

# Devolution: a catalyst for long-term, positive change in local communities

01 March 2023

The levelling up agenda has provided an excellent basis for positive change. Devolution is at the heart of this and has the potential to deliver lasting impact in regions historically underfunded for too long.

Devolution provides local authorities with the opportunity to come together for the collective benefit of their local communities. To attract much needed investment into regions and to enable local authorities to have a bigger voice to champion their local areas. And, to give local leaders significantly more control over major decisions that affect local people and businesses.

With greater autonomy and funding does come risk. That is why it is important that you have a trusted legal partner beside you every step of the way.

As the legal advisors of choice for the four authorities involved in the first cross-county mayoral-led combined authority, we're working as an extension of the in-house legal teams to help the authorities to realise the potential of the unprecedented opportunity and then to deliver their ambitious plans. Connection is strength. That's why we're collaborating with them to understand and interpretate guidance, negotiate a fair deal with the Government and navigate the process of legislating for and creating a new Combined County Authority.

For large and complex projects such as this, we combine the use of our technology solutions with the knowledge and experience of our dedicated [legal project management](#) specialist, and finely tuned processes and methodologies to provide clear end-to-end visibility of status, timing, resourcing, and cost management.

With unrivalled experience, the right foundations and specialist knowledge please contact us should you wish you discuss your own devolution arrangements.

## Our experience

- We're advising on the first cross-county, mayoral-led combined authority devolution deal in the country. The project, co-led by Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council, Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council provides a unique and unprecedented opportunity for the authorities to come together to deliver much-needed investment into the region.
- We advised the London Borough of Croydon on constitutional changes required to enable them to move to a mayoral executive.
- We provided governance and constitutional advice to the senior leaders of 17 councils and two National Parks on a proposal to form the Heart of the South West Combined Authority.
- We're supporting Nottinghamshire County Council on their involvement in the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICS.
- We advised Western Riverside Waste Authority on all legal matters, including constitutional issues which affect it as one of the seven original joint waste authorities set up by the Local Government Act 1985 and the Waste Regulation and Disposal (Authorities) Order 1985.
- We supported seven clinical commissioning groups to merge into the NHS North East London Clinical Commissioning Group, helping them to develop the wider governance arrangements for their integrated care system.
- We redrafted the 2022 Welsh model constitution for local authorities in Wales and a guide to the model constitution.
- We advised the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy on the transfer scheme for the reallocation of property, assets and associated liabilities from the Secretary of State to the Oil and Gas Authority.

- We were instructed by the Welsh Government to oversee all aspects of the creation of Natural Resource Wales under the Public Bodies Act 2010. The approach was radically different to what had previously been done and involved the merger of budgets worth £160m.
- When it was decided that there should be one overarching body in London to determine the use of land used for health and care in the city, we provided legal support to the London Estates Board, established as part of the London Devolution governance arrangements. We helped the Board to bring together the statutory organisations, including the Mayor and national partners who each have a role in service design and delivery.
- After supporting with their initial business case and submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, we're advising the project in the establishment of Freeport East, one of just eight special economic zones countrywide. Our experts are overseeing all administrative and legislative aspects, subsidy control and their new corporate structure.
- When the recently incorporated East Midlands Development Corporation was established, we provided legal support to three of the five founding members, advising on the company's constitution, governance, membership, and funding arrangements. We also assisted with the negotiation and drafting of all documents to support the establishment of the vehicle.
- We continue to advise Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council on the termination of their joint waste PFI and the reprocurement of both short and long-term waste contracts.

## Key contacts



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## Related expertise

Constitutional and administrative law

Legal project management

Public contracts, projects and funding

