



Proposal for a Tees Valley Combined Authority

Consultation Report

February 2015

1. Introduction

The five councils have been working together to investigate the potential of a Combined Authority for the Tees Valley. As part of this work they have sought the views of a range of stakeholders across the area on the proposal including the proposed priorities for the Combined Authority. Detail on the consultation process and the responses received will be set out over the following sections:

- Consultation Process
- Summary of responses
- Responses (detailed)
- Conclusions
- Appendix A – Consultation Timeline
- Appendix B – Consultation Documents
- Appendix C – Letters received in response to the consultation

As advised by DCLG the consultation has been modeled on that undertaken by the seven councils to the north of the Tees Valley in the development of the North East Combined Authority. We have taken account of the approach which they utilised and have developed this to enhance response rates through the consultation. This has been effective and a better response rate has been achieved with 1,911 responses received to our consultation compared to the North East Combined Authority total of 650 stakeholders (including over 450 residents).

2. Consultation Process

Consultation on the proposal for a Tees Valley Combined Authority ran between 10th December 2014 and 31st January 2015 (consultation timeline included as appendix A).

Within this time a range of methods were used to promote access to the consultation in a variety of ways across the five authorities including but not limited to:

- Online survey;
- Reports/presentations to a variety of committees/partnerships/groups;
- Letters to businesses/organisations/groups providing the link to the online survey;
- Dedicated webpage on each council website and the Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) website which linked through to the online survey;
- Press releases;
- Articles in council magazines.

The following information was made available on the websites of each of the 5 councils and Tees Valley Unlimited:

- Consultation document
- Online survey
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Draft Governance Review
- Background report that went to the councils cabinet/committee

- Press releases
- Video

Links were also provided from the online survey to the consultation document (included as appendix B) and FAQs so that those completing the survey could access them easily to ensure they have the information available to understand the basis for the consultation.

A range of organisations, groups and individuals have been contacted directly during the consultation period including:

- Association of North East Councils (ANEC)
- Businesses and Business Organisations
- Colleges / Schools
- Durham Tees Valley Airport
- Elected Members
- Government Departments and Agencies
- Members of Parliament and House of Lords representatives
- North East Local Enterprise Partnership / North East Combined Authority
- North Yorkshire County Council
- North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Parish and Town Councils
- Ports
- Regional and Sub Regional Newspaper Editors
- Residents
- Trade Unions
- Universities
- Other partners

3. Summary of Responses

In total 1,911 responses were received to the consultation.

74.46% agreed that the partnership approach was important.

64.77% agreed that the Tees Valley should strengthen its partnership approach through a new Combined Authority.

86.39% agreed that Economic Development was an important area of economic growth for the Tees Valley.

90.59% agreed that Employment and Skills were an important area of economic growth for the Tees Valley.

89.55% agreed that Business Investment was an important area of economic growth for the Tees Valley.

89.09% agreed that Transport and Infrastructure was an important area of economic growth for the Tees Valley.

68.14% agreed that Low Carbon was an important area of economic growth for the Tees Valley.

4. Responses (detailed)

In total 1,911 accessed the survey. It should be noted that not all of those who looked at the survey answered every question and therefore we have identified the number who skipped each question. The number of responses received was significantly higher than that achieved by the other North East authorities when they consulted on their proposal for a North East Combined Authority. In total 650 stakeholders (including over 450 residents) participated in their local consultation exercise.

Question 1

We asked...

Please tell us who you are (choose 1)

The response was...

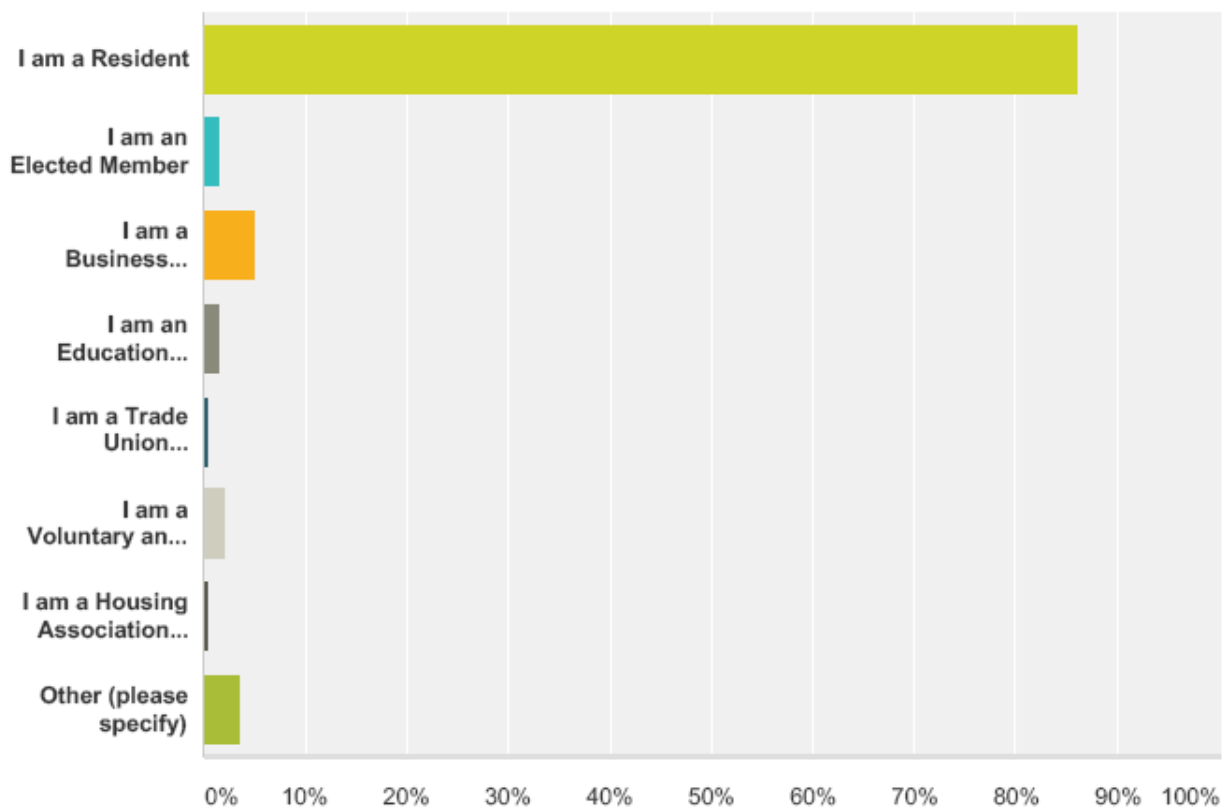
	Number	Percentage
Resident	1,638	85.98%
Elected Member	28	1.47%
Business	94	4.93%
Education Provider	27	1.42%
Trade Union	6	0.31%
VCS	39	2.05%
Housing Association	7	0.37%
Other	66	3.46%
TOTAL	1,905	100%

