The LCR Connect project was developed as the foundation for achieving the Metro Mayor’s ambition of creating a digitally connected LCR and using the region’s digital assets to drive economic growth. The CA have developed the complex project over the last five years, working with a range of key partners and stakeholders, including LA representatives, DCMS, market operators global owners, operators and intermediaries to address public procurement; changing regulations and government policy.
* There was a recognition that the UK was lagging behind European countries with regards to digital connectivity, with LCR underperforming compared to the best digitally connected cities. Local stakeholders were clear that they did not want to wait for a market response which was unlikely to cover all part of the region, and fail to meet local connectivity objectives. There was therefore a clear willingness from local stakeholders to support the project. The CA coordinated working groups with representatives from each of the six Local Authorities to facilitate their input, achieve political buy-in and ensure ongoing support, which played a key role in shaping the design and deployment of the project to deliver benefits for the region.
* The CA engaged DCMS to explore various delivery options (e.g. Public Sector Anchor Tenancy / Co-operative / JV models) and sought political, legal and senior management input on the preferred option. The JV model was selected as it offered greater scope to achieve the mayoral policy objectives – to connect all areas in the City Region; provide more control over design, specification and route; achieve public sector savings; offer the potential to attract large corporates to drive growth. This model also enabled the CA to navigate tight, sector specific subsidy control legislation; and offered the potential to facilitate and stimulate expansion of local loops.
* Given the complexity and scale of the project, it is highly unlikely that the six LAs would have brought forward infrastructure investment plans in the absence of LCR Connect. Although alternative funding streams existed (e.g. DCMS Local Full Fibre Network Programme (LFFN)) these presented their own set of issues, and concerns from DMCS over potential market challenges and state aid issues halted the City Region from receiving any LFFN funding. Similarly, while the market may have responded (at the time of project inception, less than 2% of LCR premises had access to full fibre), it is unlikely that this connectivity would have been achieved at the pace or scale required to fulfil LCRCA’s growth ambitions. There was also a risk of partial coverage, resulting in some LCR areas being ‘left behind’.
 |
| **Design and Development:** Following the decision to pursue a JV model, the CA accelerated plans to mobilise delivery and enhanced the design, through for example: * ***De-risking the JV approach.*** Although the JV model has many advantages, entering the telecoms market also brings financial risk and state aid challenges. Careful planning was required to navigate these challenges, so the CA procured specialist advisors to provide robust commercial, financial, legal and technical advice, to maximise benefits and outcomes for the city region – which culminated in the successful procurement of the JV partners.
* ***Adopting a ‘Dig Once’ approach*** – by installing digital infrastructure (ducts, chambers, fibre cable) at the same time as highways or other capital works, and in so doing, save money, time and disruption. The innovative approach was recognised as part of the UK Government’s “barrier busting” toolkit for digital infrastructure and was built into the project design to act as a unique selling point and to accelerate deployment. LCRCA engaged with LAs to secure political buy in and then coordinated with Highways and regeneration officers to identify schemes that aligned (or could be changed) to a draft network route.

