

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT

DEVOLUTION UPDATE

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

The report provides members of the Joint Strategic Oversight Committee (JSOC) with an update on activities to deliver against the ambitions of the devolution deal for Greater Lincolnshire, with a focus on employment and skills, business and infrastructure and transport.

The report includes an update on the work done by the constituent authorities to date.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The constituent authorities have continued to develop arrangements for the functions that will be administered by the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA).
- 2.2 The report provides an update on activities across the three boards of the GLCCA – employment and skills; transport; business and infrastructure.

3. DETAIL OF OPTIONS/PROPOSAL

- 3.1 **Employment & Skills:** The employment and skills group has drawn together resources from across the three constituent authorities and the Greater Lincolnshire LEP together with being joined by the regional lead from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Skills Lead from Tees Valley.

The theme group created three workstreams, adults skills, careers, care leavers.

Adult Skills Funding (ASF): The ASF will be contracted by the Strategic Authority and must fulfil certain entitlements such as funding Maths, English, and digital skills for adults. It also includes an additional number of Free Courses for Jobs Funding (FCFJ) which funds certain Level 3 provision for those aged 19 and over.

A draft Strategic Skills Plan, and ASF Readiness conditions will be ready by March 2025.

Careers: This workstream is focused on developing an action plan to ensure collaboration between stakeholders working within the careers sector for both adults and young people. The aim is to support careers professionals to deliver place-based, industry-led advice and guidance and to support participation of adults in ASF funded provision.

Care Leavers: This workstream sets out a commitment for Greater Lincolnshire to improve employment outcomes for care leavers. The initial plan is to develop and adoption a Lincolnshire care leavers covenant.

- 3.2 Business & Infrastructure: This group draws expertise from the three constituent councils and the Lep in collaboration with DEFRA/EA, DEZNES, DBT, industry representatives, consultants who have worked on previous deals and representatives from current combined authorities.

The group is focussing on three themes; environment, housing and land and businesses.

- 3.3 Environment (Net Zero, Water Management, Nature). The deal recognises the rural landscape and includes further government commitment to work in partnership with the GLCCA to preserve nature and important landscapes, respond to a changing climate and assist with the transition of our employment sectors to Net Zero.

Net Zero: The creation of a Humber Net Zero Strategy (HNZS) is set out in the devolution agreements for both Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire and Greater Lincolnshire. Under the terms of the deals the strategy will be designed to *'accelerate the green energy transition across the Humber industrial cluster.'* And *'will inform a detailed investment plan for the region, underpinned by strong collaboration between public and private sector partners across the Humber.'* The draft Net Zero Strategy for Industrial and Energy Cluster has been commissioned by the Humber Energy Board and a first draft is expected in February 2025.

In December 2024, the Board discussed the development of a Carbon Reduction Plan for Business which will develop activities to support business decarbonisation, with a particular focus on the three highest emitting sectors within Greater Lincolnshire., identify priority opportunities to maximise the economic benefits of decarbonisation, develop an over-arching cluster plan for the Greater Lincolnshire low carbon energy sector; and undertake deep dives to investigate sub-sector opportunities for net zero for Greater Lincolnshire.

It is projected that a draft Carbon Reduction Plan for Business will be commenced in June 2025 and final report in December 2025.

Water Management: Work has started on the ambition of closer working relationship with government around water management in Greater Lincolnshire, via an enhanced partnership. The work is focused on achieving added value, influence and access to funding and is not intended to duplicate and replace well-functioning existing partnerships.

A commitment from Anglian Water has been secured to enhance partnership working around water sustainability planning, with the first Leader/Chief Executive meeting taking place in September 2024 and regular operational partnership meetings taking place.

Scoping workshop took place in December to start planning transition from Lincolnshire Flood and Water Management Partnership framework to a Greater Lincolnshire Framework, with further action planning taking place on 21 January 2025. This will inform transition options to be presented for future decision making.

Nature: The scope of the nature theme includes an invite to join the Natural Capital Investment Community of Practice and the development of a Coastal Partnership which will ensure that the nature, culture, and heritage of Lincolnshire Coast are given a voice.

