

# Devolution, Combined Authorities and Metro Mayors

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# Devolution: inception of idea

- Pioneered under Labour: e.g. Prescott and the North East Devolution Referendum 2004 – but decisively rejected (78% against)
- *No Stone Unturned: In pursuit of growth* (2012) - Heseltine report recommending merging of funding streams to provide greater local responsibility and efficiency
- Fresh impetus from 2014 Scottish independence referendum – David Cameron: need to “empower our great cities”

# (Devo)lution deals

Six devo deals signed off with mayoral combined authorities recognised by government

Five others and potentially more still being negotiated

# The new Mayoral combined authorities

Six new combined authorities with elected mayors established in 2017 in addition to London. These are:

Greater Manchester – Andy Burnham

Liverpool – Steve Rotherham

Tees Valley – Ben Houchen

West Midlands – Andy Street

West of England – Tim Bowles

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – James Palmer

All are three year terms of office



# What responsibilities do they have for planning and housing?

- Spatial Plan making, in some cases statutory (GM, WoE)
- Some have CPO powers (GM, L'pool, WoE)
- Some have Planning call-in powers (L'pool, WoE)
- Mayoral Development Corporations (with authorisation of gov't)
- Potential for 'single pot' approach – concentration of central government funding streams for housing

# How are they doing on planning?

- Let's take a look at three

# Greater Manchester

Ten Local authorities

Elected Mayor: Andy Burnham (Lab)

Turnout: 29%

Share of vote: 63%



# Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

Devo Deal of 2014 refers to the GMSF – needs unanimous approval

Draft GMSF published October 2016. Broadly supported by the industry

Requires 11,360 dpa for 20 years (2015-2035) or 227,200 homes in total (now possibly 217,000)

Requires 28% of housing need to be delivered on green belt land

Election of Andy Burnham May 2017: announces 'fundamental review' of the GMSF.

APPG, 8 Sept – Burnham: getting housing policy right more important than GMSF. Need to refocus on affordable housing and regeneration. Less developer driven. New draft expected in June 2018



# West Midlands

Seven core local authorities (Birmingham, Sandwell, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Walsall, Coventry, Solihull) plus 11 associate authorities



Elected Mayor: Andy Street (Con)

Turnout: 27%

Share of vote: 45%



## 1. Devo Deal –

“ambitious target for the increase in new homes...report annually on progress”

“sufficient, balanced supply of readily available sites for...residential development”

2. *Strategic Economic Plan* identified need for 215k homes – 50k more than in current local plans

3. *West Midlands Land Commission* report recommends

- Non statutory Spatial Framework
- strategic green belt review

4. *Greater Birmingham & Black Country Strategic Locations Study* – options not binding



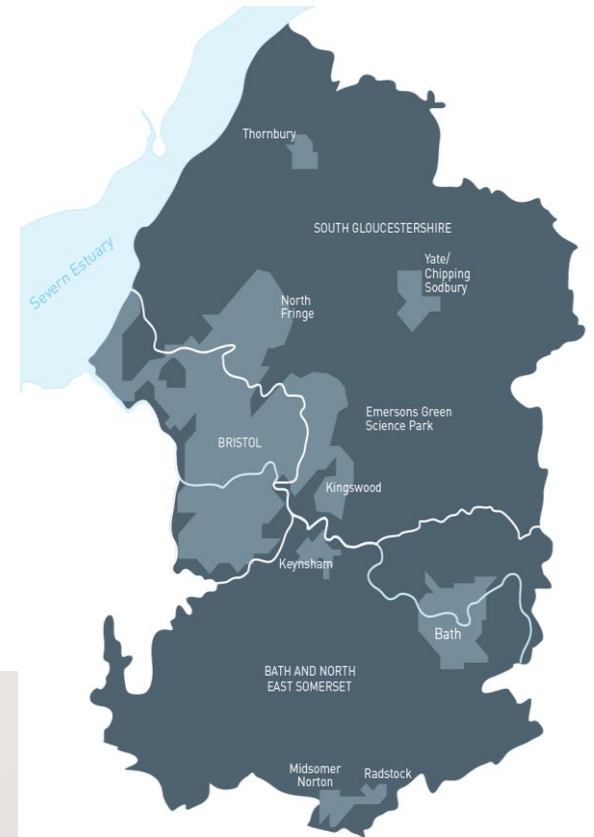
# West of England

Three local authorities

Elected Mayor: Tim Bowles (Con)

