Contents

04
FOREWORD

06
AMBITIOUS
The challenge
The vision
Growth
Focusing on what we do best
A Strategic Economic Review
Skills

10
FAIR
The challenge
The vision
A fair and just economy
Inclusive and sustainable communities
Equality for all

14
GREEN
The challenge
The vision
Green and renewable energy
Low carbon transport
Sustainable homes and neighbourhoods

18
CONNECTED
The challenge
The vision
Better transport connections
Digital connectivity

22
TOGETHER
The challenge
The vision
Governance
Leadership and partnership
“FOR TOO LONG, TOO MANY DECISIONS ABOUT OUR FUTURE HAVE BEEN TAKEN TOO FAR AWAY BY PEOPLE WHO DON’T UNDERSTAND OR CARE ABOUT OUR REGION.

For too long, too many decisions about our future have been taken too far away by people who don’t understand or care about our region.

We live in a country where power and wealth are concentrated in the capital, and where other major cities and regions have been starved of investment and deprived of opportunity.

Devolution is our chance to begin to fundamentally change that situation. It’s about more than important additional powers and financial resources, it is about a new beginning and a new direction.

Having a Mayor to provide joined-up government, and a single influential voice on the national and world stage, has given London even more clout and influence. We now have the chance to give our city region the same kind of strategic and democratically accountable leadership. A Metro Mayor and Combined Authority will give us a stronger voice and the opportunity to pool our strengths and talents to our mutual advantage.

It’s a chance to work together to attract global investment, modernize our transport system, transform education and skills provision, plan future housing allocation and work together to solve common problems and grasp the big opportunities.

I am excited and optimistic about the future, because I believe in the energy and creativity of our people and our businesses. I know how much we can achieve together.

We are a region that pioneered radical social reforms, revolutionized public service, created world-class businesses and world-changing technologies.

We are innovators and pioneers, we find new answers and invent new models, and where we see problems we devise our own solutions. We are creative and ambitious, but we are also compassionate and fair. We know, from experience, that we are stronger when we stand together.

Sometimes people in power, and elected politicians, can become distant and disconnected. I am standing for Metro Mayor to make a difference where it really matters - in the place I was born and will always call home. If elected I will work for every family and community. I will be accountable and accessible. I will expend every ounce of energy and go the extra mile wherever and whenever required.

Devolution is our chance to deal with the things that matter most to our City Region and create a future rooted in our shared values and aspirations.

This manifesto reflects conversations, meetings and round tables that I have held with communities, businesses and stakeholders over the last several months. It sets out a vision that is based on a set of core ideas that define what kind of region we want to be – a region that is ambitious, fair, green, connected and together.

This election matters. It goes beyond party politics. It’s about taking back control, making decisions in our own interests and releasing the potential of a region with a rich history and extraordinary character.

It’s an opportunity that’s simply too important to be squandered. So, let’s grasp it together.”
Ambitious

“I believe we can be a city region that really punches its weight on the national and international stage. I want us to be a dynamic and prosperous economy creating wealth for our nation and opportunity for our people.”

THE CHALLENGE

We have seen the positive impact of regeneration in many parts of our City Region, but there is still a great deal to be achieved. We have a strong international profile, a world-class cultural offer and some well-established and emerging economic strengths, but in many key areas we need to up our game to compete successfully with other UK and world cities. Across our region there are families and communities who feel bypassed by regeneration, and whose life-chances are blighted by lack of opportunity or access to rewarding work.

We need to create and attract more businesses. We need more and higher value jobs. We need to be more productive and more inventive. We need to focus on what we are best at, and identify those economic sectors where there is real potential for growth and success. More than anything we need to invest in our young people, ensuring they have the qualifications, experience and skills to help them to flourish in a high skill, high-value economy.

THE VISION

“I believe we can be a City Region that really punches its weight on the national and international stage. I want us to be a dynamic and prosperous economy creating wealth for our nation and opportunity for our people. I want to keep and nurture the talent of our region to build a high-skill, high-value economy for the future. We’re a region that built world-class products and companies, and we can do that again. I want to strengthen partnerships with our universities to retain graduates and encourage new high-tech businesses. I believe we need to give equal priority and esteem to technical qualifications with industry-standard and degree level apprenticeships available to all. We must harness the talents of all our people and all our boroughs to really fulfil our potential.”