6 skipped this question.

Others include the following:

- Local Healthwatch representative
- English Heritage
- NHS Foundation Trust
- Individuals who work in the Tees Valley

- Employees from the 5 Local Authorities in the Tees Valley
- Parish Councils
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Member of Parliament
- Partner Organisation
- NHS staff
- Business owner
- Individuals who identified as being from more than one group e.g. resident and business owner



Question 2

We asked...

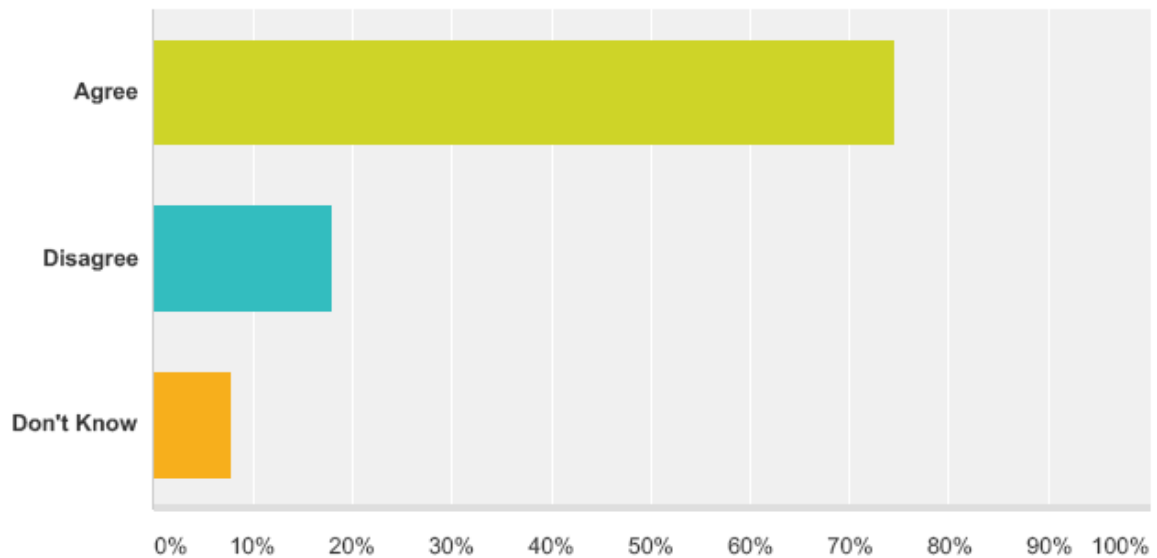
The five Tees Valley local Councils are committed to working together with business to create more jobs, support businesses to flourish and attract new investment into the Tees Valley. Do you think that this partnership approach is important?

The response was...

Agree 74.46% (1,382)	Disagree 17.89% (332)	Don't Know 7.65% (142)
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	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Resident	1,153	307	131
Elected Member	22	5	0
Business	84	5	4
Education Provider	25	0	2
Trade Union	5	1	0
VCS	32	2	3
Housing Association	3	2	2
Other	56	7	0
Skipped Q1	2	3	0
TOTAL	1,382	332	142

55 skipped this question.



Question 3

We asked...

Do you think that we should strengthen the way the five councils work together through a new Combined Authority, cementing our partnership in law, speeding up decision-making,

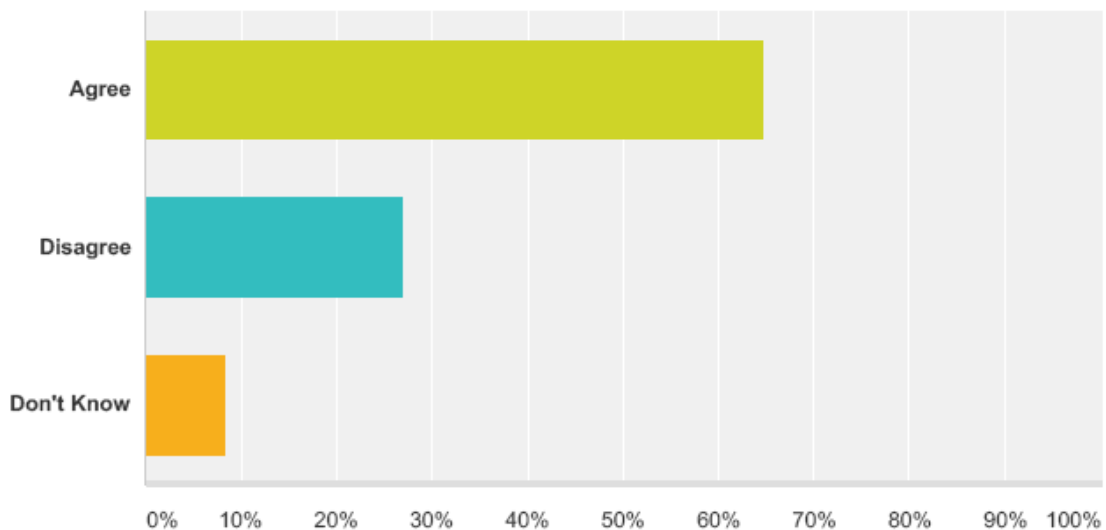
and being ready to accept new powers and resources from Government on these key issues?

