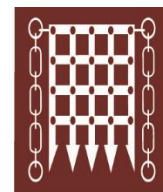


**Westminster Social Policy Forum conference:  
Next steps for devolution and growth in Greater Manchester**

Timing: Morning, Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2026

\*\*\*Taking place online\*\*\*

Draft agenda subject to change



**WESTMINSTER  
SOCIAL POLICY  
FORUM**

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Lord Bishop of Manchester**
- 9.05 **Strategic priorities for Greater Manchester's next phase of devolution - governance, delivery and growth**  
**Caroline Simpson**, Group Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Combined Authority  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **Considerations for implementing devolution in public services - transport, health, skills and local delivery**  
*implementation of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 and expanded mayoral responsibilities | delivery of priorities in the Greater Manchester Strategy | Bee Network expansion and regional service coordination | Live Well rollout and alignment with the Neighbourhood Health Framework | Greater Manchester Baccalaureate and Local Skills Improvement Plan delivery | addressing NEET rates, skills shortages, attainment and structural barriers to employment | collaboration between local government, the NHS, education and civil society partners | the duty to collaborate to prevent homelessness | commissioning, accountability and partnership working under the renewed VCFSE Accord*  
**Neal Symmons**, Lean, Continuous Improvement and Innovation Technical Manager, North West, National Highways  
**Hayley Lever**, CEO, Greater Manchester Moving; and Member, Greater Manchester VCFSE Leadership Group  
**Professor John Blake**, Director, The Post 18 Project; and Professor, Social Innovation and Public Policy, University of Salford  
**Subrahmaniam Krishnan-Harihara**, Director, Business Policy and Research, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce  
**Charlotte Bailey**, Chief Strategy, People and Partnerships Officer, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.25 **Skills, employment and productivity - widening pathways into regional growth sectors**  
Senior representative, business  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.50 **Chair's closing remarks**  
**Lord Bishop of Manchester**
- 10.55 Break
- 11.05 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.10 **Use of new planning powers - approaches to strategic development and supporting local growth**  
Senior representative, local authority
- 11.20 **Housing and commercial development - planning reform and ambitions in the Places for Everyone plan**  
*implementation of anticipated reform in the National Planning Policy Framework | operation and future direction of the Places for Everyone plan | impact of planning reform on project delivery and development capacity | land assembly, land value capture and neighbourhood-level regeneration | community engagement and nature protection | development corporations, Mayoral Development Orders and powers introduced through the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 | local plan development and alignment with the Spatial Development Strategy | Housing First objectives | implications of the Renter's Rights Act 2026 and Good Landlord Charter for landlord behaviour and housing supply*  
**Phil Mayall**, Managing Director, Muse; and Vice Chair, Regional Policy Committee, British Property Foundation  
**Greg Dickson**, Regional Practice Lead, Northern England and Scotland, Stantec  
Senior representative, planning
- 11.35 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.55 **Good Growth Fund investment - regeneration, delivery and community benefit**  
Senior representative, investment
- 12.05 **Innovation, investment and productivity - strengthening routes from research to growth**  
*Good Growth Fund deployment and collaboration with the National Wealth Fund | inward investment and Industrial Strategy Zone development | assessing the proposed Overnight Visitor Levy Bill | supporting productivity growth, regional employment and infrastructure delivery | routes from research to commercialisation | support for spin-outs, entrepreneurial firms and high-growth sectors, including life sciences and digital | priorities for cross-regional partnerships and international collaboration | long-term investment planning and infrastructure pipelines | attracting investors, talent and growing enterprises across Greater Manchester*  
**Professor Carl Diver**, Professor, Innovative Manufacturing and Director, PrintCity, Manchester Metropolitan University  
Senior speaker confirmed from **The Growth Company**  
Senior representative, local authority  
Senior representative, infrastructure
- 12.25 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.45 **'Devolution pioneer; Building on the record of Greater Manchester productivity increases to drive city regional and pan Northern growth'**  
**Henri Murison**, Chief Executive, Northern Powerhouse Partnership  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 13.10 **Chair's and Westminster Social Policy Forum closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian  
**Harry Nelson**, Westminster Social Policy Forum