GROWTH

FOCUSING ON WHAT WE DO BEST

We need to have a bold and robust plan for the future that will define our economic purpose and identify those sectors where we have the greatest opportunity and competitive edge. In addition to our port and advanced manufacturing base, we need to focus on key areas like renewable energy, life sciences and the digital and creative sector where our natural and knowledge assets give us a tangible advantage.
A STRATEGIC ECONOMIC REVIEW

It is vitally important that our economic plan is evidence-based, strategically focused and sets measurable targets. That’s why one of my first actions will be to commission the City Region’s first Strategic Economic Review. Working with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Combined Authority (CA), I will develop a vision and action plan that will deliver economic benefits and opportunities to every borough and community.

Become a leading international investment destination

Our City Region needs to raise its game to attract more investment and major business relocations. We need to utilize the power of Liverpool’s international brand more effectively and powerfully, but we also need to streamline our inward investment activity. We need to be ambitious and professional in how we pursue major investment and relocation opportunities through a single properly resourced agency and a simple investor-friendly point of access. Being open for business means making it possible for inward investors to get to the right people and access the right information quickly and easily.

Supporting local entrepreneurs and business

We know that 70% of economic growth is likely to come from businesses already based in the City Region. We need to radically improve business support services across our area to support new start-up businesses, and help established companies to expand and find new markets. We need to install and nurture a culture of entrepreneurialism, starting in schools, but also through community-based strategies and targeted support for key growth sectors.

Celebrating and rewarding innovation

We will introduce an annual Innovation Award to encourage advancements in the high-tech and knowledge sectors, nurturing design and creativity in our local businesses, universities, schools and colleges, and providing support for the technology transfer process of turning ideas into marketable products.

Making the most of our creative and cultural assets

Culture and creativity are an integral part of our international profile and brand. We will develop a City Region programme for culture that celebrates every expression of creativity including, fashion, music, dance, design, film, sport, art and architecture to exploit our international appeal and celebrate what makes our region a thriving, creative and beautiful place to live. We will appoint a Creative Director to curate and co-ordinate cultural investment and programming across the City Region and help align our cultural planning, marketing and inward investment strategies.

Our approach will be to encourage investment in excellence and international quality programming whilst extending opportunities for grass roots participation and development. We will celebrate our heritage, and our City Region’s rich cultural offer will be integral to achieving the vision for a prosperous, fair and desirable place to live, work and invest.

Devolving jobs from Whitehall and London

Devolution is not just about devolving power and resources. It must also mean devolving and relocating government departments, major public bodies or national broadcast organisations out of highly expensive London HQ’s to other major UK cities. We have already benefited from some civil service relocations, but we need to lobby more effectively to secure a greater share of the jobs and investment into a City Region with excellent connectivity, available space and an outstanding lifestyle offer.

SKILLS

Creating a high-skill, high-value economy

Our future prosperity is ultimately dependent on our ability to develop a well-qualified and highly skilled workforce. This is our biggest challenge and it has to be the key priority for the Metro Mayor, the Combined Authority, the City Region LEP and all our partners. This will require a rigorously focused and joined-up strategy and will be one of the key foundations of our Strategic Economic Review.

Mapping skills shortages and bridging the gaps

It is absolutely vital that we align investment in skills and training with identified skill deficits and the needs of our future economy. We will identify gaps in provision and ensure that currently disparate programmes and funding streams across the public, private and voluntary sectors, work in concert. We will commission programmes to create a pipeline of skilled City Region workers ready to take up employment opportunities by better aligning forecast demand with supply.

Starting with schools

We have some excellent and high-performing schools across the City Region and our Local Education Authorities are working hard to raise standards and improve results. As Metro Mayor, I will add my weight to these efforts and encourage greater collaboration and innovation to deal with underachievement especially in subjects like Maths and English, which provide core life and employment skills. I will look at lessons from other areas including the London Challenge and support sharing of best practice across the City Region.

Improved and independent careers advice

In a rapidly changing global economy young people need the best available information and support when thinking about their future education and employment options. We will develop and introduce a new Independent Careers Service to help young people to make impartial and informed decisions about their future work-life options.
Developing a ‘Pathways to Excellence’ programme

I want to create new connections and relationships between our schools and international universities and global businesses. I want our young people to understand our role in a wider world and expand their sense of possibility and opportunity. If we are to become a truly global city, then we need to be developing a global outlook with an international flavour to study and education.

