

DEVELOPING STRATEGIC AUTHORITIES

SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

LEADING WITHOUT A BLUEPRINT

Strategic Authorities are central to the government's devolution agenda - driving growth, transforming public services, shaping policy, and ensuring public funding delivers real impact. They unite councils to reimagine their places and invest in meaningful outcomes. Yet, there is no clear blueprint for how they should be structured or operate.

Some get it right, delivering, for example, better transport, housing, growth and skills, but some don't, with governance concerns, periods of special measures, and difficult relationships.

Right now, as established Strategic Authorities mature and many new ones emerge, this is a pivotal moment. Leaders must know how to shape the institutions and partnerships their communities and regions need, supported by shared learning, strong leadership development, and a commitment to defining what great looks like.

We are uniquely positioned to help. The Leadership Centre, with 21 years of experience in place and system leadership, is launching 'Developing Strategic Authorities'. This new offer connects experienced system leaders with those developing Strategic Authorities to build the leadership, vision and capacity needed for long-term success.



AN UNRIVALLED TEAM TO SUPPORT YOU

This programme brings together a team of experts in the field of establishing, developing and leading Strategic Authorities.



MAX WIDE

Associate Director, transformation specialist, leading the team for "Developing Combined Authorities"



MARK ROGERS

CEO of the Leadership Centre and Interim CEO for the Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority



ALEX KHALDI

Associate Director for "Leadership Under Pressure"



RICHARD GRICE

Interim Executive Director of Place at East Midlands Combined County Authority



STEVE SKELTON

Associate Director for Strategy at Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority



ELISE WILSON

Former Leader (Lab) of Stockport MBC and Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Economic Lead



TOBY SAVAGE

Former Leader (Con) of South Gloucestershire, former Deputy Mayor - West of England Combined Authority



RUTH DOMBEY

Former Leader (LibDem) and serving councillor of LB Sutton, member - Committee on Standards in Public Life



NIRAN MOTHADA

Former Executive Director for Strategy & Comms Greater London Authority and Leadership Centre



CLLR BARRY LEWIS

Former Leader (Con) of Derbyshire CC, founding member of the East Midlands Combined County Authority

A DIFFERENT APPROACH

Our offer is in three parts; firstly our active enquiry sets out to understand how things are working or how you are setting things up. It is different to traditional 'diagnostics' in that the process itself adds value - working alongside you, sharing best practice and experience from elsewhere, whilst developing a deep understanding of your situation. Secondly, we will work with you to help you make sense of it all, co-producing a clear and honest analysis with people who have huge experience. Lastly, we will deliver an applied leadership development programme to give people the skills they need as they deliver key projects.



THE ENQUIRY PHASE

Our enquiry phase focuses on four main components which are at the heart of developing successful strategic authorities.



YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Strategic Authorities sit within layered, often complex relationships that can become stuck or strained. As a neutral third party, we help map these relationships and support the development of honest, respectful and value-adding connections.

YOUR PEOPLE

Place leadership requires adaptability in fast-changing, uncertain conditions. Using tools like the Game Changer Index[®], we help assess leadership strengths and support individual and team development with clear, outcome-focused insight.

YOUR PLACE

Every place has a unique story, yet too often strategies can feel generic. We help uncover the specific dynamics of your local ecosystem - mapping key players and themes to shape a public narrative that inspires collaboration and shared action.

YOUR ORGANISATION

There's no one-size-fits-all model for a Strategic Authority, but there are core capabilities every organisation must develop to succeed. Using our maturity matrix, we assess your current stage, identify what's needed next, and support the leadership required to deliver your devolution deal and wider goals.

FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION: DEVELOPING THE PATH FORWARD

At the heart of our work is a simple ambition: to equip leaders with the insight, skills and confidence to lead effectively in the complexity of place. It is what we have done for years.

Our main vehicle for change is the design and delivery of a bespoke applied leadership development programme, shaped entirely by what we've learnt with you on the ground.

Through a series of leadership summits, hands-on project work and facilitated reflection, we create a space where people can stretch their thinking, test ideas, and make tangible progress. The result is a powerful return on investment: confident, capable leaders making a real impact on the priorities that matter most.

If you would like to see examples of programmes we have developed for other strategic authorities, please get in contact for a further conversation.



GET IN TOUCH

We'd welcome a conversation about supporting you as your Strategic Authority develops and evolves.



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