The response was...

Agree 64.77% (1,184)	Disagree 26.91% (492)	Don't Know 8.32% (152)
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	Agreed	Disagreed	Don't know
Resident	982	463	130
Elected Member	15	6	2
Business	78	7	5
Education Provider	20	3	3
Trade Union	6	0	0
VCS	26	3	7
Housing Association	3	2	1
Other	52	5	4
Skipped Q1	2	3	0
TOTAL	1,184	492	152

83 skipped this question.



Question 4

We asked...

Please say whether you agree or disagree with the importance of each of the five areas of economic growth for the Tees Valley area:

220 skipped this question.

Economic Development

(i.e. understanding our economy and having the right strategies in place to meet Tees Valley economic needs, to secure new resources to create more jobs)

The response was...

Agree 86.39% (1,460)	Disagree 8.70% (147)	Don't Know 4.91% (83)
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	Agreed	Disagreed	Don't know
Resident	1,239	134	78
Elected Member	19	3	0
Business	84	0	2
Education Provider	24	1	0
Trade Union	5	0	0
VCS	28	1	3
Housing Association	4	2	0
Other	55	4	0
Skipped Q1	2	2	0
TOTAL	1,460	147	83

Employment and Skills

(i.e. making sure there are local jobs for local people and that local people have the skills they need to do those jobs)

The response was...

Agree 90.59% (1,530)	Disagree 6.10% (103)	Don't Know 3.32% (56)
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	Agreed	Disagreed	Don't know
Resident	1,304	93	53
Elected Member	20	2	0
Business	84	0	2
Education Provider	24	1	0
Trade Union	5	0	0
VCS	31	0	1

Housing Association	4	2	0
Other	56	3	0
Skipped Q1	2	2	56
TOTAL	1,530	103	56

Business Investment

(i.e. attracting new, and keeping and growing existing, local businesses)

The response was...

Agree 89.55% (1,499)	Disagree 6.27% (105)	Don't Know 4.18% (70)
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	Agreed	Disagreed	Don't know
Resident	1,277	95	65
Elected Member	20	2	0
Business	83	0	2
Education Provider	25	0	0
Trade Union	5	0	0
VCS	29	1	2
Housing Association	4	2	0
Other	54	3	1
Skipped Q1	2	2	0
TOTAL	1,499	105	70

Transport and Infrastructure across the Tees Valley and beyond

(i.e. helping ensure that travel by road, rail, air and sea are fit for current and future purposes in order to keep the economy moving)

The response was...

Agree 89.09% (1,494)	Disagree 7.51% (126)	Don't Know 3.40% (57)
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	Agreed	Disagreed	Don't know
Resident	1,272	115	53
Elected Member	20	2	0
Business	84	0	2
Education Provider	23	1	0
Trade Union	5	0	0
VCS	30	1	1
Housing Association	4	2	0
Other	54	3	1
Skipped Q1	2	2	0
TOTAL	1,494	126	57

