

## LEVELLING UP THE UNITED KINGDOM: WHITE PAPER

### GM BRIEFING

#### KEY MESSAGES

- **Trailblazer devolution negotiations.** The White Paper publishes a 'Devolution Framework' for England and sets out steps to 'extend, deepen, and simplify' devolution. It also commits to opening negotiations on "*trailblazer deeper devolution deals with the West Midlands and Greater Manchester*". These will cover both the devolution of powers and functions, and options for "*streamlining the funding landscape*". GMCA officers are in touch with UK Government Officials to find out the next steps for this process and further information will be available soon.
- **Innovation and R&D.** The White Paper makes a headline commitment that the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will invest at least 55% of its R&D funding outside London and the South East by 2024-25. It also announces three 'Innovation Accelerators', including one in GM. £100m is available to support these plans, and BEIS officials have been in touch with the team working on Innovation Greater Manchester.
- **UK Shared Prosperity Fund.** The White Paper (and associated guidance) confirms the UKSPF will be significantly delegated to local leaders. GMCA will be the Lead Authority responsible for planning and managing the Fund in GM, subject to publishing an investment framework. Funding will be allocated by formula but we don't know how much each area will receive. GMCA officers are currently absorbing the detail of the guidance and we will shortly set out plans for a pan-organisational response which learns lessons from our role in both EU Structural Funds and the UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF).
- **Housing.** The Government is abolishing the so-called "80/20" rule which focused most housing spending in areas of the country with the biggest affordability issues (meaning many GM districts were not eligible). GM has also received just under £40m additional Brownfield Funding (a combination of some underspend from this year and a new allocation for next year). The Government has also pledged to strengthen the Decent Homes Standard and to apply it to homes in the private rented sector, and to consult on introducing a National Landlord Register.
- **Transport.** We believe decisions about Bus Service Improvement Plan funding are due in the next month and announcements about further Active Travel funding will come soon. The White Paper also confirms Government will look at additional transport powers for Mayoral Combined Authority areas and offer them 'first priority' on new partnerships with Great British Railways
- **Education Investment Areas.** The Government has designated 55 local authorities (inc. all in GM but Stockport, Trafford and Wigan) as 'Education Investment Areas'. These areas will receive several offers of support, though their scale and scope are unclear.
- **Levelling Up Missions.** A key set-piece of the White Paper is the inclusion of twelve Levelling Up Missions designed to anchor policy for the medium-term. These are accompanied by detailed technical annexes explaining how they will be measured, and the Government intends to put them into legislation with statutory annual reporting on progress.

**Table of Contents**

Key Messages ..... 1

Background ..... 3

Chapter One - The UK’s geographic disparities: Drivers and potential policy approaches. .... 3

Chapter Two - System change: A new policy regime for Levelling Up..... 4

    A mission-oriented approach to setting policy..... 5

    Reshaping central government decision-making ..... 5

    Empowering local decision making..... 7

    The role of data, monitoring and evaluation..... 8

    Transparency and accountability ..... 8

Chapter Three - The policy programme ..... 8

    Boosting productivity, pay, jobs and living standards..... 9

    Spreading opportunities and improving public services ..... 10

    Restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging ..... 12

    Empowering local leaders and communities..... 13

Chapter Four – Next steps..... 14

    Engagement and informal consultation..... 14

    Future legislation..... 14

Annex A – UK Shared Prosperity Fund ‘Pre-Launch Guidance’ ..... 15

## BACKGROUND

- This document provides a GM-focused summary of the Levelling Up White Paper for key stakeholders in the GM system. It follows the structure of the White Paper itself:
  - **Chapter 1 - The UK's Geographical Disparities: Drivers and potential policy approaches.** This sets out the historical context, including the origin of spatial disparities in the UK and a framework for understanding what causes them.
  - **Chapter 2 - System change: A new policy regime for Levelling Up.** This sets out a series of 'machinery of government' reforms designed to 'hard wire' spatial thinking into the UK's general approach to government and policymaking.
  - **Chapter 3 - The Policy Programme: Policy initiatives to Level Up the UK.** This sets out a series of discrete policy initiatives to tackle each of the twelve missions.
  - **Chapter 4 - Next Steps.** This sets out some general next steps for the Levelling Up programme which aren't already captured in the policy-specific commitments.

