

TIME FOR GROWTH

Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral Manifesto



Foreword

Time for Growth: Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral Manifesto

As we look toward the future, Greater Lincolnshire stands at a pivotal moment, ready to unlock its full potential. The Devolution White Paper articulates the government's commitment to widen devolution by establishing new Mayoral Authorities, complete with additional powers and funding, particularly in areas related to economic development, skills, transport, and planning. With an £24 million annual investment fund, the first mayor of GLCCA will be able drive growth across the region; while ensuring it plays an important part in the government's growth agenda.

By leveraging these new powers and utilising the funds available the mayor can also address local challenges more effectively and implement tailored solutions that reflect the unique needs and opportunities of Greater Lincolnshire.

This manifesto lays out a clear and ambitious path for Greater Lincolnshire – a path that accelerates economic growth, propels us towards our goal of net-zero emissions, and ensures that our businesses and communities thrive in the face of future challenges. By investing in our strengths, fostering innovation, and harnessing the power of local devolution, we can create an economy that works for everyone. This vision is not just about economic prosperity but also about enhancing the quality of life for all residents, ensuring that everyone benefits from the region's growth and development.

With a population of 1.1 million in 2023¹ and a Gross Value Added of £29 billion in 2022,² Greater Lincolnshire is home to key industries identified within the government's industrial strategy, including advanced manufacturing, green energy, and defence. Harnessing regional economic assets will drive future growth. Building on these assets will also help drive productivity and boost growth. By supporting these industries and working in partnership with the private sector we can collectively ensure that Greater Lincolnshire remains a hub of knowledge and creativity.

Through strategic investment in skills, infrastructure, and industries of the future, the region can meet the demands of tomorrow, ensuring it is not just competitive but globally influential. This includes investing in cutting-edge technologies, sustainable practices, and modern infrastructure that can support long-term growth and resilience. By prioritizing these areas, we can create a robust and adaptable economy that can withstand future challenges and seize new opportunities.

The CBI is committed to working in partnership with the UK Mayors Group, including the mayor of Greater Lincolnshire, on an agreed set of priorities geared towards kickstarting growth, boosting productivity, and accelerating to net zero. By fostering collaboration and leveraging the collective strengths of the region, we can achieve our shared goals and create a prosperous future for all.

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Kickstarting growth

Greater Lincolnshire has a robust economy characterized by strong agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism sectors. To further enhance its economic resilience and drive sustainable growth, the region must focus on fostering global trade relationships and attracting inward investment. The mayor can act as an ambassador for the region, promoting its strengths in innovation, technology, and sustainability on the global stage, including participating in international trade missions and fostering relationships with key global markets.

Effective tax and spending policies are also crucial for supporting the region's growth and development. The mayor can ensure that devolved tax revenues are strategically allocated to support key areas such as education, infrastructure, and public services, including investing in sustainable transport solutions, housing, and digital infrastructure. By prioritising these areas, the mayor can create a more attractive environment for businesses and residents alike, fostering a thriving local economy.

As a proponent of deeper devolution, we are committed to working alongside the first mayor to make the case for an integrated settlement – akin to those already reached with Greater Manchester and West Midlands Combined Authorities. Integrated Settlements provide greater flexibility and funding certainty over the long term and will better equip the mayor to deliver on the region's Local Growth Plan – supporting the government's national industrial strategy. The Local Growth Plan will also provide a clear vision for businesses and stakeholders, enabling them to invest with greater confidence.

The mayor of Greater Lincolnshire will play a crucial role in driving the region's economic growth and development through devolution. By utilising devolved powers, the mayor can make strategic decisions that best suit the region's strengths, needs, and ambitions, shaping policies that directly support high-growth sectors like green technology, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing. This approach will help create a diverse and resilient economy that can adapt to changing market conditions and global trends.

Collaboration with other mayors through the UK Mayors Group can amplify the collective voice and attract investment to the UK, helping to secure investment based on the unique characteristics of each mayoral region. By working together, mayors can share best practices, pool resources, and coordinate efforts to address common challenges, such as skills shortages and infrastructure needs. This collaborative approach will ensure that Greater Lincolnshire can compete on both a national and international level.

By focusing on education, infrastructure, international trade, and investment, the mayor can help ensure that Greater Lincolnshire continues to thrive as an innovative and dynamic business hub. This includes supporting initiatives that promote lifelong learning and skills development, enhancing digital connectivity, and leveraging the region's strategic location to attract new businesses and investment.

Greater Lincolnshire's predominately rural landscape also creates challenges that hinders investment. The mayor can boost investment by improving infrastructure, supporting Agri-Tech and renewable energy, and promoting tourism. Incentives and strategic partnerships would help attract businesses and drive economic growth.

