

Spotlight

THE NORTHERN POWERHOUSE: BACK ON TRACK

Jim O'Neill / Caroline Flint MP / Ben Houchen / Diana Johnson MP



twists and turns. Because why go in straight lines from A to B when into the great unknown. Because whatever you find around away from normal long ago. We're first direct bank and you can change direction whenever you fancy. Changing jobs, changing countries, that next corner, we'll be ready to help. A bank with no branches because you're a long way from ordinary. changing where you're heading entirely. Forget knowing what we don't know where you're going. A bank online 24/7/365 the next corner? When you've waved goodbye to five year plans and said hello to you'll be doing this time next week, let alone next year and take a giant leap because we don't know when you'll need us next. A bank that turned

first direct bank

Shortly after Theresa May appointed Andrew Percy as Minister for the Northern Powerhouse in July 2016, Percy called the architect of the policy, Jim O'Neill, to ask his advice. "He was supposed to be going up North to talk in a number of cities," O'Neill recalls, "and Number 10 had told him, the day before he was due to go, that he couldn't use the phrase 'Northern Powerhouse'. So he called me up to say, 'what should I do?' And I said, 'maybe you should get a new job, mate'... jokingly." However friendly the remark might have been, O'Neill found himself at odds with May's chiefs of staff, Nick Timothy and Fiona Hill, who he said "tried to kill" the Northern Powerhouse project. He resigned from the Treasury two months later.

That O'Neill was the first of May's ministers to leave should have been an omen for the new PM; the former Goldman Sachs chief economist has long been valued as an expert in recognising where things are headed. In 2001 he famously predicted that the "BRIC" (Brazil, Russia, India, China) countries would overtake the leading Western economies in 30 years. The insight was only strengthened by the global financial crisis – in 2010, the *Financial Times* reported that "during the great re-reckoning, the Brics concept has flourished". In 2011, as the Greek debt crisis began to pull at the seams of the Eurozone, O'Neill pointed out that China's growth produced "the equivalent of another Greece every 12.5 weeks". More recently, his favourite fact is that "Germany's number one trading partner is now China; Germany exports more to China than it does to Italy."

In person O'Neill is amiable and frank, his manner still more Wythenshawe than Wall Street. "I should blinkin' hope so," he replies when told that councillors in the North credit him with doing more for the Northern Powerhouse than Jeremy Corbyn or Theresa May, "Seeing as it's my baby. My idea."

"The very first spark of it in my head," he says, happened when O'Neill was chairing a meeting of the Cities Growth Commission in Manchester, early in



The economics of the new North

Former Goldman Sachs chief economist and Treasury minister **Jim O'Neill** was the author of the Northern Powerhouse policy. He spoke to Will Dunn

2014. A Mancunian and proud United fan, O'Neill noticed "a few Liverpoolian voices in the audience... I thought to myself, here are these great rival places, 38 miles apart, and slowly, over time, they're creeping together. You have people in a Manchester audience with Liverpool accents. That didn't happen when I was a kid, all we ever did was fight." As a representative from Peel Ports, a business involved in both cities, began to speak, O'Neill thought about combined power. "And I said, 'what do you think about the idea of ManPool?'"

What may have sounded like an off-the-cuff remark – "I could see [Manchester councillors] Richard Leese and Howard Bernstein thinking, what's he on about?" – was an observation in line with O'Neill's earlier economics. Just as he had identified in the BRIC countries large populations, economic potential and the political will for growth, O'Neill saw "that within a 40-mile radius of Manchester [an area he upgraded to 'ManShefLeedsPool'], you've got eight million people. And if you can create essentially a single market, you've got a game-changer, because you've got something, along with London, that registers on the global stage."

How does an economist like O'Neill predict where growth will occur in the north of England? One powerful indicator is PMI – the Purchasing Managers Index, a monthly survey of business activity. "In terms of cyclical momentum," he explains, "I've believed for decades that the national PMI is the best monthly indicator of what's actually going on in the UK. Ever since I've been in government, I've tried to focus on [regional PMIs] as a high-frequency indicator of what's actually going on in the country." These regional PMIs are important to the North because they indicate where business is picking up, and so far that's happening in one area in particular. "For the past two years, the North West has been outperforming London" in terms of PMI growth. The most recent PMIs show a 40-month high for the North West, "easily the strongest



O'Neill says the North East is "on the verge of an improving moment"

in the country".

O'Neill admits he's "not sure" what is driving this growth. "But I suspect it's something to do with Greater Manchester's leadership, and Greater Manchester being at the geographic centre of this Northern Powerhouse thing. It's supported by some other bits of data that are available," he adds, pointing to house price trends and employment indicators in the North West.

With no seat to defend or party to appease, O'Neill is free to acknowledge bluntly the North West's large population and closely situated cities as the factors that matter to an economist looking at the north of England. "The guys in the North East get very upset when I repeatedly say that. It

implies that they're not part of it. Socially and politically and human-wise," he concedes, "it has to involve all the North, but I love to emphasise to people – don't forget, from a policy perspective, that [the economic power of the North West] is the only thing that makes it of interest."

All the same, O'Neill has an encouraging prediction. "I feel that the North East might be on the verge of an improving moment," he says. "I smell an opportunity." Alongside pockets of growth and burgeoning industries growing from technological development, O'Neill says the North East will "see devolution working in places like Manchester and Birmingham," and get past "all this nonsense in Yorkshire and the North-East about fighting with each other and not wanting a mayor".

In 2001, opponents of O'Neill's BRIC theory said it was unworkable because the distances between the countries would prevent them working as a bloc. O'Neill's insight was that in a truly global economy, what counted was how close they were in economy and population size. The distance between

Manchester is outperforming London

“We should have a minister for China, and a minister for India”



Manchester has many connections with China

Liverpool and Newcastle, then, is not nearly as important as how they act – especially if their businesses are, as he strongly recommends, seeking to trade with India and China.

“Germany is the classic example, contrary to standard international trade theory about how distance is so important. Certain German cities have been transformed – Hamburg, and to some degree Munich, function indirectly off China. Hamburg because of its port, and Munich because of Siemens and BMW.”

O’Neill says trade with the world’s two billion-plus nations is so important that it should be recognised in the structure of our government. “We should have a Minister for China, a Minister for India, so that we’re being serious about trying to get close to what Germany has done.” The current government’s approach to these huge markets he describes as “mucking about with the occasional visit, and Boris and his mates going off to New Zealand every other month.”

This, he says, is “particularly important from a Northern Powerhouse perspective. Because the Chinese, as a single-party state, like nothing better than trying to shift growth around the country. They’ve spent the last decade deliberately shifting growth from the coast inland. The Chinese really get it.”

For O’Neill, the fact that China is the

largest totalitarian state the world has ever seen is not particularly relevant to whether the UK should try to establish firmer economic ties. “As a human being,” he acknowledges, “I am very happy that I’ve been raised in Britain, with the values that we have. But if you want to be successful in international trade, you can’t be dictatorial about how the world should be.” The UK can hardly wag its finger at China, he says, while it makes billions from arms deals with repressive regimes such as Saudi Arabia.

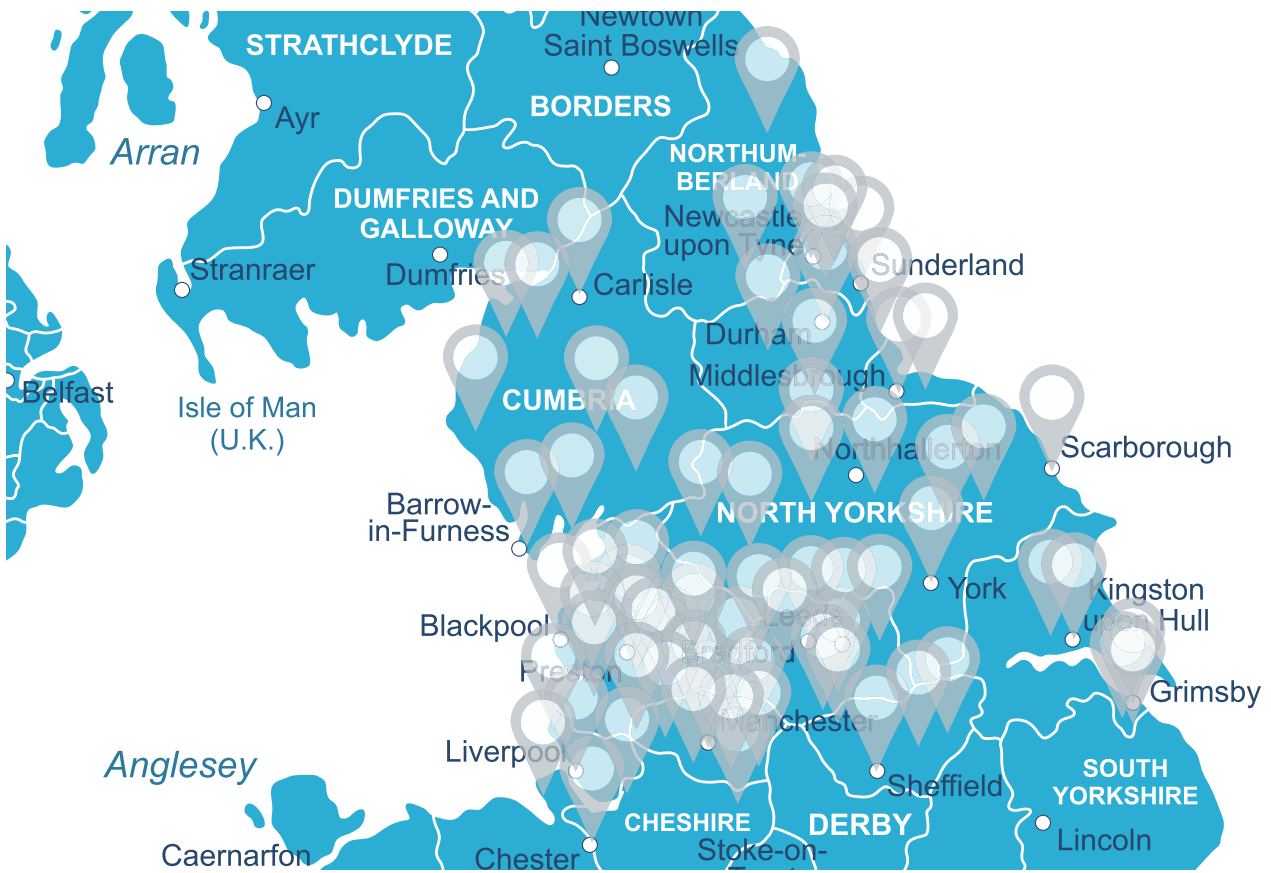
Encouraging international trade is more important to the economy than ever in the light of the decision, opposed by O’Neill and 80 per cent of the government he worked for in 2016, to leave the EU. Many Remainers, he says, “argue that trade policy is an end in itself. But what we need to focus on is trade policy as part of an overall economic policy. It is clear that in many parts of the country, the way that global economic development has gone in the last 30 years, a lot of people don’t feel like they’ve benefited, whether that’s true or not. And it’s clear, if you look at how trade has evolved, that certain communities have suffered.”

Had this been taken into account earlier, 2016 may have been a very different year. O’Neill describes meeting his then-boss, George Osborne, on the morning that David Cameron resigned. “I said to George, the day after the referendum - if somebody had started this [the Northern Powerhouse] five years earlier, we might have voted to stay in.”

O’Neill, who has described himself as a “dispassionate”, calls the current Brexit debate “staggeringly emotional”, and it is his attitude to Brexit that gives the clearest picture of how he thinks about economics. For him, the decision is made, and time spent arguing about it is time that could be better spent figuring out where growth and profit are likely to occur as a result. “One of the few things I learnt in 30 years in finance,” he concludes, “is to never let a crisis go to waste.”

What does local government think about the Northern Powerhouse?

In the biggest survey of local government so far on the subject, *Spotlight* asked every councillor in the North about the spending and policy that would make a difference to them



SHUTTERSTOCK/DIKOBRAZY; REPORTING BY JONNY BALL

84% of respondents said Brexit was getting in the way of key domestic issues like the Powerhouse.

57% cited transport as "extremely important" to the Northern Powerhouse agenda, the highest proportion of any of the options presented, including skills and employment.

68.1% saw cuts to local authority budgets as a barrier to the realisation of the Northern Powerhouse's aims.

AUSTERITY

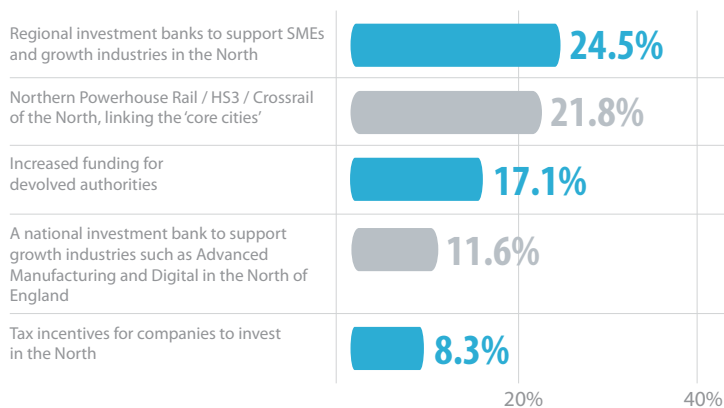
69% of Conservative councillors say their council is underfunded by central government.

DELIVERY

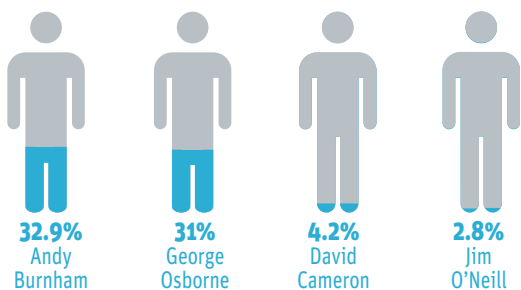
5% believed that sufficient progress has been made on the Northern Powerhouse agenda in three years.

COMMITMENT **34.7%** said that under the current government, the idea of a Northern Powerhouse is just empty rhetoric.

