

FAQs

What is devolution?

Devolution is the granting of powers and funding from Central Government to local areas. It enables decision-making and resources to be managed locally. It involves the creation of a new Combined Authority, chaired by a Directly Elected Mayor.

It is an ongoing process which has gained momentum following the Scottish independence referendum and Greater Manchester's devolution agreement in November 2014.

In May 2015, the Government announced its intention to bring forward legislation to support the English devolution process. The Queen's Speech included a draft Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill that made provision for further devolution of powers within England. This became an Act in January 2016.

Has there been devolution anywhere else in England?

Yes. Greater Manchester reached an agreement in November 2014. Subsequently Cornwall, Sheffield City Region, the North East and Tees Valley have secured devolution deals to date.

If this was agreed – would all council services be delivered by a Combined Authority?

Devolution would offer Cambridgeshire and Peterborough greater decision making powers on key issues that affect our communities such as infrastructure, growth, house building, jobs and skills.

Peterborough City Council would keep its sovereignty and continue to deliver services for residents as we do currently – even if we are part of a Combined Authority.

Who is in the Combined Authority?

Government says in order to secure a devolution deal, and the decision making powers and funding that come with it, there must be a Combined Authority with a single person who chairs it, a Directly Elected Mayor.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough proposal would mean forming a Combined Authority that would include the following organisations – Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership.

What powers are you proposing that a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority would have?

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, chaired by a Directly Elected Mayor, would receive the following powers:

- Control of a new additional £20million a year funding allocation over 30 years to boost growth
- Control of a new £100million ring-fenced fund to deliver an ambitious target of new homes over a five year period for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- £70 million for Cambridge which would be spent on new council rented homes
- Responsibility for chairing an area-based review of 16+ skills provision
- Co-designing with Government a new National Work and Health programme aimed at those with a health condition or disability and the very long-term unemployed.

Further powers may be agreed over time and included in future legislation.

A new directly elected Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mayor would act as chair to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and could exercise the following powers and functions devolved from Central Government:

- Responsibility for a multi-year devolved transport budget
- Responsibility for an identified key route network of local authority roads
- Powers over strategic planning, the responsibility to create a non-statutory spatial framework for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and to develop with Government a Land Commission.

How will decisions be made?

In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough devolution would involve creating an organisation known as the Combined Authority. Residents would elect a Mayor who would chair the Combined Authority.

The Combined Authority would be made up of a councillor from each of our councils, the Mayor and a business representative from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Powers and funding will be transferred from Central Government – and would become the responsibility of the Combined Authority and the Directly Elected Mayor.

There are proposals for how the Combined Authority and Directly Elected Mayor would take decisions. Each member of the Combined Authority including the Mayor has a vote.

Decision making would follow the principles below:

- The Directly Elected Mayor cannot make decisions alone and will require the support of a certain number of members of the Combined Authority to progress their proposals, or in certain circumstances the business community.
- Some decisions, such as the Combined Authority asking the Government for new powers and how much the authority would cost to run would require a majority of members to agree. That majority must include the Directly Elected Mayor.

Full details can be found in the published [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough scheme document](#)

How would the Combined Authority be held to account?

In a number of ways including the following:

- An independent scrutiny committee that has the power to ask the Mayor and other members of the Combined Authority to attend a meeting to answer questions. This would be made up of councillors from participating councils who are not members of the Combined Authority itself. The exact details are being worked up.
- The scrutiny committee having the power to review any of the decisions made by the Combined Authority.
- An audit committee which would monitor the Combined Authority's finances.
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough electors being able to directly elect their Mayor through the ballot box.
- The Combined Authority will be open and transparent – where it's expected that most decisions will be made in public.
- A Government assessment every five years

Please also consult the supporting devolution documents which can be found at www.peterborough.gov.uk/devolution

Why do we need devolution?

Across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough we face major challenges:

- We need to accelerate the economic success of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- We need to build new homes that meet a mix of housing needs
- Our transport systems need substantial investment and stronger integration
- We have skills shortages in key areas that businesses need
- We have a growing and aging population which generates a major financial challenge

A devolution deal means that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will be able to make a greater number of important decisions about Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, rather than them being made by Central Government.

As part of a Combined Authority we would have greater control and influence over certain powers, resources and funding that currently sit with Government. This would enable us to drive economic growth and invest more in our infrastructure, people and communities.

A devolution deal would mean that we have the power and resources to tackle our challenges and make the most of future opportunities.

Why do we need to elect someone, like a mayor, to chair a Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough?

The Government has made it clear that in return for more powers, resources and funding being devolved to combined authorities, that a Mayor will need to be elected by residents who would then work in partnership with local politicians.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would establish a Combined Authority and introduce a Directly Elected Mayor with first elections in May 2017.

How was the public consultation carried out across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough?

It included a proportionally representative Ipsos MORI phone poll of 2,280 residents as well as an online survey which 1,500 people completed, plus comments from business, community groups, parish councils and other organisations.

The scale of the response has surpassed similar consultations in other devolution areas.

How is the Ipsos MORI survey representative?

The following is taken from the independent report conducted by Ipsos Mori:

Ipsos MORI were commissioned to conduct a representative telephone survey; this survey is independent to the council run online consultation which was open to all members of the public, and was undertaken to enable the councils to extrapolate the results to the adult populations of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as a whole; important given the universe of the issues and services under scrutiny.

Whilst an open consultation (online) will permit any local resident to give their views, it will not necessarily compromise the responses of a representative sample of local residents; only those who choose to respond to the consultation. As such, it may over or under-represent a particular point of view if those people holding these views are disproportionately likely to respond; similarly, particular sub-groups may be under or over-represented.

Running a representative survey permits measurements of residents' overall opinion and ensures the results are reflective of Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City overall.

Data are weighted back to the known population profile of the county to ensure that the results are as representative as possible. Data are weighted by age within gender, and working status, as well as being balanced by local authority to reflect the distribution of the population across the county. As with sample quotas, the weighting profile is based on latest census mid-year estimates.

So what happens next?

- **By the end of October/start of November** - development of governance model, Full Council commitment to arrangements to form a Combined Authority and then Government approval. If approved:
- **November to December** - legislative process to establish Combined Authority and transfer powers.
- **November** - Shadow Combined Authority formed would operate until May 2017.
- **February** – Combined authority set up
- **May** - A Mayor for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would be elected in May 2017.

If it gets the go ahead how much would the Combined Authority cost?

Work is still ongoing on what the Combined Authority would look like and what resources it will need. But it is not only clear from the consultation but also from the partners themselves that they want the authority to be as efficient and effective as possible. This means looking at using, where possible, existing resources while also making sure the authority will be fit for purpose to deliver hundreds of millions of pounds of improvements for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.