

Westminster Social Policy Forum conference:

Next steps for devolution in England

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 6th May 2025

Taking Place Online



WESTMINSTER
SOCIAL POLICY
FORUM

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Joe Robertson MP
- 9.05 **Proposed measures in the English Devolution White Paper, and looking ahead to the English Devolution Bill**
Professor Tony Travers, Professor in Practice; and Associate Dean, School of Public Policy, London School of Economics and Political Science
- 9.15 **Lessons from implementing the mayoral combined county authority model**
Senior representative, combined authority
- 9.25 **Key considerations for delivering local government reorganisation**
Councillor Tim Oliver, Leader, Surrey County Council
- 9.35 **Implementing Trailblazer Deals - progress so far and next steps**
Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester; and Chair, Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- 9.45 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.10 **'Strategies for improving regional productivity and frameworks for collaboration between combined authorities with business and wider investors'**
Henri Murison, Chief Executive, Northern Powerhouse Partnership
- 10.20 **Priorities for supporting regional economic development and skills coordination**
expansion of local powers to deliver skills programmes / the Get Britain Working White Paper / growth opportunities and Investment Zones / delivering on local growth plans / role of devolved bodies in supporting the development of the Industrial Strategy / opportunities for inter-regional collaboration and working with arms-length bodies
Nigel Wilcock, Executive Director, Institute of Economic Development
Ginny Leonard, Director, Work Winning, Balfour Beatty
Michael Lemin, Head, Policy, NCFE
Councillor Liam Robinson, Leader, Liverpool City Council; and
Cabinet Member, Innovation, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Councillor Liz Terry, Leader, Reading Borough Council
- 10.40 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.05 **Chair's closing remarks**
Joe Robertson MP
- 11.10 Break
- 11.20 **Chair's opening remarks**
Maya Ellis MP
- 11.25 **The local government Finance Settlement and strategic options for establishing financial sustainability for the long-term**
Vicky Davis, Director, Local Government Value for Money, National Audit Office
Councillor Bill Revans, Leader, Somerset Council
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.50 **Next steps in effective delivery of public services - priorities for local and inter-regional transport, housing, and infrastructure**
learning from the experience of established combined authorities / improving regional connectivity / assessing future design and operation of regional transport in England / options for increasing autonomy in local transport infrastructure decision-making / next steps for developing an integrated transport system / support to help meet housebuilding targets and assessing proposed powers for combined authorities / developing effective Spatial Development Plans / assessing proposed measures in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill to change the powers of planning officers and planning committees / impact of reducing powers for planning committees / supporting retrofit delivery under the Warm Homes Plan
Chris Simms, Partner and Head, Rail, Burges Salmon
Hannah Shrimpton, Programme Director, Peninsula Transport
Rico Wojtulewicz, Head, Policy and Market Insight, National Federation of Builders
Senior representative, consultancy
Senior representative, local authority
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.40 **Delivery of measures in the English Devolution White Paper, and establishing an effective relationship between local and national government**
Senior representative, policy
Questions and comments from the floor
- 13.10 **Chair's and Westminster Social Policy Forum closing remarks**
Maya Ellis MP
Harry Nelson, Westminster Social Policy Forum