

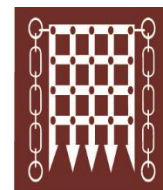
**Westminster Social Policy Forum conference:
Next steps for devolution and growth in Greater Manchester**

Timing: Morning, Friday 3rd July 2026

Taking place online

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 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
Senior representative, public transport
Senior representative, skills
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**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 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
Senior representative, planning
Senior representative, developer
Senior representative, regeneration
- 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
Senior representative, business
Senior representative, university
Senior representative, local authority
Senior representative, infrastructure
- 12.25 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.45 **Next steps for implementation of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 - powers, funding and local delivery**
Senior representative, policy
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



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