
Briefing 5: How Hampshire CC should be working to influence central government (and other local authorities)

The following briefing note summarises some of the key findings and recommendations from NEF's recent report for Hampshire County Council, 'A Green Economic Recovery for Hampshire'. For the full report see [Hampshire 2050/NEF](#)

Background

While debt-based financing can make retrofit possible for Hampshire's better-off residents, particularly when combined with personal savings, it will not be enough for many alone. The retrofitting of some properties will need to be fully or partially grant-funded. There is a considerable funding gap for this at present, and there is a role for central government and other local authorities to play in response to this.

Recommendation: Build national consensus for the requirement of ambitious and stable policy and funding from central government

The council should liaise with lower-tier authorities within Hampshire, and neighbouring authorities, to build the case that central government needs to provide additional grant funding for those residents less able to pay for retrofit, with the scale of grant funding required informed by an analysis undertaken by the council. Hampshire should also liaise with other upper-tier authorities across the country to lobby for funding. It is essential that any financing put in place is stable over the long term so that supply chains have the confidence to invest and retrain. In such communication, the council must clearly emphasise the benefits of this investment (such as job creation, skills development, climate change resilience, health and wellbeing benefits). Collaboration with campaign groups and social housing providers can contribute towards this goal.

Recommendation: Pursue the devolution of the Adult Education Budget so that the skills pipeline can be appropriately planned

On 1 August 2019, control over the Adult Education Budget (AEB) was transferred to six mayoral combined authorities (MCAs) and the Greater London Authority (GLA). On 1 August 2020, North of Tyne also became responsible for administering the AEB. Sheffield City Region and West Yorkshire will also become responsible for administering the AEB from 1 August 2021. Hampshire County Council should engage with the government to pursue the devolution of such powers so that it can use the funding to more strategically steer the shape of training provided, to better meet local needs. The Mayor of London has echoed such calls,¹ citing a broader devolution package as better able to bring skills, employment, and careers advice together in an integrated way for residents.

Summary

Hampshire County Council should work to influence central government through lobbying for funding, and ambitious, stable policy. Simultaneously, the council should highlight the inadequacy of funding in critical areas such as the UK's infrastructure investment gap, which affects skills and employment. The council should also pursue the devolution of the AEB to be able to better plan for the skills pipeline, and more strategically steer the shape of training provided.

¹London Assembly. (2020). Mayor urges Government to devolve more adult education funding. Retrieved from <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-urges-more-adult-education-budget-devolution>