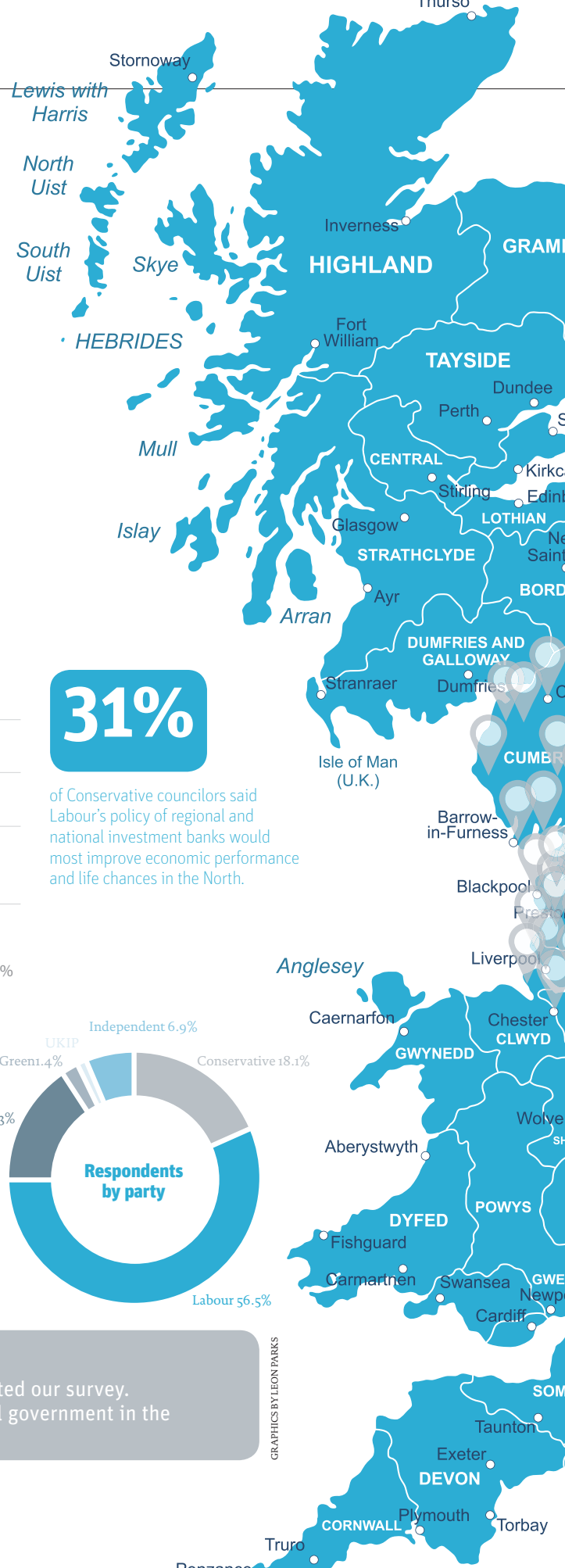
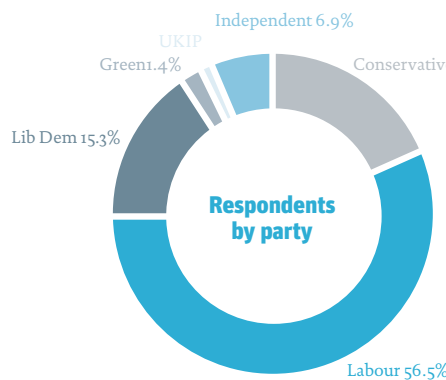
Which policy would offer the most to the North?



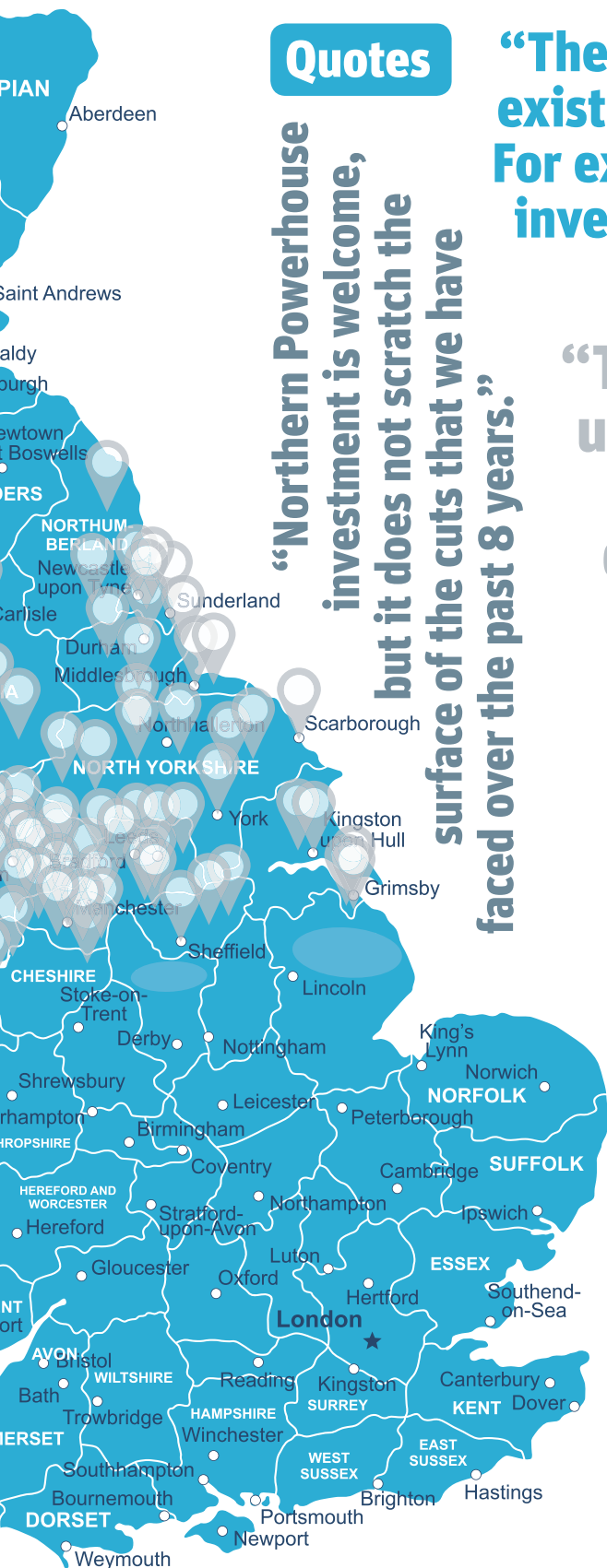
Who has done the most for the Northern Powerhouse so far?



...and one respondent said Theresa May.



About our respondents
 A total of **218 councillors** from **83 different councils** completed our survey. Between them these respondents cover **almost 20%** of local government in the North, representing over **13 million people**.



Quotes

“Northern Powerhouse investment is welcome, but it does not scratch the surface of the cuts that we have faced over the past 8 years.”

“The Northern Powerhouse does not exist north of Leeds and Manchester. For example, the lack of rail and road investment in Cumbria is a massive deterrent to business.”

“The Northern Powerhouse is understood well within both the regions that have devolved power and those that wish to have it. The government, however, simply does not ‘get’ the North... Its lack of vision and understanding is patronising at best, and, at worst, threatens to scupper the whole project.”

“It is an ideal opportunity to move the government up North whilst the Houses of Parliament/ Westminster Palace are being repaired and upgraded... demonstrating a true commitment to the concept of devolution.”

The foundations are laid – it's time for action

Devolution, industrial strategy and funding are creating possibilities, so it's time to focus on delivery, writes **Ian Liddell**, managing director, planning and advisory at engineering and professional services firm WSP



The most important question we can ask now about the Northern Powerhouse is what's deliverable, and how. Deliverability is key because so much of the groundwork has now been done, and done well. Policy frameworks and governance are in place, metro mayors have arrived, and Transport for the North (TfN) has set out its vision. A lot of the funding has been signed off, in principle. The important thing now is to go from this stage to making things really happen.

Our success at WSP is fundamentally linked to the success of the Northern Powerhouse project. We share the same challenges in skills, and we're thinking in the same time scales as TfN – with whom we're working on two Strategic Development Corridors studies. We welcome TfN's long-term vision and desire to engage all key stakeholders in the process, including the private sector. Because the private sector, and private funding, will be key in terms of delivery.

If you look at how devolution has

worked in London, there are good examples of investment going in at an early stage to bring forward development. But these are smaller, simpler cases – not only does the North have roughly twice as many people as London, it's geographically much bigger and more diverse in many ways. Perhaps the best example, then, is one that hasn't worked out as planned – the Thames Gateway. This area shares a lot with the North – it's multi-authority, part industrial, part urban, part rural, and divided by a natural barrier (the Thames), so it needs strategic connections. The great plans for the Thames Gateway haven't materialised yet and it is key to learn from this experience. That's why delivery, tangible outcomes, should be the focus of conversation about the Northern Powerhouse today.

We need people with the skills to deliver on the Northern Powerhouse vision. People who can make business cases and strategic analysis, obtain planning consent, who can design and

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





build. And the North has competitive advantages to offer these people. It has affordable housing, great universities and research institutions. Its tech and innovation startup ecosystem is blossoming, and it has a strong engineering base. WSP has almost 2,000 people in the North, and 10 per cent are graduates. We are determined to involve them in designing the future of the places where they live, work and play, and enjoy the energy, opportunity and quality of life the North has to offer.

It's also important to recognise that skills and mobility are linked. If you have a great skills base in Sheffield but they can't travel to Manchester, they'll stay in Sheffield. One of our challenges over the years was that we had offices in Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool and elsewhere that were self-contained. It's really helped us as a business to have those offices working together. This is partly about travel time and partly about digital connections. It's a microcosm of the Northern Powerhouse. For that

reason we're combining our three Manchester offices this year, not simply because it makes economic sense but because to address the challenges in the North, you need greater collaboration between the different sectors. So by getting people into the same place, we're increasing their productivity, their creativity, and their collaboration. That's a big part of our vision for the North – a greater integration of different skill-sets and people.

Our vision for the North is also about making it future ready. When thinking as far ahead as 2050 – and beyond – we have to anticipate how technological change is going to play out. Renewable energy, digital communication, autonomous vehicles and other innovations require us to think about where and how economic growth and demographic change will happen. These are the kinds of things we're working on in the Strategic Development Corridor studies that we're doing for TfN at the moment, to set out the long-term requirements. It seems obvious, but many people forget that infrastructure takes a long time to deliver. Major infrastructure projects are multi-decade. And while the opening date might be 15-20 years in the future, that's only the opening date; it needs to be fit for many decades of use after that.

The challenges, too, can show us how best to plan for the North. Political risk will now show itself not so much in terms of policy but in funding. It's the government funding and de-risking of projects by the public sector that then attracts private sector funding. To safeguard this, it's important to understand the benefits first. In our work on HS2, we witnessed the difference an assessment of the wider economic benefits and a focused engagement and communications drive made to the project. Clearly, to have holistic decision-making, these more widespread, long-term effects need to be thought about from the start, and we welcome that this is the approach taken by TfN.

Devolution has already made a huge difference in terms of taking away some

of the uncertainties that cities in particular have had, through their dependence for funding on central government. Their planning powers, the powers they have to raise and retain funding, have made a big difference in helping them to plan for the longer term. Importantly, it has also helped with the narrative setting. There's still more to be done in terms of the geographical roll-out of devolution. And it should be kept under review whether further devolution of statutory functions such as planning and funding should happen – it may well be a benefit, but we can use the piecemeal nature of devolution to see how this kind of development works out in practice.

The industrial strategy, the clean growth plan and the 25-year environment plan will also make a difference. I welcome the construction sector deal for as a key component as industry gears for delivery. With different parts of the country being tilted towards different sectors, it's crucial to ensure that they're connected, for a country that works cohesively and attracts investment from around the world.

Simply by identifying the region as a "powerhouse", too, the government has already gone some way towards making the region globally relevant for investment from abroad after Brexit, and we hope to be able to continue helping local authorities turn that attractiveness into real investment.

The North has not been politically united since Roman times. There's a temptation to think that because devolution has happened, it is united now, but we recognise – because we work in different areas across the North – that it's still a political and cultural patchwork. Infrastructure can connect communities into a cohesive whole, without forcing them to lose their identity. I am confident that the successful delivery of future ready infrastructure in the North, will help Britain stay attractive and prosperous well into the 21st century, and look forward to WSP playing its part in this dynamic journey from plans to reality.

**Co-chair of the Northern Powerhouse APPG and MP for Don Valley
Caroline Flint looks at where the policy and the region it supports are headed**

Where now for the Northern Powerhouse?



The starting point for any debate on the Northern Powerhouse is: what is it? Is it an idea? Was it just George Osborne's attempt to show the Tories cared about the North? Is it a chance to rebrand the North's major cities? Is it about bringing the North's leading politicians and industrialists together to help rebalance the United Kingdom's economy?

The answers are yes, yes, possibly and yes. Those answers are not self-evident – so let me elaborate. The idea of a Northern Powerhouse is credited now, to Lord Jim O'Neill, who chaired the City Growth Commission, a body of work commissioned by the RSA. O'Neill saw value in joining the economies of Manchester and Liverpool to add value to the North's overall economic effort.

In June 2014, Osborne counter-posed the fact that London dominates the UK economy with the need for a Northern

Powerhouse. He cited transport, science and innovation, creative clusters, and devolution to local areas as key themes. Osborne later pledged that £7bn was being committed to this idea.

While, yes, this was a clear Tory pitch to the North (a general election was a year away), there was an idea here to build on. After all, under the Labour government the northern cities had seen a renaissance, economically and culturally. But even 13 years of Labour investment hadn't finished the job. In particular, putting new heart into small towns and the rural North; improving connectivity from rail services to broadband; upgrading the skills of the workforce; there was much to do.

With the Conservative Party's re-election in 2015 and, stutteringly, in 2017, the devolution game was in full swing. Most councils had been through hard



times. Northern leaders had seen the London Olympics, Crossrail, Heathrow expansion looming, and plans for HS2 to start construction from the South. They were hungry for the North to share in this renewal.

There is an appetite for devolution; and the government has begun the process, starting with city mayors. Now the likes of Liverpool and Manchester have elected mayors and new funds to deploy. So while some northern cities have

We must work beyond party divides

SHUTTERSTOCK/DAVIDGRAHAM86

the possibility to rebrand and promote themselves, the rest of the North may soon be playing catch up.

I have family as far north as Teesside and Kendal, so I'm not one who believes that Manchester equals the North. Darlington, Newcastle, Workington, Carlisle, Blackpool, Northallerton, Scarborough, Hull and much beyond are also in need of attention. So much of the North barely gets a mention. Yet the Northern Powerhouse will seek to influence the everyday lives of some 15m Northerners.

