

Overview of the 2024 English Devolution White Paper



The English Devolution White Paper details how power and money will be devolved from Whitehall to communities. Central to this devolution framework is the legislation of the introduction of Strategic Authorities, each encompassing populations of 1.5m+ to universally cover England. This will grant Mayors unprecedented power and budgets and increase involvement of local communities. Health, wellbeing and public service reform are explicitly mentioned, with a key ambition being to align Strategic Authorities and Integrated Care Systems.

Increased maturity and access to devolved powers

Foundational Strategic Authorities

non-mayoral combined or combined county authorities.
Limited powers









Mayoral Strategic Authorities (MSA)

led directly by an elected mayor. More power over transport, housing, skills, & public health

Established MSA

can access the funding of the **Integrated Settlement (IS)** and request additional powers

The Devolution Framework gives Mayors more freedom over their funding and priorities through Integrated Settlements. Established MSAs will have oversight of the following areas:

-  **Local Growth and strategic leadership:** MSAs will be required to produce a Local Growth Plan
-  **Transport and local infrastructure:** oversight of roads, rail and buses to join up transport networks
-  **Skills and employment support:** Strategic authorities to partly own the Local Skills Improvement Plan.
-  **Housing and strategic planning:** Mayors responsible for strategically planning for housing growth
-  **Economic development & regeneration:** Growth Hubs integrated into MSA with IS funding, promoting Mayors to lead the provision of local business support.
-  **Environment and climate change:** Funding for warmer homes and greener buildings in the 2025/26 IS
-  **Health, wellbeing and public service reform:** greater public service boundary alignment and increasing the role of Mayors in Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) and Boards (ICBs). No IS funding.
-  **Public safety:** Mayors to be responsible for exercising Police and Crime Commissioner and Fire and Rescue Authority functions, where possible. No IS funding.

What else is relevant to healthcare?

- 1 A new bespoke duty for Strategic Authorities** to be introduced, in relation to health improvement and inequalities, to complement existing health improvement duty held by upper-tier Local Authorities.
- 2** Introduction of an expectation that the Mayor or a delegate is considered for the position of Chair or **co-Chair of the ICP** and that **ICBs will engage Mayors** during the processes of ICB Chair appointment and setting priorities.
- 3** A long-term ambition to **align public service boundaries**, including those of Strategic Authorities and health, police, fire and probation services; to holistically improve service coordination and efficiency.
- 4 Better data:** ONS will lead a refresh of the government's data strategy; and a promise to legislate to broaden the scope of the Digital Economy Act 2017 and assess existing data governance practices.

What to look out for next:

- The introduction of **bespoke duty** for Strategic Authorities for health improvement & inequalities
- The impact of the potential role of the **Mayor as ICP chair** and impact on ICB plans
- How **Local Growth Plans** may involve health services
- **The English Devolution Bill**, laying out the manifesto to deliver the vision specified in the White Paper

1. [English Devolution White Paper](#)

2. [NHS Confederation: English devolution white paper: what you need to know](#)