## CHAPTER ONE - THE UK'S GEOGRAPHIC DISPARITIES: DRIVERS AND POTENTIAL POLICY APPROACHES.

- This Chapter is the longest section of the White Paper and contains an extensive discussion of the historical origins of the UK's spatial disparities. It sets out a framework for understanding these disparities, explains why it's important to address them and makes a case for how policy can do so. In the interests of brevity, this briefing only covers the headline arguments.
- The White Paper argues that spatial disparities (especially in economic performance) are found across the world but that they are experienced more acutely in the UK than in many other places. It then sets out a range of examples and case studies of these variations and how these are large by international standards. It also makes some arguments about the need for nuanced analysis and argues that 'within place' differences are often as large or larger than 'between region' differences. This includes some analysis about the performance of UK cities which rehearses the well-understood argument that 'second tier' UK cities behave unusually by international standards – failing to become more productive as they get bigger.
- It moves on to making an argument about how the UK's economic and social geography operates, arguing that the performance of places requires economic, social, and institutional endowments, that issues in any one of these areas can have 'knock-on' effects, and that Levelling Up therefore requires a 'recipe' of different interventions.
- The White Paper sets out a 'six capitals' framework for understanding the drivers of spatial disparities and presents evidence about how spatial 'spread' of endowments of these different forms of capital. The six capitals are:
  - Physical capital – infrastructure, machines and housing.
  - Human capital – the skills, health and experience of the workforce.

- Intangible capital – innovation, ideas and patents.
- Financial capital – resources supporting the financing of companies.
- Social capital – the strength of communities, relationships and trust.
- Institutional capital – local leadership, capacity and capability.
- Finally, this Chapter makes the case for the role of public policy in addressing these issues. It argues that a local growth policy is both desirable (because it corrects market failures) and feasible (because there is international evidence it can work).

## **CHAPTER TWO - SYSTEM CHANGE: A NEW POLICY REGIME FOR LEVELLING UP**

- This Chapter sets out why policy has historically failed to address geographical disparities in the UK, arguing that policymakers have lacked the *information, incentives and institutions* needed. It then sets out a series of machinery of government changes designed to ‘bend’ the whole of the UK state more toward levelling up.
- The White Paper argues that past UK attempts to tackle spatial disparities in economic and social geography have suffered some key shortcomings:
  - They have not had enough longevity (with stop-start funding and ‘endemic policy churn’). This has tended to mean they’ve also been too modest in scale.
  - They have tended to operate in silos, without the necessary coordination across Government and between different sectors (public, private, and third).
  - There has been a lack of local empowerment and excessive centralization of decision-making in Whitehall. Some initiatives to decentralize decision-making have failed due to a lack of democratic accountability and transparency.
  - A lack of evidence, monitoring, and evaluation, particularly poor availability of key statistics at small spatial scales and a poor UK Government understanding about where it spends public money and how policy ‘plays out’ spatially.
  - A lack of accountability for outcomes, and no clear oversight of previous policy regimes designed to tackle spatial disparities.
- The White Paper then moves on to discussing how efforts to tackle longstanding and complex policy challenges have tended to ensure the right *information* is available, that policymakers face the right *incentives* to act, and that the right *institutions* are in place. It draws on several case studies of other policy reforms in the UK to show how this works in practice, including the creation of the Office for Budget Responsibility and National Infrastructure Commission, the creation of the Climate Change Act and Climate Change Committee, and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

- The rest of this Chapter sets out a new, five-pronged ‘policy regime’ designed to underpin specific UK Government actions and ‘transform’ the system of government and the governance of spatial policy. The five pillars are:
  - a mission-oriented approach to setting policy;
  - a reorientation of central government decision-making;
  - greater empowerment of local government decision-making;
  - a revolution in data and transparency at the subnational level; and
  - enhanced transparency and accountability of this new regime.

