

North East Mayoral Strategic Authority Corporate Plan

2026-30



Contents



Foreword: North East Mayor, Kim McGuinness	3
Foreword: Chief Executive, Dr Henry Kippin	4
About the North East	5
The role of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority	6
Our Corporate Plan	7
Our Missions	8
The home of real opportunity	9
A North East we are proud to call home	11
Home to a growing and vibrant economy for all	14
Home of the green energy revolution	17
A welcoming home to global trade	19
Tackling Inequality, Creating Opportunity	21
Our Governance	22
Cabinet Portfolios	24
How we work	25
Our Resources	28
Our People and Culture	30

This plan uses the term 'North East Mayoral Strategic Authority' in line with the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, which is currently progressing through the legislative process.

Foreword

North East Mayor, Kim McGuinness

The people of the North East deserve to know the pledges promised to them in a manifesto will be delivered. This Corporate Plan is our message to the region – you can trust us to deliver.

As a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) we are working together to prioritise mission-led delivery. To do that, we set out here the clear outcomes the public can judge us on. From bus tickets kept to £2.50, to our green jobs roadshow, it is deliberately a specific and public-focused plan while at the same time guided by our core missions.

Those missions set out our purpose as an organisation and provide assurance to the public that we are on the right track. Our core pledges remind us, and the public, that these missions have real-world benefits.

There are challenges facing the North East, but I genuinely believe that by the time we have implemented these pledges we will be a noticeably better region, with more jobs, cheaper and more reliable travel and a thriving cultural sector. Right across our region, people are proud of their northern identity and this plan sets out how we build on that for them.

Already we are making great progress. Bus fares are frozen, there is a creative development zone in Sunderland, the national Centre for Writing is funded. Every day we take a step closer to our key milestones. Key among those achievements is our region's Child Poverty Reduction Unit – nearly £30m of investment into making child-raising more affordable, from baby boxes to childcare grants, cheaper transport to help in schools.

This Corporate Plan also sets out how we as an MSA will maximise the opportunities of devolution. We are not prepared to settle only for the powers we have taken back from Whitehall to date. The next step is our progression towards an Integrated Settlement, giving us more freedom to invest where the people of the North East see fit. This is a long process, but one which will reap long-term benefits for the people of this region.

It is my greatest honour to be the first North East Mayor. Every day I see at this MSA people who are entirely committed to making this region a thriving success story. I am proud to be working with them in delivering this plan on behalf of the North East.



Foreword

Chief Executive, Dr Henry Kippin

I am delighted to introduce our new Corporate Plan for 2026-30. This is the document that guides our organisation – showing how we translate ambitious decision-making from our Mayor and Cabinet into real-world delivery. It also sets a blueprint for regional transformation – built on strategic leadership, judicious investment and cross-sector collaboration.

The Plan shows the impact that devolution can make. In a few short years this region has delivered the largest per-head devolution deal in the country, the fastest and most significant investment of any Mayoral first term, and the quickest progress to Integrated Settlement. That is why we are now recognised by Government as an ‘Established Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA)’ – with a high-performance, high-capability team and the full suite of financial freedoms through our Integrated Settlement.

The job is not finished though, and I am convinced we can go further in 2026-28. We can already see the early impact of our programmes – from community investment through to skills, housing, infrastructure and major transport improvements – and we will see this deepen and grow. Our team is evolving – with new arrivals enabled by additional funding complementing the core

capabilities we already have in place. And our relationships remain fundamental to everything we do. The North East MSA is a partnership: with seven councils, our business community, our education and voluntary sectors – and with our colleagues in central government. I want us to grow and learn together – keeping that fundamental connection that allows us to deliver better outcomes through collaboration.

This year will also be one of internal evolution: finishing the job of team-building, but also ensuring we are proactive and curious in the way we use technology, partnership and new ways of working. It is vital that we have the capability and capacity to deliver on the commitments our Mayor and Cabinet have made to the region. But we do this within an economic and financial context that remains difficult. Productivity, value for money and collaboration are essential. But so is an appetite for ambition and the right kind of risk – so that we can achieve outcomes for communities that would be impossible otherwise.

My thanks to the team for their hard work and dedication, and for the whole-organisation commitment it takes to create this plan. We will leave no stone unturned in ensuring it is delivered.



About the North East

The North East has it all - a region able to combine global relevance with local strength. With a proud industrial heritage, outstanding natural and cultural assets, and a growing role in the industries that will shape the 21st century, the North East is positioned to be one of the most competitive and liveable regions in the world.

With short travel times between vibrant, fast-evolving cities; dramatic coastlines; national parks; and expansive countryside set within a rich historic landscape - all alongside affordable living and a strong sense of community - the North East offers a quality of life that few regions can match. It is no surprise that film companies are choosing the region in growing numbers, drawn by the breadth and character of the locations that North East England provides.

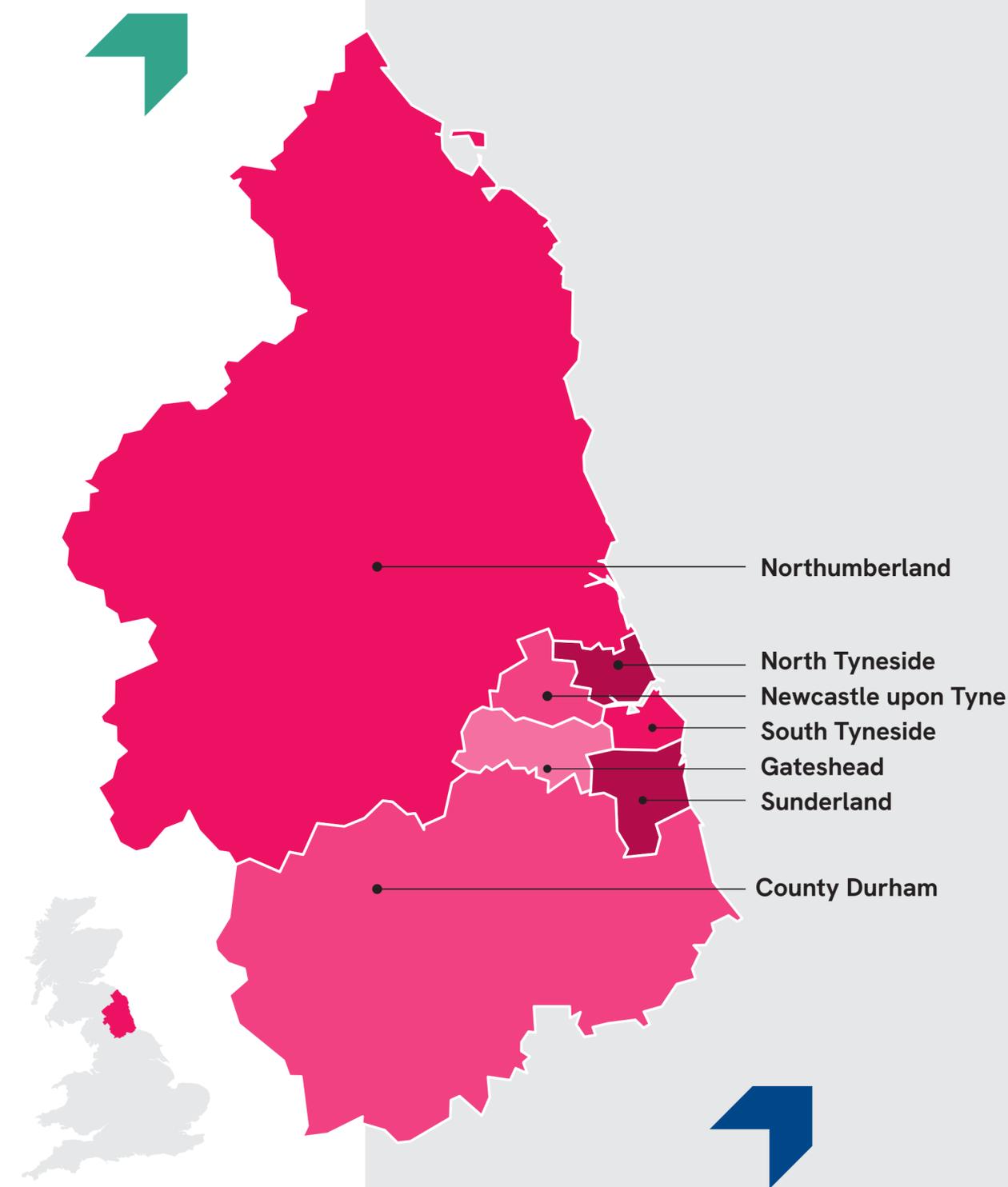
This is also a region of world class innovation with deep roots. The North East powered the first industrial revolution, and today we are leading new revolutions in renewable energy generation and artificial intelligence, while unlocking growth across advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and the digital and creative industries.