In truth, our northern cities and the industrial heartlands that surround them have huge amounts in common. Whether coal, steel, chemicals or ports – they were the engine of Britain; but they all need new purpose in the 21st century. Many experience low skill levels, a brain drain and low historic private investment.

What does this demand of the North's political leaders? First, they must see the common threads and make the big argument over the parochial. They must agree what investment is needed to improve skills, connect communities; and to attract innovative companies.

Secondly, political leaders – locally, regionally and nationally – have a duty to work together. We need to make common cause for the North, across party divides, and do so without delay.

This is one of the roles of the Northern Powerhouse All Party Parliamentary Group. Most of the political players in the North are Labour voices. But, for the time being, the government isn't; and the North needs to build a consensus for strategic investment in the North.

Recently, summing up at the Northern Powerhouse Education and Skills Conference, Jim O'Neill, vice-chair of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, argued the North had to stop acting like a victim, and make a positive case.

One example of a positive case is the Great Exhibition of the North in Newcastle and Gateshead opening in June; a showcase for 3m visitors to experience not just the North's great history, but tomorrow's innovation and

design. It is a celebration of the past and the future. I used to worry that the first regeneration step every great industry and town took was to create a museum. The industry may have died; but the waxworks remained. The North cannot look back. It must move forward.

The Northern Powerhouse APPG is a cross-party group, but several key priorities have emerged:

Attainment

The Northern Powerhouse Partnership's recent report on raising education and skills made the case for £130m more to ensure children in the North achieve their potential.

Connectivity

In the last ten years the two big UK infrastructure investments have been HS2 and Crossrail. We believe HS3 – a high-speed Liverpool to Hull service should be built in parallel with HS2. Presently, that journey takes, without delays, around three hours. We believe the journey should be halved.

Likewise, there is a positive economic benefit to be gained from a 60-minute Newcastle to Leeds service; and for the route to Carlisle to see investment too.

Technology

We need investment in tomorrow's technologies. The pace of broadband rollout, vital for small and growing businesses, has been painfully slow, never reaching some outlying communities. For most, fibre to home super-fast broadband is years away.

Advanced manufacturing will give new impetus to our lean, efficient steel and manufacturing industries. And moving forward with carbon capture is vital not just for UK emissions, but for major industrial sites like Teesside, where CCS plans could be delivered by the mid-2020s.

The North has a huge future, but we need to earn it, working together beyond party divides. Failure to do so will mean that the North will remain the South's poor neighbour.

Cotton comes home to the North



Three decades after the cotton trade disappeared from the UK, a mill is up and running again in Greater Manchester.

Augusta Riddy visits Tower Mill

The small town of Dunkinfield is built on the south bank of the River Tame in Cheshire, a few miles outside of Manchester. It faces Ashton-under-Lyne on the north bank and the neighbouring county of Lancashire. Tower Mill, built at the end of the 19th century, towers over the terraced housing that lines Park Road and the streets that stretch away from it. At the time it was built, the town was home to 14 operating cotton mills.

The Greater Manchester area – previously known as “Cottonopolis” – is the historical home of cotton spinning: in 1900, 80 per cent of cotton throughout the world was produced within 20 miles of Manchester. Cotton spinning caught the cultural imagination; novels such as *North and South* by Elizabeth Gaskell depicted harsh working conditions in the northern mills, the air thick with lethal white fluff and child labourers scabbling beneath dangerous machines. The last British mill stopped spinning in the 1980s, putting an end to a slow and steady decline that had begun in the early 20th century, when countries like India and Japan began producing

cotton on an industrial scale.

Thought never to return, spinning was consigned to Britain’s manufacturing history; another trade from our industrial past which was simply snuffed out, to the extreme detriment of millions of workers and hundreds of towns like Dunkinfield. So final was its end that the return of cotton spinning with English Fine Cottons is a highly unlikely revival.

English Fine Cottons describes the mill as the most technologically advanced in the world, and claims that the purity of the product makes it some of the finest cotton in the world. Machines execute every step in the process, and workers respond to them when a flashing red light signals an issue, as well as wheeling giant barrels of cotton and discarded piles of cloud-like substance around the mill. The raw cotton – from California – is cut and picked to make one mass. It is processed through a series of large mechanical vats to extract any impurities, making the long cords of cotton softer and softer to touch until it’s ready to be spun. It’s spun into gradually finer strands, from



the recognisable bobbins to cones. The whole place is loud – ear plugs are worn – and hot, like a greenhouse.

The plant is gradually tamed as it makes its way up through the mill until it reaches the top floor. Huge continuous rows of spinning machines stretch the length of the Victorian building. Bobbins are everywhere, crowding the view. Through them it is possible to catch glimpses of an employee, darting from one row to the other. Upon close inspection, it's possible to see the tiny strands of cotton spinning around the machine.

English Fine Cottons, owned by synthetic materials producer Culimeta-

“What I am today is down to the cotton industry”

ENGLISH FINE COTTONS

Saveguard Ltd, received investment from the Textile Growth Fund in 2015, an EU fund aimed at bringing textile production back to the UK. When the mill opened, senior management expected and hoped the company to have 10-15 customers on its books buying its products, but have been shocked to receive something like 20 enquiries a week. “We’re quietly confident of success and we’ve already started reinvesting in more machinery,” says general manager Andy Ogden. When the company “fully matures” in five years, it expects to be employing 80 people and making a profit of between £5-10m.

So what changed in the international market to allow the UK back into this industry? “Nothing,” Ogden replies bluntly. “It could have happened in the UK all the way through that period.” He points out that Italy, Germany, and Portugal have never lost their spinning. The cotton mills in the UK were owned by conglomerated as opposed to family-owned companies, who had few qualms about pulling out when the going got tough. While cotton was dying in the UK, other European countries were adapting, and targeting the luxury market. “They moved into markets that were more suited to their textile industries. We really didn’t do that.”

English Fine Cottons aren’t trying to play the likes of India at their own game, but are producing high-end cotton that can be bought in small amounts – a possibility when you don’t need to ship. “It’s a quality, luxurious product; it’s a heritage product; it’s an heirloom product.” As such its competition is predominantly European. Bespoke, “Made in Britain” products are more fashionable than ever, and Ogden believes it is only right that Britain is producing its own cotton once again. “Jermyn Street is known as the shirt maker of the world, [but] it’s not British shirting.”

So what does this signify about British manufacturing in general? Ogden is emphatic about the ability of the UK to

produce. “We are a country of doers. Why can’t we do it? Why can’t we make this work? ... [With] investment in machinery, staffing and training we can be the best manufacturers in the world.” In the past, have politicians and companies given up too quickly? “In pockets, every government has supported some part of manufacturing. The one area that we saw that hadn’t been until very recently focused on is the essential industries [including textiles]. If Brexit meant that we couldn’t buy any imports, how are we going to clothe ourselves?”

While the return of cotton spinning is creating revenue and jobs for the local area – almost 50 per cent of the mill’s staff walk to work – the historical and cultural significance of the industry also makes the revival emotive. Manhar Agraval is the mill’s spinning manager, and he worked in cotton spinning before it disappeared 30 years ago. Did he ever think it would come back? “No. A lot of people I meet say they never thought that it’s going to come back again.” For Agraval, cotton is personal. “What I am today is all down to the cotton industry.”

Ogden sees the return as symbolic of northern potential. “The ingenuity of the North, the drive, the passion, the dogged sheer determination is something that I’m very proud of.” Is English Fine Cottons part of the Northern Powerhouse? He cites a chain of locally owned companies through which the life cycle of a cotton product can be traced, beginning with the mill. “A network of partner businesses that are all working together to generate something that’s got value and quality, that stays within the region. That’s the Northern Powerhouse.”

Looking out from the top of the mill through the snow, it’s possible to make out bursts of smoke rising from industrial buildings stretching into the distance until the Pennines emerge as a wall. It’s a scene straight out of a Lowry painting. With the whir of cotton spinners behind, it feels like the industrial North has been resurrected.

Full speed ahead!

Full fibre broadband access is crucial to the success of the Northern Powerhouse, says **Mark Collins**, director of strategy and public affairs at CityFibre



Widely acknowledged as the connectivity “gold-standard”, full fibre represents more than an incremental digital infrastructure upgrade. Forward thinking towns and cities the world over have seen a step change in productivity and an increase in economic growth and innovation. From efficiency gains in business and the delivery of public sector services, to the birth of smart city and IoT applications, full fibre is a platform no nation can afford to ignore.

Despite having been long recognised as the only digital infrastructure platform capable of underpinning modern economies in a digital age, the role “full fibre” networks would play in the UK market has, until only recently, remained uncertain.

With Openreach determined to squeeze every last drop of value from its legacy copper infrastructure and no meaningful competition to scare it into action, the UK has slipped further and further behind other nations as they have invested the time, effort and substantial capital into full fibre rollouts. The UK currently languishes at less than three per cent full fibre coverage

while countries like Spain, Portugal and Lithuania are approaching or have exceeded 80 per cent.

But our position at the back of the pack is about to change, and with it the realisation of a full fibre future for the UK. In November last year, CityFibre entered into a strategic partnership with Vodafone, one of Europe’s most successful full fibre ISPs. The agreement set out a framework by which CityFibre could commence a full fibre rollout to up to five million homes and businesses by 2025, 50 per cent of the UK government’s target.

As imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, CityFibre was delighted when in early February, BT Openreach responded to our plans with an announcement of its own. At last the prospect of sitting back and losing market share had become palpable and BT Openreach had decided to make its own commitment to a three million home rollout.

With nearly 30m homes in the UK, however, it is evident that achieving critical national full fibre coverage is a job too large for the incumbent alone. It will require a new generation of

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

CityFibre



infrastructure builders, unencumbered by inefficient legacy copper assets and incremental revenue-dependent investment, who are best able to deliver faster and at a lower cost to the consumer.

The industry, Ofcom and government have a responsibility to the UK, a responsibility to deliver full fibre connectivity to the maximum possible number of premises in the shortest possible time and at the best possible value. To achieve this, and unlock the full potential of fit-for-purpose digital infrastructure, we require fresh thinking and a collaborative approach.

While the shared ambition may be national coverage, it is crucial to

The Northern Powerhouse must be built on full fibre

recognise the role of local government and communities in supporting it. Through its “full fibre and 5G” policy announced by the Chancellor in the 2016 Autumn Statement, Westminster has allocated £1.1bn of funding to stimulate and support private sector investment in our digital infrastructure. £200m of this funding has now been earmarked for the “Local Full Fibre Networks” (LFFN) programme, which aims to enable local public sector bodies to lead deployment of full fibre in their area.

CityFibre has worked closely with officials at the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport over the past six months to advise them on how to ensure LFFN funding is distributed in a way that maximises both the public money available and the opportunity for the towns and cities in question, and that it ultimately supports widespread deployment across the country.

Public sector estates, including local government buildings (council buildings, libraries and museums), education (schools, colleges and universities), health (hospitals and GPs surgeries), social housing and street access (CCTV, public Wi-Fi, traffic

management, information boards), are typically widely and evenly spread across towns and cities. Each one of these sites is increasingly bandwidth hungry. By aggregating this demand and accessing LFFN funds, local authorities have the power to anchor the creation of local ‘spine’ networks, the most effective enabling infrastructure for roll-outs of fibre to every home and business and the support of next generation 5G mobile networks.

Our towns and cities are no longer disenfranchised when it comes to securing the best digital outcomes at a local level. Coupled with the support of local business and community groups, local authorities are now in a position to influence the prioritisation of their town or city in a national roll-out. At a regional level, even more can be done.

The Northern Powerhouse represents a huge opportunity for the economic engine of the North to further catalyse its progress and ensure a prompt and extensive full fibre deployment. In research commissioned by CityFibre and undertaken by Regneris, we have identified potential productivity gains from a full fibre in the Northern Powerhouse of up to £929m, an innovation stimulus of £992m and smart city benefits of over £1.7bn. By some measures these are cautious estimates; a “Fibre to the Home Council” economic impact study, when applied to the towns and cities of the Northern Powerhouse, indicates a potential £3.5bn GVA impact per annum.

While no economic projection can be truly relied on, what is inescapable is that full fibre infrastructure is the platform on which the Northern Powerhouse, and the UK as a whole, should be building itself in the years to come. With nearly 1500km of duct and fibre network across thirteen towns and cities in the Northern Powerhouse, CityFibre is already ushering in the region’s full fibre future. We urge all those keen to support it, to collaborate and ensure it unleashes its full potential. Full speed ahead!

Driving growth in the Northern Powerhouse

Duncan Brown, senior economist at EMSI, explains why understanding local growth is the first step to creating it

Whenever we are faced with big challenges and need to make important decisions, one of the key factors that determines our success is the level of knowledge we have about the nature of our challenge. Although it is possible to have sound insight and still make a wrong decision, making decisions without the facts, or with flawed facts, means we're really relying on good luck to pull us through.

This principle very much applies when it comes to putting in place measures designed to grow a local or regional economy. If you don't first understand which sectors have been driving growth, and which sectors look set to continue driving growth for the foreseeable future, how can you create a robust strategy to underpin future development, or know which opportunities to prioritise for interventions and inward investment?

This is no less true of the Northern Powerhouse than it is for any other area of the country. If the people and organisations with responsibility for creating a growth strategy and encouraging the attraction of new business into the region are to have success, they need to understand which industries are driving growth, and

which look set to drive growth into the future. Of course, this might seem easier said than done, especially since there are so many industries to understand. Where to begin?

Industry clusters across the Powerhouse

We have made the job of identifying growth industries much easier by first grouping detailed sectors into "industry clusters" – industries which are tied together by their location, workforce or supply chains. We have then identified two types of clusters: those that mainly serve local needs, and which therefore aren't really growth drivers in a region, and those that typically trade nationally and internationally, and can bring growth into the area.

Across all industries in the Northern Powerhouse region as a whole, there were 5.2m jobs in 2017 (we have defined the region as including the following LEP areas: Greater Manchester, Humber, Leeds City Region, Liverpool City Region, North Eastern, and Sheffield City Region). Of that 5.2m, 3.4m were in local, non-tradable industry clusters and 1.8m in tradable clusters. In terms of job growth, the region has seen 285,000 jobs added since 2007, of which 245,000 were in non-tradable clusters, and 40,000 in the tradable clusters.