### A MISSION-ORIENTED APPROACH TO SETTING POLICY

- The section argues that a ‘mission-based’ approach to Levelling Up would provide more long-term consistency in approach, tackling ‘policy churn’ and ‘pre-committing’ the UK Government to prioritizing certain goals in its future decisions. The certainty of clear, measurable medium-term missions also helps catalyse and ‘crowd in’ action from other sectors.
- The White Paper sets out twelve ‘Levelling Up Missions’, set out in the Table 1 on the next page. The idea is that these are rolling ten-year ambitions, flexible but not subject to regular and significant change, and ‘anchoring’ UK Government spatial policy.

### RESHAPING CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKING

- The section sets out how Government plans to reform UK Government decision-making, so it is less ‘place-blind’. This includes action on four goals:
  - **Improving transparency about place-based spending** by improving how the UK Government uses data about the spatial distribution of its spending (in effect having a better understanding of *where* money is spent, not just on *what*); and reviewing formula-based spending (e.g., schools funding) to ensure it is targeted where it’s most needed.
  - **Hardwiring spatial considerations into decision-making** by establishing a new Cabinet Committee for Levelling Up with a cross-Whitehall mandate; establishing new ‘Levelling Up Directors’ to act as a ‘key bridge’ between local actors and the UK Government; create a new statutory requirement for public bodies to reduce geographical variations in the outcomes relevant to their business area; and making greater use of social value provisions in public procurement.
- **Improve coordination of central government policies at the local level** by publishing a plan to streamline the local government funding landscape (reducing the proliferation of funding pots, streamlining bidding, and supporting greater alignment of capital and revenue); continuing the programme of civil service relocations across the UK (with various tables of commitments by Department); and establishing a new Leadership College for Government also available to senior local government officers.

Table 1: Proposed Levelling Up missions

Focus Area	Mission
<i>Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging</i>	
Living Standards	By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each area containing a globally competitive city, and the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
Research & Development (R&D)	By 2030, domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40%, and over the Spending Review period by at least one third. This additional government funding will seek to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.
Transport Infrastructure	By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.
Digital Connectivity	By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.
<i>Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest</i>	
Education	By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
Skills	By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high quality-skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.
Health	By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years.
Well-being	By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.

Focus Area	Mission
<i>Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost</i>	
Pride in Place	By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
Housing	By 2030, renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas. <sup>305</sup>
Crime	By 2030, homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst affected areas.
<i>Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency</i>	
Local Leadership	By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.

## EMPOWERING LOCAL DECISION MAKING

- This section of the White Paper sets out the Government's ambitions for the future of devolution in England and makes the case for "*widening, deepening and simplifying devolution*". This includes a published 'Devolution Framework' setting out the core powers available to areas seeking a devolution deal, with a 'tier' of powers available depending on governance arrangements (with the lowest level for joint committees of local authorities, and the highest for Mayoral Combined Authorities or Counties with Directly Elected Mayors).
  - Note: This framework includes the outcome of review of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), with the UK Government "*encouraging*" the integration of LEPs and their business board into Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), the Greater London Authority and County Deals. Further detail is promised but it looks like this will have little impact in GM.
- This devolution framework is less relevant for Greater Manchester, as the GM settlement is already more extensive than the 'top' of the framework in most places. However, it does confirm that MCAs (and Counties with Directly Elected Mayors) will have priority for new rail partnerships with Great British Railways, a 'role' in designing and delivering future contracted employment support services, and strategic partnerships with Homes England across the Affordable Housing Programme and Brownfield funding. A note underneath the framework also alludes to "*exploring*" how MCAs could use further flexibilities on business rates to fund local priorities. Finally, this section also confirms the Government is reviewing the information underlying the formulae used for the local government funding settlement to ensure funding better matches need.
- On devolution, the White Paper commits to "*trailblazer*" negotiations on deepening the devolution settlement in Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. This is presented as an opportunity to negotiate a set of arrangements which will then be open to other MCAs to follow in due course. The commitment includes the negotiations of powers and functions, but also exploring opportunities to "*streamline the funding landscape*".
- This section also announces plans for a new Independent Body in England focused on data transparency and robust evidence in local government (which sounds a little like the former Audit Commission). This will be tasked with developing new comparable datasets which allow citizens to compare their local leaders to those in other places, help those leaders themselves to better understand how services in their place are performing, and increase the UK Government's understanding of the local government sector. This body will have its HQ outside of London, and its scope and remit will be co-designed with the local government sector.