Through the strength of our three deep-water ports on the North Sea coast, the North East has become home of the green energy revolution - supporting thousands of jobs in a new generation of offshore wind and providing the foundation for innovation in sustainable industries. These ports are also vital gateways for global trade, connecting the region to international markets and future growth. Our airport, Newcastle Airport, was crowned 'World's Best Airport' two years running, as voted for by airlines and a panel of industry experts - outperforming major global hubs such as Dubai, Singapore and New York.

We are also home to globally significant employers and research strengths. The automotive sector remains central to our modern industrial heritage, with the supply chain supporting the Nissan plant in Sunderland operating across the UK and internationally. It is a cornerstone of a wider advanced manufacturing sector found throughout the region - a sector with a strong export record and the capacity to drive a growing, inclusive economy that works for everyone.

Our cultural output in music, sport, art and writing far exceeds the size of the region. The North East is home to world-class sporting and cultural venues and events, all underpinned by eclectic, fast-evolving grassroots creativity and energy. Without doubt, our people are our greatest asset. Our communities share a strong regional identity and a deep sense of pride and solidarity - a social fabric that stands as one of our most powerful competitive advantages.

Alongside these strengths, the region contains both some of the most affluent places in the North of England as well as some of the most deprived. The picture is complex: communities facing significant challenges can be found in our cities, towns and rural areas alike, with poor housing and inadequate transport infrastructure and services continuing to act as major barriers to opportunity. That is why the region's approach to growth is grounded in quality and inclusion. Economic success is measured not only by output, but by job quality, opportunity, wellbeing, and environmental sustainability. Investment is used deliberately to create social value, strengthen communities, and ensure that growth benefits existing residents as well as future generations - truly making the North East the home of real opportunity for all.



The role of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority

The North East Mayoral Strategic Authority serves the people of the region.

It was established in May 2024 and over the past two years, major progress has been made to build a high-performing, unified Strategic Mayoral Authority that provides strong regional leadership for the people of the region. The North East MSA's role is to coordinate decisions on the economy, transport, housing, and public services at a regional level – closer to communities than central government – so that opportunities and quality of life improve for all people who live in the North East.

The North East MSA is guided by five core Missions set out in this Corporate Plan, reflecting the manifesto pledges on which Mayor Kim McGuinness was elected as the first North East Mayor in May 2024. The Mayor sets the direction of the MSA and chairs the Cabinet, made of the political leaders of the seven constituent Local Authorities, plus representatives from business and the voluntary sector, who together ensure the missions are delivered.

The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill sets out a standardised framework defining the powers and responsibilities that strategic authorities have over key functions. The North East MSA has been

recognised amongst a small number of other strategic authorities as an 'Established Mayoral Strategic Authority', within the highest tier of MSAs, therefore receiving the broadest range of powers available for the North East region, including working with central Government to receive an Integrated Settlement (a consolidated multi-year funding package with increased flexibilities) of approximately £1.7 billion from April 2026.

Partnership is central to the region's success. The North East MSA works closely with organisations across the public, private, education and voluntary sectors, helping the region speak with one voice nationally and internationally. The North East is large enough to influence national policy yet connected enough to act decisively. This positions the region to align transport, housing, skills and economic development in ways that deliver meaningful outcomes for people and places.

Devolution gives the North East greater control over its economic future, strengthens its ability to attract global investment and ensures growth benefits all communities. A Mayor and Strategic Authority mean more decisions that affect people's lives are made here in the region - and shaped by local people - rather than in London.



Our Corporate Plan



Our five Missions guide everything we do. The North East will be:



The home of real opportunity



A North East we are proud to call home



Home to a growing and vibrant economy for all



Home of the green energy revolution



A welcoming home to global trade

The North East Mayoral Strategic Authority is focused on delivering these missions and making a real, positive impact for local people. This requires clear medium and long-term plans that drive a bold vision for change.

Following extensive engagement and evidence gathering, we have published a suite of key strategies that set out how these missions will be delivered over the medium and long-term. These include:

- **‘Creating Real Opportunity’ The North East Local Growth Plan 2025-2035** – a ten-year plan to create tens of thousands of new good jobs for local people as we grow our economy, empower businesses and raise living standards.
- **‘Delivering Green Transport’ The North East Local Transport Plan** – a long-term plan to deliver a reliable, accessible, affordable, and integrated public transport system that works for all.
- **‘New Deal for North East Workers’** – a five-year plan focused on improving skills and qualifications, reducing unemployment and inactivity, supporting economic growth, and expanding opportunity across the region.
- **Child Poverty Action Plan** – a five-year plan to ensure every baby, child and young person is supported to thrive and achieve their potential - regardless of their background or where they live.
- ...with a **regional Spatial Development Strategy** - a long-term, high-level plan guiding future growth and development across the North East, coordinating housing, jobs, infrastructure and environment to ensure joined-up growth – in development.



This **Corporate Plan 2026-30** serves as the organisation’s central strategic roadmap, drawing together the full range of existing strategies to establish a single, coherent direction for the organisation. It sets out a focused set of short-term pledges for 2026-28, identifying the areas that will receive priority attention and resources.

Much of our work spans the medium and long-term, reflecting both the complexity of the challenges we face and the scale of our ambition. The Mayoral Strategic Authority will use this Corporate Plan as a shared point of focus, enabling the organisation to deliver targeted, meaningful and pacy change aligned with these priorities.

Our Missions



The home of real opportunity

The North East is a great place to live and work, yet too many people still face barriers that hold them back. We will act to remove these barriers, ensuring the benefits of a growing economy and strong public services reach every part of the region.

This means ensuring that people of all ages and backgrounds can develop their skills, access good-quality, well-paid jobs, and build fulfilling careers in a region they are proud to call home. This includes helping people build the essential skills they need to access work, as well as those specialist skills required for our key growth sectors and the North East's foundational economy.

It also means providing targeted support for children, young people and families as we work to create a more equitable society. Our ambition is a North East where every baby, child and young person is supported to thrive and achieve their potential - no matter their background or where they live.

We will work in close partnership with local authorities, public sector partners such as health services, businesses, the third sector and trade unions. By bringing these partners together, we can align expertise, resources, and leadership to really make a difference for our people.

Our progress so far:

We are already translating this ambition into action.

Since 2024, we have established the North East Child Poverty Reduction Unit and launched A New Deal for North East Workers - bringing together our skills support, job creation, and good employer campaigns under a single focused brand.

And we are seeing these deliver real change for people across our region.