The story of the growth in those tradable clusters is one of big losses in some clusters being offset by big gains in others. Much of the decline has come through losses in four particular sectors, with financial and legal services, printing and publishing, education and knowledge creation, and plastics and vulcanised products accounting for total job losses of 83,000 between them. But at the same time as these sectors have shrunk, a number of others have seen big growth over the same period. The infographic shows the top 5 tradable clusters in the Northern Powerhouse, according to job growth over the past ten years, and as you can see, it also shows that there is likely to be continued growth in these clusters over the next five years.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Digging into the area's sub-regions

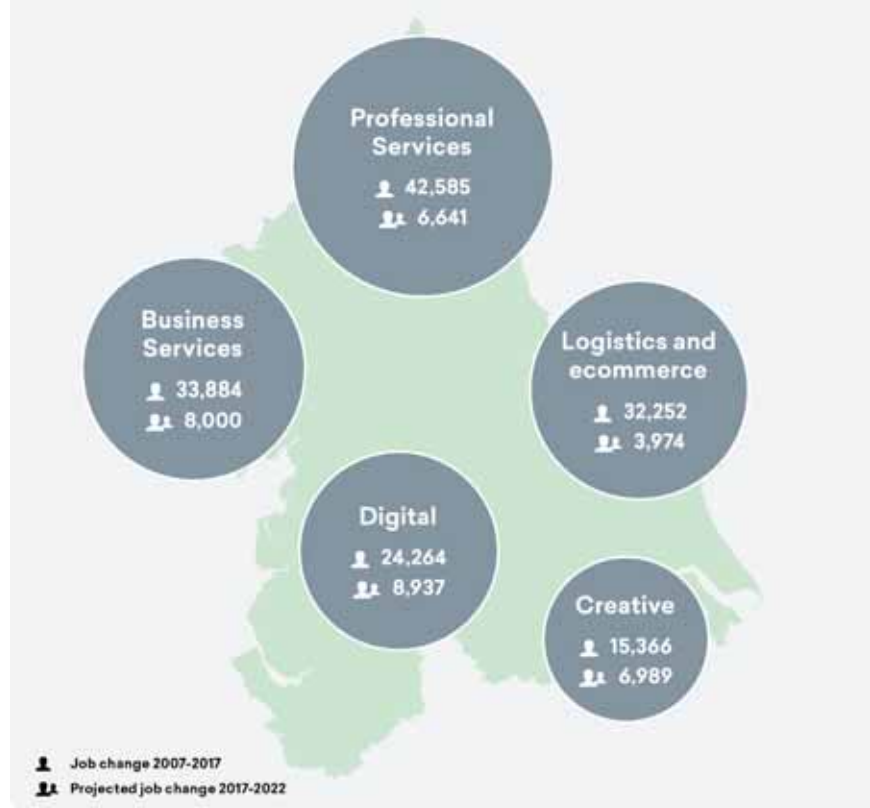
Insight such as this should prove helpful to economic developers in terms of establishing a sound strategy for growth, and in understanding where priorities for interventions and efforts to encourage inward investment should take place. Yet, as much as it is essential to look at the Northern Powerhouse as a whole to see which sectors are growing and which are stagnating, it is even more important to get under the hood of the region, as it were, to identify growth patterns at the sub-regional level.

Take the digital cluster, for instance – naturally a focus of many discussions about local economic growth. Although it may well have grown across the Northern Powerhouse region as a whole over the last ten years, and be projected to grow over the next five, this doesn't necessarily mean that this is the case for all the areas within it. Looking at the data, we do indeed find big differences across the region. For example, whilst Greater Manchester and Leeds City Region added 10,000 and 8,000 digital jobs respectively, the Humber region has seen virtually no net jobs growth. As for projections over the next five years, four-digit growth is expected to continue in Greater Manchester (3,500 jobs), Leeds City Region (2,500), and North Eastern (1,500), whereas Liverpool City Region, Sheffield City Region and Humber are expected to each add around 500 new jobs in the digital cluster between now and 2022.

Playing to strengths

The data shows there are big variations across the region, meaning there may be value in pursuing different strategies and interventions in each of the sub-regions. So whilst it would seem sensible for economic developers in Greater Manchester and Leeds City Region to concentrate on developing their digital cluster, given that it is clearly a strength of both regions, it may make less sense in other areas where their digital cluster has barely grown in the past 10 years, and is projected to show only slight growth in the next five.

TOP 5 GROWTH CLUSTERS IN THE NORTHERN POWERHOUSE FROM 2007-2017 WITH PROJECTED GROWTH OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS



It would surely make more sense for an economic developer to concentrate on the clusters where they have strengths within their area. For example, in the Humber region there has been significant growth over the last ten years in tradable clusters such as furniture and wood products (3,000 new jobs); civil engineering (2,000); logistics and e-commerce (2,000); business services (1,500); and food and drink production (1,500). Looking at what is driving or holding back these cluster strengths may well offer the best returns for local economic strategy.

The Northern Powerhouse and the Industrial Strategy

The government's Industrial Strategy aims to deliver economic growth across the UK, helping to develop "high growth clusters" where appropriate. If this is to become a reality in the

Northern Powerhouse, and indeed across the country, those responsible for economic development at the local and regional level will need to identify what their "high growth clusters" are.

As we have demonstrated in this piece, using local level insight is a crucial first step to understanding which clusters are driving growth and which therefore represent opportunities for future growth. Identifying which clusters is the very first step – there's much more to be explored in terms of the opportunities of people, place and supply chain to understand how growth can best be enabled. Only on the basis of robust, localised insight can we hope to build a successful strategy, take good decisions, and ultimately foster growth.

For more information, please visit: economicmodelling.co.uk/local-sector-strengthfinder

The Infinity Bridge, Stockton-on-Tees

Is Tees Valley at the centre of “a political earthquake”?

Ben Houchen was elected the first ever mayor of Tees Valley in a shock win for the Conservative Party in the north of England. Here, he talks to Rohan Banerjee about turning Labour’s heartlands blue

The election of the inaugural Tees Valley metro mayor should represent one of the easier pub quiz answers to remember, by virtue of the fact it was so surprising. The Conservative candidate, Ben Houchen, beat Labour’s Sue Jeffrey by over 2,000 votes last May, describing his victory as “a political earthquake” in the opposition’s heartlands.

All but three parliamentary seats in the north-east of England voted in Labour representatives in the 2015 general election, some with majorities exceeding 10,000; but the three that didn’t – Berwick and Hexham in Northumberland, and Stockton South in Teesside – elected Conservatives. Perhaps, then, Tory tremors were already happening before Houchen’s win.

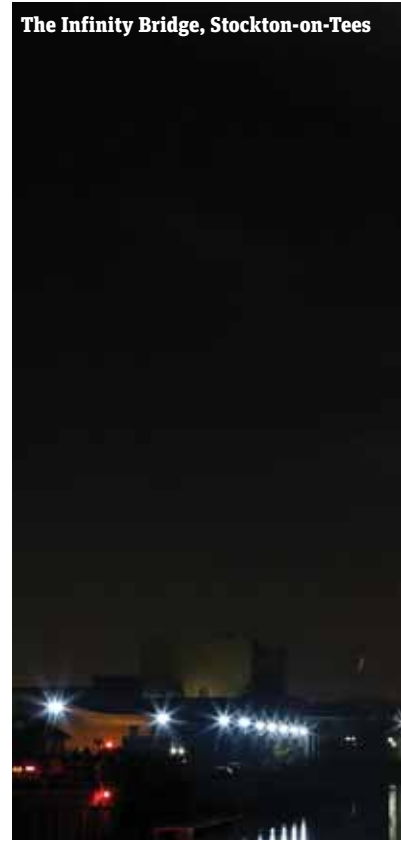
After the declaration of his victory at Thornaby Pavilion, the former solicitor said: “What we have seen in recent years is fantastic trends towards the Conservatives across the Tees Valley and today it is, I believe, at a tipping point.”

Despite Labour’s strong performance

in the snap general election that followed in June 2017, which saw it narrowly regain Stockton South, with the Conservatives still in central government, Houchen maintains that the party’s unexpected surge in the North can be sustained. Labour is losing its grip on the North, Houchen argues, because the party has become rooted in the capital and has forgotten the “working-class” Northerners on whom it has historically depended. Houchen says the “Islington clique” to which he claims Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn belongs is a turn-off for “soft-left” northern voters, whose interests, particularly within the context of investment and infrastructure, have been deprioritised in favour of what he calls the “failed European project”.

Brexit thrusts the North into the spotlight

The United Kingdom’s decision to leave the European Union, Houchen says, has blurred the lines between left and right-wing thinking. Political ideology in the North, he suggests, has become less about socialism versus capitalism,





“Tees Valley is at a tipping point”

and more about social issues such as immigration, or infrastructure concerns such as transport connectivity. “I think there’s a strong core in Teesside of soft-left and perhaps centrist voters. This idea about him [Corbyn] being from Islington and not really understanding the rest of the country has some truth to it. I like to think that Teesside is a bit of a bellwether for the rest of the UK. Places like Stockton and Middlesbrough in particular did buy into that ‘take back control’ mantra surrounding Brexit, because they wanted their share of investment and attention.”

The Tees Valley Combined Authority contains some of the country’s most deprived areas. Some of these areas have received tens of millions of pounds in funding from the EU’s European Social Fund (ESF) – a financial arm of the bloc focused on increasing labour market participation, promoting social inclusion and developing the skills of the potential and existing workforce in member states’ poorest parts. Areas in the Tees Valley Combined Authority accessed around £96.7m of ESF funding during the

2007-13 programme, leading to 1,912 jobs being created, the safeguarding of a further 1,332, and the launch of 470 businesses.

Nevertheless, Houchen, whose wife is a modern languages teacher, campaigned on a heavily pro-Brexit ticket. He notes Labour’s comparatively lenient stance on immigration while also pointing towards a frustration with EU-mandated legislation affecting the SSI Steelworks in Redcar. Over 2,000 people lost their jobs following the closure of the SSI Steelworks in 2015, something which he describes as a “human tragedy”.

EU state aid rules do not allow for emergency loans or government guarantees to steel manufacturers in financial difficulties. The European Commission says this is owed to its past experience with steel, and taking into account the features of the EU steel industry – in particular its overcapacity. A Tees Valley Combined Authority, Houchen claims, would have defended SSI Steelworks with far more conviction. “People who voted for Brexit wanted

“It’s an honour to represent an area I love”

control over their own destiny. I think people were supportive of the idea that local government could have done more with a proactive role in defending the steelworks. Brexit presents us the opportunity for the first time in half a century to take back control of our industrial strategy.”

The importance of being a local lad

Houchen, 31, says he is not in the business of slating central government for its past; rather, he backs it to learn from it in the future. The modernisation of the Conservative Party, he thinks, has been important in rolling out devolution and in appealing to a section of the electorate it couldn’t previously have hoped to reach. Houchen, himself Stockton-born and his accent fully intact, is evidence of the latter point especially. He says: “Teesside is in my blood and it’s an honour to represent an area I grew up in and love.”

Indeed, Houchen is a far cry from the typical Tory toff image he admits has undermined the party for too long. He grew up in one of the first 100 houses on the Ingleby Barwick estate and attended the comprehensive Conyers School in Yarm before studying law 40 miles up the road at Northumbria University in Newcastle. “You need that local link,” Houchen says, “if you’re to do your job properly. My party understands that, and the local members who selected me get that too. The Conservative Party has come a long way since the wilderness days in opposition. Our candidates are getting younger and they’re no longer exclusively pale, male and stale.”

Why connectivity is key

Transport in the North remains a sore point for many people across the region. While London enjoys its extensive underground rail network and six international airports, maintained and politicised under the banner of national interest, the North’s major cities are too often, according to Houchen, seen as an afterthought.”

Of all the pledges made in his mayoral manifesto, Houchen says “the most eye-catching” was to use the Combined

Authority’s budget to buy the struggling Durham Tees Valley Airport (DTVA). “How can we say that we are truly well-connected unless we have a strong, thriving airport? We are working with a number of private sector aviation and company operators, who are interested in partnering with us to do that.” Houchen says that his ambitions for the airport extend “far beyond just a few flights to the Costas” and instead tie into a wider agenda to redistribute flights, commercial or otherwise, further up the country and minimise the pressure on the capital. The Heathrow expansion debate, Houchen reckons, would have been resolved far sooner had northern airports been “given the attention they deserve”.

While Houchen’s position on the DTVA hasn’t faltered, delivering on the pledge is proving easier said than done. The chairman of DTVA owners Peel Airports, Robert Hough, told *The Northern Echo* that he is “not inclined to sell” and highlighted the recently revamped £250,000 terminal as evidence for this. Houchen, though, is not giving up and says that talks are ongoing with Peel about “a deal that would be best for Tees Valley”.

Improving the North-East’s rail links is also on Houchen’s agenda and he has set his sights on regenerating Darlington Station. “I have a £464m war chest to invest in local priorities over the next four years. I am proud to say that my plans for growth and investment can be funded through money devolved to us.” Houchen is aiming to spend £100m on transforming Darlington Station into a “modern rail hub”.

The so-called Darlington 2025 proposal sets out new plans for the rearrangement of the rail infrastructure around the station, which Houchen says will lead to faster and more frequent services in the Tees Valley, County Durham and North Yorkshire. This is important because “as soon as you reduce that travel time between cities, you stand to transform the entire northern economy. It’s not just about getting from A to B quicker; it’s about integrating those communities and workforces effectively.”



The Darlington 2025 proposal sets out new plans for the reconfiguration of the rail infrastructure around the station

“People will ultimately vote for jobs”

An unarguable policy

Whatever perceptions people might have had about the Tories and the North, Houchen says, they should not fail to appreciate that the Northern Powerhouse agenda was brought into mainstream political discourse by a Conservative government. In recognising the potential of the North, he thinks that the Tories are onto something that Labour can't afford to argue with. “The priority has to be to make sure that devolution is a success so the UK can be self-sustainable post-Brexit. The Northern Powerhouse agenda, while established under George [Osborne] and David [Cameron], has ultimately got to be embraced across the political spectrum. It's part of the devolution remit in a big way and is being taken forward by people like myself and [Labour mayor of Greater Manchester] Andy Burnham. It has to be taken

seriously or we will all, including people in the South, be worse off for it.”

Does having a Conservative central government make Houchen's job easier? “This [the metro mayor movement] is about as close to consensus as you're going to get, to be honest. I think there is a plan about strategic economic growth and self-sustainability in the UK.”

Houchen is confident, he says, because “having worked with several Labour-led local authorities, I know that balance is possible”.

Balance, however, is not conducive to the “tipping point” Houchen craves. How do the Tories make sure they translate any auspices about immigration and railways into parliamentary seats? “It comes down to jobs. People will ultimately vote for jobs, and transport and infrastructure are certainly crucial to delivering them.”