## THE ROLE OF DATA, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- This section begins by stressing that “*high-quality, timely and robust spatial data are a foundational pillar of the new policy regime for levelling up*”. The White Paper sets out plans to improve this by:
  - **Producing and disseminating more timely, granular and harmonised subnational statistics**, through the Government Statistical Service’s Subnational Data Strategy and by creating a new ‘Spatial Data Unit’ in DLUHC.
  - **Making granular data publicly available through a number of tools**, including a new ONS interactive subnational data explorer.
  - **Harnessing data visualisation techniques** by supporting an ONS-led collaboration platform which will develop a suite of data dashboards to support spatial analysis across government; and investing in spatial modelling techniques to help local government in their planning (with a small team of modellers, building on recent research on street level geographies using administrative data).
  - **Increasing incentives to evaluate, monitor and experiment in levelling up policies and programmes**, including by embedding consistent and regular use of subnational data when tracking UK Government spending and impact (e.g., through the Treasury’s ‘priority outcomes and metrics’).

## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- This section sets out the establishment of a new “Levelling Up Advisory Council” which will be tasked with providing independent expert advice on matters relating to the design and delivery of levelling up, and which will be commissioned by the Levelling Up Cabinet Committee. It also confirms UK Government plans to introduce a statutory obligation to report annually on progress toward meeting the Levelling Up Missions.

## **CHAPTER THREE - THE POLICY PROGRAMME**

- This chapter sets out specific policy interventions across a wide range of areas. None of these announcements involve new money which has not already been allocated in the 2021 Spending Review (SR21), but often provide further detail on how funding already announced at SR21 will be spent by Departments in pursuit of Levelling Up goals. In each area, the White Paper sets out the ‘case for action’ then the policy interventions.
- This briefing focuses on summarising the policy interventions and focuses on those where further detail has been announced (i.e., it will not cover where the White Paper summarises UK Government actions which have already been announced and where no further detail has been given). The actions are structured by the Governments four ‘focus areas’ and the 12 ‘missions’ which sit underneath them (see *Table 1*).

BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY, PAY, JOBS AND LIVING STANDARDS

MISSION ONE: BY 2030, PAY, EMPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY WILL HAVE RISEN IN EVERY AREA OF THE UK, WITH EACH REGION CONTAINING A GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE CITY

- **SME finance.** The Treasury, Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) will work with the Levelling Up Advisory Council to further explore options for unlocking capital for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) given challenges to SME finance outside the South East.
- **Unlocking institutional investment.** The UK Government is asking Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds to publish plans for increasing local investment, including setting an ambition of up to 5% of assets invested in projects which support local areas.
- **Unlocking globally mobile investment.** The UK Government will establish Freeports in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (one of the eight in England is in Liverpool City Region which extends to parts of Port Salford). The UK 'Office of Investment' will also establish a presence across the UK, allowing it *"to partner with city region mayors and growth companies."*
- **Adoption and diffusion.** The UK Government will aim to *"embed adoption and diffusion into its business support schemes, particularly in areas with low productivity"*.

