

#OneYorks

One Yorkshire devolution

Frequently asked questions

1. What is devolution?

Devolution is about taking decisions as near as possible to where they will have an impact. As an example, it makes most sense for the Government in London to take decisions about defence but your local council will decide when your bins will be emptied.

At the moment, a large proportion of decisions about what happens in Yorkshire are taken by the Government and its departments. Through a process known as 'devolution deals' the Government is giving areas more powers to make their own decisions on issues such as transport, skills and support for business.

2. Why do we need an elected mayor?

The Government has decided that to take on new powers, areas have to agree to have a mayor, voted for by the public, who can be held responsible for how the powers are used. Under One Yorkshire, the whole region would have a single elected mayor sitting with a 'combined authority' made up of council leaders.

3. What is the One Yorkshire devolution plan?

18 councils in Yorkshire and the Sheffield City Region Mayor are supporting the One Yorkshire devolution proposal. This would involve the creation of a One Yorkshire Mayor, elected by voters in the region, overseeing powers transferred by the Government with a Combined Authority of council leaders, similar to a Cabinet.

4. What would the elected mayor do?

The powers of the Mayor would depend on the final devolution deal agreed with the Government but it is expected they would work with council leaders to develop regional plans in areas such as business support, inward investment and skills. How they decided to use those powers would depend on the policies the mayor put before the public.

5. When will this happen?

With the support of the Government an agreement could be in place and the One Yorkshire Mayor elected by 2020.

6. How would the mayor be held to account?

The Mayor would be part of a Combined Authority with Yorkshire council leaders who would all have a say in the decisions taken at a regional level. There would also be an Overview and Scrutiny process similar to that in place in local authorities. The Mayor would be responsible to voters and re-elected every four years.

7. Why not have devolution deals for smaller areas such as West Yorkshire or the Humber?

The 18 councils and Sheffield City Region Mayor believe devolution at a Yorkshire level would deliver the most for our communities in the most streamlined way. The independent economic study suggests working at a Yorkshire level could deliver economic uplift worth £30bn a year.

8. Would councils be merged/scrapped?

No. This is about transferring powers down from the Government. Yorkshire councils would continue to have their existing responsibilities.

9. Isn't this just more bureaucracy and more politicians?

Devolution is about reducing bureaucracy. By taking decisions closer to where they will have an impact we can reduce the lengthy processes involved with dealing with Government and secure better outcomes offering better value for money. The only additional elected person would be the Mayor working with the Combined Authority and committees drawn from existing councillors.

10. What happens if we don't have a devolution deal and a mayor?

Without a devolution deal, a large proportion of decisions over what happens in Yorkshire will continue to be taken in London. Areas with elected mayors will enjoy powers, over public transport for example, which will give them an advantage over Yorkshire. Areas with devolution deals and mayors have also been given priority for some Government spending. An example is the Government's Transforming Cities Fund worth £840m where elected mayors were given a share automatically but other areas had to compete for a share

11. What does this mean for the Sheffield City Region devolution deal?

The future of the Sheffield City Region deal is a matter for the local authorities in that area. The Sheffield City Region Mayor supports the One Yorkshire idea. The 18 councils and the Sheffield City Region Mayor have committed to working with the Government to find a way to deliver the benefits of the Sheffield City Region deal while progressing towards a wider One Yorkshire agreement with a mayor elected in 2020.

12. What happens next?

The findings of the independent economic study and the details of how the Mayor and the Combined Authority would work have been submitted to the Government. We are ready to meet Ministers at any time to progress them.