Transforming northern decline into renewal

Dismantling the Sellafield nuclear site is a technical and human challenge on a grand scale, but Sellafield Ltd is enabling a positive ending for Cumbria, according to media relations manager **Matt Legg**



Sellafield is a remarkable business with a remarkable story,” says its head of development and community relations Jamie Reed.

“If you look at it right now, it’s the one of the biggest building sites in Europe. It’s the biggest nuclear industrial facility anywhere in the UK. It was created to produce the materials to help us win the Cold War. It successfully did that. That’s a phenomenal legacy that should be celebrated a lot more. A few years later, we were the home of the world’s first commercial nuclear power plant. I’m very, very proud of that. We provided the best part of half a century of low-carbon electricity to the UK economy.”

In the 21st century, its core mission is nuclear clean-up. This means decommissioning and demolishing the 1,000-plus buildings on the site, some of which contain the UK’s most hazardous nuclear materials.

It’s devilishly difficult.

Sellafield’s original waste stores were built when Cold War-era paranoia was at its peak. Detailed plans often weren’t kept and buildings were constructed at breakneck speed by modern standards, with little consideration as to how their contents would eventually be removed.

This has left a complex conundrum. New retrievals equipment has to be installed in buildings never designed to be emptied. Cunning methods of breaking into these radioactive safes have to be designed and delicately delivered on vanishingly small parcels of land on a heavily congested site.

As a result, Sellafield Ltd – a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) – has become a world leader in solving the most difficult engineering challenges.

But there’s another more vexing question facing the company. In 2020, Sellafield will have completed its original mission: reprocessing used nuclear fuel from around the UK and

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





across the world.

For 60-plus years this has been the backbone of the west Cumbrian economy providing stable, well-paid work for generations of local people. Once complete, more than 2,000 roles will no longer be needed.

It feels like a familiar tale of post-industrial decline: the world changes, industries close, and unemployment and urban decay follow. But this story has a very different ending.

Sellafield Ltd has pledged no redundancies will be made. Everyone who wants a new job will be retrained and redeployed elsewhere on the site. This will be done while the company meets its targeted £1.4bn in efficiency savings for the Treasury by 2020 and aiming for a further £1-1.4bn by 2029.

How will Sellafield Ltd perform this seemingly impossible pivot? “It really does require a genuine partnership between the public and the private sector, trade unions, local politicians,

national politicians,” says Reed.

“We’ve seen this story unfold so many times in the UK, particularly in the North of England. It doesn’t have to be like that. What we’re doing at Sellafield proves the point.”

“By changing the way we do things on the site. By changing our organisation and our structure and by working with our partners more, involving our local supply chain and our wider national and even international supply chain better, we’re delivering more value for money and driving better performance than ever before.”

“Transforming a business like Sellafield, a £2bn a year enterprise, with more than 11,000 employees, is difficult, but we’re doing it. It’s that transformation which is helping us to achieve these efficiency savings and deliver more value for money for the taxpayer.”

“At the same time, it’s not just about money. We’re performing better than we’ve ever performed; our safety record is better than it’s ever been, and we’re doing all of that in the midst of a transformation programme. That transformation programme is helping us to achieve those improvements and it’s helping us be fit for the future.”

“We’re on track to place everybody whose role will no longer be needed and that’s an incredible success. It didn’t have to be that way, we just look at the recent industrial history of the UK in the shipyards and the coalfields and the steelworks to see what mass redundancies do to communities.”

Problem solved then? Not quite. Once the heavy decommissioning work is completed, by about 2040, west Cumbria will be left with a similar quandary.

“That’s the real issue we’re grappling with,” says Reed. “While there’s a large programme of work for people to transfer to, retraining and redeployment is possible. But, once that work is complete, what then? That’s what makes our transformation programme unique. We’re making changes now that will get the job done but will also unlock a post-Sellafield future: a robust

and diverse local economy borne out of Sellafield but not reliant on it.”

“This means supply chain companies accessing work at Sellafield and using this to diversify into other sectors and markets. The greatest legacy we can leave is a revitalised private sector working with a committed public sector to deliver quality jobs in a sustainable community.”

It was this eye on the future that prompted Sellafield Ltd to join the Northern Powerhouse programme.

As part of the company’s own investment programme, there’s a new £33m school campus under construction in neighbouring Whitehaven, to which Sellafield Ltd contributed £10m, with other funders including NDA, Copeland Council, Copeland Community Fund, and Cumbria County Council.

The company has also helped deliver the National College for Nuclear in nearby Workington, one of only five national colleges to provide skills for the UK’s key strategic industries identified in the government’s Industrial Strategy. There are a number of further investments in the pipeline along with joint venture initiatives with the supply chain.

“In the future, I’d like to see Sellafield’s dominance of the economy being significantly reduced and because of the work we’ve done and the partnerships we’ve created, for there to be a much bigger, diverse, more sustainable private sector economy in Cumbria,” adds Reed. “The county is heavily reliant on public expenditure and we see our work as a real future opportunity to help the economic base to diversify and be more sustainable.”

Reed has undergone his own transformation, leaving Parliament last year where he served for 12 years as MP for Copeland, his lifelong home and the constituency covering Sellafield. “My belief in what this area can achieve is why I left Westminster. Every area says this, but here I think we’ve got the substance to underpin the words: our best days are ahead of us.”

For this government, all roads lead south



**Hull North MP
Diana Johnson
recently told
the House of
Commons that
commercial
spaceflight will
be established
before the North
has working
transport**

If the economic challenges posed by Brexit loom large for Britain as a whole, they are even starker for northern England. There's rarely been a more relevant time to ask not what the country can do for the North, but what the North can do for the country.

Westminster spends much of its time debating supply-side, micro-economic issues, such as education and skills, where the objective is to make people and communities ready for jobs in sunrise industries that we assume are coming. However, can we now be certain that those opportunities will arrive?

The post-1945 confidence that future generations can expect a higher standard of living than their parents looks doubtful. The most recent statistics for the most deprived areas point to the first downturn in life expectancy in peacetime since Victorian times. This, then, all adds up to an urgent need to address some fundamental macro-economic questions.

Britain needs to make its own luck, just as we've been doing in Hull. Local effort attracted UK City of Culture and Siemens to the city in recent years. Now Hull seeks a City of Culture legacy and

a post-Brexit export market in continental Europe for our offshore wind energy industry. For all we have achieved in recent years, since 2010 against the backdrop of some of the heaviest government cuts, Hull's regeneration is still in its infancy and could easily be rolled back.

The fundamental economic challenge facing the country is to escape the vicious circle of austerity and stagnant growth by building the broad-based, resilient economy that generates the sustained growth needed to reduce debt and meet our basic needs – from financing social care to house-building.

If we are "taking back control" of immigration we need to ask whether sufficient work is being done to cope with the consequences for our economy and public services. There are questions about whether enough is being done to forge the global alliances needed after Brexit, about what we will manufacture in future, and to whom we will sell. Should we continue placing so much reliance on the service sector, especially the casino end of finance and banking?



Underpinning all this is the challenge of improving productivity. It is here that addressing the North's needs becomes such a key consideration.

The government needs to get real about allowing the North to take pressure off the congested and inefficient South East, thus boosting overall UK GDP growth. Fewer industries need to cluster in the south east corner of the country in the digital age.

To assist the regional economic "rebalancing" that has been talked about since 2010, the so-called Northern Powerhouse's creaking transport network needs a fairer share of transport infrastructure investment than the £13bn allocated in this parliament. This is less than the amount spent on London's Crossrail 1. Northern taxpayers and fare payers are absorbing the heaviest above inflation rail fare increases for many years. For what?

The government continues chasing the endless transport capacity needs of the South East, as exposed in IPPR North's latest figures. These show that London is set to get five times the investment per head of Yorkshire and the Humber over the next four years.

Rather than acting to end the unfairness, Chris Grayling is keener to attack IPPR North and use statistical ruses to paint a false picture of the North getting the most lavish state investment in rail and roads. However, when Grayling points to Transport for London projects that receive no central government funding, it only highlights the effort also being put into securing large-scale private investment for London and the South East. The same effort has not been made for the North, where attracting private money is not so easy.

Hull saw the privately-funded Hull to Selby rail electrification blocked by Tory ministers. The North's local bus services have been cut, our cars bear the damage caused by the potholes backlog and we await long-promised road upgrades.

After years hyping government rail electrification plans, Grayling recently embraced bi-modal diesel trains to

justify cancelling electrification schemes in the North. Bi-modal technology is not new, contradicts the claim of being "environmentally responsible" and dashes any hope of delivering truly high-speed services for passengers and freight.

Last summer, Grayling told the North to "get in the driving seat", but we know that Transport for the North's advisory powers, easy for Whitehall to block, are inadequate compared to those of Transport for London.

Beyond phasing out Pacer trains, aspirations to improve the northern transport network by 2050 do not meet the country's needs over the next few decades. Commercial space travel is due to arrive decades before Transport for the North's vision for 2050.

We've seen in other parts of the UK in recent decades, such as in East London's Docklands, what's possible when governments get serious about regenerating a sub-regional economy for the long term. They don't invent pre-conditions about adopting, on a permanent basis, made-in-Whitehall models of local or regional government, and then cite insufficient co-operation as an excuse for withholding investment.

Surrey MP Grayling's recent reappointment as Transport Secretary does not inspire much confidence that key questions will be faced or that we will see any government rethink that grasps the reality – indeed rather than rhetoric – that the North's revival is central to the future prosperity of the whole nation.

For example, Grayling recently committed to moving forward with HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and Crossrail 2 "in lockstep". Does our rail industry have the capacity to achieve all this at once? Wouldn't priorities have to be set? I suspect that Grayling simply doesn't want to tell us what his real priorities would be.

The fact that large south eastern schemes, such as London's Crossrail 2 and the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor, are so much further advanced than anything from Transport for the North's plans is a strong indicator of what to expect.



We are too reliant on the service sector

Success in the North is driven by people

In order for the North to continue to thrive, it must attract the talent that will foster growth and success. Head of first direct **Joe Gordon** explains how it can be done



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

first direct bank

Here at first direct we are focused on helping people across the UK to achieve their goals, but as a northern-based bank we have a particular interest in championing economic development in the North and supporting it to achieve its full potential.

Our people come from across the UK, but they choose to come to Yorkshire to develop their careers, to make their homes, and to live.

A prosperous North benefits the whole of the UK, improving overall productivity and setting out the foundations for greater future economic performance, as well as enhancing the social well-being of everyone in the UK.

Society today is changing. People coming into employment for the first time are more mobile than ever before. In terms of job satisfaction and career progression they're more likely to migrate to where they can find this than any other previous generation. At the

same time professional fulfilment alone is not enough. Personal fulfilment is an increasingly important priority too. It's about both the experience that people have but also the values that the brand exhibits externally.

Firms that can meet more of their employees' needs are likely to see higher retention, improved customer service and greater productivity. But they can't do it alone; opportunities attract talented people to stay or move to an area, but without co-ordinated investment in skills and infrastructure it's harder for businesses to create the conditions for growth, and without strong businesses there can be no growth.

We are a national bank, with customers spread right around the country, but our base is in the North. When we set up first direct 28 years ago, we wanted to build a bank around a talented, diverse workforce, and we wanted a clear identity for first direct that set it apart from other banks. The



North was the logical choice.

A bank without branches, a bank that was genuinely revolutionary in the UK. We set out with a blank piece of paper and the first words on it were “Pioneer Amazing Service”. Since then we’ve worked hard to build and develop this through everything we do.

Since those words were committed to paper, we’ve won hundreds of awards for customer service and we’ve built an incredibly strong culture of positivity, of family and togetherness, as well as an inherent want to do some good for the local community and society.

We need to continue to leverage this if we’re to attract some of the most talented people to us, as we’re only ever as good as our people. Whether this is the heroes in the back office who keep everything moving, the tech wizards who develop our app and new functionality, the creative geniuses who tell people about first direct and what kind of bank we are, or the super talented, lateral thinking people who

engage with our customers through any of our channels.

There is a proven relationship between customer satisfaction and financial performance. Achieving consistently higher levels of satisfaction is linked to stronger turnover growth, profit and employee productivity. But it’s something that needs to be worked at constantly, and it needs to be fluid and agile, changing as the world changes.

We’ve got a proven track record here, but we’re passionate about building on the North’s economic potential. Investing in education and skills is extremely important to us, and we have well established scholars programmes in place with local schools and universities. For the region to grow, then it needs to have a strong academic core. We need to develop our own talent and demonstrate there are opportunities for young people on their own doorstep.

We’re part of the growing digital hub

in the North. As a digital bank, the vast majority of our customers carry out straightforward transactions digitally, either through our 5* rated app or our website. We were the first bank in the UK to begin pioneering voice ID security on a mass scale, and late last year we were among the first banks in the world to fully integrate face ID into our app on the new iPhone. We couldn’t do this without having people with the right technical expertise, and so we’re fully on board with supporting the North to become a global digital hub.

But for this to happen we need better transport and connectivity. We need high-speed rail links connecting the Northern cities and airports, and improved road links if we’re to showcase the developments in digital that are already happening right across the North.

If the Northern Powerhouse is to live up to its aspirations we also need to be able to offer people access to a fantastic social infrastructure too. The North has some of the most spectacular countryside in the UK, and has vibrant cities rich in culture and history.

At first direct we recognise the importance of supporting the arts, and that’s why we’re the proud sponsor of the first direct arena in Leeds – now the 13th most popular arena in the world. Sponsoring the arena provides us with a unique way to show our support for, and give something back to, the city we call home. We’ve been a proud sponsor of the Northern Ballet since 2010 – considered trailblazers in the world of ballet; our sponsorship is one factor in helping Northern Ballet acquire the very best talent from lighting technicians to the set designers, as well as dancers.

We’re proud of our Northern heritage. It’s the people. It’s the communities where we live just as much as where we work. Supporting further economic development in the North is the right thing to do for this generation and for generations to come.

The next generation has put its faith in the North

Millennials are choosing Sheffield.

Emma Martin of Knight Knox explains how this trend can be supported and sustained



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



There is no question as to the strength of the UK's northern cities and there has been a marked change in attitude toward these hubs of business and culture over the last five years. No longer an afterthought, these premier cities are attracting the global interest of investors whose imaginations have been captured by the northern renaissance.

