

Devolution proposal summary

Please note: This document contains a summary of the draft proposal for the creation of a Combined County Authority by Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, and Nottingham City Council. It does not contain all details of the draft proposal and should be read in conjunction with the full draft proposal, which can be accessed here: [Full proposals](#)

Organisations involved

Devolution would cover Derbyshire, Derby, Nottinghamshire, and Nottingham.

The four councils leading on devolution in our area are Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, and Nottingham City Council.



District and borough councils in the area include:

- Amber Valley Borough Council
- Bolsover District Council
- Chesterfield Borough Council
- Derbyshire Dales District Council
- Erewash Borough Council
- North East Derbyshire District Council
- High Peak Borough Council
- South Derbyshire District Council
- Ashfield District Council
- Bassetlaw District Council
- Broxtowe Borough Council
- Gedling Borough Council
- Newark and Sherwood District Council
- Mansfield District Council
- Rushcliffe Borough Council

Those supporting devolution include local leaders across the political spectrum, the Chamber of Commerce, the East Midlands D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the University of Derby, Nottingham Trent University, the University of Nottingham, and Nottingham College.

What would devolution mean for our area?

Devolution would mean a new guaranteed funding stream of £1.14 billion, or £38 million a year over the next 30 years for Derbyshire, Derby, Nottinghamshire, and Nottingham, as well as an extra £16.8 million for new homes.

It would give us much more control over our own area. Rather than many major decisions being made for us in London, as happens now, local people would have more say in the region's priorities.

Devolution also provides opportunities for us to improve the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of people who live and work in our area. For example:

- Local control over a range of budgets like the Adult Education Budget, so we can use the money to better meet the needs of local people and the needs of local employers.
- Local powers to tackle challenges that are specific to our area and harness its true economic potential, for the benefit of everyone who lives and works here
- Working more effectively on a larger scale across council boundaries, further strengthening partnership working across and between our counties and cities.

Devolution has seen real improvements in other parts of the country where it has been successfully adopted. Plus, other areas with devolution deals have been able to make their funding go even further by offering loans to businesses so they can invest and grow, with devolved areas making money from the interest – so the true financial benefit is likely to be greater still.

A new combined county authority and a new mayor, from 2024

Devolution would create a new combined county authority for our area. This would cover Derbyshire, Derby, Nottinghamshire, and Nottingham.

Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Derby City Council and Nottingham City Council would all be involved. The four councils would continue to exist individually. They would also work together on a formal and legal basis through the new combined county authority to improve the region for residents, communities, businesses, and other organisations.

Rather than a brand-new level of government, devolution would move existing funding and powers from London, directly to us in the East Midlands, which means that local voices would play a greater role in decision making. Devolution would not mean scrapping or merging any local councils.

The new combined county authority would include representatives from existing county, city, borough, and district councils and it would be led by a new regional mayor. There would also be opportunities for private, public, and voluntary sector organisations to contribute and have their voices heard.

A new regional mayor would:

- Give us a bigger voice
- Give us more influence,
- Give us a higher profile across the country
- Create a single point of contact for businesses and other organisations looking to move into our region or expand.
- Help us speak with one voice
- Help us to make a strong case to the Government for more investment in our area.

The mayor would be directly elected by residents in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Derby, and Nottingham, giving them more influence over issues which affect them. The first election for a regional mayor would be in spring 2024.

The benefits of devolution

Devolution is an opportunity to bring decisions closer to where they have an impact, and to get a fairer share to help close the gap in public investment in our area, so we can see more economic growth and new and better jobs.

We can build on our region's existing knowledge and expertise, for example in transport and green technology, promoting the growth of a future low carbon economy by investing in related skills training at colleges and other training facilities.

By playing to our strengths and tailoring our approach to the needs of our area, we can encourage economic growth and make sure local people benefit. Devolution also means we can take advantage of economies of scale by using combined and devolved budgets to deliver more value for taxpayers and more cost-efficient services.

The shared vision of Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Derby City Council and Nottingham City Council is for the people who live and work in our area to be better connected, more competitive, and more prosperous.

The priority areas for achieving this are:

- Our homes
- Our skills
- Our transport infrastructure
- Our carbon reduction / net zero ambition

More and better housing

Devolution would mean that the new combined county authority and mayor could work with local councils, landowners, developers, and housing providers to create affordable, good quality housing, and to retrofit existing homes to be more environmentally sustainable.

- New powers held by the new combined county authority and mayor could be used to buy land and housing, with the consent of district and borough councils.
- It would mean that new and better standards for homes could be introduced, low carbon measures put in place, and improvements to existing housing could be made.
- It would mean £16.8 million a year would be available for building new homes, subject to suitable areas being identified.

£9 million would also be available to support local housing priorities, and new powers would allow the new combined county authority and mayor to buy land to build houses, commercial space, and infrastructure, to grow our local economy and regenerate our area.

More and better jobs

The new combined county authority and mayor would work with employers, skill providers (like universities and colleges) and local councils to make sure people here have opportunities to develop key skills and access opportunities to work well and build fulfilling careers. This will also help the creation of a strong and sustainable local economy.

Devolution means that more decisions about our area would be made in our area. For example, a fully devolved adult skills budget means we'd no longer be constrained by rules set nationally on what we can use adult education funding for – only on specific age groups, for instance – and could instead tailor this to the needs of people in our communities.

