
DEVOLUTION

OUR OFFER OF SUPPORT

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Devolution is fundamentally changing the way local decisions are made and how public services are funded. It provides greater freedoms and flexibilities at a local level, resulting in more effective, better targeted public services, greater growth and stronger partnerships between public, private and community leaders.

The Local Government Association (LGA) believes, it is councils, not Westminster, that are best placed to ensure positive outcomes for people in England. Therefore, helping councils to secure the benefits of devolution for their residents is one of the LGA's top priorities.

We have been central to making devolution happen locally, working closely with councils and combined authorities to develop their deals, broker new relationships and negotiate with Whitehall officials. In order to continue meeting the needs of local government as devolution gathers momentum we have developed a new package of support, shaped to reflect the key challenges councils have told us they are facing.

As each devolution deal agreed is as individual as the local area it transforms, there is no standard template to our offer, but tailored support can include:

- brokering and advice from experienced member and officer peers
- technical advice, for example on governance
- leadership support
- policy advice
- strategic advice for negotiations with government departments
- bespoke communications support
- specialist support to provide additional capacity and capability.

OUR OFFER TO COUNCILS

FOR ALL COUNCILS

We want to help councils at all stages of their devolution journey and offer a range of support, from advice and research to networking and events.

DEVONEXT HUB

Our DevoNext Hub has everything you need to know about devolution for local government, a 'one-stop-shop' for the latest learning and intelligence. As well as looking at what powers have already been devolved to councils it provides a range of useful online tools, including an exploration of the most effective methods for engaging communities and a new tax and spend tool to help areas make the case for devolution by providing an overview of local public expenditure and fiscal revenue.

Along with providing the latest research the Hub gives you the resources you need to make the case for devolution, including our 'Don't be left in the dark' guide, providing answers to some key questions and our popular 60-second explainer videos.

www.local.gov.uk/devolution

In addition our DevoNext campaign microsite asks 'What next for devolution?'

Join in the discussion at: devonext.org

DEVOLUTION NETWORK

Our devolution network is an opportunity for officers from councils working on, or interested in, devolution to share experiences and learning on a range of issues, from the tactics of negotiating with government, through to dealing with governance issues that arise in a combined authority. As a member, you will have the opportunity to meet others to discuss specific policy themes emerging from negotiations and deals. You will also receive regular updates summarising latest LGA activity, events and resources, plus useful articles and research.

The network is free to join for all council officers.

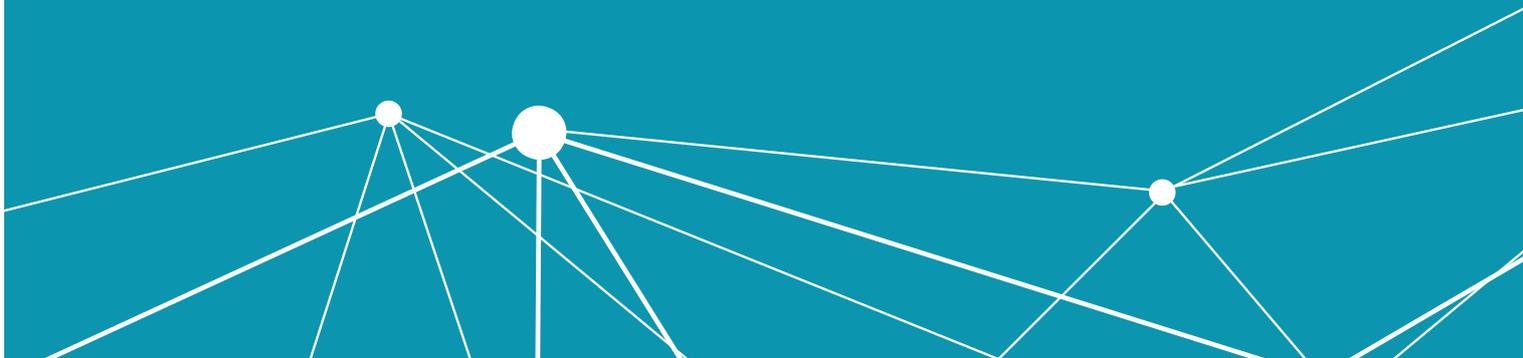
Please contact: localism@local.gov.uk

TAILORED SUPPORT AND ADVICE

For areas looking to make the case for a devolution deal we offer access to technical support to help develop a business case and financial modelling to support proposals, advice on developing a communications and influencing strategy, help with creating a devolution bid, and advice on what government is looking for from areas making a bid, as well as peer support and guidance from an area which has successfully secured a devolution deal.

EVENTS

Our devolution events have covered topics such as health, leadership, and communications and provide an opportunity for elected members, officers and partners from across local government to have both strategic and practically focussed conversations, to share learning and to influence the wider agenda. Past presentations and our supporting explainer films can be found on the DevoNext Hub.



FOR COUNCILS WITH DEVOLUTION DEALS

Areas that have secured deals will be facing a new set of challenges and opportunities. We are committed to helping councils and combined authorities implement their deals as effectively as possible and supporting areas to negotiate subsequent deals with government, to secure the best outcomes for their communities.

Designed to support the unique circumstances of individual combined authorities and devolution areas, and resourced by the LGA, we offer areas a bespoke package of support that could, for instance, include:

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

There can be challenges in engaging all members and in supporting leaders and mayors who will be working together in combined authorities. We are keen to work with councils, to ensure that political change is supported.

We have dedicated capacity to 'join up' conversations and policy work streams locally, ensuring the creation of a long term vision and practical implementation are entwined, helping to drive the local public service reform agenda.

Additionally, we can act as a broker between differing parts of the sector and encourage good relationships between combined authority mayors and other leaders.