Manchester, in particular, has led from the front as part of the Northern Powerhouse initiative, boosted by a willingness to work with foreign investors, and huge strides in infrastructure, housing and business. Statistics from EY's regional economic forecast show that Manchester is the UK's best performing city in terms of economic output, outpacing the capital, with predicted economic growth of 2.4 per cent every year until 2020. In addition, the UK's de facto second city has benefited from a hot housing market

driven by investor and tenant demand, with an increase in house price of over 35 per cent in the last five years, with rents on a similar trajectory.

Other core cities in the North are beginning to show their hand, looking to catch up with the impressive growth Greater Manchester has experienced. This is particularly true of Sheffield, a city on the cusp of something incredibly exciting.

Moulded by a rich industrial history Sheffield – or the “steel city” – is a city of makers and is carving out a reputation as a hub of modern industry. Exhibiting many of the signs displayed by Greater Manchester five years ago, many believe that Sheffield is primed for similar success in 2018 as tenants pile in to the city.

Historically known for being the UK's nucleus for steel work, Sheffield continues to uphold its status as a city of production and supports active growth



across a number of sectors, principally in advanced manufacturing and the creative and digital industries. Last year's State of Sheffield report revealed that, in 2014, out of the core cities Sheffield had the second highest number of patents granted per 100,000 people.

To bolster the success of its major sectors, Sheffield City Council has developed the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (AMID) in partnership with local universities, aiming to encourage research and technological advances which will boost the local economy and bring in the new talent which is needed.

AMID, described by the Sheffield city region as a "2,000 acre centre of excellence", has been met with fantastic approval, with leading global companies so impressed with the facilities that many are choosing to locate to the area. Boeing is building a £20m factory for

the production of aeroplane parts and McLaren Automotive is building a £50m Composites Technology Centre which will produce supercar chassis, create more than 200 jobs and provide a predicted £100m cash injection to the local economy.

The city is experiencing average economic growth of almost two per cent year-on-year according to the State of Sheffield 2017 report, which shows the digital, education, and health sectors are performing particularly well, chiefly because of the way that local government in Sheffield is trying to nurture these areas.

In addition, the world class educational facilities based in Sheffield mean that there is a constant stream of talent settling in the city, which is having a direct effect on the local housing market. With the fantastic and ever increasing job opportunities on offer, it's no surprise that more than 25 per cent of graduates choose to remain in Sheffield. With greater housing demand, investment in housing and infrastructure is crucial.

Additionally, research from CV-Library has shown that Sheffield ranks as one of the best places to look for work in the UK, with the total number of jobs vacancies in the city up 13.5 per cent year on year. This is just one more reason why it is anticipated that Sheffield is on the cusp of a property boom. The report also showed that salaries rose by 5.3 per cent over the same period, illustrating a buoyant and confident business sector.

Ultimately a cocktail of supported employment opportunities, enhancements to infrastructure and a thriving local culture has resulted in increased tenant footfall and investor interest in Sheffield, which is the driving force behind a 29 per cent property price increase recorded by Zoopla over the last five years. With rising demand for rental properties, it's no surprise Sheffield's town planning department considered more than 700 pre-application considerations in 2017.

It is clear that Sheffield is following

the same path that led Manchester to becoming the go-to city for millennials looking for a bright and successful future. With the confidence of the next generation placed firmly in our premier northern cities, we can be assured that the Northern Powerhouse is happening whether government policy supports it or not.

We now must make sure that, like local government in Sheffield, we support the next generation, who are so pivotal to the future of the North – principally by continuing to build high quality rental accommodation in urban areas and by cultivating emerging

Sheffield is experiencing two per cent annual growth

sectors which will see continued economic growth.

Knight Knox is a specialist property consultancy with over 10 years' industry expertise. With a particular focus on the city centre residential markets in the North, Knight Knox is expert in sourcing investment opportunities in both new-build residential markets and high-end refurbishment projects. Knight Knox boasts an impressive portfolio of both completed and future stock – a true testament to the quality of the properties it brings to market.

Knight Knox has an impressive track record of 85 developments launched and 58 completed and occupied in the UK's strongest rental markets, including luxury new-build residential apartments and high-yielding boutique student accommodation projects in major cities throughout the UK. Its diverse range of properties enables Knight Knox to offer a wide range of opportunities to suit all investment needs.

Drawing on the past to deliver the Powerhouse

Strong infrastructure is key to a successful Northern Powerhouse. There are lessons to be learnt from history, argues head of transport planning at WYG **Peter Blair**

The Northern Powerhouse may not exert the traction it did when George Osborne was Chancellor, but the fundamental needs it sought to address are stronger than ever. As Brexit fast approaches, with all its uncertainties, this perspective still holds; it is important to refocus on what the Northern Powerhouse can deliver, and how we go about making it work in this new landscape.

The initial aim of the Northern Powerhouse was to address the gaps between north and south and rebalance the economy to benefit the country as a whole. The consultation draft Strategy Transport Plan from Transport for the North (TfN), published in January, describes how the northern economy could benefit from £100bn of growth, and the creation of 850,000 new jobs. Also published in January, the Northern Powerhouse Education Report from the

Northern Powerhouse Partnership, chaired by George Osborne, calls for £300m to close the education gap. This education imbalance ultimately translates into a skills shortage.

Establishing economic equilibrium means making the North an attractive prospect for people to live and invest in, with good housing and good jobs. Efficient infrastructure and transport are key enablers of this.

In terms of general concepts, it is important to understand why our northern region is the way it is before we can understand what needs to be done to make improvements.

Our region led the industrial revolution, when the mills took our towns to fast flowing water in the hills and our mining industry built our towns on coal fields. Being the industrial centre of the world, coupled with an extensive British Empire saw the rise and prominence of our ports. Our agriculture, steel works, fishing industries, ship building and the topography of our region have left us with a patchwork quilt, strong in heritage; every town and city location was a response to its reason for being. We have five of the UK's ten largest cities. However, those sound locational reasons have long diminished or ceased to be and we now have a historical pattern of centres of population that need to prosper and grow.

If coal, water and textiles were the life blood of the industrial revolution and our towns and cities were its vital organs, then it was the canals, railways and roads which were the arteries that allowed the blood to flow and our economy to function.

Today the North of England is living in a worn-out body, often relying on the same veins and arteries that were built by the Victorians. The sixties and seventies brought major infrastructure in the form of motorways and we have seen great growth and expansion plans in our airports. Just consider for a moment the work that our motorways do for our region every day, and how our older infrastructure, much of it –

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





like our railway stations – built over a hundred years ago, is still serving us. The lesson here is that sound infrastructure delivered now will still be serving our country far beyond our current scheme evaluation period. Then, pause to consider just how the Northern Powerhouse could be the opportunity for a renewal and rebirth.

It is obvious that to make the Northern Powerhouse a reality, we need to invest significantly in our transport infrastructure to alleviate the congestion that commuters and commerce currently face every day. We must allow our economy to flow in order for it to grow. We need to improve the capacity of east-west and intercity rail links, making journeys quicker and more comfortable, making ports and airports more accessible. We have less energy efficient housing in the North, and addressing that is going to be a key enabler in attracting a workforce to settle.

Specialist skills will be instrumental,

of course, in delivering these major infrastructural projects. The skills gap poses a real threat to our industry and the economic wellbeing of the country. Businesses have a role to play in tightening their collaboration with universities to inspire the forthcoming generation of skilled workers, offering sustained educational support, attractive career paths, and a thriving environment for professional and personal development.

The Northern Powerhouse could be an opportunity for an accelerated new beginning, but how do we knit these factors together to make a place for everybody in the North?

Brexit is imminent and we need to ensure that we are ready to seize new opportunities from new markets.

As a professional services firm with a large presence across the North, in Newcastle, Leeds, Harrogate, Manchester, Liverpool, Chorley, all the way up to Carlisle and Cockerthorpe,

WYG has always been a strong advocate of the Northern Powerhouse. Not only have we got the expertise to help shape the vision for a Northern Powerhouse, but we also have the capability to support its delivery. We are committed to enabling education, encouraging young people towards our careers, and nurturing skills. Along with many other businesses across the North, we understand the role that we can play and we want to be part of building a region that attracts and retains talent.

Cumbria is a clear example of how talent attracts global opportunities. As a centre of nuclear excellence, “the engine room of the Northern Powerhouse”, Cumbria has become an incubator for a highly skilled workforce. This home-grown expertise is coveted by organisations around the world, and the skills that we have honed in the region’s energy sector have given our technical experts the edge to attract business from international blue chip companies and governmental organisations alike.

On the infrastructure front, we have been appointed to the Transport for Greater Manchester Framework, the West Yorkshire Combined Authorities Framework, and have undertaken a small commission for Transport for the North. We have seconded people into Kirklees and Wakefield Councils and have been appointed to the NEPO Lot 10 Transport Framework. We are prepared for growth.

The infrastructure required is on a grand scale and consequently, thus far, initiatives have been promoted by local authorities, transport bodies, etc. We should not overlook the opportunity to engage with private businesses and private landowners to enable development and help complete the Northern Powerhouse jigsaw.

The world is changing rapidly and, whichever way the political wind might blow, we need a firm commitment to deliver long-term projects and for statutory bodies and public authorities to work hand-in-hand with businesses and land owners to accelerate delivery, allowing the transformation to happen.

Local solutions to poverty in the North

Mike Hawking, policy and research manager at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, argues that place-specific steps need to be part of local strategies battling economic hardship in the North



Underneath the record employment figures and “19 consecutive quarters of growth” celebrated by the government is a big problem: far too many people are excluded from the country’s growing prosperity. As much as a fifth of the UK’s population lives in poverty, more than half of whom are in working households. Rising living costs and unstable work hold these people down and stop many from getting on.

Theresa May showed some sensitivity to many of the issues in her oft-quoted “burning injustices” speech at the outset of her premiership. The Industrial Strategy, published to a small fanfare late last year, is her government’s flagship policy to “create better, higher paying jobs in every part of the United Kingdom”. But can it help to tackle the structural issues in our economy that are creating poverty? At JRF we think there is potential, but there is significant work to do, at a national and local level.

For example, in the run-up to the Strategy we called on the government to proactively seek deals with low-pay sectors such as retail and hospitality. These are high employment sectors in which workers are disproportionately likely to be in poverty and whose productivity lags their counterparts in competitor nations such as the US, France and Germany. Promisingly the government has pledged to work closely with those sectors to “progressively drive up the earning power of people employed” in them and “enhance our national productivity”.

Skills are a cornerstone of high productivity; we also called on the government to set an ambitious target to meet adult basic skills needs by 2030. The strategy restates the commitment to a new adult digital skills entitlement, providing access to free basic digital skills training. This is welcome, but it needs to go hand in hand with a renewed drive to improve literacy and numeracy

SHUTTERSTOCK/SILENT CORNERS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





among the five million adults that lack those basic skills. We estimate that delivering such a target would require a doubling of investment along with reform of skills programmes delivery.

But the UK's economic challenge is not just about the capacity of individuals or even whole sectors. The role of place is crucial. Ask people in Stoke or Blackpool how they feel the economic recovery is benefiting their areas; many will look back quizzically. The government has acknowledged this and committed to working with mayors and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to develop local industrial strategies to operate alongside the national strategy.

This move is welcome, and it is possible that local strategies provide the best opportunity to deliver solutions to poverty. However, questions remain as to whether LEPs have the capacity and capability to deliver radical new strategies that will make a difference to people on low incomes. To date, the

visions they've set for their areas have mostly been traditional economic development fare, with a focus on high value, highly skilled jobs to boost economic output. Critics even suggest that some existing strategies wouldn't pass the Tippex test: if you delete the name of the place from the document, can you tell which place its referring to.

Many areas in the UK are already wrestling with these challenges, and there are some good lessons we can learn from towns and cities in other countries too. To help solve poverty, we at JRF believe there are several things local strategies could do.

Firstly, they need to develop specific policies and strategies for places that have seen the least economic growth in recent years. This is one area that government is moving on, exploring the idea of supporting towns facing particular challenges through a set of specific "town deals", beginning with a pilot in Grimsby. But even our more prosperous city regions contain areas that have not benefited from the growth in their centres. Local strategies must consider how these different parts can be better connected to opportunities. Initiatives such as the "town centre challenge", recently launched by the mayor of Greater Manchester to boost the prospects of peripheral towns, should be followed closely.

Secondly, they should target sectors that deliver growth in good quality jobs. This means thinking beyond which sectors will be best for GVA figures when seeking to attract them, but considering what jobs the businesses will be like and who will get them. For example, local leaders in San Antonio in the US have identified priority sectors based on the types of job they create as well as the local economy's existing assets. By targeting sectors delivering middle – rather than highly – skilled jobs, they identified health services, business systems, IT, and vehicle maintenance and repair as their priority sectors; a very different set to those often pursued through industrial strategies. UK cities could estimate the

number and types of job provided by different sectors that align with their current assets, and prioritise the ones that best directly deliver good jobs.

Third, local areas should consider developing a network of responsible businesses, led by local anchor institutions (the biggest employers and spenders in the area). These would be the leading firms that provide fair terms and conditions, give disadvantaged groups access to jobs and training and use their own procurement to spread good practice. This approach is being applied with encouraging results in Preston, where the local council, university and college, amongst others, have worked with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies to consider how they can boost local spending and employment practices, supporting local businesses and help to establish worker co-operatives.

Finally, LEPs need to co-ordinate and partner with other local institutions to ensure local people, often from historically overlooked communities, do benefit from opportunities that are created. This means working alongside universities and colleges to develop the skills pipeline for jobs that are coming down the line. In Ireland, the Limerick for IT scheme formed a partnership of major inward investors, local universities, local and national governments, to work to identify infrastructure and skills needs and then to provide services and skills to ensure people living locally benefitted from inward investment.

Clearly there is still plenty of work to be done. But there is potential for the Industrial Strategy to improve prospects for people across the UK. As the white paper says: "[our] cities, towns and rural areas have distinctive comparative advantages. Our national framework will only be effective if it reflects and makes the most of these economic opportunities and challenges." Local and national strategies must work hand in glove, and focus on creating more and better jobs that can benefit people in poverty.

Three out of seven councils in the North East have joined forces to make devolution a reality, but what about the other four? Augusta Riddy talks to the leader of Newcastle City Council **Nick Forbes** and others

A city cut in half by a river, and devolution



In October 2015, George Osborne wrote to the leaders of seven councils in the Newcastle area, congratulating them for agreeing a “historic devolution deal”. The then-Chancellor gushed that with the signing of the North East devolution deal they were “starting to make the government’s vision for the Northern Powerhouse a reality.”

