Moving towards a *de facto* scalar and institutional fix in England, through Subnational Growth Deals

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Lee Pugalis (Northumbria University)
Travel-to-work of 8 core cities of England, 1981-2011, thousands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Workplace population</th>
<th>Daily travel IN</th>
<th>Daily travel OUT</th>
<th>Col2/Col1 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1981 Males</strong></td>
<td>1276.0</td>
<td>499.4</td>
<td>195.4</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2011 Males</strong></td>
<td>1182.5</td>
<td>466.0</td>
<td>280.2</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1981 Females</strong></td>
<td>905.4</td>
<td>264.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2011 Females</strong></td>
<td>1031.1</td>
<td>415.7</td>
<td>191.8</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Movement towards change; last 12 months

- Combined Authorities set up (March onwards) under Act of 2008, in (closely) ex-Metropolitan County areas
- NO direct staff; each constituent Local Authority has a lead role for one topic, given one vote in decisions
- All 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships required to produce Strategic Economic Plans
- Adjudicated in Whitehall in July as Growth Deals
- Scottish referendum spurs government to agree some financial devolution to Greater Manchester
- More due next Wednesday e.g. Leeds City Region
- Other former counties move toward Combining
What are SEPs and Growth Deals?

SEPs – strategic (economic/investment) plans used by Government in deciding Growth Fund allocations

- No set format; guidance is permissive
- Non-statutory documents. Thus no requirement for European Strategic Environmental Assessments

Growth Deals – specific projects contained in and supported by SEPs from all 39 LEPs were selected in July for implementation by government

- Half the £12bn, over 6 years, is top sliced from DfT; much of rest is in Skills, Housing and Business support.
SEP: Content Analysis; the Black Country

- Spatial frameworks – a good example of plans that attempt to provide overarching spatial frameworks for a myriad of plans, processes and investment decisions
- Tailored from past Multi-Area Agreement work with understanding of modernising industrial sites & access
- GROWTH DEALS include one of several new Transport Interchanges in the Deals, Motorway improvement, employment land, business support including a Construction Industry College, and Centre regeneration
- HOWEVER, it struggles to explain connectivity with the adjoining Birmingham LEP
Potentials of Growth Deals

- **Cemented the geometry** of LEP areas (capital funding)
- Process has increased the importance of strategic planning (in the eyes of LEPs)
- Projects advanced in Growth Deals start with existing Plans, road alignments and site boundaries
- Moving forwards, SEPs may provide more “soft planning” which may provide improved longer term Planning under the Acts, or conflict in a potential disconnect
- BUT...SEPs have no legal basis
- Their Planning content and LEPs’ competence are variable
- SEPs are unlikely to prove robust enough to prevent local Plan conflicts; arguments against statutory adoption
Growth Deal allocations £ per capita by LEP area, 2015/16-2020/21 (A. Pike)

Source: CURDs research based on HMG data
How Cities’ discourse led to an Inter-Party spatial fix (+ professional acquiescence)

- Formation of the Core Cities’ Group
- CLG position in the “Sub-National Review”>2008 Act
- Multi-area Agreements provided working experience
- LEPs initiation amenable to city-region approach
- Rural LEPs removed the charge of urban bias
- G. Manchester attained respect of London (e.g. Respublica)
- Labour for devolving more to “City and County regions” (Heseltine, Adonis, Lyons) Thus all 3 political parties intend to devolve powers to city regions post-2015
- The shock from Scotland and shifting blame for austerity (ECONOMIST, 7-14 November)
Content and criticism

- Elected mayors little use over voter alienation
- Powers seen arriving variously in 3 tranches:
  RSA favourites: Transport, housing, skills, economic dev’t
  Worrying to some: Minimum wages, justice, energy, business rates
- More Scottish (Smith report): Welfare (varying benefit rates); Education; Health?!
- However, the Manchester deal is partial on new fields;
  power to re-shape FE, joint commissioner for next Work Programme, business plan with CCGs for Health & Social Care; Spatial Plan is 2017
- Competitions “concreting in existing inequalities” Boyle
Further material