Recommendations

- Collaborate with the UK Mayors Group to amplify the collective voice and attract investment to the UK. Ensuring regional assets and opportunities of national strategic importance are given the visibility they need. By fostering a climate of collaboration over competition, mayoral regions can focus on securing investment based on their unique characteristics, including business clusters and sector specialisms.
- Locally, the mayor of Greater Lincolnshire must ensure strong alignment with their counterpart in Hull and East Yorkshire to foster meaningful cross-estuary collaboration and drive the successful implementation of the Humber Energy Board's Delivering The Vision proposals. We would encourage ongoing dialogue to establish a Humber Estuary Growth Zone, maximising the potential and scale of opportunity, while providing single front door for inward and domestic investment.
- Create a fully integrated export strategy that highlights the trade benefits and provides targeted business support. This strategy should leverage the region's strategic location and port facilities, as well as other key infrastructure. By promoting Greater Lincolnshire's strengths in sectors such as Agri-Tech, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing, the mayor can attract new markets and investment opportunities.
- Continue to support the next phase in the evolution of the region's ports and the competitiveness of its logistics sector, both of which underpin trade and national supply chains. This is critical given the UK's dependence on the maritime sector, with 95% of goods exports and imports moved by sea³. This would provide a welcome boost to the £1.36bn⁴ of exports that region currently contributes to the UK economy.
- Promote Regional Strengths in Innovation: Greater Lincolnshire has strong capabilities in sectors which have strategic importance to the UK economy, including food manufacturing, logistics, renewable energy, and defence.
- Given the geopolitical climate and intense focus on increasing defence spending among NATO and EU members, the next mayor should work to accelerate the creation of a nationally recognised cluster of innovation-focused defence companies, making Greater Lincolnshire a go-to destination for defence related industries.

Boosting productivity

Boosting productivity is at the heart of our economic future. To ensure Greater Lincolnshire remains competitive, resilient, and capable of driving growth, we must harness the power of local leadership, innovation, and collaboration. Devolution provides a unique opportunity to make tailored, strategic decisions that best suit the region's strengths, needs, and ambitions. By taking control of key economic levers, we can build a region that thrives by leveraging local expertise, accelerating growth in emerging industries, and ensuring that all businesses—large and small—have the tools they need to succeed.

This section outlines a vision for increasing productivity across Greater Lincolnshire by aligning with local growth plans and the government's Industrial Strategy. Through devolution, the region will have the power to shape policies that directly support its strengths in high-growth sectors like Agri-Tech and Defence. By combining these strengths with a commitment to improving skills, infrastructure, and innovation, the region can create an environment where businesses are empowered to invest in their future and increase their productivity.

Building on the government's Industrial Strategy, which emphasises the importance of local economies, innovation, skills and sector development, Greater Lincolnshire play an integral role in the national economy. By focusing on initiatives that improve connectivity, facilitate digital transformation, and cultivate a skilled and adaptable workforce, the mayor can provide businesses with the tools they need to succeed in a swiftly evolving global economy. This includes investing in high-speed broadband, enhancing transport networks, supporting skills, and gearing policies towards the region's strengths.

United by the strength of devolution and a mutual commitment to local development, the mayor can enhance productivity in Greater Lincolnshire—driving sustainable economic growth, generating high-quality jobs, and securing enduring prosperity for everyone.

Recommendations

- **Support Business Adoption of New Technologies:** The Tech for Growth programme, an initiative by the Greater Lincolnshire LEP in partnership with local business networks, provides targeted support to small and medium businesses to enhance their digital presence and adopt new technologies. This programme includes expert workshops, hands-on specialist advice, and skills support to help businesses implement new systems, improve processes, and increase productivity. By embracing digital transformation, businesses can streamline operations, reduce costs, and enhance their competitive edge.
- **Prioritise infrastructure investments** that can drive growth in key sectors of our local economy, including the UK Food Valley, Energy, Ports, and logistics. These sectors have been identified as critical priorities for both Greater Lincolnshire and the broader UK economy. Supply chains are critical to the wider economy and are essential to keeping the flow of goods moving, therefore the mayor should work towards enhancing the region's transport network to facilitate a smoother flow of goods.
- **Promote Health and Wellbeing in the Workforce:** Helping businesses promote health and well-being in the workforce is essential for maintaining a productive and engaged workforce. By prioritising employee well-being, businesses can reduce absenteeism, improve morale, and boost overall productivity. Additionally, fostering a healthy work environment can attract top talent.



Accelerating to net zero

Accelerating to net zero and achieving growth is society's defining economic challenge – one that can only be achieved through industry and government partnership. Inaction on the transition is costlier than action, and the business community wants to play its part in achieving sustainable growth.

Increasing decarbonisation beyond the power sector is the big opportunity to grow clean energy markets, scale infrastructure, and advance green technologies. The government leading collaboration across business and finance sectors powerfully signals to investors a focus on delivery that can help get capital moving. By creating a supportive policy environment and providing financial incentives, the government can encourage private sector investment in renewable energy projects and green technologies. Greater Lincolnshire is also playing an active role in enabling the United Kingdom to accelerate to net zero.