The celebrations were short-lived. The deal fell apart in September 2016 when four of the councils – Sunderland, County Durham, South Tyneside and Gateshead – voted against putting the plans out to consultation, citing concerns over funding insecurity post-Brexit. They asked the government to confirm that European Structural and Investment Funds, aimed at job creation and economic development, would be “sustained beyond 2020, for as long as needed”. Paul Watson, the chairman of the North East Combined Authority, wrote to communities secretary Sajid Javid in the wake of the collapse to reiterate the

region’s commitment to the “principle of devolution”, but Javid’s curt reply signalled the government’s patience had officially run out. “You made an unambiguous decision not to proceed with the deal, and as a result, the deal is now off the table.” This was just two years after Osborne’s original Northern Powerhouse speech in 2014, which fired the starting gun for devolution negotiations with regions across the North, including the North East.

“Out of the ashes of that disaster,” explains Newcastle council leader Nick Forbes, the North of the Tyne devolution deal was born. Irritated but undeterred, the three remaining councils – Newcastle City, North Tyneside and Northumberland – set about making devolution a reality, without their four neighbours south of the river. Following in the footsteps of Greater Manchester, the West Midlands, Liverpool City and other regions, the deal was confirmed in the Chancellor’s autumn budget, releasing



£600m of government investment. A metro mayor will be elected in 2019. The Chancellor also committed £337m to replace the ageing regional Metro rail fleet; new trains are expected to arrive by 2021.

Does this mark the start of a new era for the region? Forbes has big plans for his city; he hopes that the deal will put Newcastle on an international stage and raise its profile as a “modern, vibrant, outward-looking city”. “People still think of us as a place with smoking chimneys, flat caps and whippets – a kind of 1970s sitcom. We’re not like that, we haven’t been for nearly 40 years.”

For the North of the Tyne devolution deal, jobs are a major focus. “The North East is the area in England with the highest unemployment rate and the lowest average wage levels” explains Forbes. “We want to flip that.” Newcastle council has been peddling this agenda for some time; Forbes claims when he became leader in 2011 he turned it into “a job-creation machine”. He is

confident that the deal will massively accelerate progress in this area. “Our initial assessments are that the £600m will leverage in £2.1bn of private sector investment and we expect that to create, over a lifespan of the current deal, 10,000 jobs.” Complementing this employment drive is an ambitious push on housing, which wasn’t part of the previous plan. “This [deal] is much more focused on investing in people,” summarises Forbes.

When the combined authority elections took place in 2017 the UK devolution project really kicked into gear. “When we first started talking about mayoral combined authorities they were an academic concept,” says Forbes. As newly elected metro mayors took up their positions in six regions around England, Forbes and his fellow council leaders north of the Tyne looked on with concern; “the North East was in real danger of being left behind.”

Nick Forbes is pleased to finally have a North East package in action, four years

after regional leaders started discussing the possibility, but he’s not convinced of this government’s commitment to the Northern Powerhouse project. When Jake Berry was reappointed as Northern Powerhouse Minister after the January reshuffle, Forbes was relieved that the post still existed at all. Although he speaks well of Berry – “I get on well with Jake; I don’t doubt his personal commitment” – he warns that commitment can only take you so far without the funds to match. “We need people in the Treasury and No. 10 who take this seriously and so far, the jury is still out.”

Nowhere is this funding gap more visible, or more complained about, than within transport. Northern authorities have big plans to improve the ageing, or in some places, non-existent transport infrastructure, but don’t have the money. On the 16th January Transport for the North, for which Forbes is a partnership board member, published its ambitious 30-year Strategic Transport Plan, which asks for £60-70bn of investment to transform transport in the North with seven strategic “corridors” connecting key locations. John Prescott stormed out of the launch, calling the whole event “a bloody fraud” as the body lacked the budget to execute their plans, rendering them no more than a wish list. “Transport for the North gives us the first real opportunity to start shaping a pan-northern transport agenda of our own, but the control is only part of the picture – we need the resources to go with it,” concedes Forbes.

So what about the other four councils? Sunderland, County Durham, South Tyneside and Gateshead – a stone’s throw away from their regional partners – are now experiencing a relative gulf in funding, powers and attention from Westminster. It is plausible that certain policies, for example those aimed at Newcastle city centre, could have widespread benefits that will be felt beyond the mayoral authority border; “there’s nothing stopping [people from surrounding areas] going to access the jobs if they are created,” explains Paul

“There is a renaissance in Northern civic leadership”



SHUTTERSTOCK/LORDANIS

Swinney from the Centre for Cities. He thinks that the deal is far from ideal, but doesn't blame the three councils for getting on with it. "It is a victory for pragmatism, but not an ideal geography."

Swinney says the way the region is made up economically and geographically makes it hard to disentangle the city of Newcastle from the surrounding area. Over one in three people from the Gateshead area (not part of the deal) commute into the Newcastle area every day, and one in four from South Tyneside (also not part of the deal). "The authorities of Gateshead, South Tyneside, North Tyneside and Newcastle are actually a continued urban fabric; there's no break to suggest that the city stops. A line has been drawn pretty much through the centre of that city area."

As such, the mayoral authority creates an artificial divide, which means that even if the proximity does spread some of the benefits to the neighbouring councils, when it comes to policy areas like transport and skills, only covering half the region might make it less effective, and worsen the river divide. Will the other councils change their mind and come on board? Swinney isn't sure, but is particularly hopeful that Gateshead, practically a part of

Newcastle, might have a change of heart.

Wounds are not yet healed from the debacle of 2016, and regional politics, thought by many to be the real reason behind the decision of the four councils to walk away, are still prickly. "Gateshead, in particular, has been quite vocal about its differences with Newcastle," explains Swinney. "I think that's a real shame for the people that the politicians represent, because this is an opportunity to improve the job opportunities and the amount of money in people's pockets," he laments. "Politics, both small p and large P, has been used to get in the way and that seems a big missed opportunity."

Despite the glaring imperfection of this latest addition to the devolution club, Forbes is very optimistic about what this deal will do for his city and the wider Northern Powerhouse effort, having received support and advice from his close acquaintances metro mayors Andy Burnham and Steve Rotherham. "[They] have got a very clear commitment to working collaboratively across the whole of the Northern Powerhouse area. It feels as though we've got a renaissance in civic leadership." If a renaissance is taking place, three councils north of the Tyne have done their best not to miss out.

In Yorkshire, the client comes first

If no two clients are the same, then why should any two products be?
Vinnie O'Connor,
head of FM at Everlast Group,
explains why, and how, they shouldn't be

Everlast specialises in the building envelope and our unique one-stop shop approach encompasses the roof waterproofing and cladding aesthetics for both new build and refurbishment projects. Our service doesn't just finish with a final handover; we have the capacity to continue our maintenance programmes, designed to suit all clients.

Our highly experienced and professional team have a proven track record in all aspects of the industry, including cost planning, asset management and budget planning, and regularly draw on their extensive knowledge to analyse the technical requirements for each project, giving top priority to the client's constraints.

Our team will deliver the right result for every budget, project performance criteria and aesthetic desire.

Whether it's a simple fast-track solution or a complex green roof, a PFI project or a commercial development, we can deliver a perfect solution to meet your needs.

Enviably track record

At Everlast we value our clients and work with them to ensure the service they receive is second-to-none and matches their operational and business requirements. Our clients always know they can rely on us to specify appropriate solutions for long-term peace of mind.

Partnership

We work closely with a wide range of

industry partners to provide our clients with top-quality skills, knowledge and workmanship. By working in partnership with well-respected companies we are able to offer our clients the full spectrum of disciplines.

With Everlast, clients can have total confidence from day one. With our system of mutual programming, every individual project is planned and developed in close coordination with the client, so that their specific needs and requirements are met. Throughout each project we aim to keep clients well informed and hold regular progress and design team meetings so that everyone is up to date with all aspects of the project.

Limitations of the client are considered

Supply chain

We also ensure that our sub-contractors and manufacturers work closely with us too. All our sub-contractors go through strict vetting procedures in accordance with the ISO 9001:2000 standard and we always carry out regular site audits to ensure that the required health and safety and quality standards are adhered to.

Our supply chain is an essential tool that allows us to deliver on time and on budget. By making manufacturers our partners we make sure they understand the way we work, the quality we demand, and that we often allow projects to be client-driven in terms of programme, quality and budget.

For more information, please visit:
www.everlastgroup.co.uk

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Maximising the North's potential

Universities play a key part in the economic development of the North. The University of Leeds is making significant investments to support growth and opportunity, explains **Professor Lisa Roberts**

Education and skills

Attracting the brightest and best from over 150 countries, we have a global community of more than 34,000 current students and 250,000 alumni.

As well as the immense cultural contributions they bring to the region, our international students are exemplary ambassadors for the North and raise its international profile. The city's international students bring £390m to the UK economy each year.

There are opportunities for students from all backgrounds to study with us, whether that's through our widening access initiatives for students from under-represented groups, our degree apprenticeships with PwC, or our fully-funded PhD places.

We help develop independent, critical thinkers who make a difference to the world, as recognised through numerous awards and accolades, including The

An artist's impression of one of the entrances to the new Nexus building



Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide's "University of the Year 2017".

We are one of the top five universities in the country targeted by the UK's leading employers. With many graduates forging success within northern businesses and organisations or through their own start-up companies, we are building a critical mass of talent.

Innovation and growth

With our strong background in commercialisation and our unrelenting focus on collaboration, we have a proven track record of aiding the business sector in catalysing growth and productivity.

The launch of our new innovation centre, Nexus, will see a further step in our efforts by providing seamless access to our world-leading expertise as well as state-of-the-art space for start-ups, SMEs and corporate teams.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



As we generate and facilitate these far-reaching successes, we are proud of our civic roots and responsibilities in our thriving, successful city. We contribute £1.3bn to the UK economy, providing jobs for 6,500 directly, and supporting a further 14,000 locally.

Cultural and social impact

Above all, we are committed to making a difference to the world and the region we live in, helping make the North an even better place to live, work and study. With around 3,000 participants, our student volunteering programme is one of the biggest in the country, and our research promotes health, quality of life and environmental sustainability.

We remain true to the North's cultural heritage, recently securing prestigious All-Steinway School status, and we play a key role in the famous Leeds International Piano competition. In addition to hosting the competition, this year we have extended our financial support to ensure audiences around the world can experience performances through medici.tv, the world's leading online classical music channel. Our partnership with Opera North enhances the creative and intellectual life of Leeds, and through our inspiring museums and galleries we enjoy being part of a rich cultural scene. Our Cultural Institute is helping to strengthen the region's cultural and creative economy, with ground-breaking initiatives such as bringing together experts in performance with partners in medicine, robotics, engineering and computing to assist in the rehabilitation of stroke survivors.

It is against this backdrop of internationally regarded research, rich culture and heritage, together with a sense of pride, ambition and innovation, that we, in collaboration with other world-class universities in the north of England, will continue to increase knowledge and opportunity to support the vision of the Northern Powerhouse.

Professor Lisa Roberts is deputy vice-chancellor of research and innovation

We are committed to ensuring the North continues to be an outstanding place for businesses to start up and grow; our ground-breaking research helps industry tackle real-world problems on a varying scale; regional or global.

Our huge breadth of challenge-led research areas are led by some of the most highly regarded researchers and problem-solvers in the world. The government's Industrial Strategy highlights areas of excellence which are in abundance here at Leeds. We are spearheading our region's strengths in health innovation and medtech, advanced manufacturing, advanced materials, data and energy. We undertake collaborative research with global companies, such as Procter and Gamble, with whom we have over 20 current research projects underway. Through our spin-out companies we create regional jobs and opportunities.

INVESTMENT

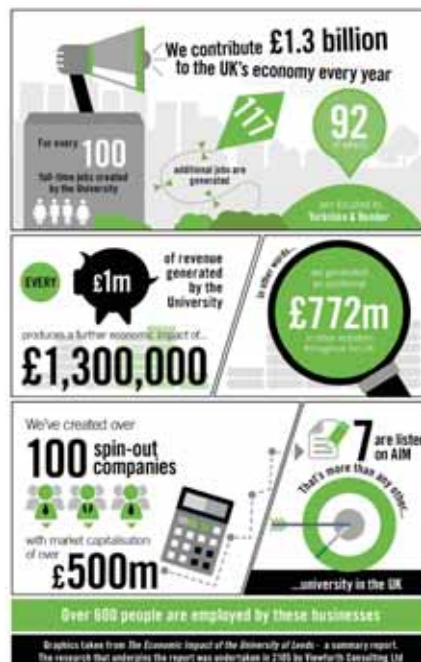
Nexus

We have a history of supporting innovation, licensing and spin-out companies, including:

- Over 110 companies created in the last 20 years
- Six market-listed companies with a value in excess of £550m
- 200 commercialisation projects
- Over 120 technology licences

Nexus will build on this success, providing a new way of working with us through access to our world-leading academics and facilities with particular focus on the health, data, environment and engineering sectors.

It will bring together a vibrant community of innovators, supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a professional team working with businesses to identify and create effective research partnerships delivering commercial impact.



Northern solutions to tomorrow's energy mix

Mark Horsley, chief executive of Northern Gas Networks, explains why gas will have a leading role in the UK's exciting, low-carbon future

What is the biggest challenge?

Tackling climate change is one of the greatest challenges we face today. The way we heat our homes, cook our food, fuel our cars and generate our electricity has a lasting and irreversible effect on our planet.

The 2008 Climate Change Act commits the UK to reducing 1990 carbon levels by 80 per cent by 2050. Heat currently accounts for over 30 per cent of our carbon emissions, and 80 per cent of domestic households in the UK use natural gas to heat their homes. How we can decarbonise heat in a way that is affordable, reliable, sustainable and secure is potentially the biggest challenge.

To date there has never been a holistic solution that is technically possible and economically viable. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that the UK gas network has a vital role to play in making sure the country meets these requirements.

How does gas fit into the picture?

Decarbonisation of the UK gas networks at a scale proportionate to climate change targets is a relatively new concept and a conversion from natural gas – methane – to 100 per cent hydrogen, as presented in the 2016 H21 Leeds City Gate report, could represent the biggest single contribution to those targets.

However, this doesn't remove the need for other measures, such as energy efficiency improvements or increasing renewables. One solution isn't going to provide all the answers, and we need to be realistic and recognise the diverse contribution that alternative solutions can provide.

We also need to remember that 2050 is just 30 years away and large energy infrastructure construction takes time. We can make the mistake of favouring economic analysis over credible deliverable action.