Working groups were established to support both strategic planning and operational delivery efforts throughout the project lifecycle, resulting in a draft network designed in collaboration, reflective of local needs and opportunities, that passed through each constituent LA and close to priority areas (e.g. business and employment parks, strategic sites and local growth areas, town centres and transport hubs). The CA’s convening and facilitating powers played a key part in achieving such local support. By clearly communicating the potential benefits of the project; championing the innovative ‘Dig Once’ approach; and encouraging collaboration, the CA were able to secure local commitment to the project.The need for clear objectives, specialist advice to be the intelligent client and good collaboration are critical for a project of the size and complexity.  |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** The CA’s involvement in the LCR Connect project accelerated mobilisation and ensured that local needs and opportunities were reflected in the design. The delivery team benefited from soft market testing and collaboration with DCMS; regular engagement and local knowledge provided by LA partners; retention of competent external advisors to add value to the dedicated internal team; a clear focus on Dig Once deliverability and programme management; and from? rigorous, comprehensive and competitive procurement (one of the UK’s largest public procurement exercises during the COVID-19 pandemic).The anticipated outputs and outcomes of the LCR Connect project include: * Increased connectivity via gigabit-capable broadband coverage, and take-up across the LCR​ – which will in turn support the case for smart cities
* More competitive local digital market – to “attract new operators to the region to give businesses and residents greater choice of services”​
* Economic growth in LCR (estimated at £105M over 15-year lifetime of JV) via new and existing businesses
* Increased job creation​ and training opportunities
* Potential commercial return on JV investment
* Further expansion of / investment in LCR digital infrastructure​

LCR Connect will provide high-quality digital infrastructure – now recognised as the ‘fourth utility’. It will enable the LCR to exploit strategic assets, attract investors, grow the business base, address Local Authority connectivity needs, and ultimately deliver transformational economic development.  |
| **Legacy:** LCR Connect is a long-term commitment for the CA. It is envisaged that the initial economic benefits will be realised over a 15-year period. The CA is represented on the JV board to ensure that the CA’s vision and values continue to influence business and investment decisions. Furthermore, the CA expects a return on investment, which will be reinvested in further growth opportunities (e.g. expansion of local loop networks, digital inclusion initiatives). Future investments would further demonstrate the CA’s commitment to improving digital connectivity and securing long term benefits across the LCR. |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** The LCR Connect project would not have been delivered without the input and drive of the CA. The ambition of the Metro Mayor, and the convening powers of the CA, led to the coordination, facilitation and funding of a large, complex and transformative project. The LCR Connect Network ultimately represents a commercially attractive investment, that delivers against the Metro Mayor’s commitment to deliver a resilient, future-proofed digital infrastructure, that benefits all six LCR boroughs.  |

| **Case Study 12: Tyne Taskforce, North of Tyne Combined Authority** |
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| **Overview:** Tyne Taskforce is an enhanced partnership working approach to development along the River Tyne recognising the fundamental role the river plays in the economic future of region – supporting industrial growth, net zero transition and new opportunities for housing, jobs and skills. Tyne Taskforce builds on the river as a key economic asset for the offshore and energy sectors making the River Tyne a globally competitive resource. The River Tyne spans several different administrative boundaries so working at a coordinated level facilitated at the combined authority level with key partners south of the river is helping overcome previous barriers to progress and minimising the risk of missed opportunities. |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** In late 2020, NTCA and local councils funded research to produce an evidence base and common narrative for the north bank of the River Tyne. This work identified the potential to add an additional £262m of GVA to the local economy if seven key priorities were addressed. Recognising the lack of a shared voice for the Tyne, a Taskforce was set-up to drive forward the study recommendations.Since October 2021, NTCA has chaired and facilitated the Tyne Taskforce with membership from across the public and private sector representing both banks of the Tyne. There has also been wider consultation with the business community to inform ongoing taskforce development. |
| **Design and Development:** Tyne Taskforce came into being following the 2021 White Paper *Unlocking the Economic Potential of the North Bank of the Tyne* that was commissioned by NTCA and local councils and undertaken by Stantec. Tyne Taskforce is a specific response to the lack of shared voice for the Tyne that was identified within the research.NTCA has coordinated and chaired the Tyne Taskforce with local representation from the public and private sectors. NTCA provided £500,000 funding to enable to Tyne Taskforce. NTCA has also made additional funding available through its Business Case Development Fund offering up to £200,000 for development of projects identified along the River Tyne. Without NTCA’s involvement the coordinated approach offered by the Tyne Taskforce would not be administratively or financially possible.NTCA has created a new structure for economic development along the river enabling a broader focus on regional issues and for the first time – or at least the first time in recent years – a multilateral group of partners have come together and participants have stated that the significance of this achievement should not be underestimated. |
| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** A Tyne Taskforce case study was conducted as part of NTCA’s National Evaluation and independent evaluators SQW spoke with 25 stakeholders/participants and identified five key benefits coming out of the Tyne Taskforce.* New structure for economic development
* Improved stakeholder engagement
* Improved partnership working
* Helping to generate consensus
* Project selection for the good of the region

NTCA’s key role has been convening the Tyne Taskforce as a vehicle for economic development that has engaged the regional private sector bodies to become the driving force behind development along the river. The single voice provided by the Tyne Taskforce has resulted in better outcomes for all partners both public and private. It has also fostered real willingness to work collectively in an ongoing manner. |
| **Legacy:** * The River Tyne is a key economic asset for the offshore and energy sectors but the relative fragmentation of stakeholders along the Tyne – including multiple councils, businesses and landowners - made it difficult for organisations to act collectively and with a ‘single voice’, in turn leading to missed opportunities.