The North East Child Poverty Reduction Unit has co-produced a Child Poverty Action Plan and begun to mobilise £28.6m of investment - funding Baby Boxes, advice in community settings, and campaigns to help families maximise their income. A Mayor's Childcare Grant pilot, to support families with the cost of childcare, has also gone live in Durham and Northumberland, with over 24 grants awarded to date.

The Mayor's Opportunity Fund and Flexible Social Finance Fund have awarded a combined total of £2m to protect jobs and community spaces across the North East, with that investment set to more than double in the years to come.

We have invested £68.5m into our Adult Skills Programme, which has supported over 35,000 residents so far, with 7,300 residents progressing to higher level study, and 6,000 reporting a job outcome as a result.



£28.6m

mobilised for Child Poverty Reduction

£68.5m

invested into our Adult Skills Programme

And SHINE - our programme to recognise employers who lead with fairness, opportunity and respect - has received 186 sign-ups since its launch in June 2025. 50% of these businesses have achieved Intermediate or Advance accreditation, covering over 60,000 employees across the region.

We're creating opportunity for all, and we're only just getting started.

The home of real opportunity

2026-28 Short-term Pledges

Deliver the Child Poverty Action Plan to reduce the number of children living in relative poverty after housing costs

We are helping families increase their incomes, remove barriers to opportunity, and give children and young people the best start in life.

By March 2028, we will have delivered three major pilots – a Health in Pregnancy Grant, Baby Boxes, and expanded after-school activities – reaching over 2,700 families and young people. We will also have supported 4,000 families with community based financial advice, run two regional take-up campaigns, and funded 100 schools through our Inspire Grants.

Use the New Deal for North East Workers to build a better skilled and more diverse workforce in our key sectors, including the Foundational Economy

We will deliver a far-reaching Adult Skills Programme that gives people across the North East a clear route into learning and work, helping them build skills, support local employers and move into long-term jobs.

We will fund support for under-represented groups, including women, to access good jobs in fast growing sectors so our workforce better reflects our region. By March 2028, we aim to help more than 36,000 residents gain the skills needed by local businesses and future investors.

Improve education and destination outcomes for young people in the North East, decreasing the number not in employment, education or training (NEET)

We will strengthen education, careers support and progression routes so more young people can achieve, thrive and move into long-term opportunities.

By March 2028, we will have consistent careers offer across the region, given all pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 at least one workplace experience, and improved outcomes for around 65,000 Year 11 leavers. We will also run a Work Experience Pilot for 1,250 young people facing extra barriers and support more than 550 schools and 158,000 pupils through our Excellence in Education Programme.



Through innovative Trailblazer and Connect to Work programmes, deliver our priority of moving more people into employment and economic activity

We will build local services that are easy to access and give people the joined-up support they need to move into work.

By March 2028, we will have helped up to 8,000 residents overcome barriers to finding a job, getting into work and staying employed.

A North East we are proud to call home

Where we live matters.

People in the North East are rightly proud of their local identity and want the places and infrastructure that enables them to build good lives here.

We will deliver the strategies and programmes that make this possible - from better, more affordable transport that allows people to move around the region with ease, to increased affordable and social housing, to a thriving creative sector and sustainable rural communities.

We will be guided by the priorities of local people, directing investment and action toward what our communities value most.



Our progress so far:

In under two years, we have already taken significant strides towards making this mission - shaped by our people - a reality.

We have launched the Mayor's North East Local Transport Plan following engagement with over 16,000 people across the region; and in summer 2026, we will be consulting on plans to bring our region's buses back under public control, giving people the opportunity to have a meaningful say on how bus services may be delivered in the future.

And we're already making sure everyone in the North East feels the benefit of transport investment.

While Government took the decision to cap the cost of single bus fares at £3, we went further. We capped single fares at £2.50 for adults, and introduced £1 single and £3 all-day fares for under-22s. This has already had a huge impact - by November 2025, more than 75 million trips had been taken using The Mayor's Fares, saving customers an estimated £56.5m.

Elsewhere on our public transport network, 40 of our 46 new Metro trains have now been delivered, with up to 23 in service. This means that by the summer of 2026, 100% of weekday Metro services will be operated by new fleet. We have also committed the funding to deliver a new Shields Ferry landing; new ticket gates for Metro stations; and 100km of improved walking, cycle and wheeling routes.

Work has also started to bring Metro to Washington - technical advisers have been appointed to develop the business case which will deliver the first extension to the Tyne and Wear Metro for 30 years.

3,000+
new homes unlocked
through the Brownfield
Housing Fund

£17m
Environmental
Stewardship, Coast,
and Rural Investment
Plan developed

Government confirmed it will work with the Mayor on the development of a new railway for County Durham along the former Leamside Line route. The business case planning work is underway and will be taken forward alongside Northern Powerhouse Rail. This marks a significant endorsement of the Mayor's plans to deliver better transport for local people and the first new rail service for County Durham in decades.

But transport investment is just one part of our wider plan to make the North East a place we can all be proud of.

We're unlocking over 3,000 new homes through the Brownfield Housing Fund, with Government recognising the region's ability to deliver by providing a further £17.6m top up to this funding and £143m of housing funding between now and 2030 through our Integrated Settlement.

We're developing a region-wide Spatial Development Strategy, which will set a long-term, regionwide framework that guides how land is used; and we've developed a £17m Environmental Stewardship, Coast, and Rural Investment Plan, of which £8.5m will go towards a Rural Growth Programme which goes live in May 2026.

And we're supporting events which put the North East on the map, including the opening match of the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, the MOBO Awards, and the Mercury Prize music awards - the latter is estimated to have brought £1.4m to the region.

We're delivering our people's priorities - but we know there's so much more to do.

A North East we are proud to call home

2026-28 Short-term Pledges



Continue to deliver affordable bus travel to grow patronage, improving access to jobs, skills, education and leisure

We'll keep bus travel affordable through the Mayor's Fares. With around 47 million trips expected each year, passengers will save around £32 million annually.

Produce a business case which sets out costs, location and design of new metro stations for the expansion of the Metro to Washington

With Nexus, we will produce a fully costed Outline Business Case by 2027, confirming station locations and design options to help secure the capital investment needed. The first phase of the Leaside Line programme will bring Metro access to Washington for the first time, providing faster, cleaner links to jobs, services and the wider region, supporting growth and improving everyday travel.



Make bus and Metro stations safer and increase the perception of safety across the transport network

We'll carry out a study to better understand the safety issues women and girls face when travelling around the North East, and identify measures to address them. These will be included in our Local Transport Plan Delivery Plan from 2027. By 2028, we will have improved 800 bus stops, so they meet modern safety and accessibility standards.

Take the decision to bring buses under public control to support the 'Angel Network'

We will complete the Audit and Consultation on the proposed Franchising Scheme ahead of a Mayoral decision in early 2027. If approved, we will begin the transition to a franchised bus network, bringing services back into public control. Passengers will see improvements to bus services as Angel Network initiatives roll out. We will establish a project to identify the future shape of the Transport Delivery Body to deliver the Angel Network, Bus Reform, as well as the wider integrated transport system.



A North East we are proud to call home

2026-28 Short-term Pledges

Secure clear government commitment to upgrading the Moor Farm roundabout

We will work with National Highways and local councils to strengthen the case for upgrading Moor Farm roundabout and secure its place in the 2026-2031 Road Investment Strategy. This would allow the scheme to move into development and, if approved, be built from 2031, improving safety, reliability and connectivity, and supporting the region's growth plans.



Collaborate with regional delivery partners to develop new housing projects, including the delivery of social housing

We will continue to work with local and national partners to unlock and build new homes, including social housing to secure the indicative £1.1bn of the National Social and Affordable Homes Programme.

By 2028 we will have maximised investment opportunities through the Social and Affordable Housing Programme, Brownfield Housing Fund and Integrated settlement resources to unlock and build over 2,000 new homes.