Creating second chances for everyone

Too many people across our region left school without the qualifications they now need to access rewarding work. We need a region-wide initiative to give people a second chance to help them get back into education and training. It is neither right nor sensible to deny people the opportunity to learn or train. We cannot afford to waste talent and human potential if we are to build a successful and inclusive City Region.

Gold Standard and expanded apprenticeships

We need to radically improve the quality and scope of apprenticeship provision across the City Region. We will roll out ‘gold standard’ and degree-level apprenticeships for young people to address skills shortages, securing true parity between the academic and technical routes to employment. We will also develop an easily accessible apprenticeship portal that people can access online to apply for apprenticeship opportunities across the City Region.

Overcoming barriers and ensuring equality

We will focus on removing barriers and expanding opportunities for all. We will ensure more girls are supported to develop technical and scientific skills, so that we can turn around the under-representation of women in jobs like data coding. We will work to remove barriers to extend job opportunities for BAME groups to access every employment sector.

Extending devolved responsibility for training and skills

Our current Devolution Deal establishes greater local control over expenditure on skills and training, but it is an area where more autonomy and scope for innovation are needed. We will make a strong case to Government to provide further powers relating to the 16 – 19 year-old and adults skills budgets, to allow our area to create high-performing colleges that meet the needs of our economy and help reduce youth unemployment. We will press to ensure that any underspend from the Government’s Apprenticeship Levy available from April 2017 is ring-fenced to be spent by the Metro Mayor on apprenticeship training programmes in the Liverpool City Region.
Fair

“I will put fairness and social justice at the heart of everything we do as a City Region..... I want this to be a region that values and nurtures all its citizens, that ensures everyone has access to education, good public services, rewarding work and a decent affordable home.”

THE CHALLENGE

We live in a society that is more unfair, unequal and unbalanced than nearly every other advanced economy. Inequality, poverty and injustice blight our communities and stifle potential. The recent State of Liverpool City Region Report, published by the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, found that despite recent economic improvements we continue to experience high levels of worklessness, low income and chronic ill-health relative to many other UK cities and regions. The City Region still contains some of the country’s most economically and socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

For a City Region with a strong commitment to fairness, and a proud tradition of pioneering social and ethical business, we need to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared equitably, and every community is able to access increased prosperity and opportunity.

THE VISION

“I will put fairness and social justice at the heart of everything we do as a City Region. These are the values that have driven and inspired me to become involved in politics, and I will continue to promote them and implement them as Metro Mayor. Successful modern cities are not built on low-skill economies or exploitative labour markets. That’s why we need to be an exemplar for a fair, progressive and sustainable economy. I want us to be a beacon for tolerance and equality at a time when these principles are being eroded and threatened. I want this to be a region that values and nurtures all its citizens, that ensures everyone has access to education, good public services, rewarding work and a decent affordable home.”

Keeping in touch with communities across our six Boroughs will be a key role for the Metro Mayor, and will be vital if we are to create a strong, united and fair City Region.
A FAIR AND JUST ECONOMY

Leading by example on the Real Living Wage

It’s important that we lead from the top and deliver on the principles and values that we espouse. For that reason we will commit to being a Real Living Wage employer and work to ensure this is reflected in procurement undertaken by the Combined Authority. The Real Living Wage is a fundamental building block to achieving a fair economy and a society free from poverty.

Rewarding and promoting fair and ethical business

We will establish a City Region Fair Employment Charter that recognises and celebrates businesses that promote social value by paying the Real Living Wage, minimising the use of zero hours contracts, recognising and working with trades unions, procuring locally where possible, engaging with the social economy, providing quality apprenticeships, investing in their workforce and promoting gender equality.

Using smart procurement to promote social value and sustainability

In a City Region where public procurement exercises a powerful economic influence, we will ensure that The Combined Authority uses smart procurement procedures, supply chain management and local labour clauses in contracts to maximise social value and the full economic benefits from the money we spend. We will use our influence and leadership position to foster similar policies and principles across public sector procurement throughout the City Region.

INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

A plan for a fairer, greener housing market

Making the housing market work for everyone is one of the biggest and most urgent challenges facing our region. That’s why within my first 100 days in office, I will convene a high-level housing summit, bringing together local authorities, housing providers, developers and government agencies to develop a strategy and early actions to make ours a fairer, greener housing market. Our actions will include scaling the role for a City Region-wide vehicle to deliver new homes to rent and buy as well as other affordable tenures.

The Metro Mayor’s Housing Challenge

As part of our wider commitment to innovation, we will launch a Metro Mayor’s Housing Challenge Competition to identify and pilot new ways to meet our housing needs; including new approaches for older people, 21st century community mutual and co-operative models, self-build initiatives, community-led neighbourhood design, new funding approaches and alternative and sustainable construction methods. Our aim will be to foster strong, vibrant and empowered communities across the City Region, taking an asset-based approach to community development rather than focusing on problems and privations.

Making the most of our assets and land

Many areas across the region are blighted by poor quality, badly maintained and empty homes. These are assets than can and should be better utilized. We will work with our local authority partners to promote good practice and co-ordinate initiatives to tackle poor quality rented accommodation and empty homes. We will use our strategic planning and housing powers to encourage better use of brownfield land, promote good design and support concerted action to improve the quality and attractiveness of neighbourhoods across the City Region.

Working in partnership to tackle homelessness and street sleeping

Local Authorities are already leading positive initiatives to tackle homelessness and provide support to street sleepers. We believe that this is another area where co-ordination, best practice and fresh thinking can be applied to enhance these efforts. Within the context of our proposed housing summit, we will promote consideration of a ‘housing first’ approach to meeting the needs of street sleepers and homeless people. Whilst recognising that those affected often have complex needs, prioritising the provision of a home has been demonstrated to be a sound foundation for tackling their underlying issues for the longer term.

A fairer deal for current and former military personnel

On my first day in office, I will start work with our Local Authorities and veterans’ groups to draw up and sign the first armed forces City Regional Covenant outside London. We will set up a working group to tackle barriers to better housing for former service personnel and campaign for the Government to work in a more integrated and collaborative way with Local Authorities to better meet the needs of people who have served our nation and deserve better.

EQUALITY FOR ALL

Putting equality and social justice first

We want to measure every policy, every service and economic initiative against our commitment to deliver a fairer and more equal City Region. We will establish a Fairness and Social Justice Advisory Board to review every aspect of the Metro Mayor’s and Combined Authority’s policy and practice. The Board will give a voice to all disadvantaged and marginalised groups and bring together representatives from the social economy, faith and community groups, large and small businesses, trades unions and young people.

Creating an equal and inclusive City Region

As Metro Mayor, I will provide decisive and robust leadership to promote equality and tackle every form of discrimination. This will include adhering to the principles of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, and lead by example to promote gender equality by recruiting six women from different sectors across the City Region – including Merseyside’s Labour Police and Crime Commissioner Jane Kennedy - to help bring balance and diversity to the current all-male membership of the Combined Authority. We will work closely with the anti-racism charity, Show Racism the Red Card, and other groups to foster a City Region that is free from bigotry and intolerance.

Campaigning for those affected by mental illness, dementia and autism.

If elected I will also use my position as a Metro Mayor elected to serve a population of 1.5million to be an advocate for people impacted by poor mental health and dementia, tackling the stigma and championing the services they need. Everyone has a right to feel understood, valued and able to contribute fully to their communities, hence working with all local council leaders and becoming a dementia and autism friendly region will help ensure that more people feel supported and appreciated across our region.

Signing the UN Global Compact Cities Programme.

We will join other European cities like Berlin, Amsterdam and Barcelona in signing up to the United Nations Global Compact Cities Programme, which sees major global cities working together to achieve fair, inclusive, sustainable and resilient cities and societies.
‘I want our region to be at the forefront of innovation in sustainable technology and be a zero-carbon City Region by 2040. I want us to be a place that cherishes its natural assets, its green spaces, its ecology and its heritage.’

THE CHALLENGE
Cities today are engaged in fierce competition for investment, people and visitors. Increasingly, liveability and environment are key differentiators determining how places are seen and how attractive and desirable they are. If we want to position Liverpool City Region alongside the best, then we need to be at the forefront of environmental conservation and sustainability. We need to be tackling issues like pollution, congestion and environmental degradation. We need to be safeguarding our heritage and natural assets, and embracing low carbon solutions and technologies. We need to understand and act on our global responsibilities, as well as embracing opportunities to make a thriving and attractive place for the future. Being green is not an optional extra. In the 21st Century it is a fundamental necessity.

