

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority  
**Corporate Plan 2024 - 2028**

# Liverpool City Region: **INNOVATING FOR GROWTH**

*The best place to grow up, grow a family, and grow a business.*



**LIVERPOOL  
CITY REGION**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

**METROMAYOR**  
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION



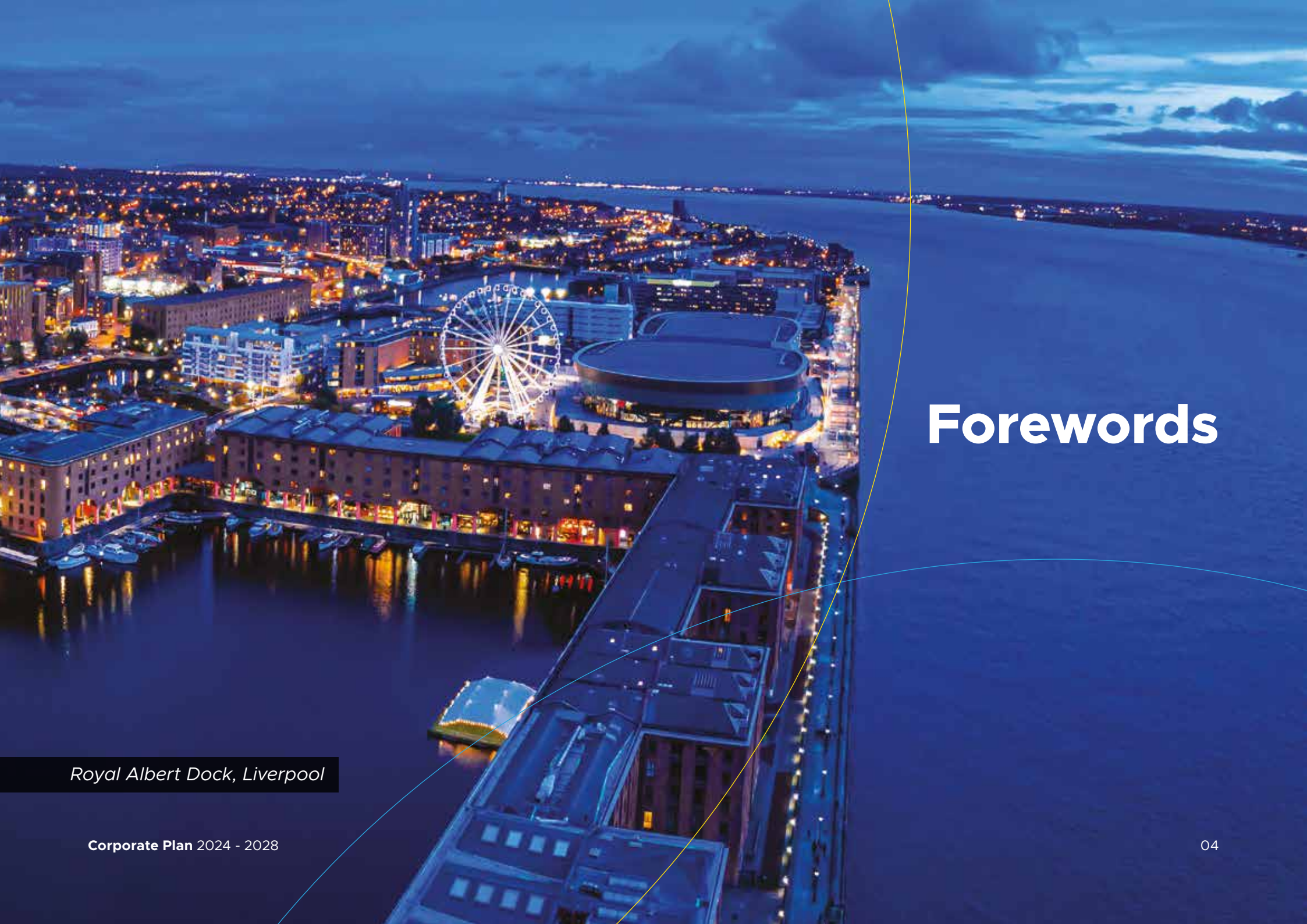


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*Scientists in a laboratory*



# Forewords

*Royal Albert Dock, Liverpool*

## Mayor's Foreword

Serving as the region's first mayor has been the honour of a lifetime, especially as someone who genuinely believes there is nowhere better in the world to spend your time - especially on a sunny day. It is a place with so much to offer.

Tackling inequality, driving inclusive growth and ensuring that we leave the next generation and the planet with a better inheritance than we received are at the core of my politics and my administration.

**I want to make the Liverpool City Region the best place to grow up, grow a family, and grow a business.**

Since I was elected, we have helped 60,000 people into jobs; rolled out world-class publicly owned trains; helped to build 30,000 homes for families to put down roots; helped hundreds of thousands of our residents get new qualifications and begun the process of bringing our buses back into public control.

These are just a few examples of what we can do as a city region with important decisions being made locally.

