

Green Party condemns undemocratic devolution deals for North East

The North East England Green Party has condemned the Government's newly announced devolution deals for the North East as undemocratic and paltry. The party say they want much greater devolution for local communities instead.

The current plan involves 2 directly elected mayors for the North East Combined Authority and the Tees Valley Combined Authority in 2017. New powers are being given to these organisations over areas such as transport, planning and investment. The new powers would be controlled by these two organisations, which are made up solely of the leaders of the councils – leaders who are elected but only by their own fellow Labour councillors.

North East England Green Party Coordinator Shirley Ford said

“We want devolution but these deals include only £45 million extra funding a year in return for power to be even more concentrated into the council leaders’ hands.”

“The deals don’t devolve power far enough – they stop at the unaccountable Combined Authorities, instead of devolving to local authorities and to community level councils, such as parish and town councils. This is just another attempt by the Conservative government to pretend it is giving power to local people.”

The Green Party is calling for a People’s Constitutional Convention to bring real devolution in a way that has widespread public support.

Redcar Greens spokesperson, Cecilia Elliott added

“George Osborne’s Northern Powerhouse project is clearly flawed, as the latest devastation of the steel industry shows. The paltry and inadequate funding in these deals will only increase social inequality. In an area of growing deprivation, high unemployment and one of the highest mortality rates in the UK, this deal will compound the problems facing Teesside.”



“The Northern Powerhouse is an attempt to inflict the worst parts of London’s economy upon the North East promising only more pollution, growing inequalities and more energy use – just when we need to move in the opposite direction if we want to limit the devastating effects of climate change.”

Newcastle Greens spokesperson and South Heaton candidate, Andrew Gray said

“Real devolution would allow communities to shape policy to suit local needs. For residents in Newcastle that would mean abolishing the bedroom tax, more joined-up health and social care and the ability to levy taxes on out of town supermarkets. Last week’s paltry deals offer none of these things.”

The Green Party are determined to win elections locally, to campaign for real devolution and to move the North East towards a fairer, greener future.

Spokespeople are available for interview, please contact Shirley Ford on 0771 440 1466