MISSION TWO: BY 2030, DOMESTIC PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN R&D OUTSIDE THE GREATER SOUTH EAST WILL INCREASE BY ... AT LEAST 40 PERCENT

- **R&D and Innovation.** The UK Government will ask the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and UK Government Office for Science to work with Departments to collect and publish subnational data on their R&D spending, which will be used to set specific spatial targets. As a 'down payment' on these targets, the White Paper confirms that:
  - The **Department of Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)** will invest £100m over three years to pilot three new 'Innovation Accelerators', including one in Greater Manchester. It makes Levelling Up one of the objectives of its R&D strategy, and will aim to invest at least 55% of its R&D funding outside the Greater South East by 2024-25. Finally, it will give UK Research and Innovation (the arms-length body which is responsible for distributing a lot of public R&D funding) a new objective to *"Deliver economic, social, and cultural benefits from research and innovation to all of our citizens, including by developing research and innovation strengths across the UK"*.
  - The **Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)** will commit to increased investment in National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) Biomedical Research Centres outside London, Oxford and Cambridge and will commit that the next round of NIHR Clinical Research Facilities will see over half of funding going outside these areas.
  - The **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** will expand the regional footprint of the Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory.

**MISSION THREE: BY 2030, LOCAL TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY ACROSS THE COUNTRY WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY CLOSER TO THE STANDARDS OF LONDON**

- **Local transport.** The White Paper confirms that “*significant bus transformation*” will be funded in the “*Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) areas*” (as part of the National Bus Strategy and Bus Service Improvement Plan process) and signals further discussions in the weeks ahead. We understand that final BSIP allocations are expected in the next month. It also re-confirms spending of ~£2bn across the Parliament on active travel with a focus on “*places where funding is most needed*”. It confirms the new Executive Agency Active Travel England (led by Chris Boardman) will work with councils on the “*detailed design of schemes*” over the months ahead.
- **Empowering local leaders.** The UK Government will explore devolving more transport powers in MCA areas, providing “*new powers of direction*” to increase mayors’ control over Key Route Networks and exploring “*transferring control of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing to both combined authorities and upper-tier authorities*”. The Greater British Railways (GBR) Transition Team will also develop “*successor partnerships to those already in operation, to align them with the ambitions of the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail*”. These will encompass the whole passenger offer and could include the ability to integrate ticketing and fares, control stations and buy extra services or infrastructure with locally raised funds.

**MISSION FOUR: BY 2030 THE UK WILL HAVE NATIONWIDE GIGABIT-CAPABLE BROADBAND AND 4G COVERAGE, WITH 5G FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION**

- [This section contains no new announcements]

**SPREADING OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPROVING PUBLIC SERVICES**

**MISSION FIVE: BY 2030, THE NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN ACHIEVING THE EXPECTED STANDARD IN READING, WRITING AND MATHS WILL HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED**

- **Eliminating illiteracy and innumeracy.** The Government will establish new “Education Investment Areas” (EIAs) covering 1/3 of local authorities in England where attainment is weakest. Seven of ten GM authorities are covered (not Stockport, Trafford, or Wigan). The Department for Education (DfE) will launch a consultation on moving schools in EIA areas with successive ‘Requires Improvement’ Ofsted judgements into strong multi-academy trusts. It will also offer retention payments to help schools retain teachers in priority subjects. There will be “*more intensive investment*” across “*some*” EIAs to tackle wider issues that may be limiting school improvement and DfE is opening new 16-19 free schools “*where they are most needed*”.
- A new **UK National Academy** will be created, a free and online digital education service designed to support the work of schools. This will allow students to acquire additional advanced knowledge and skills and reduce regional disparities caused by geographical divides. The process for setting up the organisation that will run this has not been finalised.