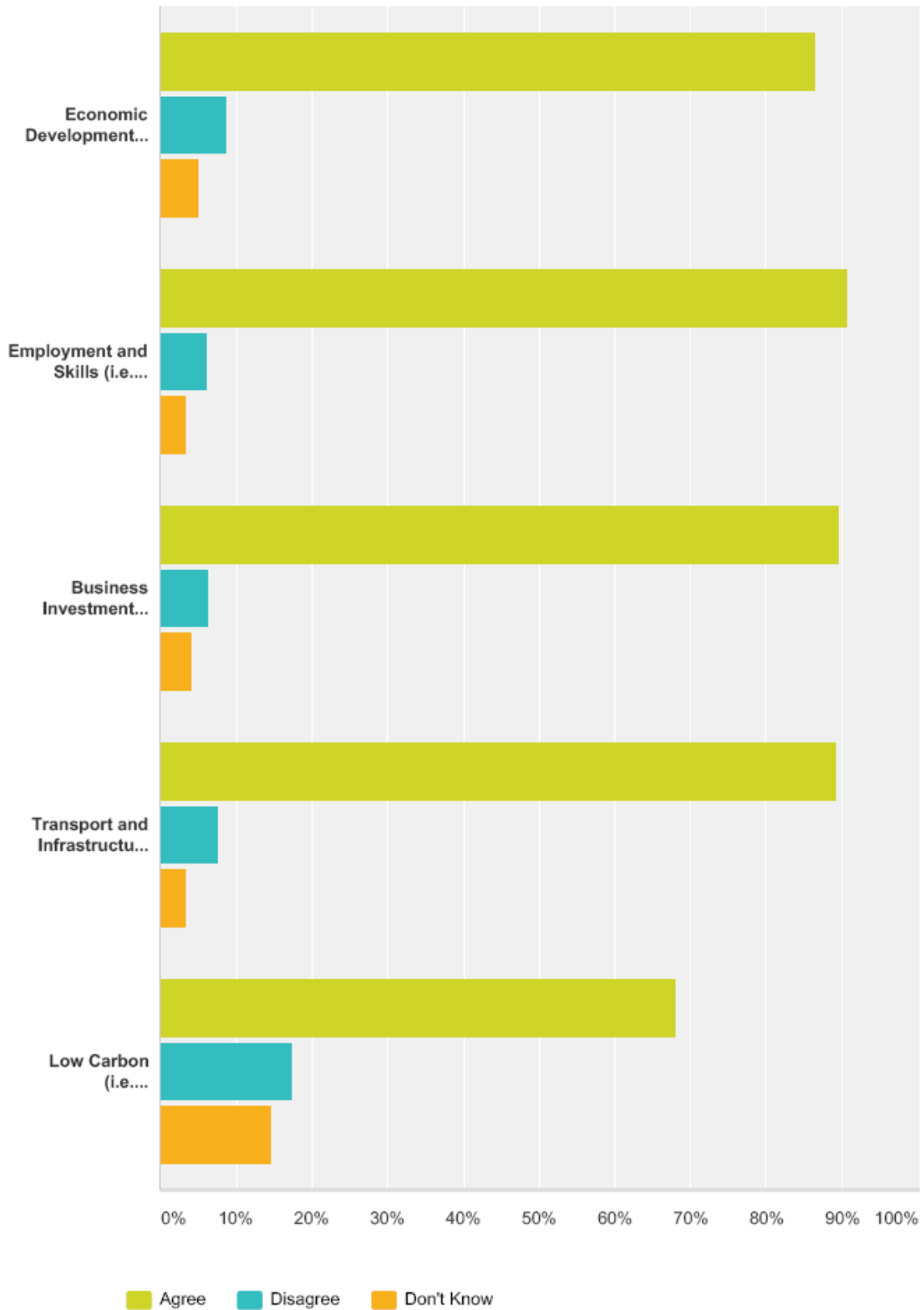
Low Carbon

(i.e. maintaining and growing the local economy whilst using less energy, limiting the effects of energy use on the local environment and growing low carbon businesses)

The response was...

Agree 68.14% (1,140)	Disagree 17.33% (290)	Don't Know 14.52% (243)
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	Agreed	Disagreed	Don't know
Resident	963	254	218
Elected Member	17	5	0
Business	62	10	14
Education Provider	18	4	3
Trade Union	5	0	0
VCS	22	5	4
Housing Association	3	2	1
Other	49	7	3
Skipped Q1	1	3	0
TOTAL	1,140	290	243



Question 5

We asked...

Please use the box below to make any additional comments.

The response was...

In total 750 chose to provide additional comments whilst 1,161 skipped this question. That means that less than 40% of the total respondents chose to answer this question.

The additional comments provided covered a range of topics and included both positive and negative views. In addition some raised questions about the detail of the Combined Authority.

A number of concerns were anticipated in advance of the consultation and were included within the Frequently Asked Questions. Unfortunately this has not stopped people raising those concerns in their additional comments.

The following section provides a summary of the main themes that came through from the additional comments provided. This reflects just a flavour of the comments received:

- Many comments were supportive of the development of a Combined Authority for the Tees Valley as they felt it would put the area into a better position to attract funding and investment.
- Some were concerned about the Combined Authority being a recreation of the old Cleveland County and felt that their Local Authority should either remain autonomous or would be better placed with another area e.g. North Yorkshire or County Durham.
- However, there were also a number of comments in support of the Local Authorities going even further and becoming a single authority or combining other functions such as education support services or health and social care.
- Many felt that working together in partnership would give the area a stronger voice and take it out of the shadow of the other North East local authorities so that the Tees Valley would not lose out to places like Newcastle.
- But there were others who felt that the Tees Valley should join the rest of the local councils in the north east as part of the North East Combined Authority.
- A number raised concerns about how equally funding and resources would be spread across the 5 local authority areas and also between the urban centres / principal towns and the rest of the area.

- Some comments were made on the proposed scrutiny arrangements. These included the need to include business representatives in the proposed membership and queried whether the Chair should be from the “opposition party” due to the complexity of local politics within the Tees Valley.
- There were a number of comments about the potential cost of the Combined Authority and particularly concerns that this may have implications for residents through increasing Council Tax bills. Some felt that there should be an aim to make the new structure cheaper and that there was a need for greater transparency about what the Combined Authority would cost.
- Concern was raised about the Combined Authority being an added layer of local bureaucracy or that there would be duplication with existing arrangements. This links to other comments which questioned whether the change would result in redundancies within Local Authorities. Some were against this whilst other felt that jobs should be reduced where there was duplication.
- Many welcomed the potential opportunities for the Tees Valley that could come from the devolution of further powers from central government. However, some were wary about such additional powers including concern that if this included setting local tax revenues we may lose out to the South East.
- Some queried how local people, businesses and groups (e.g. Residents Associations, the VCS and Parish Councils) would be involved in the shaping of policy for the Combined Authority. This included queries around future consultation arrangements.

A range of comments were also received on what should be priorities for the Combined Authority. These included:

- Transport and access - particularly in reference to rural and peripheral areas within the Tees Valley. One respondent felt that there should be one Tees Valley Transport Plan with Borough chapters to ensure a strategic approach to transport issues.
- Durham Tees Valley Airport - Improving and developing the airport was identified by a number of respondents.
- Training and skills - Whilst many noted that this should include young people it was also felt that there should be opportunities for all ages, particularly around re-training. Workplace skills for graduates was also highlighted.

5. Other responses to the consultation

In addition to those completing the online survey a number of letters of support were received from local partners (letters included as appendix C):

Association of North East Councils
Cleveland Police & Crime Commissioner and Cleveland Police
North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC)
North East Combined Authority (NECA)
PD Ports
Tees Valley Unlimited
UNISON (Northern Region)

6. Conclusion

The results of the consultation demonstrate that there is broad support for the proposal to develop a Combined Authority for the Tees Valley.

Almost two thirds of those who responded to the consultation (64.77%) agreed that the 5 councils should strengthen the way that they work together through a new Combined Authority, cementing the partnership in law, speeding up decision-making and being ready to accept new powers and resources from Government.

Appendix A – Consultation Timeline

When?	What?
W/C 24 th Nov	Explanation of Combined Authority proposals set up and made public on all council websites & TVU website.
10 th Dec	Consultation opened – council websites (except Middlesbrough) updated with consultation details and link to online survey.
10 th Dec – 23 rd Jan	Promotion of consultation through press releases to local media & inclusion in council magazines. Letters sent out to consultees by identified lead organisation.
17 th Dec	Consultation goes live in Middlesbrough (following Call-In period), website updated with consultation details and link to survey.
31 st Jan	Online consultation closes.



Have your say on:

**The proposals for a Tees Valley
Combined Authority**

Consultation Document

This document is available in alternative formats and in different languages on request. If you need support or assistance to help you read and/or understand this document, please contact your Council on 01429 266522

Please complete the [online survey](#) by 31st January 2015

Introduction

The five local councils in the Tees Valley (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees) are asking for your views on proposals to form a Combined Authority for the Tees Valley.