Introduce a homelessness blueprint to reduce homelessness across the North East

We will convene partners to develop a bespoke regional approach to reduce homelessness across our region.

Support small high street businesses through the High Street Commission

We will work with the High Streets Commission (a collection of key partners and experts from across the region) to develop an action plan to enhance and complement existing activity to significantly improve a small number of high streets across the region. We will develop a new model for regeneration and long-term improvement that strengthens these vital community hubs.



Introduce a Spatial Development Strategy to shape long-term growth and deliver the strategic objectives of the Local Growth Plan

We will work to be one of the first places in the country to adopt a regional Spatial Development Strategy. This will form the statutory development plan for the North East, sitting alongside the Local Plans of constituent authorities. It will guide land use and investment decisions, coordinating housing, jobs, transport, utilities, the environment and infrastructure to support sustainable, integrated growth across the region - helping to attract much needed investment into the North East.

Improve Metro punctuality and reliability

We will deliver our Metro Performance Improvement Plan, implement a revised timetable, and ensure a smooth transition to the new fleet.

Home to a growing and vibrant economy for all

Growing our economy is essential to the region's long-term success.

We will support the creation of thousands of jobs across the North East, driving higher employment and rising take-home pay. We have identified the sectors where the North East has clear strengths, assets and opportunities – and we will work to realise their full potential. Through our other missions, we will also ensure that people have the skills needed to access these jobs, and the transport networks to reach them.

We will work closely with businesses, universities and the research and innovation catapults to unlock greater levels of R&D and innovation funding. We will support the region's transition to a digitally enabled economy that helps people enter, stay in and progress within work. And we will ensure that economic growth reaches every part of the North East, with targeted support for rural and coastal communities.

Our progress so far:

Work is well underway to make this mission happen.

Our Local Growth Plan - 'Creating Real Opportunity' – has been agreed, and we will now take forward the sectoral priorities and capital investment pipeline it identifies.

We've launched the North East Elevate Fund and the North East Accelerate Fund, which will support 470 businesses to create 2,300 jobs in the next 15 years. And we have committed £36m of Investment Zone funding, including support for skills and innovation facilities in the automotive cluster (MADE NE) and offshore energy cluster (Energy Academy & Energy Central Institute); and delivering site infrastructure to support inward investment in the space and defence industries.

We're investing in our creative industries, including putting £1.8m into the development of a new world-class recording studio and £2m into the new Centre for Writing in Newcastle, as well as adding £1m to the Culture and Creative Investment Programme and providing a £875k top-up to the North East Production Fund.

And, in December 2025, the North East MSA and Sunderland City Council agreed to launch a new Creative Development Zone in Sunderland. This will unlock the next phase of development in the Riverside Sunderland regeneration programme, including the first phase of the Crown Works film studios, new urban neighbourhoods and projects to boost the creative sector.



£36m

of Investment Zone
funding committed

£5m+

invested in our
creative industries

We have also designated the centre of Newcastle and Gateshead as the region's first Mayoral Development Zone, which will accelerate regeneration in the area, including on key sites like Forth Yards and Gateshead Quays. This builds on Government's commitment to invest £120m into Forth Yards, transforming Newcastle's last major brownfield site into a new neighbourhood with up to 2,500 homes.

We're putting our plan into action – creating good jobs for people across the North East and playing an integral role in delivering the Government's Industrial Strategy.



Home to a growing and vibrant economy for all

2026-28 Short-term Pledges



Create jobs and support the hospitality industry by doubling the size of the visitor economy over the next decade

We will create a new regional destination marketing and delivery organisation - Experience North East England - to boost inbound marketing, develop new tourism products, promote business events and work closely with partners across the sector.

Deliver a programme of events that raises the region's profile and creates opportunities for residents and communities.

We will build on our success delivering major events - including the MOBOs, Mercury Prize and the Women's Rugby World Cup - by launching a three-year Events Fund. These events will be accessible to residents and support job growth in the visitor economy.

Continue to support job creation in the creative industries

We will use the £25m Creative Places fund to invest in film and screen, working with the BBC, to grow the music industry, and support freelancers and creative digital industries.



Increase business creation and growth in the region, including the number of innovative firms and those with the potential to scale up or export

Driving forward innovation is one of the Local Growth Plan's three shared commitments with Government. Delivery will include funding early-stage businesses, supporting spin-outs and high growth businesses. This will increase productivity and create job opportunities.

We will support businesses to start, grow and scale across the North East through a streamlined business support service

Our new approach to business support will be launched and will be built on evidence of what works and co-designed with our business community. This will support our region's businesses to start, scale and grow.



Support grass roots music and creative venues through the introduction of a Small Venues Fund

We will help increase the sustainability of venues across the North East - supporting communities and the next wave of music talent.



Home to a growing and vibrant economy for all

2026-28 Short-term Pledges



Use the SHINE programme to promote and celebrate exemplary workplaces and employment practices in our region

By 2028, 1,000 business will have received SHINE accreditation, with over 40% receiving Intermediate or Advanced level recognition. A mentoring scheme will also be rolled out to support business owners adopt good employment practices.



Accelerate regeneration of our towns and cities through Mayoral Development Zones in Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, and unlock proposals across Durham City

We will create a long-term regeneration plan for the Newcastle-Gateshead Mayoral Development Zone, setting a 20-year vision and coordinating public and private investment. We will also work with partners to build a strong pipeline of future projects. We will drive forward the 2040 vision for Riverside Sunderland, support the next phase of Crown Works Studios, and produce a three-year investment prospectus. We will work with Durham Council and partners to unlock growth in the city, including at Aykley Heads.



Attract inward investment to large scale capital development across the region through the Investment Prospectus

We will work with partners across the region to attract and support developers and investors to bring forward the strategic sites in our £14bn Investment Prospectus, driving capital development across the North East and creating jobs, expanding opportunities for residents, and strengthening the key sectors identified in the Local Growth Plan.



Home of the green energy revolution

We will grasp the opportunity that green energy presents for the North East, transforming the economy, creating thousands of jobs, cutting carbon emissions, and developing the technologies the UK needs to decarbonise. Our region will be the natural home for new clean-energy industries, offering access to renewable power, development land, natural resources, and a skilled workforce.

The North East is set to become the UK's leading offshore-wind cluster, ideally located near key North Sea sites and capable of delivering a fifth of the nation's offshore-wind economy. The region's renewable-energy sector is poised to attract over £3 billion in private investment, powering the creation of 24,000 high-quality jobs by 2035 and cementing the North East as a national clean-energy powerhouse.

We will drive innovation, grow green businesses, and equip residents with the skills to thrive in a low-carbon economy. By uniting partners and setting a clear strategy, we will lead the region's clean-energy transition.

We will also protect and restore the North East's distinctive natural environment while ensuring that every resident can share in the economic and social benefits of a greener future. This transition will be shaped with - and for - the people of the region.

Our progress so far:

The global green energy revolution is moving at pace, and so are we.

We know the economic opportunity this presents, and we're already making significant moves to make good on our commitment to double the number of green energy jobs in the region.

We have invested £13.5m in the Energy Central Learning Hub in Blyth and the Energy Academy in Wallsend to ensure that people in our region have access to the training they need to benefit from jobs in the sector, and secured £50m from the Department for Business and Trade to strengthen our Electric Vehicle supply chain. We're also launching a Supplier Readiness and Transformation programme, providing capital grants of between £250,000 and £3m to businesses to help them scale up operations and adopt innovative technologies, with applications open from April 2026.

What's more, we've agreed a North East Ports Partnership with the region's major transport and logistics hubs - Port of Blyth, Port of Tyne, Port of Sunderland, and Newcastle Airport - strengthening the region's global connectivity, driving investment, accelerating the transition to a net zero economy, and raising the North East's profile as a world-leading hub for sustainable trade and innovation.