THE VISION
‘As a City Region, we are blessed with some unique natural assets including our river and our coastline. They give us the potential to be the cleanest, greenest city region in the country. Our vision for a sustainable City Region is about more than tackling climate change, protecting our environment, or acting to improve air quality. Low carbon technologies and industries are a growth sector and a huge opportunity for us to be at the cutting edge of a new global economy. I want our region to be at the forefront of innovation in sustainable technology and be a zero-carbon City Region by 2040. I want us to be a place that cherishes its natural assets, its green spaces, its ecology and its heritage. We’re the place that invented public parks and boasts more miles of coast than Sussex by the Sea. So, let’s base our future on the things that make us really attractive and exceptional.’
Establishing a green energy investment fund
We will pool local funding with national and Third Sector funding to establish an investment fund to promote new renewable and community energy businesses and initiatives, as well as supporting businesses already operating in the sector. The fund will be part of our wider strategy, to drive innovation and encourage an entrepreneurial approach to developing our carbon-free future.

LOW CARBON TRANSPORT
Promoting 'clean' public transport across our region and leading by example
We will utilise potential devolved powers to re-regulate the buses, like to those in force in the capital, to join London Mayor Sadiq Khan and other European and global cities in their commitment to only buy clean electric or hydrogen buses from 2020. By working together, and adopting a progressive procurement approach, we will seek to encourage manufacturers to embrace clean bus technology.

Expanding and encouraging electric vehicles
In partnership with the private sector and our Local Authorities we will work to deliver more electric charging points across the City Region, to enable the expansion of clean electric vehicles lowering our carbon footprint and putting the region at the forefront of the green transport agenda.

Promoting walking and cycling
We will lead a City Region-wide campaign to promote walking and cycling and champion the needs of pedestrians and cyclists working alongside public health leaders. We will deliver a strategy to make these sustainable and healthy forms of transport safer and more attractive to all.

SUSTAINABLE HOMES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
Embracing a balanced and sustainable land use strategy
We will use devolved strategic planning powers to balance the needs of economic growth and environmental conservation. We will consult widely with residents, businesses and stakeholders in devising a sub-regional spatial strategy that ensures new homes and businesses are built in the right places and we safeguard the future of valued green spaces and sensitive habitats.

Developing eco-friendly and energy-efficient housing
We will champion innovative and sustainable building and support the initiatives for 'Eco Homes' and exemplar Passivhaus developments as part of a sustainable City Region housing strategy. We will work with housing providers and partner Local Authorities to support energy efficiency initiatives for existing homes as part of our vision for a low carbon City Region.

Engaging young people in the work to ‘green’ our city region
We will encourage bottom-up initiatives and community participation in efforts to green our environment. We will work with organisations like the Community Forest Trust and Woodland Trust, Local Authorities, businesses and communities to deliver an ambitious tree-planting programme across the City Region, with a particular focus on engaging schools and young people.

Boosting recycling efforts and creating new employment opportunities
We will work with Local Authority partners, Mersey Waste Authority and Third Sector groups to reinvigorate efforts to increase the amount the City Region recycles. We will support initiatives to use waste creatively as an economic and social resource to generate jobs, energy and enterprise. We’ll encourage re-use, repair and re-manufacture wherever possible.
"I believe our future prosperity depends on our ability to renew and modernize our connections – to fulfill the potential of port expansion, to revolutionise our digital capacity, to foster our export capacity and culture, and ensure we are an integral part of the UK’s agenda for high speed rail."

THE CHALLENGE

More than any other city or City Region our economic fortunes have been built on the strength of our transport links and connectivity. As the second port of the Empire and the place that built the world’s first inter-city railway, our wealth was based on our ability to connect goods, people and ideas across the globe. For much of the last century our location and connectivity became an economic obstacle rather than a competitive advantage. Our once pivotal location became peripheral in a changed economic and trading environment, and we are in danger of being bypassed by major national infrastructure projects including high speed rail. Our emerging strength in the creative and digital sector is being constrained by lack of broadband capacity and speed, and we are the only City Region in Europe where in the future all cross-river traffic movements will be subject to expensive tolls.

