Explaining devolution for Greater Manchester

A communications guide

1. Sixty second introduction

Below is a quick elevator pitch for Greater Manchester devolution. It'll vary by audience of course, but might help as a couple of lines if you're ever put on the spot!

*"Greater Manchester's devolution deal will **bring power closer** to residents. It brings greater freedom and flexibility to reform services, build our local identity and help us become one of the best places in the world to live, work and learn.*

*"There'll be a new elected Mayor to act as **ambassador for the region** and **bring local people together.** The ten areas in Greater Manchester have come together as Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and, together with the Mayor and partners in the NHS, transport, police and fire, they will have **full control** over almost every aspect of spending – rather than things being decided in Westminster.*

*"This means **local people** now have **more say** on how money is spent locally and **can influence more.** And it means we can attract **more money for the area** and create better services. This will come through **creating savings** made through working together, using funds more effectively and being able to generate more **investment.***

*"The benefits are **already being seen in many communities,** with schemes that are creating new homes from empty houses and giving people the skills they need to get back into work. Devolution has brought things as wide ranging as new chartered flights to China and the creation of the Wythenshawe Interchange.*

*"As a whole, the GMCA **brings together the ten parts** of Greater Manchester and **makes us less reliant on Westminster.** It removes bureaucracy and accelerates the **story of Greater Manchester,** as we become a **modern, autonomous and networked city region.***"

2. Message house

The message house below is a starting point in promoting devolution for Greater Manchester. It doesn't affect the more generic, aspirational devolution messages, around democratic empowerment, service reform, geographical identity and economic growth. Rather it gives a set of more immediate things to emphasise and address when explaining devolution – before moving into the wider messages.

Greater Manchester working together

Clear	Tangible	Personally relevant
• **What's actually changed?** • **What can we control that we couldn't before?** • **Do we get more money?** • **How do I explain this to someone else?**	• **When is it happening? Has anything really changed yet?** • **How will it affect the area?** • **Will I really get more say and if so why?** • **How do I explain this to other people?**	• **Does it apply to my area?** • **What does it mean for my job / business / family?** • **When will I start to see this where I live?** • **Who can I talk to and what can I do to change it?**

3. Asking for feedback

To make sure devolution in Greater Manchester is the win for democracy that it deserves to be, it's vital that people get involved. Residents have a big role to play in stepping up and shaping the process. The first step is voting for a candidate in the Mayoral elections in May 2017. But even after this there will be plenty of opportunities for people to have their say – for instance, in consultations about future GMCA projects.

Below are some handy tips when talking to the people you represent, to encourage them to vote, get involved, provide feedback or have their say in other ways:

- Mention that others locally are getting involved - **"Most people on the street are stepping up"**

- Emphasise that residents' voices will make a real difference - **"GMCA is something new, so individual ideas can make all the difference"**

- Encourage people to plan when they'll vote, provide feedback or give their opinion - **"Do you think you'll have time to do it after you've eaten tonight?"**

- Make sure people have basic information, like e-addresses or venues - **if necessary write it down, and give your contact number in case they're having trouble**

- Encourage them to encourage others - **"Once you've had your say, don't forget to ask your neighbours to have theirs"**

- Thank them in advance - **"I'll be looking forward to seeing what people have to say..."**