MISSION SIX: BY 2030, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING HIGH QUALITY SKILLS TRAINING WILL HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED IN EVERY AREA

- **Local employers at the heart of the skills system.** The UK Government will create an ‘enhanced recruitment service’ for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to help them recruit apprentices. The Department for Education is also setting up a new ‘Unit for Future Skills’, which will bring together government administrative data and use it to produce information on local skills demand, future skills needs, and the existing skills base in an area.
- **Strengthening institutions.** The New ‘Institutes of Technology’ (one of which will be in Salford) will be able to apply for Royal Charter once they have demonstrated their success, with criteria and application process published in Spring.
- **Lifelong training.** From April 2022, the ‘Lifetime Skills Guarantee’ will expand to include a trial enabling any adult with a Level 3 qualification or higher who earns below the National Living Wage or who is unemployed to access a further “high value” level 3 qualification for free.
- **Work opportunities and progression.** The UK Government’s response to the ‘Progression Commission’ will set out more detail about how the new Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) ‘In-Work Progression’ offer will operate.

MISSION SEVEN: BY 2030, THE GAP IN HEALTHY LIFE EXPECTANCY BETWEEN LOCAL AREAS WHERE IT IS HIGHEST AND LOWEST WILL HAVE NARROWED

- **Improving public health.** The UK Government will publish a new White Paper on Health Disparities in England in 2022, as well as a new Tobacco Control Plan for England. The UK Government is also “considering the future” of the NHS Health Check programme.
- **Food and diet.** The forthcoming Food Strategy White Paper will respond to Henry Dimbleby’s Independent Report. The Department of Education will also work with the Food Standards Agency to pilot a new approach for councils in enforcing school food standards (with four councils, none in GM).

MISSION EIGHT: BY 2030, MEASURES OF WELL-BEING WILL HAVE IMPROVED IN EVERY AREA OF THE UK, WITH THE GAP BETWEEN TOP PERFORMING AND OTHER AREAS CLOSING

- [This section contains no specific announcements, arguing that wellbeing is a cross-cutting outcome which will be affected by many of the other announcements made in the White Paper]

RESTORING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY, LOCAL PRIDE AND BELONGING

MISSION NINE: BY 2030, PRIDE IN PLACE WILL HAVE RISEN IN EVERY AREAS OF THE UK

- **Regeneration.** The UK Government is scrapping the 80/20 rule, which targeted housing funds at areas of lowest housing affordability (only five of ten GM councils met this threshold). The UK Government will support twenty places on wholesale town/city centre regeneration schemes – the first two are in Sheffield and Wolverhampton, and there is no detail about how the remaining 18 will be selected. There is further detail about how Brownfield funding will be distributed, with just under £40m for GM (including some new money and underspend on previous rounds). Homes England will be refocused to a more ‘English Partnerships’-style role, with a wider focus on place partnerships and regeneration. 68 new places will get expert support from the High Streets Task Force (including Bury and Stockport). Additionally, councils will get the right to require landlords to rent out vacant properties to prospective tenants. Finally, there will be a new £30m Parks Fund to deliver up to £1m to up to 30 parks.
- **Communities.** A new National Youth Guarantee will offer every young person access to regular out of school activities and opportunities to volunteer by 2025, supported by £368m invested into areas of England with high levels of child income deprivation and £288m capital investment in 300 new and refurbished youth clubs. A new Strategy for Community Spaces and Relationships will be published, and the UK Government will aim to improve official statistics on civil society. It will also launch a review of neighbourhood governance, and test Community Covenants and other forms of community partnership (with further detail later this year). The White Paper also commits to communities retaining the right to “*meaningful say*” on “*individual planning applications*”. £44m from the Dormant Assets Scheme will be unlocked immediately, and the Government will expand the Scheme to unlock up to £880m. They will consult on how this could be used, considering proposals for a Community Wealth Fund
- **Culture, heritage and sport.** 100% of the additional funding for Arts Council England (ACE) in last years Spending Review will be spent outside London. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DMCS) will also set out ACEs key priorities for investing in National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) from 2023, including supporting a number of NPOs to establish a presence outside London.