This funding could be made available to the people who need it, so they can fulfil their potential and get the jobs they want. It would also mean employers could hire people with the skills they need, addressing the skills gap, and removing barriers to better paid work.

By playing to our strengths in research and industry, including aerospace, life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and energy, and making the most of opportunities in the future associated with the East Midlands Freeport, HS2 and rail, and the East Midlands Development Corporation, we can maximise employment opportunities in our area.

Better connected transport

By working with transport providers inside and outside our area we can develop our transport infrastructure to create the best possible public transport system for our residents.

Devolution would give us the opportunity to:

- Combine local transport plans together, so we have one single plan
- Develop new smart integrated ticketing on public transport
- Create new concessionary fare schemes

It would also mean we could set up and coordinate a Key Route Network, which would be made up of some of the busiest and most important roads in our area, so we could better manage our highways.

A greener environment

Devolution would mean we could work across our area to lead the way in moving from fossil fuel to fusion and play our part in achieving our national ambition of net zero by 2050.

Our goal is that our area will be a leader in pioneering new forms of generating clean energy, acting as a model for other areas to follow, when it comes to climate change adaption.

Devolution means we could work more effectively on a larger scale so we can all benefit from cleaner air, lower heating costs, and so we can move towards being carbon neutral, with:

- New low carbon homes
- Retrofitting existing homes with external wall insulation
- Promoting the use of renewable energy
- Protecting and enhancing our green spaces
- Exploration of areas where heat network zoning may work locally, to decarbonise heating and hot water
- Opportunities to increase the capacity of our area's electricity network

Devolution would also make £18 million available to support housing and net zero ambitions in our area.

What powers and duties would the new mayor and combined county authority have?

The new combined county authority will:

- Be expected to set a budget for itself.
- Have the power to borrow.
- Have a duty to prepare an economic assessment of Derbyshire, Derby, Nottinghamshire, and Nottingham.
- Have adult education and training functions, which will be transferred from the Secretary of State.
- Have compulsory purchase, land acquisition and disposal and development of land powers. The exercise of compulsory purchase functions is subject to the consent of all the local planning authorities affected.
- Have housing supply and regeneration functions.
- Have a duty to review air quality plans and propose and undertake steps to support the delivery of those plans by district, borough, city, and county councils in the area.
- Have incidental powers in relation to its functions (the power to do anything which it needs to, to carry out its functions).

The mayor will:

- Lead the new combined county authority.
- Have the power to designate a Mayoral Development Area and then set up a Mayoral Development Corporation, taking responsibility for planning functions (subject to consent of all the local planning authorities affected).
- Have housing and land buying powers to support housing, regeneration, infrastructure and community development and wellbeing (subject to consent of all the local planning authorities affected).
- Have the power to draw up a local transport plan and strategies.
- Have bus franchising powers.
- Have the duty to set a Mayoral budget.
- Have the option to set a precept on Council Tax to fund mayoral functions.
- Have the option to charge a business rate supplement, subject to a ballot of local businesses.
- Have the power to provide relief from non-domestic rates in areas covered by a Mayoral Development Corporation.
- Have the 'functional power of competence' - the power to do anything reasonably related to the exercise of the mayor's functions.

Devolution will help us to build on our strengths...

- Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Derby, and Nottingham have a combined population of 2.2 million people and contribute £50.5 billion to the UK economy in terms of GVA (Gross Value Added).
- The area has more than 88,000 businesses providing over 930,000 jobs in sectors with potential for growth, including advanced manufacturing, engineering, clean energy, logistics, creative and digital, education, health, pharmaceuticals, and wholesale and retail trade.
- The region is home to Toyota UK, Rolls Royce, Alstom, and Boots, as well as the University of Derby, Nottingham Trent University, and the University of Nottingham, which provide centres of research excellence with expertise in aerospace, rail, life sciences, and strong transport links.
- The area is home to major tourist attractions including the Peak District National Park, the National Forest, Nottingham Castle, Derby's Silk Mill and Sherwood Forest.
- There are major strategic opportunities presented through the East Midlands Freeport, the East Midlands Development Corporation, and the announcements in the Integrated Rail Plan on HS2.
- The two cities and counties are geographically close and already work closely together on many collaborative large-scale initiatives.

...and help us to overcome the challenges we face.

- Productivity in the East Midlands is behind the UK average - we need an increase of 14.6% to close the gap.
- Public spending per person has historically been below the UK average.
- There are areas within our region with high levels of poverty and poor social mobility, with 219,600 people living within the most deprived 10% of areas across England.
- Our area has seen a shortage in housing supply. An estimated 9,200 homes a year are needed to meet local need and we are likely to see a shortfall of over 6,500 homes over the next 10 years.
- More local powers will help us tackle these challenges and harness the true economic potential of our area, for the benefit of everyone who lives here, and which would also benefit the whole country.
- Devolution for our area would give us more control and the flexibility to respond to local needs, including transport, skills training, regenerating our villages, towns, and cities, and more.

A devolution deal is the beginning of the journey, not the end. There would be opportunities to build and enhance on it over time, as has happened in other areas.

There is still a lot to do before devolution becomes a reality. Locally, we will have to work hard to make devolution work for us, and to ensure it results in the improvements we want to see. But we are convinced it would mean a significant step forward for the region, addressing years of historical low investment in the area whilst providing a platform for accelerated growth.