Jorgen Sandstrom, from the World Economic Forum, said that “there are few places around the world more crucial to the road to Net Zero and industrial decarbonisation than the Humber.”⁵ By leveraging the region's natural resources and expertise across the net zero ecosystem the Humber can become “location from which so much can be achieved and learned”⁶ - while creating new jobs, boosting investment, and helping to deliver sustainable growth.

The region has become a significant hub for green energy production, contributing at least 25% of the UK's energy output. This sector is valued at £1.2 billion annually and employs over 12,000 people, highlighting the region's commitment to sustainable energy practices. This demonstrates the region's commitment to sustainability and its potential to play an even greater role in UK's climate change agenda. The Humber will be a driving force in the UK's net zero journey. Its success is vital to tackling the so-called energy trilemma, providing energy security for homes and businesses, delivering the UK's legally binding net zero targets, and doing so in a cost-effective way that unlocks regional growth. The Humber supports over 360,000 jobs and adds more than £18bn to the UK Economy.⁷

Recommendations

- The mayors of Greater Lincolnshire and Hull and East Yorkshire must collaborate across the Humber, with each other and with the Humber Freeport and Humber Energy Board, to maximize regional delivery against the Humber Economic Strategy. By working collectively with businesses across the estuary, they can not only maintain existing jobs and industries but also drive significant growth in the area. The private sector is prepared to invest over £15 billion to transform the region into a powerhouse for energy security, economic productivity, and clean, green manufacturing.
- Work closely with the government and neighbouring Mayoral Combined Authorities to deliver the Clean Power 2030 mission. This will require certainty and clarity over timetables on key decarbonisation processes, especially on hydrogen and carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS). The mayor and their Hull and East Yorkshire counterpart, working with the government, must help give the confidence to industry to invest and deliver the pathway to industrial decarbonisation set out in “Delivering The Vision”.⁸
- Connectivity to the national electricity grid has been a significant challenge for firms investing around the region. Whilst not a devolved matter, the mayor must use their convening power to champion the ambitions of the National Energy Systems Operator and support the regional spatial energy plan to prioritise projects that will deliver the Clean Power 2030 mission.
- Develop Sustainable Transport Solutions: By investing in sustainable transport infrastructure, the mayor can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create a more connected and accessible region. This includes working alongside sub-national transport bodies to help develop a regional electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy. For Greater Lincolnshire specifically, other alternative low carbon fuels, such as hydrogen, will play an important role, particularly for large vehicles that require longer ranges and faster refuelling.⁹ Investment in sustainable transport will also boost major centres of economic activity, including its thriving tourism industry.

Conclusion

Greater Lincolnshire's economy is characterised by its strong agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism sectors, supported by a vibrant academic base and increasingly strong concentration on sustainability and the net-zero transition. When no less a body than the World Economic Forum says our region is one of only a small number of the most globally significant opportunities for industrial decarbonisation at scale then we should listen and act. This will require laser focus on addressing future skills needs, on dealing with transport connectivity, whilst ensuring intra-regional inequalities are addressed for the region to fully capitalise on emerging opportunities.

The CBI is committed to working alongside the mayor and the GLCCA to help ensure sustainable economic growth. The CBI contends that when politicians, education providers, public and private sectors collaborate through shared interests, Greater Lincolnshire can unlock its full potential. CBI members based in the region stand ready to play their part in helping to drive growth and take forward the priorities within this manifesto.

A thriving region will ensure the region can contribute to delivering sustainable economic growth, which will benefit not only the region but the UK as a whole. To help achieve this, the mayor should commit to working in partnership with the UK Mayors Group, which, using its convening powers, can collectively form an effective alliance for growth. By fostering collaboration on key policy areas such as skills development, infrastructure investment, and sustainable practices, the mayor can ensure that Greater Lincolnshire remains competitive and resilient in the face of future challenges.

Together, we can create a prosperous and sustainable future for Greater Lincolnshire, ensuring that our businesses and communities thrive for generations to come. By embracing the opportunities presented by devolution, fostering innovation, and committing to a clear and ambitious vision, we can build a region that is not only competitive but also globally influential. Let us work together to unlock the full potential of Greater Lincolnshire and secure a brighter future for all.



Reference

- 1 [Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire | Institute for Government](#)
- 2 [Regional gross value added \(balanced\) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region - Office for National Statistics](#)
- 3 [Our proposal – Lincolnshire County Council](#)
- 4 [Our proposal – Lincolnshire County Council](#)
- 5 [Delivering the Vision | Future Humber](#)
- 6 [Humber vision 'has the world's attention' as investors and government pore over £15b pipeline - business Live](#)
- 7 [Delivering the Vision | Future Humber](#)
- 8 [Delivering the Vision | Future Humber](#)
- 9 [Our proposal – Lincolnshire County Council](#)

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