* Tyne Taskforce, funded and facilitated by NTCA has resulted in the Tyne Powered branding providing a single public reference point to promote ongoing initiatives and investment in the river and the region.
* NTCA’s instrumental role in realising the Tyne Taskforce is securing benefits for the North of Tyne and councils south of the river. The region is now able to maximise economic opportunities and ultimately realise the forecast 4,000 offshore and energy jobs within the local economy and generate the potential additional £262m of GVA that could be added to the local economy.
 |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** The concept of the Tyne Taskforce emerged from the initial research with local councils which NTCA was instrumental in funding and coordinating. The NTCA has facilitated the establishment of the Tyne Taskforce and provided £500,000 of funding for the core initiative. NTCA are making available ongoing business development funding to mobilise around ideas for economic projects along the River Tyne and prepare them for major investment. |

| **Case Study 13: Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Devolution** |
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| **Overview:** A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in February 2015 to establish a delegated arrangement between NHS England and Greater Manchester (GM). This enabled GM to take ‘devolved control’ of the £6 billion plus per annum budget for health and social care for the 2.8 million people of the city region, with the ambition of creating a strong, safe, and sustainable health and care system that is fit for the future. |
| **The Role of the Mayoral Combined Authority** | **Project Inception:** * There has been a longstanding history of collaboration across local government and other public services in Greater Manchester (GM). This has led to GM being at the forefront of English Devolution for a number of years.
* There was also already a significant history of collaboration in the GM NHS not limited to hospital services but also including the Association of GM Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and, prior to that, the Association of GM Primary Care Trusts.
* A devolution deal for GM, involving a range of public services, was signed on 3 Nov 2014 within the context of a growing interest nationally in devolution and regional governance in England.
* This significantly extended the responsibilities of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and established the role of the GM Mayor, as well as inviting consideration of the potential for health and social care devolution.
 |
| **Design and Development:** * The Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership (GMHSCP) was established in April 2016, hosted by NHS England. It was positioned as a key component of the overall GM ambition as described in the document ‘Taking charge of our Health and Social Care in Greater Manchester’[[3]](#footnote-3) (known as ‘Taking charge’): “to become a financially self-sustaining city region, sitting at the heart of the Northern Powerhouse with the size, assets, skilled and healthy population, and political and economic influence to rival any global city.”
* Health and social care devolution would not have happened without the interventions of the officers / groupings / political leadership and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities, which over time evolved into the Combined Authority (CA).
* The establishment of the GMCA, working in close partnership with GMHSCP, was important for enabling collaboration and coordination across GM; both in terms of different parts of the health and social care system working together, but also in brokering relationships between health and social care and the local government and voluntary sectors.
* The health and care portfolio lead from the CA has provided political leadership throughout health and care devolution. The CA has facilitated the ongoing political leadership through the (former) portfolio lead: Sir Richard Leese (previously, leader of Manchester City Council), providing very senior leadership which he now carries through into his role as Chair of the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board.