We have a tailored programme of support for mayoral candidates in advance of the May 2017 elections.

PEER SUPPORT FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Our member peers have been working behind the scenes with councils developing new relationships together in order to further local aspirations for devolution. We have a strong record of sector-led improvement through peer support and mentoring. This is something that we will continue across combined authorities as they develop and as new ways of working are embedded.

MANAGEMENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Working across combined authorities brings new challenges and opportunities for employees. Building on existing support from the LGA workforce team we are refining our offer to support transformational change across combined authorities and devolution areas, including management development and workforce skills, such as resilience.

COMBINED AUTHORITIES' CHIEF EXECUTIVE NETWORK

The combined authorities' chief executive network provides an invaluable opportunity for chief executives and chief officers to share learning and experiences, have space to discuss practical challenges and focus collectively on some of the key areas of policy development emerging within combined authorities and devolution deal areas. The network also helps to shape our support offer, ensuring that it not only adds capacity but is invaluable locally.

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN DEVOLUTION

We recognise the importance of ensuring local residents, communities, partners and businesses are engaged fully in the devolution agenda and can support areas to develop their approach to civic engagement.

TRANSFORMATION AND SPECIALIST SUPPORT

We are working jointly with Local Partnerships, the company we co-own with Her Majesty's Treasury, to deliver our devolution support programme. Local Partnerships have a strong record of supporting councils to: shape their combined authority bids, realise housing ambitions, redesign services to release multi-million pound savings, develop integrated health and social care services and provide practical support with the completion of assurance frameworks.

Local Partnerships can also provide specialist support in business case development, housing and economic development, transport, infrastructure and planning and can offer additional capacity to help councils realise their strategic ambitions.

localpartnerships.org.uk

DEVOLUTION COMMUNICATIONS

In circumstances where a devolution deal has been agreed in principle but is yet to be enacted, we can provide:

- an overall review of current communications capacity and capability
- peer support from an area with a devolution deal
- advice on appropriate structure
- resources for devolution communications
- support to help develop a compelling narrative.

Areas with devolution deals already in place can also benefit from an in-depth, strategic review of their progress to date, including a review of the current communication strategy, function and narrative, research into local perceptions about devolution and recommendations for the future.

www.local.gov.uk/devolution-communications

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

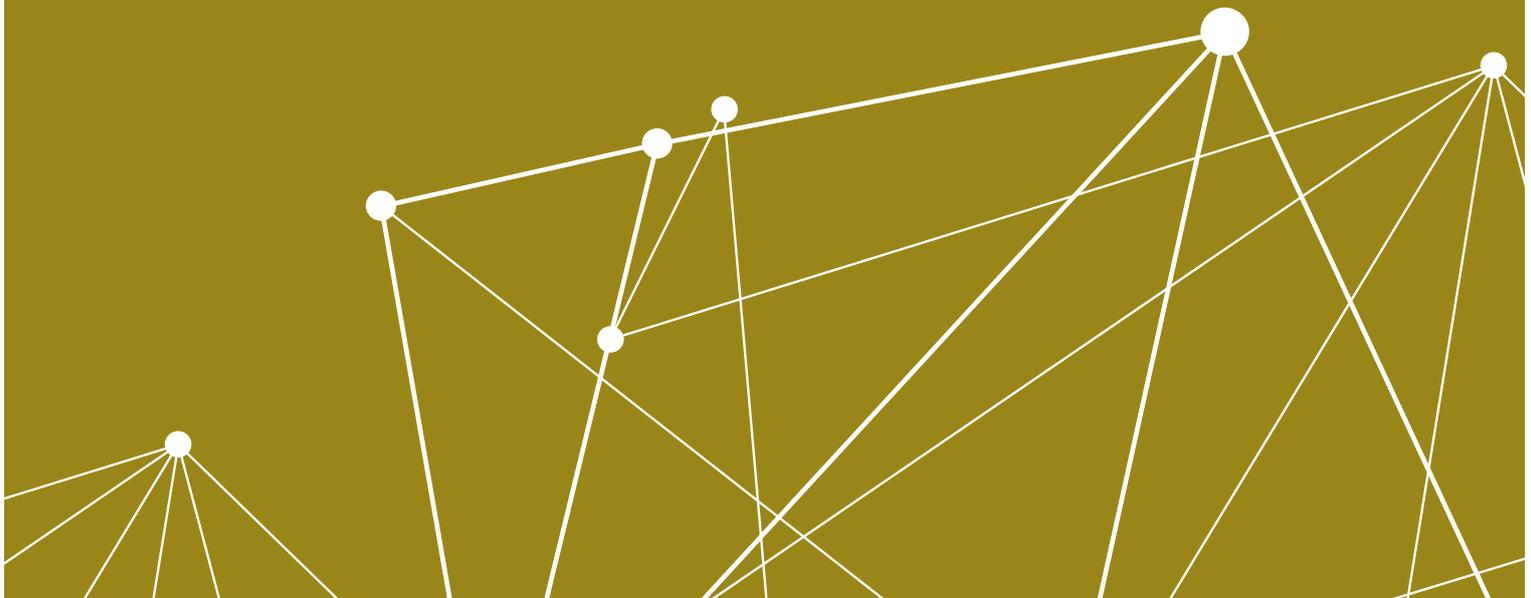
It is likely that combined authorities and devolution areas will need to develop an approach to benchmarking and evaluation of impact to support self-improvement. We can help with the development of effective combined authority performance management frameworks.

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY

We are working with the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) to support devolution deal areas to develop robust governance and overview and scrutiny arrangements within their combined authority.

www.cfps.org.uk/how-we-help/devolution-governance-and-scrutiny

If there are other areas we could assist with, please get in touch.



HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

To find out more about our services or to discuss any support you may need, please contact your principal adviser.

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