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IPPR
NORTH

DO WE NEED A GREAT NORTH PLAN?

CALL FOR EVIDENCE

ABOUT IPPR NORTH

IPPR North is IPPR's dedicated thinktank for the North of England. With its head office in Manchester and representatives in Newcastle, IPPR North's research, together with our stimulating and varied events programme, seeks to produce innovative policy ideas for fair, democratic and sustainable communities across the North of England.

IPPR North specialises in regional economics, localism and community policy. Our approach is collaborative and we benefit from extensive sub-national networks, regional associates, and a strong track record of engaging with policymakers at regional, sub-regional and local levels.

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NEW IDEAS
for CHANGE

ABOUT RTPI

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is Europe's largest organisation seeking to advance the science and art of town, country and spatial planning for the benefit of the public. It represents 23,000 planning professional members across the UK and worldwide, and is a learned society.

RTPI holds the Royal Charter, and as a Chartered Institute is responsible for maintaining and improving professional standards and accrediting world-class planning courses nationally and internationally. RTPI also owns and delivers Planning Aid England, which has for over 40 years helped communities understand and engage with the English planning system, free of charge. RTPI and its UK regional offices work with many other organisations nationally and internationally to develop and influence planning policy for the benefit of communities, the environment and economies, now and in the future.

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Background

In 2014 a number of organisations came together to hold two events in the North West under the banner 'Framing the Future'. At each of these events, participants expressed a clear sense of frustration that, at a national level, matters of planning and economic development were not being given the attention that they deserved, and that spatial planning processes at the sub-national level were fragmented. There was agreement that, in the absence of any serious national spatial plan, the north of England needed a plan of its own: a Great North Plan.

Since then, the three Northern Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) regions – Yorkshire, North East and North West) have partnered with IPPR North to develop plans for a series of regional roundtables to be held during the summer of 2015. These will lead up to a 'Northern Summit' conference early in the new year, and then a report exploring what a spatial planning framework for the North should look like, and how it might be developed.

The main aim of this work is to determine the most appropriate approach to developing a strategic spatial planning framework across the North of England.

It has three objectives.

1. To initiate discussions about the nature and scope of a strategic spatial planning framework for the North of England.
2. To solicit proposals for greater integration between transportation and spatial planning.
3. To explore and develop advice about the appropriate governance needed to take this agenda forward.

Call for evidence

We are initiating the process by issuing this call for evidence.

Businesses, planners, academics, local councils, civil society groups – indeed, anyone living or working in the north of England – is invited to share their thoughts about whether we need a Great North Plan and their ideas about what it should look like. Our consultation is framed by two key questions.

1. What should be the nature and scope of a strategic spatial planning framework for the north of England?

Some of the key issues to consider here are the following.

- What are the key components of such a framework? These might include issues of land-use, energy, transport and other infrastructure, water and population, among others.
- Where should the boundaries covered by such a framework lie, and how should it address cross-boundary matters?
- To what extent should it be 'inclusive', and to what extent should it focus on the big cities?
- How it might fit with and relate to the statutory plans of local and combined authorities, and with the government's plans to create a 'northern powerhouse'?

2. What might be the process and timetable for the development of such a framework?

Issues under consideration here will include the following.

- Over what timetable could a Great North Plan be successfully developed? What are the first steps?
- Who are the key partners who need to drive the process? More widely, who will need to be involved and consulted?
- How might such a process be funded?
- How should it be branded and promoted to build wider 'ownership'?

Our call for evidence is open until 30 September 2015. Submissions, of no more than 5,000 words, can be made in writing and sent to infrastructure@ippr.org. Please indicate whether or not you are willing to have your submission made public on the dedicated Great North Plan website.¹

In order to move the conversation forward generate wider interest in this initiative, you can also tweet your ideas on any aspect of these key questions, using the hashtag #GreatNorthPlan. The best of these will also be featured on the Great North Plan website.

Roundtables

Plans are in place to hold five regional roundtables in Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Leeds and Sheffield in June and July 2015; each roundtable will be re-run in two separate time-slots. Despite their city-centre locations, these roundtables are aimed at stakeholders from across all 11 northern LEP areas. Each one will follow a similar format: the first half will be primarily for planning experts, with the second half involving wider stakeholders from combined authorities, LEPs, local planning authorities, transport agencies, businesses and so on. IPPR North will attend and write up a short report on each roundtable, which will feed into the wider process.

Dates and locations are as follows.

Sheffield

2–4pm and 4–6pm, Wednesday 24 June 2015
Halifax Hall Hotel, Endcliffe Vale Road, Sheffield S10 3ER

Leeds

2–4pm and 4–6pm, Monday 13 July 2015
Eversheds LLP, Bridgewater Place, Water Lane, Leeds LS11 5DR

Liverpool

2–4pm and 4–6pm, Tuesday 14 July 2015
No. 1 Mann Island, Liverpool L3 1BP

Newcastle

2–4pm and 4–6pm, Wednesday 15 July 2015
Claremont Tower, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU

Manchester

2–4pm and 4–6pm, Wednesday 22 July 2015
DAC Beachcroft, 3 Hardman Street, Manchester M3 3HF

The Northern Summit – Leeds, 2016

The process will conclude with a Northern Summit event, hosted by Leeds city council in early 2016, which will assemble more than 100 stakeholders to draw together work emanating from the regional roundtables, and to discuss the way forward for a Great North Plan. It will feature keynote speakers including a minister from the new government, a presentation of the roundtable findings and evidence, and break-out groups on some of the key themes.

Further details of this event will be published shortly.

¹ <http://www.greatnorthplan.com/>