This note is intended to explain what a Combined Authority is, as well as what it isn't, and why we think it's a good idea.

Building on our strength

The five councils already work closely together with local business to strengthen our local economy, attract new business investment, create more jobs, support businesses to grow, and improve transport and local skills. To do this, the five councils already jointly fund an organisation called Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) to work for the whole Tees Valley.

As well as attracting investment from businesses, TVU has, since 2010, secured over £186m of European funds and well over £165m of UK Government funds.

We work very closely in partnership with businesses, through the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This partnership has served us well for many years and the way we work across all five councils and with business is often seen as a good example for other areas of the country to follow. The strength of our LEP has helped TVU to secure the large resources detailed above.

So why change?

We are hugely ambitious for the Tees Valley and our communities. Our existing governance arrangements have served us well but we are in a fast changing world and it is essential that we build on our success.

We want to cement our partnership in law, so that it offers all of us, including our businesses, certainty that we are working together for the long-term. And we want to be ready to accept new powers and resources from Government which may be given to Combined Authorities in the future.

We want to continue to be a big player, competing successfully alongside other, often much larger regions, both in the UK and internationally. Some areas already have greater powers and resources as a result of creating a Combined Authority – we believe we should not be left behind. This is about a new era of joint working, building on the strengths we have created together.

What options have we considered?

We have examined four potential models overall:

- Enhancement of the status quo;
- Joint committee;
- Combined Authority; and
- Company models

These were assessed against criteria including operational efficiency and effectiveness; capability to enhance our economic development; local authority governance; public sector financial management; and engaging with the private sector. We have concluded that the Combined Authority model is the most effective model for us and a summary of the rationale is included in the detailed governance report (see the link below).

What would a Combined Authority do?

We have produced a more detailed report and a set of Frequently Asked Questions which you can read by clicking on this link.

www.hartlepool.gov.uk/TeesValleyCombinedAuthorityConsultation

This sets out what the Combined Authority would do and what the local councils would continue to do. In summary, the Combined Authority would focus on economic growth and our ambition to create 25,000 new jobs for the Tees Valley.

What impact will this have on our existing local councils?

The role of each of the five councils will be undiminished. Each council will still be responsible, for example, for social care of young people and adults, local regeneration strategies, highways repairs and maintenance, libraries and the many other services we currently run.

This also means that a Combined Authority is NOT a recreation of the former Cleveland County Council.

Resource Implications

We estimate that there would be minimal additional running costs. For more information on this, please refer to the report and FAQs in the link above. In summary, the small additional running costs would be dwarfed by the potential financial gains from Government.

How do I have my say?

Please complete the online survey by no later than **31st January 2015**. There is space for your own wording too. Please complete the online survey at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TeesValleyCombinedAuthorityConsultation>

What happens next?

We will report the conclusions of the consultation to all five councils no later than March 2015. If feedback is supportive, we intend to formally ask each Borough Council to approve our 'scheme' in March, which is when we have to submit our proposal to the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State will then carry out further consultation before placing an 'Order' before both Houses of Parliament. Because of the General Election in May 2015, this is likely to mean that the earliest chance to have the Order approved before both Houses of Parliament would be Autumn 2015.



email: melanie.laws@northeastcouncils.gov.uk
tel: 0191 261 3910

28 January 2015

Councillor C Akers-Belcher
Leader of the Council
Hartlepool Borough Council
Civic Centre
HARTLEPOOL
TS24 8AY

Dear Christopher

Tees Valley Combined Authority proposal

Thank you for inviting the Association to respond to the consultation on the proposal for a Combined Authority in the Tees Valley.

On behalf of the Association, I am writing to confirm that we support the proposal, which builds on established and successful working across the local authorities in the area. We very much welcome the core ambition expressed in the proposal aimed at boosting the economy of the area.

This is an objective which is very much shared across all places in the region and we wish you well in your endeavours. We look forward to working with you in the coming months and years.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Paul Watson
Chair



Cleveland Police Headquarters
Ladgate Lane
Middlesbrough
TS8 9EH

Police and Crime Commissioner:
Acting Chief Constable:

Barry Coppinger
Iain Spittal

Tel: 01642 301653
Tel: 01642 301217

30 January 2015

Mr Ray Mallon
Mayor
Middlesbrough Borough Council
Town Hall
Middlesbrough
TS1 2QQ

By email only
ray_mallon@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Dear Ray

Proposed Combined Authority for the Tees Valley

We write in connection with the current consultation on the subject of the Tees Valley Combined Authority.

Although, as an elected Local Policing Body and Chief Officer respectively, we are neither statutory nor discretionary consultees in respect of the proposal, we felt it important to ensure that we make a submission setting out our positive view of the proposal.

We note the key features of the intended scheme and its overall intended purpose of setting the strategic vision, key priorities and outcomes for the Tees Valley and to deal with certain strategic funding matters.

Turning to the specific features of the TVCA we would wish to highlight the following

Approach and Ways of Working

We note and endorse the overall statements of strategic ambition for the Tees Valley in terms of achieving its economic potential. We agree that failure to progress this proposal at this time would represent a significant missed opportunity and we entirely agree that for the reasons set out in the reports that underpin your recent decision making, there has never been a better time to establish a Combined Authority.

We would be keen to engage closely with the Combined Authority's decision-making on economic development, skills and transport across the proposed TVCA area and would be willing to consider, should the Authority in due course think fit, any proposal which might arise in due course for co-opted involvement on the Authority.



The Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland is an accredited Living Wage Employer with the Living Wage Foundation.

As you would expect, we share the overall vision of the potential this proposal offers for achieving devolution of central government powers and we endorse the intention to operate the TVCA in a way which is cost-effective, which minimises bureaucracy and which achieves alignment with the decision-making of the Tees Valley Unlimited Local Enterprise Partnership.