We're also ensuring that the people of the North East feel the social benefits of a greener transport system. We've installed 26 new EV charging points across Northumberland and County Durham, and funded 97 new electric buses across the region, meaning 10% of the region's bus fleet are now zero emission.



£50m

secured to strengthen our Electric Vehicle supply chain

97

new electric buses across the region funded

And we've launched the world-leading North East Carbon and Nature Marketplace to help protect and restore the North East's distinctive natural environment, which has already leveraged a total of £12.5m of funding across 30 projects.

We're making the North East the home of the green energy revolution, and we're making the revolution work for our region.



Home of the green energy revolution

2026-28 Short-term Pledges



Introduce the Mayor's new delivery plan for green jobs, creating opportunities in offshore wind and other areas where the North East leads the country

We'll deliver a clear plan to double renewable energy jobs in the region to 50,000 by 2035. By March 2028, this will include investment in sites, skills, innovation and supply chain growth.

Deliver the new Energy Academy in Wallsend as part of our Green Energy Super Academy

We'll invest £8.5m to expand the Energy Academy. Once fully operational, the campus will provide clean energy training to 1,000 residents each year.

Support families with the cost of living by tackling fuel poverty through the roll out of a major retrofit programme that will make North East homes warmer, greener and cheaper to run

The North East Warm Homes one-stop-shop will give advice to over 3,000 households, helping 1,600 adopt energy saving measures and 245 carry out major home improvements to boost energy efficiency.

We'll also develop a retrofit strategy and action plan to coordinate efforts to tackle cold, damp homes and prepare for devolved funding from 2028.



Continue to create and support jobs in the advanced manufacturing sector, including the electric vehicle industry

The Supplier Readiness and Transformation Programme will provide grants of up to £3m to help businesses pivot to EV components, scale up operations, and adopt innovative technologies. This will support the development of a sustainable, competitive EV cluster in the North East, strengthening our position as a global leader in EV manufacturing.



Increase access to greener transport options across the region

Through our substantial investment in Electric Vehicle Charging infrastructure, we will replace or upgrade 50 legacy EV charge points and install 500 new ones.

We will also continue supporting the rollout of electric buses, building on the 97 already in service across the region.





A welcoming home to global trade

The North East has strong international links and we will build on our global reputation to maximise new opportunities. We will secure more inward investment and re-investment, helping increase our share of global trade, including by maintaining a focus on our manufacturing and pharmaceutical strengths, together with newer opportunities across energy, defence, space, education, digital, finance and the cultural sectors.

We will position the region to attract financial and business investment, whilst refreshing our international inward investment and visitor capabilities. This will be seen in our spending on infrastructure, and the development of key sites to unlock private finance.

UK's 1st
AI Growth Zone
secured

5,000
new jobs
unlocked

Our progress so far:

Despite unprecedented international uncertainty, we are already making good on our commitments.

We've secured the UK's first AI Growth Zone, which will unlock more than 5,000 new jobs and bring in £30 billion in private investment, solidifying the North East as one of the largest data hubs in Europe.

We've also looked beyond our shores to attract and protect investment into our key industries. The Mayor led the North East MSA's trade mission to Japan, the first overseas mission of its kind, in November 2025.

This visit secured an agreement with Hitachi Ltd to work together with the North East MSA on the region's transition to a zero-emissions bus fleet, and to work with the North East MSA and Port of Tyne on the vision to develop a "Smart Port of the Future".

As well as meeting with the likes of Hitachi and Nissan, the Mayor also used the visit to make connections with companies spanning green energy, shipping, solar technology, gaming and the music industry, making the case for investment into the North East and promoting the region's fantastic export firms.

Back in the North East, we also hosted 300 investors at our inaugural Invest North East: Energy & Innovation Summit in January 2026, which showcased the North East as a global hub for clean energy, green manufacturing, and net zero innovation and convened leaders from business, finance, and government to discuss the region's role in the UK's transition to clean power and advanced manufacturing.



These are just a few examples of work which has already secured investments into the region which will create over 2,000 jobs - including £50m of investment from Japanese car firm Jatco, adding to our world-leading strengths in advanced manufacturing, the automotive sector, and electric vehicles.

The North East is a great place to do business, and we're telling that story to the world.



A welcoming home to global trade

2026-28 Short-term Pledges

Continue to target, attract and secure investment into the North East that creates good quality jobs in our key sectors

We will deliver a targeted programme of outreach, including trade shows, investor forums and outbound delegations, to showcase opportunities in the North East. Working with the Office for Investment, we will target and respond to opportunities that create job growth in key sectors. Alongside expanding employment in key sectors and the foundational economy, we will raise the North East's profile with a global audience and remove barriers to convert opportunities into projects.

Create more opportunities for North East businesses through the deepening of strategic relationships with other countries

Continue to strengthen investment and trade links with key markets such as Japan and the USA, as well as building and developing relationships with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Nordics.

Leverage the North East AI Growth Zone to attract investment to the region

Our AI Growth Zone puts the North East at the forefront of the AI revolution. We will work with partners to accelerate nationally significant data-centres, attract more investment, and ensure local businesses and residents benefit through new skills and wider AI adoption.

Attract new funding into the region to unlock investment and growth, including through the Mayoral Revolving Growth Fund

Additional funding will help unlock the Local Growth Plan's capital pipeline – attracting investment, growth and jobs.

Unlock growth in SMEs through the implementation of the new North East Fund, helping businesses access the finance needed to be successful

We will launch and deliver the Inspire, Elevate and Accelerate Funds to unlock finance for SME in the North East. By 2028, the Funds will have supported over 110 companies to create over 650 jobs.



Tackling Inequality, Creating Opportunity

Inequality remains one of the most significant challenges facing our region.

It limits life chances, undermines social and economic wellbeing, and threatens our ability to realise the full potential of the North East devolution deal. Yet inequality is not inevitable. With collective ambition and purposeful action, we can create a region where opportunity is genuinely shared.

Our mission is to make the North East the home of real opportunity – a region where life outcomes are not determined by postcode, background, or personal characteristics. Every resident should be able to contribute to our shared prosperity and access the foundations of a good life, now and for generations to come.



To achieve this, we are embedding equality at the heart of everything we do. Our approach includes:

- **Setting clear equality objectives** that focus on priority issues and drive improvements in policy-making, service design, resource allocation, and employment practices.
- **Using equality impact assessments and robust data insights** to shape programmes that expand access to opportunity for our most marginalised communities, and to evaluate our progress with honesty and transparency.
- **Building strong partnerships with the voluntary, community, and social enterprise sector**, recognising their vital role as trusted anchors in neighbourhoods and champions for inclusion.
- **Embedding co-design and collaboration**, ensuring that the voices and experiences of marginalised communities directly inform our plans, decisions, and delivery.
- **Creating a representative workforce**, taking deliberate steps to ensure our organisation reflects the diversity of the people we serve.



Through these commitments, we will remove barriers, open pathways, and foster a culture of fairness, dignity, and belonging. Tackling inequality is not only a moral imperative — it is essential to unlocking the full potential of our region and ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared by all.

