

STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday, 26 July 2022

Report: Trailblazer Devolution Deal

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Purpose of paper

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Board on the progress of developing the Crime, Community Safety and Resilience strand for the Trailblazer Devolution Deal.

Trailblazer Devolution Deal: Crime, Community Safety and Resilience Strand

2. Before we analyse what is meant by the Trailblazer Devolution Deal (TDD), we first need to unpack what is meant by Devolution. "Devolution" is the term used to describe the process of transferring power from the centre (Westminster) to the nations and regions of the United Kingdom.



Figure 1

3. One of the key vehicles used by the government to achieve devolution is the use of combined authorities. Combined authorities are set up by groups of local authorities working together on shared issues. It is not obligatory for a combined authority to be led by an elected mayor, but the Government prefers this model as it makes it easier to agree 'deals' for more local powers and investment. There are currently ten combined authorities led by elected mayors, including in the West Midlands. The

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) was set up in 2016 and elected its first Mayor in 2017.

4. At present there are four key forms of devolution. These can be found in the box below:

Type	What it means	Example
Single devolution	The power to make decisions about activity and funding is moved from Whitehall to the WMCA.	Adult Education Budget £128 Million
Double devolution	The power to make decisions about activity and funding is moved from Whitehall to the WMCA and then passed on to, usually, Local Authorities.	Brownfield funding, Housing First
Triple devolution	The power to make decisions about activity and funding is moved from Whitehall to the WMCA and then passed on to, usually, Local Authorities, who then pass on the power to communities – often the voluntary sector.	Business Improvement Districts, Thrive IPS
Centralisation	Powers from Local Authorities are administered centrally by the Combined Authority	

5. The Trailblazer Devolution Deal sits within the context of the government’s ‘Levelling Up’ agenda. This Levelling Up agenda is described most clearly within their Levelling Up White Paper, published February this year. The paper articulates levelling up as the following: *“While talent is spread equally across our country, opportunity is not. Levelling Up is a mission to challenge, and change, that unfairness. Levelling Up means giving everyone the opportunity to flourish. It means people everywhere living longer and more fulfilling lives and benefitting from sustained rises in living standards and well-being.*

This requires us to end the geographical inequality which is such a striking feature of the UK... It is vital that we preserve and enhance the economic, academic, and cultural success stories of the UK’s most productive counties, towns, and cities.”

6. This brings us on to the ‘Trailblazer Devolution Deal’. Manchester Combined Authority and West Midlands Combined Authority have been invited by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to engage with them on a TDD process, where they will be given the opportunity to negotiate with central government on achieving tailored devolved powers and devolved funding on a basis of what will be most beneficial for their given geographies and systems. As part of this process both combined authorities will need to articulate how their TDD proposals will help to achieve the 12 Levelling Up missions.
7. The 12 Levelling Up missions can be found below:
- a. By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, and the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
 - b. By 2030, domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40%, and over the Spending Review period [2022/23-2024/25] by at least one third. This additional government funding will seek to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment

- c. By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing
 - d. By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.
 - e. By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third
 - f. By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high quality-skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas
 - g. By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years
 - h. : By 2030, wellbeing will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing
 - i. By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing
 - j. By 2030, renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas.
 - k. By 2030, homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst affected areas.
 - l. By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.
8. To address these 12 Missions the West Midlands Combined Authority have broken down the development of their Trailblazer Devolution Deal into 20 separate strands.
 9. One of these strands is 'Crime, Community Safety and Resilience'. This strand sits wholly within the areas of work which are covered by the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.
 10. The Combined Authority has been working in partnership with the Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner since March of this year to develop a series of proposals for this strand of work. The office has engaged in a thorough design process to generate ideas which will then be taken to central government. These ideas are all areas of policy which may benefit from devolved funding or devolved powers. In order to do this, we have employed a double diamond design process. See figure 2.