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| **Delivery and Benefits Realisation:** * Being a constituent body of GHSCP (along with the 10 local authorities, the CCGs and the hospital trusts), the CA’s role was important in: bringing the partnership together at a GM level; championing the joining up between local authorities and the health system; and providing the overarching political governance, for example it was a regular topic at the monthly GMCA meetings. Strategically, the ambitions of ‘Taking charge’ were aligned to the Greater Manchester Strategy.
* Since launching the GM Making Smoking History strategy, adult smoking prevalence has dropped to 16%, meaning just one in six adults still smoke and as a city-region we are on trajectory to achieve a Smokefree 2030.
* GM has overseen a significant improvement in the quality of social care. There are 555 care homes and 456 home care agencies in GM. The proportion of care home beds in GM rated good or outstanding by the CQC has improved: this rose from 47% in 2016 to 81% now.
* With higher education institutes, we jointly developed and funded, the University Student Mental Health Service – a national first. We became the first UK region to provide digital mental health support to all of our residents offering immediate access to a free, confidential and safe digital mental health service 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
* Working Well Early Help aimed to change how health and employment services work together. Adults of all ages who were at risk of falling out of work due to poor health received up to six months of individually tailored advice and support from a dedicated caseworker to help them back to good work. This typically included health, wellbeing, and lifestyle advice alongside building confidence and relevant skills; the programme helped to make changes within their place of work or in finding suitable new employment. The Early Help programme concluded in March 2022 and sat as part of a wider family of locally commissioned Work and Health support programmes known as Working Well. To date Working Well has supported over 60,000 residents and has achieved employment for 18,000 GM residents the majority of whom have health conditions or disabilities and have previously experienced long-term unemployment.
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| **Legacy:** The CA continues as a key partner within the new Integrated Care System in Greater Manchester, which came into existence in July 2022. This is the next stage in GM’s continued ambition to transform public services, of which health and care are key elements, and will enable the people of GM to have good lives, with improved health and wellbeing.  |
| **The Benefit of Devolution:** The health and social care achievements seen in Greater Manchester in recent years are inextricably linked to devolution and the new ways of working which this has stimulated and facilitated. Progress on the key themes of work has been varied and, undoubtedly, affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Arguably the greatest progress has been made in population health and transforming community-based care and support, through work in localities and neighbourhoods. A study undertaken by the University of Manchester[[4]](#footnote-4), published in the Lancet, assessed the impact of the devolution of health and social care powers to Greater Manchester between 2014 and 2019 and found a slight increase in life expectancy. Encouragingly, these gains also seem to have reduced health inequalities to a certain extent, with gains larger for males, and larger in areas with high income deprivation and lower life expectancy prior to devolution. Whilst the study was unable to determine the exact mechanism of the increase, the authors suggest it might be due to: “coordinated devolution across sectors, affecting wider determinants of health and the organisation of care services”.   |

1. This comprises the following Combined Authorities - Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire, Tees Valley, Liverpool City Region, West Midlands, Cambridge and Peterborough, West of England, North of Tyne, West Yorkshire; and the Greater London Authority. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/the-impact-of-devolution-on-health-a-generalised-synthetic-control-analysis-of-greater-manchester-in-england(890fc9cd-d0fa-4a6e-b42a-4886e9b6c43b).html](https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/the-impact-of-devolution-on-health-a-generalised-synthetic-control-analysis-of-greater-manchester-in-england%28890fc9cd-d0fa-4a6e-b42a-4886e9b6c43b%29.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/The-big-plan-Taking-Charge.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/the-impact-of-devolution-on-health-a-generalised-synthetic-control-analysis-of-greater-manchester-in-england(890fc9cd-d0fa-4a6e-b42a-4886e9b6c43b).html](https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/the-impact-of-devolution-on-health-a-generalised-synthetic-control-analysis-of-greater-manchester-in-england%28890fc9cd-d0fa-4a6e-b42a-4886e9b6c43b%29.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)