DEFRA will work with the GLCCA to consider possible place-based research in Greater Lincolnshire to ensure future policy considers both sustainable food production and climate and environment outcomes.

Progress has been made including the well-established Local Nature Recovery Strategy partnership and there is a pending agreement with Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership in relation to co-delivery of some of the LNRS works.

Going forward there will be a focus on the Coastal Partnership and establishing how this would work alongside the Humber Coastal Partnership and the Wash and North Norfolk Coast Marine Partnership.

3.4 Housing & Land (Enhanced Powers, Housing Pipeline, Homes England).

The proposal sets out the aspiration to use the levers achieved through devolution to unlock housing through enhanced infrastructure including investing in high quality homes, locations and services, investment from Homes England to bring forward the necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of local communities, and support to regenerate areas and provide sustainable and affordable housing. This included an allocation of £228,000 to bring forward a pipeline of housing projects.

Progress to date includes re-engagement with Homes England post the general election period, engagement workshops with housing and planning colleagues across Greater Lincolnshire (SIDF group), the development of a commissioning brief which is out for procurement using the Homes England Framework, the award for award of contract for Housing Pipeline and the commencement with the successful bidder.

- 3.5 Business (Food, Innovation, Culture & Tourism): The Business section of the deal focuses on two main topics: UK Food Valley and Business Innovation. However, helping businesses to grow is the core principle of the authority and the actions in the skills, transport, and environment/nature sections all contribute directly to that principle of helping businesses to grow.





Having a combined authority gives us the chance to promote the businesses in Greater Lincolnshire much more effectively. The national event, UKREiiF, which is held in May, provides the first opportunity to do this. The constituent councils have agreed to have a Greater Lincolnshire pavilion at UKREiiF, and events are being planned for the authority to meet national/international decision makers and to make the case for further investment in Greater Lincolnshire during the event.

Food Sector: The deal has identified joint working with government on the food sector as a priority. This will be delivered through further work to promote our area as UK Food Valley, in recent months we have hosted visits from potential business investors, and we will work to do more of this. Government's commitment to join the UK Food Valley board should give us the chance for greater Lincolnshire to be better promoted to global investors. Our deal also recognises the importance of small and medium sized businesses in the food sector; we will shortly start work on developing programmes which will help those businesses to grow.

Business Innovation: The deal includes a commitment to form an Innovation Board with support from government. Businesses which innovate are proven to grow more quickly than those that do not, creating more jobs and having a positive impact on their local community. Statistically Greater Lincolnshire has fewer innovating businesses than other parts of the country. The deal's commitment to an Innovation Board gives us the chance to deliver on the Innovation Routemap which Greater Lincolnshire LEP launched recently, and the board will be formed during summer 2025 and at first it will explore how to help small businesses to start to innovate whilst also helping our most innovative businesses to retain their position as market leaders.

- 3.6 Transport: The Devolution deal recognised the opportunity that improving and enhancing the transport system across Greater Lincolnshire could have on economic growth.

The GLCCA will become the Local transport Authority (LTA) for the area. The GLCCA will be responsible for setting the transport policy for the whole area. To prepare for the inception of the organisation work has been initiated on reviewing the key transport policy drivers for the area. This will provide the basis for the GLCCA to prepare and adopt a GL Local Transport Plan. The key themes are economic growth, safety, security and healthy lifestyle, connecting people with work, leisure and learning, green transport solutions.