MISSION TEN: BY 2023, RENTERS WILL HAVE A SECURE PATH TO OWNERSHIP AND... THE NUMBER OF NON-DECENT RENTS HOMES WILL HAVE FALLEN BY 50%

- **Making home ownership a reality.** Councils will get new powers to apply a premium of 100% to homes left empty for a year (rather than two) with all additional revenues retained locally.
- **Improving housing quality.** A Renters White Paper in the Spring will include proposals to end ‘no notice’ Section 21 evictions and a consultation on introducing a new National Landlord Register. The Government will also review the Decent Homes Standard and apply it to all tenures (including the private rented sector). It will also launch a new Task Force to look at ways to offer older people better choice, quality and security of housing.

MISSION ELEVEN: BY 2030, HOMICIDE, SERIOUS VIOLENCE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME WILL HAVE FALLEN

- **Crime, drugs and serious violence.** The expanded Safer Streets Fund (£50m p.a.) will encompass the prevention of neighbourhood crimes like burglary, robbery and vehicle theft, anti-social behaviour and violence against women and girls as its primary objectives. It will also consolidate multiple streams into a single source of funding offered over two, 18-month rounds. The maximum bid size will be £500k p.a. and a 1/3 match (which can be in kind) will be needed. The UK Government will also work with the 10-20 areas in England most affected by prolific neighbourhood crime as part of the 10 years drugs strategy.
- **Restoring order, tackle anti-social behaviour, and boosting quality of life.** The UK Government will give police the same powers as local authorities to deal with noise complaints (as is already the case in Scotland).

EMPOWERING LOCAL LEADERS AND COMMUNITIES

MISSION TWELVE: BY 2030, EVERY PART OF ENGLAND THAT WANTS ONE WILL HAVE A DEVOLUTION DEAL

- **Local devolution in England.** The Government will:
  - **Deepen devolution** by “*opening negotiations immediately*” on trailblazer devolution deals with GM and the West Midlands, which will act as a blueprint for other Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) to follow and by working with MCAs to explore options to streamline the funding landscape (initially through trailblazer deals).
  - **Extend devolution** by negotiating ten new ‘County Deals’, a new MCA in York and North Yorkshire, and an extension of the North of Tyne MCA to the wider North East.
  - **Simplify devolution** through the devolution framework included in Chapter 2, and through legislating for a new form of MCA made up of county and unitary councils with lower-tier authorities as non-constituent members.
- **Private sector-led partnerships.** The UK Government will support private sector-led partnerships across the UK to support growth clusters.
- **Local Growth Funds.** The Government has published a further detail about how the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (USKPF) will operate (see Annex A). This is summarised in the White Paper. The UKSPF will provide a mix of capital and revenue and will focus on ‘pride in place’ for the first two years before pivoting toward skills and employment (though there will be flexibility to support programmes earlier than this if they are at risk as EU funding receipts tail off). UKSPF funds will be allocated to, and invested by, MCAs where they exist with “*decisions made by locally elected leaders*”. Areas will receive a conditional allocation skewed to need with no bidding, and “*the resulting fund will act as a predictable baseline element of local growth funding*” as part of a wider programme of work to streamline the local growth funding landscape.

## CHAPTER FOUR – NEXT STEPS

- This short Chapter sets out some general ‘next steps’ not already covered in policy-specific announcements in the preceding chapters.

### ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMAL CONSULTATION

- **Engagement and informal consultation.** There will be a structured programme of Ministerial-level visits across the whole of the UK and local panels will be set up to serve as sounding boards on levelling up delivery (working closely with the new Levelling Up Directors). Annual reports summarising the findings of these boards will go to the Cabinet Committee on Levelling Up, and the Government will create a new ‘online space’ for local ideas.
- **Setting and delivering missions and metrics.** The UK Government will work with the Office of National Statistics (ONS), devolved and local government, and external stakeholders to road test the missions and to design and agree suitable and metrics to measure progress against them. The White Paper stresses this will need significant horizontal collaboration across UK Government Departments, and vertical collaboration across different tiers of governance.
- **Funding simplification:** The UK Government will engage with local government and key stakeholders on the simplification of the local growth funding landscape with respect to the publication of further plans later this year.
- **Expert subcommittees of the Levelling Up Council.** There will be several sub-groups of the new independent Levelling Up Council, which are likely to include groups looking at regional adoption and diffusion infrastructure, the role of private sector capital, and local communities and social infrastructure.