Transport, Skills and Economic Growth

We are particularly anxious to underline our shared view that economic growth for the area can make a vital contribution to our goal of reducing crime, by addressing a key feature of its root cause. We note and would especially wish to endorse the proposal that TVCA should pursue targeted measures to increase employment and address worklessness, as well as committing to a coordinated programme of support for young people, adult learners and employers.

We are particularly interested in exploring the potential for co-commissioning of services generally, but in particular within this context those that focus upon young people.

Similarly, we support the ambitions of the TVCA's transport remit; improvement in the transport infrastructure being

- important on its own merits and in terms of the link with our remit over road traffic matters; and
- vital, we agree, in terms of its contribution to accelerating economic growth.

We note and endorse the opportunity for the TVCA as Integrated Transport Authority to ensure that investment is maintained in socially-necessary public transport routes.

Summary

We support the proposal and would wish to make clear, at the outset, that we would wish to work closely with the TVCA and with partners in order to assist it to realise its potential.

We would be delighted to expand upon this submission in due course as the process develops.

Yours sincerely



Barry Copping
Police & Crime Commissioner



Iain Spittal
Acting Chief Constable

cc: Chief Executive



The Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland is an accredited Living Wage Employer with the Living Wage Foundation.

05 February 2015

Mrs Amanda Skelton
Chief Executive
Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Redcar & Cleveland House
Kirkleatham Street
Redcar TS10 1RT

Dear Amanda

Re: Proposals for a Combined Authority

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposals for a Combined Authority for the Tees Valley, please accept this letter as the formal response from the North East Chamber of Commerce. NECC is the largest business representative organisation representing about 1,000 businesses in the Tees Valley area across all sectors and covering an estimated one third of the area's workforce.

The proposals for a Combined Authority have been circulated to our members in the Tees Valley for comment and discussed at a number of the NECC's Committee meetings in the five boroughs. This response therefore represents the considered view of our members from all parts of the Tees Valley.

We strongly support the proposals for a Combined Authority and see a move for the five Boroughs to work more closely together as a positive and sensible approach. Changes in Government policy and the possibility of attracting new areas of funding will require such co-operation if the Tees Valley is to have a strong voice.

Members also support the proposal to locate the Combined Authority with the LEP and to utilise the same staffing arrangements. We believe this is a sensible approach which will maximise expertise and minimise costs.

The Combined Authority will require clear, strong leadership to provide a strong voice for the Tees Valley and enhance connectivity with key decision makers in Government and the Business Sector.

However, whilst we support the proposals, there are a number of areas where we would like to see further commitments from the Combined Authority and LEP.

NECC
Commerce House,
Exchange Square,
Middlesbrough TS1 1DW
Tel: 0300 303 6322
E-mail: enquiries@necc.co.uk www.necc.co.uk

North East Chamber of Commerce Trade and Industry.
A Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England No 2938084.
Registered Office: Aykley Heads Business Centre, Aykley Heads, Durham DH1 5TS

Accredited by



British
Chambers of
Commerce
Accredited

Supporters of

north east
england

1. Working with other LEPs and Combined Authorities

A Combined Authority will give the Tees Valley a stronger voice but we would not wish to see the organisation being Tees Valley centric and would expect to see it working in a meaningful and transparent way with surrounding Areas or Areas with similar interests. As funding comes to the North of England through initiatives like “One North” Tees Valley should be seen to be working strategically with neighbouring authorities to make sure the strongest possible case is made for transport, infrastructure and resource investment. This may include giving support to projects which technically lie outside the political boundaries of Tees Valley but nevertheless are strategically important to the growth of the business footprint of the area. A Combined Authority offers the Tees Valley huge opportunity but it is not an island and it will need strategic allies and neighbours going forward to support the wider growth of the region.

It would also be hugely beneficial and cost effective to work more closely with other Authorities, LEPs and partnering organisations on matters relating to inward investment. Whilst we accept that the Tees Valley has its own sector specific strengths and particular offers, co-operation on inward investment support must be a sensible approach and one we would like to see taken forward.

2. Visitor Economy

Tees Valley has an economically significant visitor economy and so must work together with organisations such as NGI, Visit Durham and Visit Yorkshire. Too many opportunities to promote the Tees Valley alongside other key visitor attractions are being missed because there is no named contact with authority and the ability to speak for the Tees Valley on the Tourism and Visitor agenda.

3. Private Sector Representation

Whilst we acknowledge that the private sector board members on the LEP will be present at the joint board meetings, we would not wish to see a “two tier” board with Combined Authority matters being decided away from the official board meeting and then effectively “rubber stamped”. We have a very good record of working together across all sectors in the Tees Valley and will need to continue to attract good quality private sector board members to the LEP.

NECC will continue to support all the Local Authorities and the LEP through this process and if you require any further clarification on these or other issues, please do not hesitate to contact Rachel Anderson on 08450 768357.

Yours sincerely

Kiersten Avery
Chair – NECC Tees Valley Committee



Contact: Cllr Simon Henig
Direct Tel: 03000 268 820
Fax: 0191 383 3662
email: simon.henig@durham.gov.uk

BY EMAIL

Councillor Akers-Belcher
Leader
Hartlepool Borough Council
Civic Centre
HARTLEPOOL
TS24 8AY

26 January 2015

Dear Councillor Akers-Belcher

On behalf of the North East Combined Authority I am pleased to submit our response to the proposals to establish a Combined Authority for the Tees Valley.

The local authorities in the North East and Tees Valley share a commitment to creating the conditions for economic growth in the region, and this is underpinned by the strong working relationships that exist between the authorities and the two LEPs across the area.

We welcome the opportunity to respond, and believe that whilst identifying the most appropriate governance model for an area is clearly a matter for the authorities involved, the creation of a combined authority offers an effective statutory framework to take advantage of a range of opportunities to accelerate the economic prosperity of the North East. We are pleased to support the proposal for a combined authority in the Tees Valley as the preferred model for collaboration, and as arrangements evolve we look forward to a continued partnership approach on the key issues affecting the North East.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Simon Henig
Chair, North East Combined Authority

cc Dave Stubbs, Chief Executive

Principal Office: Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY

Seven Councils Working Together

Durham County Council • Gateshead Council • Newcastle City Council • North Tyneside Council
Northumberland County Council • South Tyneside Council • Sunderland City Council

29th January 2015

Amanda Skelton
Chief Executive Officer
Redcar & Cleveland Brough Council
Town Hall
Fabian Road
Eston
MIDDLESBROUGH
TS6 9AR

Dear Amanda

Re: Proposals for a combined authority

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposals for a combined authority for the Tees Valley, please accept this letter as the formal response from PD Ports. We have already responded to the online survey issued by Tees Valley Unlimited.