Greater Lincolnshire LTP themes			
 Economic Growth	 Safety, security and a healthy lifestyle	 Connecting people with homes, work, leisure and learning	 Reducing transport related carbon dioxide emissions and protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment
Key themes from national, regional and local policy			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turbo charging business growth ■ Promoting High Aspirations ■ Economic recovery and growth ■ Regeneration ■ Productivity, pay, jobs and living standards ■ Growing and levelling up the economy ■ Stronger economy, stronger communities ■ Where business can sustain and grow ■ Enabling economic growth and renewal ■ Facilitate growth through transport improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support high aspirations ■ Supporting Safety, Security and a Healthy Lifestyle ■ Quality of Life ■ Citizens of all ages live active, healthy, and independent lives ■ Keeping people safe and well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A sense of community, local pride and belonging ■ Empowering local leaders and communities ■ Enable everyone to enjoy life to the full ■ Where young people have choice and are equipped with the skills to exercise that choice. ■ Where people are proud to live, work, invest and visit. ■ Enabling resilient and flourishing communities ■ Provide equal opportunities through improvements in accessibility to key local hubs and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enabling resilient and flourishing communities ■ Decarbonisation and Climate Change ■ Creating a Thriving Environment ■ Delivery of net zero targets ■ Reducing negative impacts on the environment ■ Sustainable and carbon neutral future. ■ Reducing transport related carbon dioxide emissions ■ Protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment through sustainable transport solutions

These themes will be part of key policy documents including the Local Growth Plan and the Investment Strategy to ensure that the transport network and system acts as an enabler to driving economic growth and increased productivity.

One of the key tools to assist in meeting those strategic objectives will be the designation of a Key Route Network (KRN). This will be designated by the mayor once in post, but work is underway to identify an evidence base to assist with the identification of the most appropriate KRN.

The KRN will assist the delivery of economic growth by acting as principal connecting routes for those accessing skills provisions, employment opportunities, housing, and business growth.

The identification and implementation of the KRN will support joint working across the three Highway Authorities forming the CA area. While no changes are proposed to the way in which the three highway authorities manage the highway networks within the KRN, by adopting the principles of the KRN this will increase the opportunity to develop strategic approaches to the development of the routes, thus creating greater strength of need when considering future scheme development and securing of funding opportunities.

The GLCCA will be a member of Midlands Connect and a co-opted member of Transport for the North. This ensures that the GLCCA will be a key partner within both of these sub-national transport bodies to benefit from cross regional prioritisation of transport scheme development new funding opportunities.

The Deal made a specific commitment to establish a rural transport group to be chaired by the GL Mayor. The group is intended to champion innovation and work in partnership with the Department for Transport (DfT) to identify pilot projects to address rural connectivity and accessibility challenges.

Improving rural transport is integral to growth ambitions in Greater Lincolnshire. Work continues with DfT to develop opportunities. Work is underway to align the Demand Responsive Transport Systems for each of the constituent authority areas, with a procurement of the North Lincolnshire offer to be completed and aligned under the Lincolnshire Call Connect banner by the end of the summer and North East Lincolnshire in 2026.

4. RESOURCE AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Existing resources within the three constituent authorities are being used to establish advance the ambitions set out within the devolution deal for Greater Lincolnshire. This will transition into an interim structure once the authority is established.
- 4.2 As part of the readiness conditions, which are set by DfE, the employment and skills workstream must demonstrate that the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority is ready and able to manage the funding. This includes staffing, systems and processes that must be in place by March 2025 for Devolution of skills funding for academic year 26/27. Legal considerations are managed within the governance group for the devolution programme.

5. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES (INCLUDE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT IF RELEVANT)

- 5.1 The devolution programme continues to maintain a risk and issues log which is reviewed regularly with the relevant responsible officers. The individual capital projects each have appropriate risk management arrangements in place.

6. CONSULTATION/ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 Each workstream has included engagement with relevant stakeholders within their project plans. This has included the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Department of Education,

Department of Transport, and with Lincolnshire district councils, along with providers, employers and residents.

**7. GOVERNANCE – DECISION(S) FOR MEMBER COUNCIL’S REQUIRED
(in accordance with the Joint Committee’s Terms of Reference).**

7.1 See section 8 below.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that members note the progress to date on advancing the ambitions set out within the devolution deal which will be taken forward by the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority, once established.

Author: *Lee Sirdifield (LCC), Carolina Borgstrom (NELC), Damien Jaines-White (NELC) and Andy Gutherson (LCC)*

Date: *21 January 2025*

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report – *None.*