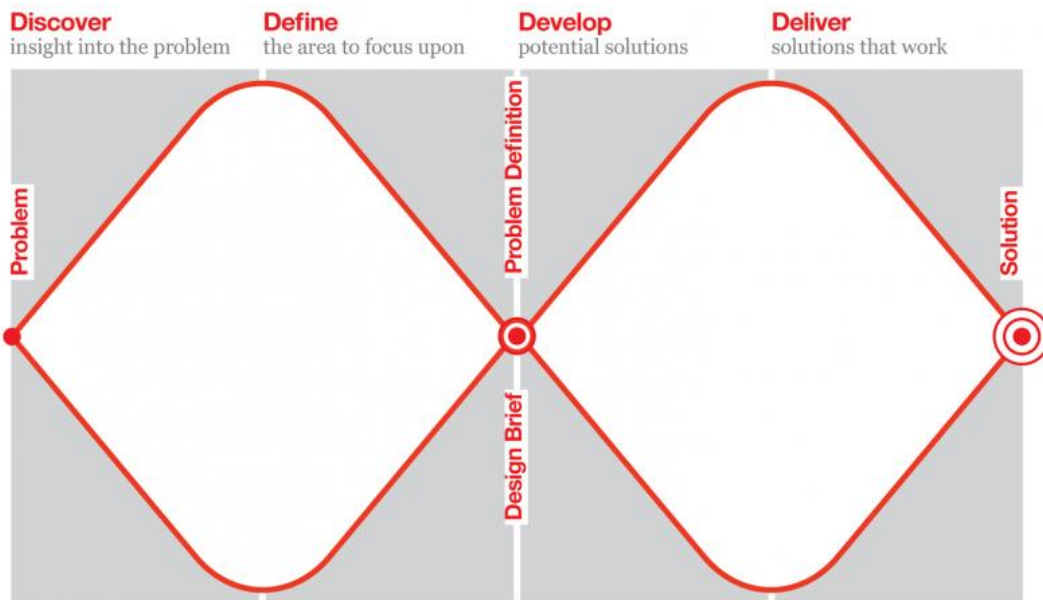


Figure 2

11. In practice this has meant a process of extensive engagement to develop the ideas we have generated over the course of the drafting process for this area of work.
12. Our starting point was a series of four 'Ideas Generation Sessions', with partners from across the systems that we cover. We structured the sessions using blue sky thinking tools, encouraging partners to imagine what could be possible if all barriers were removed and how this may translate into being achievable through either devolved powers or funding. This constituted the 'Discover' stage of our process.
13. We then entered a thorough drafting process and engaged with a number of system leaders both in forums and one on one. Towards the end of this drafting process we organised a number of meetings with officials from the Department for Levelling Up as well as two meetings with the Home Office and a meeting with the Ministry of Justice. There have been a number of formal engagements between the PCC and the Mayor in which negotiations have taken place on what each other will accept to be included within this strand of the Trailblazer Devolution Deal. This formed the 'Define' stage of our process.
14. Most recently, we have run a series of four consultation sessions with partners from across the criminal justice system, as well as an extraordinary Local Criminal Justice Board. At these sessions we have shared with partners the ideas which have come as a result of our 'Define' stage, using these sessions to hone, refine and alter our proposals – so they are best angled to fit the needs of the systems we are looking to enhance through devolved powers and funding. This has formed part of our 'Develop' stage of the design process.
15. These ideas have been drafted into a position paper, which will be submitted to the Department for Levelling Up in September. Before this happens, the paper will pass through a number of governance forums. These forums are as follows:
 - a. The Senior Local Authority Officers Group
 - b. The Devolution Strategy Group
 - c. The Finance Director's Group
 - d. The Met Leaders Group
16. Once the paper has passed through these groups it will then be sent to government. Following this a series of negotiations will take place between the Combined Authority, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and central government to decide on which proposals can be advanced.
17. Once all parties have decided on a set of proposals, the expectation is that the Combined Authority works to develop them into business cases which meet treasury green book standards.

18. For the Crime, Community Safety and Resilience strand these business cases will need to be drafted in partnership with the Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

Financial Implications

19. This paper has no immediate financial implications though it should be noted that the process is seeking devolved funding from central government

Legal Implications

20. This paper has no immediate legal implications though it should be noted that the process is seeking devolved powers from central government

Equality Implications

21. The WMCA TDD process includes a full Equality and Health Impact Assessment. This process has already commenced within the Crime, Community Safety and Resilience strand and we are actively considering how we can ensure that our proposals have a positive impact on disadvantaged groups.

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