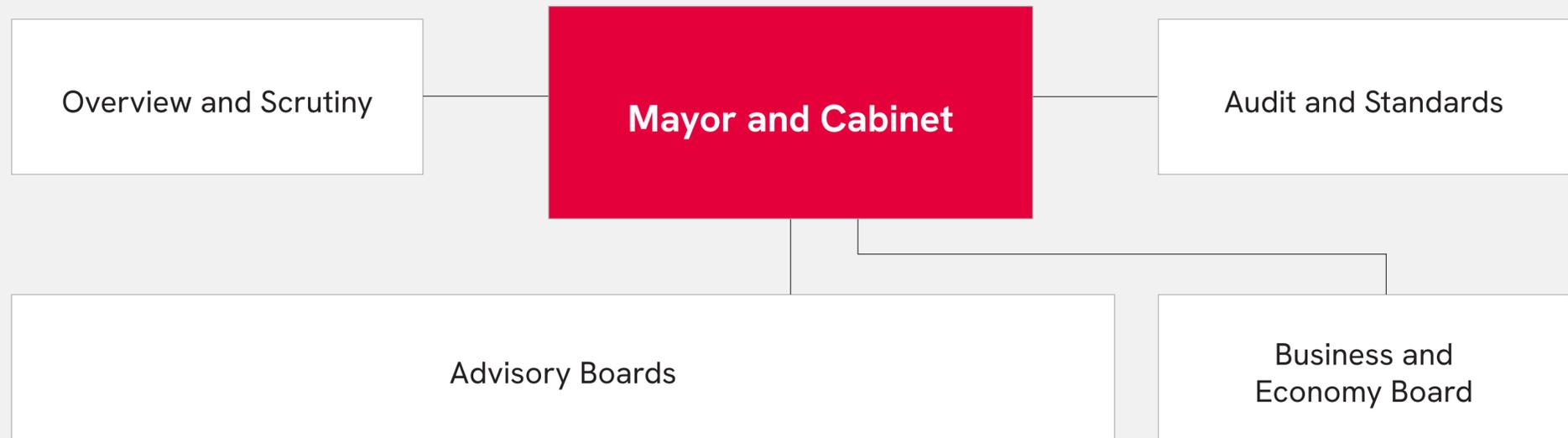


Our Governance

Our Governance

The North East Mayoral Strategic Authority is democratically governed by the Mayor and the Cabinet.

We make decisions with transparency, efficiency, and accountability. Our Constitution and Single Assurance Framework set out how we manage governance, make decisions, and ensure our programmes deliver impact and value for money.



Cabinet

Cabinet is the primary decision-making body of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority and is chaired by the Mayor. Cabinet is made up of the Mayor, and the Leaders of the seven constituent Local Authorities. There are two non-voting members - John McCabe, Chief Executive of the North East Chamber of Commerce and Chair of the Business and Economy Board, and Martin Brookes, Chief Executive of the Voluntary Organisations' Network North East - representing the business, community and voluntary sectors. The region's two Police and Crime Commissioners - Susan Dungworth (Northumbria Police) and Joy Allen (Durham Constabulary) - and a Trade Union representative - Clare Williams, Regional Secretary Northern Unison - attend Cabinet as observers.

Committees

We have two committees.

The Audit and Standards Committee is responsible for monitoring the robustness of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority's arrangements to implement its policies and to manage its resources. It is also responsible for promoting and maintain high standards of conduct by members of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority and its committees.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises policy decisions and other action taken by the Mayor and Cabinet, its impact on the area and its people, and seeks to influence decision-makers by making recommendations.

Advisory Boards

We have member-led Advisory Boards aligned to the Cabinet portfolio areas, and a Business and Economy Board. All support members of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority in overseeing the delivery of the five missions, ambitions and programmes of activity set out in the Corporate Plan and associated plans and strategies. The Boards are not decision making but are an important part of ensuring the work of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority is inclusive and collaborative by bringing together key stakeholders and expertise to provide advice and a regionwide view to their portfolio lead, Cabinet and the Mayor.

Executive Leadership

The Executive Officer Leadership Team, led by the Chief Executive, provides strategic and operational leadership for the MSA, translating the missions into delivery. The team works collaboratively to build a high performing organisation that can deliver transformative programmes, forge powerful partnerships that unlock opportunity and secure greater investment - all to advance the MSA's ambitions for the region.



Cabinet Portfolios



The Mayor brings together the voice of the North East, ensuring every community is heard and able to shape its future. She leads the delivery of her manifesto, represents the people of the region, and oversees a range of devolved powers – including responsibility for transport. As Mayor, she also chairs the Cabinet of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority.

Together, the Mayor and Cabinet work to improve the region and create a stronger, fairer North East.

The Cabinet Portfolios are:

Finance and Investment



Councillor Michael Mordey
Leader, Sunderland City Council

Strategic oversight of funding and investment to drive economic growth and long-term prosperity across the region.

Transport



Councillor Martin Gannon
Deputy Mayor and Leader, Gateshead Council

The region's transport investment programme, the development and delivery of the Local Transport Plan, aligning policies across sectors, and maximising funding opportunities.

Home of real opportunity



Councillor Tracey Dixon
Leader, South Tyneside Council

Innovative work to reduce child poverty, grow skills to increase access to employment and increase local people's access to opportunity.

A North East we're proud to call home



Councillor Andrew Husband
Leader, Durham County Council

Housing policy development and delivery, including building more affordable and social housing, and the Rural Growth Fund.

Home to a growing and vibrant economy for all



Councillor Karen Kilgour
Leader, Newcastle City Council

Delivery of North East's Local Growth Plan, including our investment in key growth sectors and the foundational economy, support to the culture and creative industries, and work to boost research, development and innovation across our businesses.

Home to the green energy revolution



Mayor Karen Clark
North Tyneside Council

Work to grow the green energy sector in the region, protect our environment and coastline, and enhance our investment in net zero measures.

A welcoming home to global trade



Councillor Glen Sanderson
Leader, Northumberland County Council

Growing inward investment and building the North East's place on the world stage to increase exports and trade, as well as giving local firms access to new finance and investment funds.



How we work

How will we track our progress?

Our ambitions are transformational, and we know that meaningful change doesn't happen overnight. That's why performance and accountability are central to our approach.

Our Performance Management Framework has been developed through a rigorous and collaborative process, drawing on best practice and shaped through extensive co-production with colleagues across the organisation and key partners. It has been subject to robust check-and-challenge from Cabinet to ensure clarity, accountability and strategic focus.

The framework is fully aligned with our missions whilst also enabling us to report against the Integrated Settlement Outcomes Framework to Government, providing a clear, coherent and evidence-led approach to tracking progress and demonstrating impact.

Through our Performance Management Framework, we will track and demonstrate impact across four key themes.

Together, these elements create a coherent system that directs our resources where they can deliver the greatest measurable impact.

Missions



Our missions keep us focused on long-term change and meaningful outcomes for the region. We will use both quantitative data and qualitative insight against a range of outcomes and indicators, to understand our progress and the difference we are making to the lives of people across the North East.

Investment Delivery



Through our Single Assurance Framework, we will assess value for money and the contribution each investment makes to our missions. The data and insights generated through assurance will feed directly into performance reporting for this pillar.

Delivery Plan



The Corporate Plan sets out our five missions and the priorities for the next two years, all of which are captured in our organisation-wide Delivery Plan. A quarterly review cycle will ensure delivery remains on track and that all activity is aligned to one or more of our missions.

Organisational Health



We will ensure the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority is equipped to operate effectively and efficiently. This includes robust budgeting and assurance processes, strong use of data and technology, a communications approach that builds trust, and a healthy organisational culture.