THE VISION

"The most successful city regions have the physical and electronic infrastructure to move goods, services and people quickly and efficiently within and between them. I believe our future prosperity depends on our ability to renew and modernize our connections – to fulfill the potential of port expansion, to revolutionise our digital capacity, to foster our export capacity and culture, and ensure we are an integral part of the UK’s agenda for high speed rail."

We need to radically improve our transport system within the City Region to guarantee reliable, affordable public transport access to every community. We also need to ensure that our river ceases to be a barrier to movement and commerce and find imaginative and sustainable ways to alleviate the burden of tolls."
Supporting the expansion of the Port of Liverpool and the SuperPort vision

We will provide strategic support for the Liverpool 2 post-Panamax berth to ensure this game-changing opportunity realises its full potential in a post-Brexit world. We will support infrastructure investment and better connections to the port to enable Liverpool to become the UK’s deep port gateway to the Americas and the Pacific. We will give impetus to the wider SuperPort vision, prioritising investment in improved transport links, inter-modal infrastructure and logistics capacity to facilitate the rapid movement of freight within and beyond the City Region. We will specifically investigate improvements to the existing rail link to the Port of Liverpool through North Liverpool, to help improve capacity, encourage modal shift to rail and also extend passenger services to communities in Fairfield, Tuebrook, and Anfield.

Creating an affordable, reliable and integrated transport network

We will use devolved powers promised by the Government to re-regulate the buses; we want to build a properly integrated transport network for our region that provides more accessible connections for all, when needed, whilst investing in updating our fleet with new, clean, green buses to tackle air pollution.

Improving information and accessibility for all public transport users

In addition to better integration of public transport, we will work to make services more accessible and legible. We will work with Merseytravel to ensure that information about arrival and departure at stations and stops - and as far as possible on the various modes of transport - is clear and can be seen and heard by travellers. We will investigate ways to ensure our transport system is a gateway to work and opportunity for all through affordable fares and targeted concessions. This will include looking at plans for concessionary travel passes for new apprentices.

Ensuring our river is an asset not a barrier

We are the only City Region in Europe where there will be no free cross-river road routes for residents and businesses. We need to be more flexible and creative in finding ways to remove burdens and barriers to travel and support business growth and ease of movement. This will include plans for a reduction in the fast-tag tunnel fare to £1 and lobbying Government to review the unfair and detrimental impact of current tolling proposals for the Mersey Gateway Bridge.

Investigating new funding streams for infrastructure

We will press for more freedom and autonomy to find innovative ways to fund urgently needed new infrastructure projects, similar to those used in London for Crossrail. Additional borrowing flexibility, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and other innovative fiscal models are in the spirit of devolution and would unlock the investment needed to make the Northern Powerhouse vision a credible reality.

Ensuring that the City Region is at the heart of the UK’s vision for high speed rail

We will work to ensure that Liverpool is an integral part of the UK’s high speed rail infrastructure, including direct connection to the proposed HS2 system, but more importantly we become the beginning and gateway to the urgently needed East/West line to connect the key Northern cities. We believe that this vital piece of infrastructure is essential to any rebalancing of the UK economy and the creation of a counterweight to an overheated and congested capital.

Improving our rail connectivity within the City Region.

We will strive to improve rail connectivity within and to the City Region including direct rail services from Liverpool to North Wales to improve connectivity with Wirral, Runcorn and Liverpool Airport. We will also seek to expand the number of Merseyrail stations and support plans for new stations in key locations, including Liverpool Knowledge Quarter and the former St James station, to support economic growth, tackle congestion and improve air pollution.
Together

“We are a region of many identities, towns and communities, but we are also united by history, geography and some fundamental shared values.”

The Challenge

We live in a time when politics and politicians seem distant and disconnected. Too many decisions are taken too far away by people who don’t understand the everyday concerns of communities in our region. A London-based political system continues to give preference to the interests of the capital whilst the rest of the country is starved of investment and opportunity. Our Local Authorities struggle with the impact of Tory austerity and diminishing finances, whilst Brexit creates another layer of uncertainty and instability.

Whilst some politicians seek to promote division and fear, our City Region is coming together to create a new democratic structure and take more control over our key decisions and resources. Bringing six Local Authority areas into a new collaborative relationship is both a challenge and an opportunity. It will require leadership, sensitivity and a capacity to include every part of our region and every section of our community.