PD Ports is one of largest employers in the Tees Valley region and is a significant contributor to the North East economy as well as a major player in the UK ports sector.

The proposals for a combined authority have been discussed at length within our business and amongst our customers, supplier and stakeholders enabling us to give a considered and informed response.

PD Ports strongly supports the idea of a combined authority and we believe that together we can be stronger and have greater impact on the region's growth and development as well as long-term economic prosperity.

Whilst our view is one of support for the proposals there are a number of important factors that we feel need to be put into place to ensure real benefits delivered.

- Clear leadership across the organisation, providing a stronger united voice for the region.
- Strong collaboration with other LEP and City Regions on matters relating to the Northern Powerhouse agenda.
- Private sector inclusion on transport and infrastructure to support the wider growth of the region.
- A specific focus on developing an Inward Investment team, which has strong links to partnering organisations.
- Act as hub for co-ordination for the Skills and Education agenda to ensure we meet the demands of business and invest in young people.
- Develop a more visible and stronger brand for the region and our connectivity with key decision makers in Government and the business sector.

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At PD Ports we look forward to working with the TVU to achieve our collective growth ambitions and deliver some world class infrastructure to our region.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Robinson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**David Robinson MBE
Chief Executive Officer
PD Ports**

Mr Rob Mitchell
Head of Policy and Performance
Redcar and Cleveland BC
Redcar and Cleveland House
Kirkleatham Street
Redcar
TS10 1RT

29th January 2015

Dear Rob,

I write on behalf of Tees Valley Unlimited, the Local Enterprise Partnership for the Tees Valley area, to express our full support for the proposal that the five local authorities should establish a combined authority to undertake the functions set out in the Consultation documentation. TVU believes that a combined authority with responsibility for economic development, skills and transport will help greatly to achieve the task of creating sustainable prosperity for the area.

Building on the already excellent relationships that exist not only between the five authorities themselves but also with the LEP and the private sector the Combined Authority will provide an improved focus on devising and delivering strategies that will transform the Tees Valley economy as well as accessing greater resources and devolution of powers.

In this context the proposal to ensure that the combined authority and the LEP work as one in a seamless fashion will help keep the private sector at the heart of the partnership working needed to achieve all our aims and aspirations.

Best Wishes



Stephen Catchpole
Managing Director
Tees Valley Unlimited



NORTHERN REGION

**UNISON NORTHERN REGION RESPONSE TO THE
CONSULTATION ON A COMBINED AUTHORITY FOR
TEES VALLEY**

INTRODUCTION

UNISON, the public sector trade union represents 80,000 public sector workers, including 44,00 local government workers across the Northern Region. In addition we also represent workers in health, transport, higher and further education, community and voluntary sector, police and fire services. UNISON is committed to quality public services that deliver for the needs of our communities.

In a period of unprecedented change in the public sector UNISON works in partnership with public sector and private sector employers, retaining our commitment to the value of quality public services.

UNISON Northern Region therefore welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the consultation process offered by Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, Darlington and Stockton-On-Tees councils.

UNISON has both an industrial workplace negotiating and bargaining, as well as a campaigning focus to maintain both quality public services for our communities, and also good public sector employment terms and conditions for public sector workers. UNISON Northern Region has been calling for the implementation of an alternative economic strategy which is based on investment in the public sector, create a climate for economic growth, reduce unemployment levels especially targeting youth unemployment, and delivers fairness for all. A growth strategy for the Region is needed, and there needs to be an understanding of the symbiotic relationship between public sector employment and economic spending power in the private sector. As this region has the highest level of unemployment in the country, with youth unemployment remaining at critical level, and the continuing public sector job losses set to increase, UNISON is also committed to tackling the issue of regional poverty given that we have some of the worst areas of deprivation in the UK. With one in two jobs in the public sector done by women we are also concerned about the increase in women's unemployment and underemployment in the region and its effect on families and the local economy.

The public sector is a major contributor to the regional economy and job market, particularly in local government and health which represent the largest employers in the region.

UNISON has a footprint across all public sector services in the region. UNISON members contribute to the quality of life in our communities and economy. UNISON's alternative economic strategy is geared to delivering economic growth, good jobs and social justice.

The public sector is a major contributor to the regional economy and job market, particularly in local government and health which represent the largest employers in the region.

UNISON is a key voice for public sector workers. We have a footprint across the region. Our members are active not only at work but in their communities. They contribute to the quality of life in our communities and economy. UNISON's alternative economic strategy is geared to delivering economic growth, good jobs and social justice.

The key issues for UNISON are:

- Quality public services that deliver for communities across the region;
- Apprenticeships and quality jobs;
- An integrated transport system that includes rural communities;
- Democratic accountability;
- Skills development, lifelong learning and retraining;
- Ensuring people from under-represented parts of our communities are supported into quality employment;
- The opportunity for UNISON to be included in consultation and negotiation on future delivery of public sector services in the region, especially in shared services and functions;
- The position of how the proposed Combined Authority will be led.

UNISON Northern Region's response concentrates on the issues that are of significance to us. As a major voice for working people in the region, this response is based on our perspective of the proposals and our industrial priorities.

REGIONAL ECONOMY

Since 2011 UNISON has been campaigning for an economic strategy that will create demand in the economy, will create employment through investment in skills and the infrastructure, and that sees investment in public services as a boost to the economy. While we recognise that this region has a reliance on public sector employment, and with Government spending cuts affecting the region drastically, UNISON still believes, along with leading economists, that the Government's austerity measures are hindering the region's economic recovery; a view that was shared by the International Monetary Fund in its review of the UK economy in May 2013. Investment in the public sector will help a regional transition to a more balanced economy and attract inward investment.