The existing gas grid provides energy through a secure network, unaffected by weather, and is designed to meet a peak demand for a weather event occurring once every 20 years. If the network can be repurposed to transport

Terawatt problems need terawatt solutions

a zero-carbon gas such as hydrogen, it will help us to capitalise on existing network assets and help customers to avoid disruptive and expensive changes to their homes, compared to alternative energy solutions.

Why hydrogen?

Unlike natural gas, hydrogen contains no carbon. When burned, it only produces heat and water.

In 2016, Northern Gas Networks

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





published the H21 Leeds City Gate report. Based on a blueprint of the city of Leeds, it proved it is technically possible and economically viable to convert the UK gas network to 100 per cent hydrogen.

This conversion would be done using steam methane reformers to create the hydrogen at scale, salt caverns to store the gas, and carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology to store the carbon. Ageing iron gas mains are currently being replaced with modern polyethylene pipes, which will be suitable for carrying hydrogen.

A UK-wide conversion to hydrogen will reduce heat emissions by more than 80 per cent as well as support localised electrical generation and decarbonisation of transport.

The government position and H21

In 2016, we were invited to work with the BEIS heat and science policy teams. Our H21 programme director Dan Sadler was seconded for a year to define a programme that de-risked hydrogen for heat beyond the meter. In October last year, hydrogen was identified as one of three key plausible pathways to 2050 as part of the

government's Clean Growth strategy. If followed, this pathway could lead to the existing gas infrastructure being converted by 2050.

Affordability is a key focus and H21 has demonstrated we could convert the gas network to hydrogen at a realistic cost with minimal disruption for the customer.

What's next for H21?

Last November, NGN led a successful submission to Ofgem's Network Innovation Competition fund and a £10.3m H21 project is now underway. This collaborative project is being undertaken by the four gas distribution companies throughout Great Britain – Northern Gas Networks, Cadent, SGN and Wales & West Utilities - focusing on providing critical safety evidence to prove hydrogen is as safe as the natural gas used in our homes today.

The work will directly complement the BEIS hydrogen programme, following similar timescales and will collectively provide the critical safety evidence required for a 100 per cent hydrogen conversion by 2021.

This is essential in supporting the government to make a future policy

decision on heat in the interests of all energy customers, which considers the full range of decarbonisation technologies and importantly, the relative scale and buildability of different solutions.

NGN is also working with the other gas distribution networks to model hydrogen conversion strategies across other key UK cities. Central to this is a collaboration with Cadent and Statoil to conceptually design a conversion strategy for the north of England, spanning Teesside, Tyneside and West Yorkshire and including the cities of Hull, Liverpool, Manchester and York. This report, billed as "H21 – North of England" will be published in September 2018.

The H21 story has secured international interest; awareness of the project at a global scale is invaluable, offering knowledge sharing and lobbying opportunities and helping to maintain momentum.

As with any first mover the most significant economic benefits will go to the first country to convert, so the race is on! Although the UK is out in the lead, others are certainly catching up.

Will hydrogen be powering our lives?

If we want to meet the climate change challenge then a combination of large scale hydrogen availability and electric working together to displace oil is the most logical, cost-effective and deliverable solution.

The Climate Change Act is a terawatt problem and terawatt problems require terawatt solutions. Repurposing our national gas grid with hydrogen using proven large-scale technology available today would represent the biggest single contribution to that challenge.

Longer term, hydrogen can act as a global green energy vector, allowing international trade of energy between nations with surplus renewable energy such as Australia to nations with physical constraints like the UK.

For more information, please visit:
www.northerngasnetworks.co.uk/futures

Our built environment can unlock the Northern Powerhouse



Kevin Whitmore, director – head of North at becg, explains why the built environment is a central consideration for fostering prosperity in the North

Across the north of England, young people are making choices that will shape the rest of their lives. Will they stay in the North or will they leave? And if they do stay, what awaits them? A long, healthy life in which they can fulfil their ambitions and enjoy themselves doing it, or failing to reach their potential in an under-performing economy?

Those young people may have never heard of the Northern Powerhouse, but decisions being taken by politicians and business people today will do much to decide the course of their lives. That is why becg is proud to sponsor this *New Statesman* report. Getting the North’s built environment right is fundamental to the success of the Powerhouse. With offices in Manchester and Leeds we work with public and private sector clients to facilitate investment, unlock support for new developments and ensure the needs of local communities are met and their concerns heard.

Devolution

The case for strong city regions with powerful elected mayors has been well made. Those mayors need place-making powers to effectively shape our environment. The ongoing debate about the shape of devolution in Yorkshire creates challenges for the Powerhouse. Should devolution align with the various economic centres of England’s biggest county or should it follow a romantic ideal of a “One Yorkshire” mayor? With government and business seemingly preferring a city region approach and elections for a Sheffield City Region mayor scheduled for May, time is running out for Yorkshire to grab the “devolution dividend” that Manchester, Liverpool and the Tees Valley have reaped since the first mayoral elections last year.

High density versus urban sprawl

Will the people of the North be better served by a Northern Powerhouse that

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





builds up – increasing density for both residential and office space in our towns and cities – or that builds out, creating new suburbs on green fields?

There is no doubt that, if the North is to grow and thrive, both approaches will be needed, but there are real benefits to increasing urban density. Higher density living makes it easier and cheaper to provide people with high quality infrastructure, healthcare and leisure facilities. becg works with clients across all built environment sectors and we understand the many challenges to getting development right.

At a city level, delivering the right mix of housing is critical. The balance between privately owned, privately rented and socially rented needs to be carefully considered if the North is to compete and attract people with the mix of skills it will need to prosper.

Jobs and skills

A child growing up in the North will,

on average, end up less well-educated, less skilled and earning less than their counterpart in London or the South East. For the gap to close, that must change. It remains one of the biggest and toughest challenges we face. It isn't good enough for anyone to sit back and see this as someone else's problem. It is a problem for all of us and we must all be a part of the solution.

We work with clients who are increasingly focused on developing their workforce, recruiting local people and taking on apprentices and graduates; helping them attract the talent they need.

Infrastructure: transport, energy, utilities and broadband

The Northern Powerhouse debate is often focused on better connectivity between our great cities. Northern Powerhouse rail is undoubtedly a key plank of the vision for our region competing on a world stage, but it isn't the complete solution. For the vision to be turned into a reality, the same focus that has been given to transport, needs to be given to developing the North's energy assets; investing in our utilities and delivering high-speed broadband to our towns and cities.

At becg we understand that good communications can smooth the delivery of transformational investment. When faced with a new development in their area, most people will reasonably ask: "What's in it for me?". The developer with a good answer to that question is not only more likely to succeed more quickly, but will generate the best outcomes for the area too.

Open to the right investment

The Northern Powerhouse must meet the challenge of Brexit and find ways to attract more inward investment. Councils need to be outward-looking and business-friendly to build stronger relationships with the private sector – an approach that becg is able to support.

Better health

We must invest in healthier towns and cities. Recent research in *The Lancet*

suggests that people living in higher-density cities are less likely to be overweight or obese than those in sparser suburbs – they walk more and take the car less. Cities also offer easier access to high quality health facilities and specialist hospitals. However, air pollution remains a major challenge. The health effects of new developments (good and bad) are easily overlooked, but with the strains on the NHS and social care growing, we see good development as playing a key role.

More leisure activities

The young professionals the Northern Powerhouse needs to drive our economy don't want to live somewhere boring. We need to give them choices for spending their disposable income including cinemas, theatres, cafes, restaurants, bars, shops, dance studios, gyms, 3G football pitches, leisure centres, sports stadiums, and festivals etc.

Making it happen

We at becg are passionate about creating the right future for young people, allowing them to fulfil their dreams in the Northern Powerhouse.

The built environment impacts on every aspect of our lives. Developing our town and city centres is complex. Regenerating brownfield sites is always going to be a tougher prospect than greenfield development. But with effective partnerships and appropriate powers, much more can be done.

Good communication can make the difference between successfully delivering the change we need and seeing projects stumble and fail.

We need a better built environment that supports our economic growth, providing the foundation for society to thrive. The next generation is central to this – providing them with the homes and jobs to help our economy flourish.

For more information, please visit:
www.becg.com

What next for Yorkshire devolution?

The Sheffield City Region deal has been rejected by many voters, businesses and politicians in Yorkshire.

Jonny Ball talks to both sides of the battle over devolution in the largest of Britain's historic counties

If the mandarins of Westminster assumed that the devolution deals they handed would be accepted gratefully across the North, they have been surprised. Strong regional identities have been stirred by the EU referendum and exacerbated by the prospect of being squeezed into the same jurisdiction as a traditional enemy 20 minutes down the motorway.

A frequent refrain of Northerners living outside the M62 corridor is that so far, all the fanfare around the Powerhouse has focused too much on the big cities west of the Pennines. So when South Yorkshire was given the chance to replicate the successes of the Manchester and Liverpool devolution deals by electing a mayor for Sheffield City Region in May, this should have been a chance to capitalise on the new powers and cash incentives that Whitehall has offered to the region's four constituent local authorities: Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster. But early talks that included Chesterfield

and Bassetlaw ended in acrimony, with Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire county councils accusing Sheffield of predatory behaviour and a land-grab against their respective regions.

To make matters worse, at the end of last year, Barnsley and Doncaster held a referendum or "community poll" on devolution, in which 85 per cent of voters rejected the Sheffield City Region model – offered after two years of painstaking work and negotiation – in favour of a proposed "One Yorkshire" settlement that had never even been on the table as far as the government was concerned. All but two of the 20 local authorities in Yorkshire now support all-Yorkshire devolution, leaving Sheffield City Region as an unwanted gift for which the recipients are making no attempt to pretend they're grateful.

"There's a Brexit-esque quality to people worrying about where their place starts and stops" says Chris Read, Labour mayor of Rotherham – the only council, along with Sheffield, that is still fully





Other towns fear being seen as second to Sheffield

behind the City Region deal. “My view is that this is all a bit of a distraction from what our shared priority ought to be, which is: how do we draw in investment, how do we create jobs? But I appreciate functional economic geography doesn’t excite people in quite the way that Yorkshire loyalties might do.”

Fellow Labour mayor Ros Jones, of neighbouring Doncaster, sees things differently: “Yorkshire has the size, assets and brand to make devolution a real success. People clearly feel an association with Yorkshire which they don’t feel about the Sheffield City Region, and that sense of pride and identity is important if we want to gain public support for a new layer of regional government.”

This sentiment is echoed by Dan Jarvis, Labour MP for Barnsley. Jarvis is in a rare position for a politician in that, as both the leading advocate of all-Yorkshire devolution and a contender to be Labour’s candidate for mayor of Sheffield in May, he’s trying to get elected to an

office he doesn’t believe should exist in the long term. But for Jarvis, who campaigned to remain in the EU as the MP for a constituency that ultimately voted almost 70 per cent to leave, the referendum was an abrupt lesson in listening to the people of Yorkshire. That result, he says, “demonstrated to the political establishment that millions of people felt disenfranchised. They felt that the places where they lived had not received the benefits that globalisation had brought to other parts of the country. And the EU referendum provided them the opportunity to have their say in kicking back against a system they didn’t think had served them particularly well.”

For central government to once more impose on his constituents an identity they don’t recognise would, says Jarvis, be a big mistake. “People instinctively feel part of Yorkshire. It’s a recognisable brand. People go to football matches and they’ll shout ‘Yorkshire! Yorkshire!’ They don’t have that same sense of identity to the Sheffield City Region.”

In areas such as Barnsley and Doncaster, it doesn’t help that the new City Region’s name implies that those towns will become an appendage of Sheffield. For Chris Read, this is a superficial concern. “Sheffield City Region is just a name that we give to it,” he says. “We’re all equal parts of it... We could call it South Yorkshire City Region or we could call it Derbyshire and South Yorkshire or whatever, the name doesn’t matter to me. But [opponents of the Sheffield deal] were concerned about that.”

Read says other devolution deals would do well to take this into account. “I expect all towns outside cities have a concern that’s part of their local identity. People in Rotherham are

A Yorkshire deal could split the region

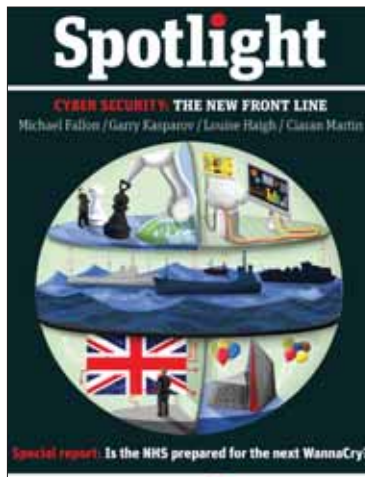
proud of being from Rotherham. They wouldn’t describe themselves as being from Sheffield. But the task has always been, for us local leaders, to demonstrate the practical, tangible benefits of devolution.” Those not inconsiderable benefits include around £1bn of extra government investment over 30 years following the mayoral election in May.

The dispute is not simply one of local identity. Supporters of the One Yorkshire proposals include leading business groups such as the CBI, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Institute of Directors, as well as the TUC. Businesses are enthusiastic about the county’s considerable size and potential economic clout; Yorkshire’s economy is larger than that of 11 EU states. Its population of over five million puts it on a par with Scotland. It is twice the size of Northern Ireland with almost three times as many people. There are twice as many people in Yorkshire as there are in Wales. But these places, unlike Yorkshire, already enjoy the benefits of considerable devolved powers at the assemblies in Holyrood, Stormont and Cardiff Bay.

Party politics, too, could hamper progress. It’s possible that an all-Yorkshire devolution deal would split the region into a Tory north and a Labour south, with neither party able to guarantee dominance. Rotherham’s Chris Read concedes that while the Sheffield City Region would, like Manchester and Liverpool, be all but guaranteed to be run as a Labour fiefdom for the foreseeable future, his “political sense of it is that it would be more likely to be a Tory mayor [for all of Yorkshire] more often than a Labour one.”

So far, the government has signalled its willingness to negotiate on the issue of Yorkshire devolution, provided South Yorkshire’s Sheffield City Region deal is properly implemented first. If Dan Jarvis wins the Labour nomination next month, he is all but guaranteed to be elected mayor of Sheffield City Region. But for him, and for the 18 Yorkshire councils calling for regional autonomy, the City Region deal will be just the beginning.

Spotlight



Find business and policy news,
in-depth interviews and features
and full policy reports at:
newstatesman.com/spotlight