

Devolution Priority Programme Consultation
English Devolution and Institutions Team
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
4th floor
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

please reply to:

70 Dynevor Road
Stoke Newington
London
N16 0DX

GreaterEssexDevolutionConsultation@communities.gov.uk

roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk

2025-04-11

Dear MHCLG,

Establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea

Question 1: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority over the proposed geography will deliver benefits to the area?*

Strongly agree

Please explain your answer.

A Greater Essex with a single champion to determine, develop, design, and deliver economic, social and environmental programmes to support a more prosperous sub-region in 'punching above its weight' as a net contributor to the national economy.

Question 2: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed governance arrangements for the Mayoral Combined County Authority?*

Neither agree nor disagree

Please explain your answer.

As an independent voluntary organisation we aim to collaborate on a multi-agency, cross-sector and all-party basis with whatever governance arrangements may be in place. We are however especially interested in the Mayor's statutory role in governing, managing, planning, and developing the rail network, and engagement with the DfT on its national rail planning processes, and how they will be reflected adequately in future governance arrangements.

Question 3: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will support the economy of the area?*

Agree

Please explain your answer.

Same as for Q1.

Question 4: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve social outcomes in the area?*

Agree

Please explain your answer.

Same as for Q1, noting that the sub-region exhibits some marked socio-economic inequalities.

www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk
www.railwatch.org.uk

Question 5: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve local government services in the area?*

Neither agree nor disagree

Please explain your answer.

May be more dependent on the results of local government re-organisation than devolution.

Question 6: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve the local natural environment and overall national environment?*

Agree

Please explain your answer.

Same as for Q1.

Question 7: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will support the interests and needs of local communities and reflect local identities?*

Neither agree nor disagree

Please explain your answer.

This will in our view be heavily dependent on the personal leadership qualities of the Mayor.

About You

1. *Please tell us how you found out about this consultation?*

GOV.UK website

2. *What best describes your response?*

I am responding on behalf of, or as a representative of, a business or organisation

9. *What best describes your organisation?*

Voluntary and community sector or charity

Railfuture is Britain's leading and longest-established, independent national voluntary organisation campaigning exclusively for a better railway across a bigger network for passenger and freight users, to support economic (housing and productivity) growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities. We seek to influence decision makers at local, regional and national levels to implement pro-rail policies in development and transport planning.

10. *What is the first part of the postcode where your business or organisation is based?*

CM1

Yours faithfully,

Roger Blake BA, MRTPI (Rtd), MTPS
Railfuture
Vice-Chair London & South East regional branch
Director for Infrastructure & Networks, national Board

Establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea