

**Westminster Social Policy Forum conference:
Next steps for devolution and growth in the North of England**

Timing: Morning, Monday, 17th November 2025

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



**WESTMINSTER
SOCIAL POLICY
FORUM**

Draft agenda, subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Assessing key priorities and challenges for growth and coordination in the North of England**
Senior academic
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.25 **Supporting regional growth - developing public sector capacity and investor confidence**
Henri Murison, Chief Executive, Northern Powerhouse Partnership
- 9.35 **Key considerations for devolution, local government reorganisation, planning and improving public service delivery**
priorities for regional public service delivery / implementation of Spatial Development Strategies and planning reform / progress under the Devolution Priority Programme and unitary authority transitions / funding settlements and Fair Funding Review considerations / capacity and governance arrangements, including proposals for a Local Audit Office / right to request and pilot powers / business engagement with combined authorities / partnerships with Homes England and the National Infrastructure Service Transformation Authority / devolved skills commissioning and Adult Skills Fund priorities
Zoë Billingham, Director, IPPR North
Tom Bousfield, Executive Director Growth, Business and Skills, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
Alex Miles, Chair, Northern Skills Network; and Managing Director, Yorkshire Learning Providers
Gemma Davies, Director, Housing and Economy, Cheshire West and Chester Council
Senior representative, health
- 10.00 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 **Supporting pan-regional capacity, economic clusters and shared delivery**
Senior representative, combined authority
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.40 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.45 Break
- 10.55 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.00 **Next steps for Northern Powerhouse Rail**
Martin Tugwell, Chief Executive, Transport for the North
- 11.10 **Priorities for improving transport links and supporting interregional connectivity**
delivery of Transport for City Regions funding / integrated local transport systems / Bus Services Bill and next steps for local transport / coordination with Great British Railways / delivery capacity and workforce planning / coordination of housing and transport masterplanning
Jason Syrett, Partner, Allies and Morrison
Senior speaker confirmed from **West Yorkshire Combined Authority**
Senior representative, transport
- 11.25 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.40 **Supporting inclusive growth, public service innovation, and net zero ambitions**
Dr Henry Kippin, Chief Executive, North East Mayoral Combined Authority
- 11.50 **Next steps for economic development, regional collaboration, and frameworks for delivering growth and infrastructure**
pan-regional strategy and the role of the Great North partnership / attracting inward investment / reducing regional productivity gaps / Local Growth Plans and integrated settlements / unlocking Industrial Strategy Zone growth / coordination with national delivery bodies, including Homes England and the National Infrastructure Service Transformation Authority / aligning housing, transport, employment and net zero / infrastructure pipelines and Green Book reforms
Simon Green, Chief Executive, Humber Freeport
Sandra Manson, Executive Director, Planning, Pegasus Group; and Chair, Developing Consensus
Kamal Patel, Partner, Infrastructure Advisory, EY
Dan Monnery, Pro Vice-Chancellor, External Engagement, Northumbria University
- 12.10 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Implementing proposals in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill and priorities for driving growth in the North of England**
Senior representative, policy
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Social Policy Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Harry Nelson, Westminster Social Policy Forum