The Vision

“We are a region of many identities, towns and communities, but we are also united by history, geography and some fundamental shared values. We understand the value of solidarity, co-operation and standing by each other. I want a City Region that recognizes and celebrates the identities of each borough and community, but can also pool its assets and energies so we can all share in the benefits and opportunities that come from increased prosperity in an increasingly uncertain and globalized world, we need be strong, competitive and work together.”

A Metro Mayor who will be accessible and engaged, bringing together all our boroughs and communities.
GOVERNANCE
Ensuring the Metro Mayor and Combined Authority are accountable and accessible.

We are creating entirely new democratic structures to bring our region together and represent all its communities. It is vitally important that we operate in a transparent and genuinely accountable way. I have engaged with people across the region in writing this manifesto, and I will remain in touch over the next three years through regular round table and community forum events in every part of the region. I will build on my commitment to create a Fairness and Social Justice Advisory Board by establishing other cross-cutting boards and forums that bring genuine diversity of experience and opinion into the policy-making process. We will utilise the talent, energy and creativity of the entire region. We will recruit people with expertise and experience from business, the Third Sector, our academic institutions, trade unions and communities to work with The Mayor and Combined Authority and help us tackle the big challenges ahead.

Working with my Combined Authority colleagues, we will design effective scrutiny structures with representation from every borough, every political group and key civic stakeholders.

LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP
Looking out and building alliances
One of the key benefits of having a Metro Mayor is having a single figurehead and champion with a democratic mandate who can give our region the kind of profile that London has enjoyed for many years. I will take on a proactive role as an investment champion and advocate for our region, and with our six borough leaders will continue to ensure our voice is heard where it matters.

I will also work with the newly elected Mayors in other City Regions to provide a powerful counterweight to the London-centric and pro-South East view that predominates in London. I will also open a new chapter of co-operation with our neighbouring City Region in Greater Manchester, knowing that our economic interests and potential are closely linked and key to our mutual success.

Making space to think creatively and act collaboratively
Our devolution deal establishes specific areas of direct responsibility for the Metro Mayor and Combined Authority focusing primarily on investment, economic growth, planning and transport. But making the most of devolution means using these new forums to explore opportunities to share best practice, pool resources and act together where it is agreed and makes sense.

I believe there are a number of key areas where fresh thinking and cross-boundary collaboration could help us to find new solutions and pilot new approaches. These include:

- Responding to the urgent crisis in health and social care by joining forces to lobby Government and convening a City Region health and social care summit to see whether there are steps we can take to better use the limited and stretched resources we have by working more closely together, investigating new models and learning from other areas where we can.
- Delivering joined-up initiatives with Local Authorities and NHS Trusts that encourage healthy and active lifestyles across the City Region as part of an integrated public health strategy. Working together we have the scope to pool resources and extend reach to promote sport, walking and cycling, and support those who want to shake off lifestyle risks such as drugs, smoking and alcohol, and tackling childhood obesity.
- Supporting people into work by pressing the Department for Work and Pensions to give the City Region its own contract package under the new Work and Health Programme. For an area with some of the gravest long-term and health-related unemployment challenges of any City Region, we need the ability to develop our own bespoke service, using our own skills and local expertise.
- Devising innovative fiscal models that give us greater control over local taxes and expenditure including the idea of a 5 year Stamp Duty ‘holiday’ that would enable the City Region to get the benefit of Stamp Duty proceeds/receipts for 5 years ring-fenced for land remediation.
- Work alongside our Police and Crime Commissioners in Merseyside and Cheshire, using the devolved powers on skills to help address the cycle of re-offending.

We believe there are other areas where the new devolved structures can help to foster collaboration and innovation, especially in response to the challenges of Tory austerity where resources and existing models will come under greater pressure. Crucially, a Labour Metro Mayor, working with six Labour-led Councils, gives us the opportunity to develop the depth of common purpose that we need to give our City Region effective leadership and the chance to compete nationally and internationally. Devolution is an opportunity for us to recover our genius for innovation and creativity, to better use our own resources and talents, and draw on our shared values. We’re a region with a rich history and deep roots, but our future success will be founded on something even more fundamental and precious - a capacity to see and reach further with a gaze that is always directed outward and forward.