Turnout: 30%

Share of vote: 35%

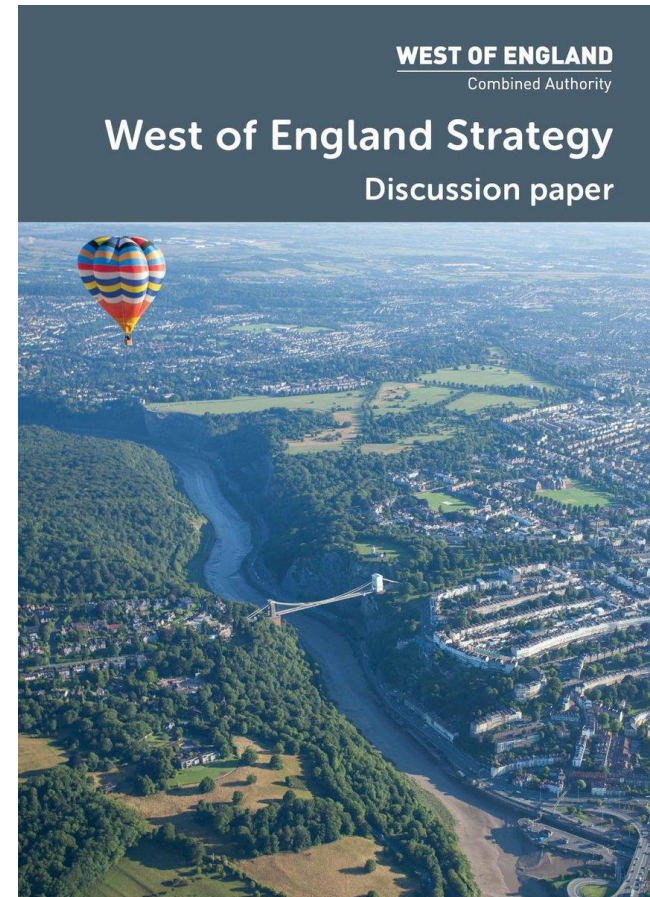


# West of England Discussion Paper

Devolution Deal -

“The West of England is committed to the delivery of high quality, planned, sustainable growth and is leading the way on a strategic approach to regional planning through its emerging Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) and Joint Transport Plan (JTP).”

- Productivity highest of all the core cities other than London
- Net contributor to the UK economy
- But housing delivery and affordability is a critical issue
- Emphasis on affordable homes
- Joint Spatial Plan delayed
- Allegation of lack of capacity in the development industry
- No consultation with industry to support this claim



# Challenges ahead

- Introduction of new tier of authority and policy between government and local authorities
- Delays to Spatial Plan making...

...provides excuse for delays to Local Plans

- Short-termism rules as Mayors focus on next three years.
- Public sector investments prioritised
- Loss of competition in the land market?

Risk: devolution of planning policy; death of NPPF

Risk: five year land supply discipline critical to maintaining pressure on combined authorities and local authorities to plan and approve

*Planning for the Right Homes (para. 44)*

*“We consider that the same (method) should apply to elected Mayors with plan-making powers. However, there may be compelling circumstances not to adopt the proposed approach.”*

# Possible message from the industry:

We will support the local agenda, but not at the expense of Spatial Plan making

The exemplar is London: GLA established in 2000. First London Plan adopted 2004. A new London Plan is produced every five years

Local Plan production is key: they hold the public sector to account

No (devolution) taxation without representation