### FUTURE LEGISLATION

- The UK Government will bring forward legislation to put some key pillars Levelling Up into statute, including a requirement for an annual UK Government report on delivery against the missions, and strengthening devolution legislation in England.

## **ANNEX A – UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND ‘PRE-LAUNCH GUIDANCE’**

- Alongside the Levelling Up White Paper, the UK Government has published ‘pre-launch guidance’ on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). This can be found here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-pre-launch-guidance>
- This guidance confirms that the UKSPF will total £2.6bn up to March 2025 (a mixture of revenue and capital), ramping up over the period to £1.5bn a year by 2024-25. Further detail has also been confirmed about how the UKSPF will operate, including:
  - Where they exist, Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) will be the Lead Authority for the UKSPF. This means GMCA will be the lead authority in GM.
  - Lead Authorities will receive an allocation via a funding formula (i.e. no competitive bidding). But there is no further information about how this will be calculated.
  - The numeracy programme Multiply (announced at the 2021 Spending Review and funded through the UKSPF) will run separately to the rest of the programme and the Department for Education will provide further details on delivery plans.
  - Lead Authorities will develop and deliver an Investment Plan for each place, in which they will be asked to set out measurable outcomes they are looking to deliver, and what interventions they are choosing to prioritise. This will be submitted to the UK Government for approval. Lead Authorities should also involve MPs throughout.
  - Lead Authorities will then be responsible for delivery of the Fund thereafter, including assessing and approving project applications, processing payments and day-to-day monitoring. Lead Authorities will also have flexibility over how the Fund is delivered locally.
  - Lead Authorities are encouraged to start identifying a diverse range of local stakeholders, appropriate groups and organisations to represent cross-sector voices. In circumstances where a local authority already has a group that could be used, it can designate the group for UKSPF purposes, taking care to ensure that it is fully representative and that its terms of reference meet the Fund’s needs. The UK Government should have a standing invite to any partnership meetings.
  - The Government will publish further information later in the Spring, including a full Prospectus, the Fund’s outcomes and an interventions toolkit (guidance for how local areas should select local outcomes and a list of interventions from which places can choose).
- The Guidance sets out **three Investment Priorities** that places can choose to invest in with their Fund allocation: communities and place, local business, people and skills. The first two will be prioritised until 2024-25. The details are set out in the table on the next page.

**UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment priorities**

<b>Communities and Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.</li> <li>• To build resilient and safe neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.</li> </ul>
<b>Local Businesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions, and range from support for starting businesses to visible improvements to local retail, hospitality and leisure sector facilities.</li> <li>• Promote networking and collaboration, through interventions that bring together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth.</li> <li>• Increase private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to undertake new-to-firm innovation, adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques, and start or grow their exports.</li> </ul>
<b>People and Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boost core skills and support adults to progress in work, by targeting adults with no or low level qualifications and skills in maths, and upskill the working population, yielding personal and societal economic impact, and by encouraging innovative approaches to reducing adult learning barriers.</li> <li>• Support disadvantaged people to access the skills they need to progress in life and into work, for example the long-term unemployed and those with protected characteristics through funding life, and basic skills where this is not delivered through national or local employment and skills provision.</li> <li>• Support local areas to fund local skills needs and supplement local adult skills provision, e.g., by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification-based and non-qualification based.</li> <li>• Reduce levels of economic inactivity and move those furthest from the labour market closer to employment, through investment in bespoke employment support tailored to local need. Investment should facilitate the join-up of mainstream provision and local services within an area for participants, through the use of one-to-one keyworker support, improving employment outcomes for specific cohorts who face labour market barriers.</li> </ul>