

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **East Midlands Greens criticise proposed Mayoral Deal**

The consultation for the “East Midlands Devolution Deal” closed on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023. It will see a new, additional authority for “the Area” which comprises the counties of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, including the cities of Derby and Nottingham. The proposal is being sold on the basis of bringing in an extra £1.14 billion over the next 30 years and a new mayoral authority to oversee the Area.

The Green Party is a party of social and environmental justice, which supports a radical transformation of society for the benefit of all, and for the planet as a whole. We understand that the threats to economic, social and environmental wellbeing are part of the same problem, and recognise that solving one of these crises cannot be achieved without solving the others. We do not believe that the imposition of a mayoral authority on the people of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, without proper democracy and accountability, will further these aims.

The East Midlands Green Party welcomes any additional funding for our region but disagrees with the proposal and has submitted a [detailed response](#) setting out its reasons. In essence these are:

The proposal lacks detail and transparency and is hard to comment on but it clearly does not represent real devolution to the region. The centralisation of power through one person is undemocratic and provides insufficient local accountability. The proposed model is unproven and has been disastrous elsewhere, in Bristol for example.

Although called the East Midlands Combined County Authority, the Area covers less than half the region and we are concerned about the impact of the proposal on parts of the East Midlands which are excluded from the Area.

There has been no referendum to confirm support for the proposal. The mayor will be elected by the discredited ‘first past the post’ / ‘winner takes all’ system, and the authority will be formed of 8 members drawn directly from the constituent councils. Additional non-constituent members with only limited voting rights will be appointed to represent the Area’s district and borough councils and other interest groups. There will be no regional assembly to which the authority is accountable.

We contrast this with the situation in London where the Greater London Authority was created in 2000, following a referendum in 1998. The current mayor, Sadiq Khan, was elected in 2016 using the Supplementary Vote system. At the same time, a regional assembly, the London Assembly, was elected using the Additional Member system. Both the Supplementary Vote and Additional Member systems are forms of proportional representation.

There is no clarity on the relationship between local planning authorities and the Mayoral body. There is a suggestion of swingeing powers to acquire and dispose of land, as well as

power to designate Mayoral Development Areas and to create Mayoral Development Corporations. Without proper accountability, we fear that the mayor will ride roughshod over the wishes over local communities.

On adult skills, we are concerned that the proposals will lead to greater fragmentation of education and training opportunities. At the same time, the skills offer is far too narrow, focusing very obviously on economics with little regard to the role that better skills can play in social inclusion, social cohesion, individual self-confidence and the well-being of the people of the Area.

The ambitions for carbon reduction and net zero lack urgency and are predicated on the delivery of as-yet undeveloped and untried technologies. The proposal assumes that nuclear fusion and hydrogen will be fundamental to its aim of achieving net zero by 2050. Both these technologies are in the early stages of development and there remain significant hurdles to overcome. The Green Party believes that the UK must achieve net zero by 2030 using proven renewable technologies.

Overall, there is no evidence that the proposals will address the issues of the East Midlands. The background and context for the so-called Devolution Deal do not provide a convincing case for the solution offered. Apart from the offer of funding, there is no obvious advantage to the region and it is not clear why the funding could not simply be made available to existing councils. The amount offered is spread over 30 years and is not linked to inflation. By 2054 the annual grant will be worth very little.

#### **Note to editors**

East Midlands Green Party is one of 9 regional Green Parties in England and can be contacted via [coordinator@eastmidlands.greenparty.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@eastmidlands.greenparty.org.uk) or mobile:07776 456380.

Full details of the East Midlands Devolution Deal can be found [here](#)

A copy of the full response to the consultation can be found [here](#).

[www.eastmidlands.greenparty.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlands.greenparty.org.uk)