Our Performance Management Framework sets out the indicators we will use to measure progress:

Headline Outcomes:

Reduced Child Poverty; Higher GVA; Improved Productivity; Higher Employment; Reduced Economic Inactivity

 Home of real opportunity	 A North East we are proud to call home	 Home to growing and vibrant economy	 Home of the green energy revolution	 Welcoming home to global trade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bigger, better skilled, and more diverse workforce to support key sectors ▪ Improve employment rates and reduced economic inactivity ▪ Improved career pathways ▪ Reduced child poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved business productivity, supporting local growth ▪ Improved employment opportunities ▪ Stronger growth across the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve business productivity to support local growth ▪ Improve employment opportunities ▪ Growth across the North East 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supply skills to support more green jobs ▪ More green energy technologies and solutions ▪ Improved environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased levels of foreign direct investment ▪ Increased export activity ▪ Increased investment in North East businesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Addressing skills shortage vacancies ▪ Narrowing the gap in employment rates and economic inactivity ▪ Narrowing the gap in education and skills attainment ▪ School readiness, attendance and retention ▪ Reduction of people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) ▪ Reduction in children in relative poverty ▪ Higher residual Household Income (focused on increased wages and decreased housing, heating and local public transport costs for income deprived households). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More affordable, quality houses unlocked and delivered ▪ More rural businesses and land-based industries supported through growth infrastructure and support. ▪ Higher percentage of journeys made by walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport ▪ Higher percentage of households have access to a hospital, GP, secondary school, town centre, 10,000 jobs within 45mins using public transport ▪ Reduction in the number of those killed or seriously injured on our roads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More jobs in priority sectors (green, creative, AM, life sciences, tech, defence) ▪ Increased gross disposable household income (GDHI) per head ▪ Lower proportion of people earning hourly pay below the living wage ▪ Higher median and lower quartile full-time weekly employee pay ▪ Reduced wage/GVA gaps within the North East ▪ Increased productivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More green Energy businesses, jobs and apprenticeships ▪ Higher FDI in green energy ▪ Providing opportunity for increased use of Zero Emission Vehicles in the North East ▪ Improving the direct environmental impact of transport networks and operations ▪ More spinouts supported ▪ More clean energy installations and energy generation (KwH) ▪ Reduced greenhouse gas emissions ▪ More households provided with advice and take-up of energy efficiency measures ▪ More natural land improved and private investment in natural capital ▪ More flood and climate resilience measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased investment in NE to improve job quality ▪ Stronger international relationships and trade links ▪ More engagement with potential inward investors ▪ Implement refreshed Access to Finance programmes

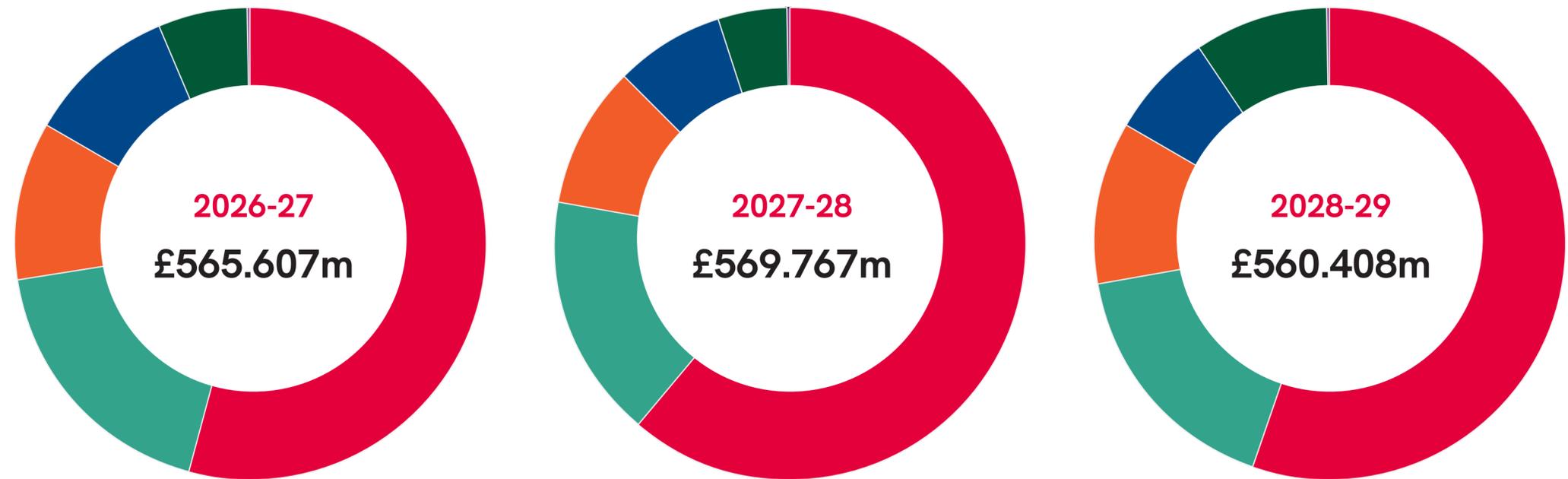
Our resources

In delivering the missions and pledges in this Corporate Plan, we use our resources in ways that maximise value for money relative to the benefits achieved.

Our investment framework and assurance processes guide these decisions: they set the principles for where and how we invest, and how we appraise, monitor and evaluate specific programmes.

The charts on this page and the next show our funding sources and how that funding is spent. The proposed investment plans in the table outline the areas in which we expect to invest over the medium-term financial plan period, aligned with the pillars of our Integrated Settlement with Government. The two corporate budget and expenditure charts set out the costs of running the Combined Authority for 2026/27.

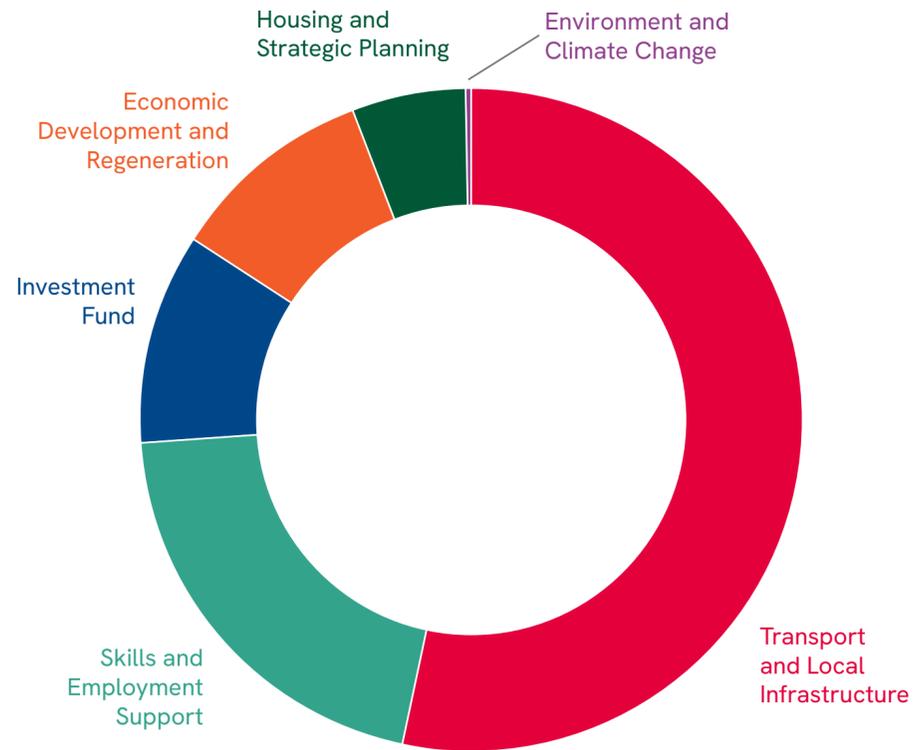
Medium-term resource outlook (revenue and capital)



Integrated Settlement Pillar	2026-27 £m	2026-27 £m	2026-27 £m
● Transport	307.811	348.709	310.620
● Skills and Employment Support	103.687	95.471	94.922
● Economic Development and Regeneration	60.048	54.583	63.009
● Investment Fund	58.453	43.207	40.321
● Housing and Strategic Planning	35.084	27.273	51.012
● Health, Wellbeing and Public Service Reform	0.339	0.339	0.339
● Environment and Climate Change	0.185	0.185	0.185