Public sector workers make a significant contribution to the regional economy. For every pound earned by a public sector worker 70p will be spent in the local economy. With 8.5% unemployment in the region, further public sector job losses will potentially see unemployment rise. The private sector is not creating jobs at the rate

that they are being lost in the public sector. Since 2010 the region has lost approximately 59,000 public sector jobs. However, the sector still represents 1:4 jobs in the region.

The scale of the public sector cuts means that the region is facing a significant impact on our economy as a result. One in three children in the region lives in poverty. The Child Poverty Action Group has highlighted how the job shortage in the region exasperated by further public sector job losses will lead to rising child poverty. 10 of the North East local authorities have child poverty levels above the UK average. Shelter has identified the North East as the UK hotspot for house repossessions.

UNISON would wish to see a Combined Authority tackle the issue of unemployment across the 5 Local Authority areas as a matter of urgency, especially youth unemployment. UNISON supports the view, the region needs “more and better jobs”. It is also UNISON’s contention that new jobs, if they are to be better jobs have to provide at least a Living Wage, and we have been actively campaigning as a trade union against zero hours contracts, particularly in the public sector. It is to be hoped that this would be a consideration for a Combined Authority. In addition secure employment is vital to address the problem of the growth in short term temporary low paid jobs within the region, especially in the Teesside area. Better paid jobs make for a better economy and quality of life.

SCOPE AND REMIT OF THE COMBINED AUTHORITY

UNISON is committed to democratic accountability and the right of citizens to be consulted on the creation of a Combined Authority, especially as it would be funded on a levy basis from council taxation.

UNISON recognises that the Combined Authority draft proposals do not indicate a merger of existing local authority functions, but the councils already work closely together with local business to strengthen the local economy, attract new business investment, create more jobs, support businesses to grow, and improve transport and local skills. The five councils already jointly fund an organisation called Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) to work for the whole Tees Valley.

Clearly UNISON would wish to be included in discussions on any move to share services or integrate functions, at the earliest stage, and that would include not just in local government but in the wider public sector if such issues arise.

Local authorities have recently taken over responsibility for public health, and under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 is part of health commissioning. In respect of transparency, democracy and accountability UNISON would wish to see engagement by the Combined Authority to consult with other sectors of the public sector.

While recognising that a Combined Authority is not a replacement for the former Regional Development Agency, UNISON would anticipate that there would be an interface with trade unions in the remit of the Combined Authority, as there was with the RDA.

UNISON supports the Combined Authority being strategic with local authorities charged with delivering the strategy. UNISON would seek clarification of whether there would be standard terms and conditions of employment across the seven local authorities, which would require industrial bargaining.

The current proposal for a Combined authority involves 5 local authorities. Should the Combined Authority go ahead UNISON would require clarification of the implications if one of the 5 withdrew.

SKILLS

It is recognised that a means of addressing unemployment is through tackling the skills shortage within the region.

UNISON has been committed to providing lifelong learning within the public sector. Through our educational partnership agreements, we have worked closely with local authorities and health trusts to deliver essential skills training, skills acquisition and vocational training. UNISON would want to see this continuing, and given our experience believe that we have a contribution to make to develop the lifelong learning initiatives which we have run in conjunction with the Open University and Bridges to Learning.

Given the anticipated further job losses in the public sector UNISON would hope that the Combined Authority would include skills training for those public sector employees faced with redundancy or already made redundant.

In respect of Apprenticeships, the public sector has played a crucial part in creating apprenticeship opportunities both in local government and the NHS. The priority for UNISON would be to see quality apprenticeships that deliver quality jobs. Apprenticeships are a means of addressing youth unemployment and in addition developing skills for long term unemployed and the underemployed.

A major concern is how the funding is going to be channelled from central government to the Combined Authority to deliver the vision for skills. Further clarification is required about the role of further and higher education in delivering the skills agenda and the implication of funding for this sector. It is also important to retain graduates in the region to boost the regional economy which also means that there needs to be job opportunities for them to encourage them to stay.

Equality is at the heart of UNISON and we would expect that a Combined Authority would enshrine equality into its skills agenda. UNISON would wish to see skills training deliver equality and quality.

In addressing women's unemployment as part of a skills vision for the region consideration would also need to be given to the barriers to women, particularly the access to quality affordable childcare.

Further clarification is required in respect of how and by whom career advice will be delivered. UNISON represented members in the Connexions services and those staff who transferred to local authority responsibility. It is an area that we consider to be crucial for both young people and the long term unemployed.

Given the divergent quality of training provider that has been experienced, additional clarification is also required on what is defined as a "learning provider" and how quality can be maintained.

TITLE OF THE NEW BODY

In respect of the title for the new body, UNISON would favour Economic Prosperity Board rather than Combined Authority, as we believe the former is more inclusive than a Combined Authority which implies that the only stakeholders are local authorities and not the wider economic community. As a trade union we would aspire to be part of an industrial partnership that can contribute to economic growth and skills within the region.

CONCLUSION

UNISON at regional level welcomes being given the opportunity to contribute to the consultation exercise for the Combined Authority. UNISON has concerns that if a second Combined Authority is created in the region there will be competition between the two instead of one strategic voice for our region. UNISON has and is keen to continue on a collaborative basis to work with the local authorities involved in proposal for a Tees Valley Combined Authority. A disappointment for UNISON is that despite this partnership approach there is no formal inclusion of the trade unions to the strategic development of the Tees Valley, especially as we are an engine of change, and we would welcome that formal links be considered with the trade unions and UNISON in particular.

UNISON would also seek clarification, as a matter of urgency, as to whether there is an intent to introduce an Elected Mayor for Tees Valley.

UNISON looks forward to a continued dialogue with the 5 local authorities for which we have had a commitment. UNISON is committed to contributing to the economic sustainability of the region and as a significant stakeholder within the North East.