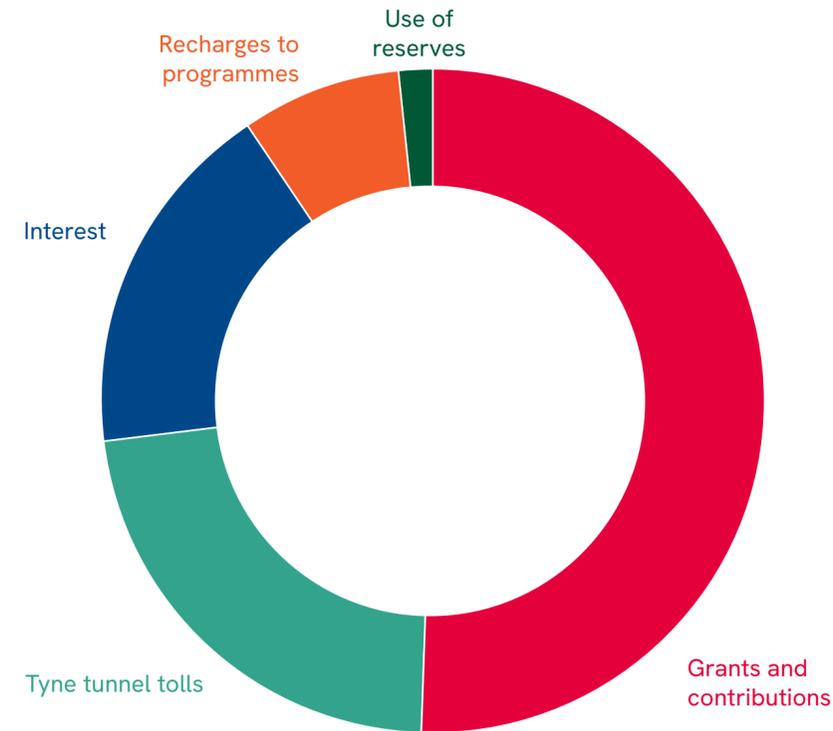
2026/27 position

Draft funding for programme delivery



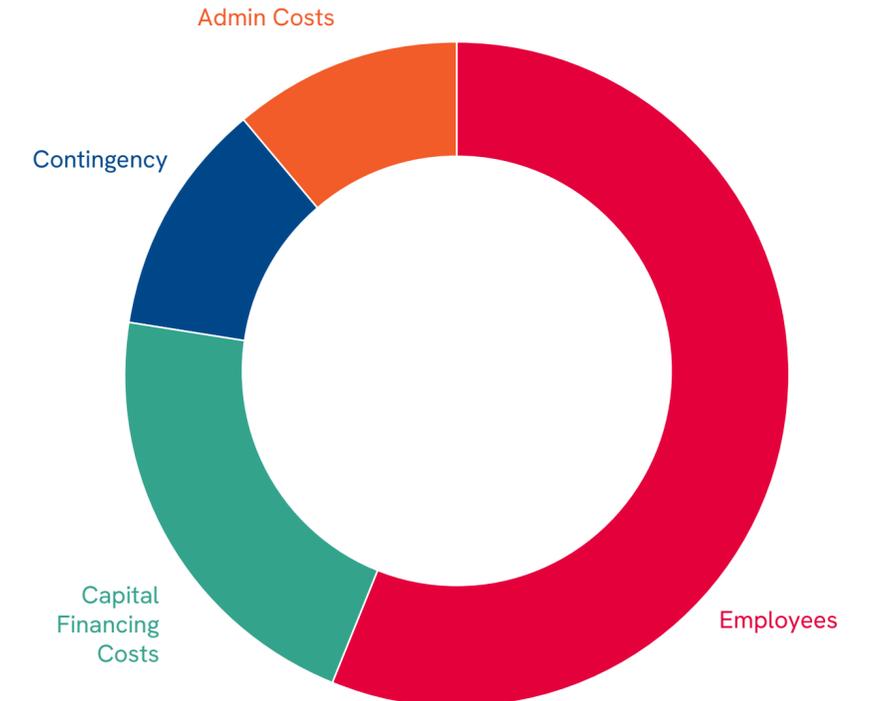
	£m
● Transport and Local Infrastructure	307.81
● Skills and Employment Support	117.60
● Investment Fund	58.45
● Economic Development and Regeneration	58.39
● Housing and Strategic Planning	31.94
● Environment and Climate Change	0.19

Draft funding for corporate costs



	£m
● Grants and contributions	19.75
● Tyne tunnel tolls	8.79
● Interest	6.80
● Recharges to programmes	3.10
● Use of reserves	0.55

Draft corporate expenditure budget



	£m
● Employees	23.17
● Capital financing costs	8.79
● Contingency	4.66
● Admin costs	4.56

In addition to the above, we will collect levies from our constituent local authorities totaling £97.65m. This is invested in its entirety in delivering transport infrastructure and services across the region.

Our people and culture



Our Values:

Strive for brilliance

One team

Make it happen

Be inclusive

Drive sustainability

At the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority, we are building a culture that reflects a delivery-focussed, mission-led, forward-thinking organisation. As we grow, we are attracting and developing a powerful and diverse workforce united by a shared purpose: delivering meaningful outcomes for people across the North East.

We are committed to building an organisation that reflects the communities we serve. As champions of the New Deal for North East Workers, we will create early-career opportunities, support economically inactive people into work, and open pathways for those who want to contribute to the region's success.

Our culture is rooted in collaboration, accountability, and inclusivity. Every colleague will understand their role in our shared mission and feel a sense of belonging. We will invest in development, learning, and leadership so everyone can grow and excel here.

People, transformation and technology will be the catalysts for our future success. In a world of constant change, we will adapt with confidence, lead with purpose, and shape the future. We will unlock smarter, more agile ways of working, and drive innovation at every level. Transformation investment and activity isn't just about improving processes and systems; it's about shaping a culture that thrives on progress, ensuring we're ready to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Wellbeing will remain central to how we work. We will promote flexible working, prioritise health and wellness, and support a positive work-life balance so people can thrive and perform at their best.

Together, as One Team, we will build a culture that supports our people and drives the success of the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority.

Our design for success

Our organisational design will enable us to deliver our missions effectively and efficiently. Every role will be aligned to our strategic objectives, supported by a structure that is clear, agile, and future-ready. We will minimise duplication, empower decision-making, and maximise impact.

We will continually review and refine our model to ensure it remains fit for purpose and helps every colleague understand how their contribution drives success for our organisation and the region we serve.

A team that enables delivery

Two years on from being established, we now have a fully operational senior management team and employee structure that enables us to deliver on our missions with focus and momentum.

Our passionate and talented workforce is organised into five core directorates. Yet, as a mission-driven Mayoral Strategic Authority, our work is never confined to organisational

boundaries. Colleagues collaborate across teams, united by a shared purpose, and work closely with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to create impact across the region.

Economic Growth, Innovation and Culture

Guides investment in the region to boost growth, create jobs and productivity whilst proactively reducing inequality.

Transport

Shapes and delivers a greener, affordable integrated transport network that works for everyone.

Skills, Inclusion and Public Sector Reform

Builds an economy everyone can contribute to and benefit from, equipping residents with the skills and support needed for the region to thrive.

Operations

Underpins all activities of the organisation by setting direction, communicating, managing performance, capability and culture, ensuring good governance and managing our reputation.

Finance & Investment

Underpins all activities of the organisation by providing strategic financial leadership and assurance, as well as managing and investing significant public funds.



If you have any questions about our Corporate Plan,
please contact:

enquiries@northeast-ca.gov.uk or call us on 0191 211 5695

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