**But that is just the start.**

Transformational projects have been delivered in every borough of the region, which would not have been possible without a mayor or devolution. Our local councils are all pulling in the same direction, shaping the next phase of our development.

And we now have a government that wants to work with us to deliver economic growth.

The Liverpool City Region is a place steeped in history, a place full of pioneers and talent. While we are proud of our history, we are ready to look forward to an even brighter and more prosperous future.

We are ready to become a hub of economic growth through investment in new jobs, digital infrastructure and transport, a leader in the transition to renewable energy, become the best place for businesses to invest, and build on our vision for a city region that embraces innovation at every step.

**This corporate plan is our blueprint for getting there.**

It clearly articulates a programme of innovation, investment and improvement that will set us up for success for years to come.

The election of our new government, which shows signs of being the most pro-devolution Britain has ever seen, offers the chance to turbocharge our work. Rather than working with one hand tied behind our back, we can work hand in hand with them.

Working alongside our Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, and his new Cabinet, I will ensure that the next chapter in our illustrious history will not be written for us in Westminster or Whitehall - but by us here in the Liverpool City Region.



Steve Rotheram  
**Mayor of the Liverpool City Region**

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*Steve Rotheram .*

## Cabinet Members' Foreword

**As Cabinet Members of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Leaders of the city region's six Local Authorities, we are pleased to support the Combined Authority's plan for growth for the next four years.**

We have achieved a lot since the Mayoral Combined Authority was established in 2017. We have seen that devolution can really deliver and improve people's lives, and so we must continue to work at the regional level to push our area forward.

**But we know that there is more to do over the next four years to deliver even more for our residents.**

This Corporate Plan sets out what we will achieve by continuing to work together, strengthening our partnership working, and accelerating the difference it can make to the people who live here.

**What we deliver is important. But how we deliver it is equally important.**

We are committed to working together and with our communities and partners to empower them to play an important role in the future of our city region. And we are committed to ensuring that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion underpins everything that we do.

As a team, we will work together to deliver the vision to make our city region a great place to grow up, grow a family, and grow a business - where **no-one is left behind.**



Cllr Mike Wharton  
**Leader, Halton Council**



Cllr Graham Morgan  
**Leader, Knowsley Council**



Cllr Liam Robinson  
**Leader, Liverpool City Council**



Cllr Marion Atkinson  
**Leader, Sefton Council**



Cllr Anthony Burns  
**Leader, St Helens Council**



Cllr Paul Stuart  
**Leader, Wirral Council**

## Chief Executive's Foreword

The Combined Authority has a vital role to play in enabling a prosperous future for our unique and brilliant city region.

The Liverpool City Region is **world-famous** for its history and culture, music and sport. A place of pioneers for over 300 years, it is today a place of science and innovation, which is transforming its economy with highly innovative, **world-leading** economic clusters in health and life sciences, digital and creative, and advanced manufacturing at the vanguard.

Since I became Chief Executive of the Combined Authority, three years ago, I have been truly **inspired** by the region and its people. This motivates us all to play our part in **growing the economy** so that everyone benefits. At the heart of our work is collaboration and partnership: working with the constituent local authorities, businesses, academic institutions and communities.

At the start of a new Mayoral term, this Corporate Plan sets out the priorities on which the Combined Authority and its partners will deliver over the next four years, across five priority areas: **Economy, People, Place, Transport, and Digital Infrastructure.**

And it is underpinned by the guiding principles of **Sustainability, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.**

I am excited by what we can achieve together over the next four years, as we strive to build our innovative city region as a great place to grow up, grow a family, and grow a business – and where **no-one is left behind.**



Katherine Fairclough  
**Chief Executive**  
**Liverpool City Region Combined Authority**

*Katherine Fairclough*



## About the Combined Authority

The Combined Authority is made up of the six local authorities of the city region – Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral.

It is **chaired by the Mayor**, whose Cabinet is formed by the Leaders of those six authorities. Together, they use the **devolved powers** and funding secured from Whitehall and Westminster to make the key strategic decisions that **benefit the residents of every borough**, right here in the city region.

The longstanding relationships and close partnerships between all six local authorities have continued to strengthen and mature since the establishment of the Combined Authority, recognising both the unique contributions of each authority and our combined strength as one city region.

This enables the Combined Authority's decisions to be delivered in partnership, alongside businesses, institutions and communities, so that investments, programmes of work and services have a positive impact on the region's economy and its people, in areas such as **innovation, transport, creating jobs, skills, digital connectivity, housing**, tackling the **climate emergency, net zero**, and **culture**.



A sunset scene with a person's silhouette on a pier, a ship on the water, and the word 'Vision' in white text. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the sky and water. The person's silhouette is reflected in the water. A large ship is visible on the left side of the water. The word 'Vision' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font on the right side of the image. There are decorative curved lines in yellow and blue on the page.

# Vision

*'Another Place' by Antony Gormley, Sefton*

## Our Vision

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority plays a central role in the economic development of our region. We are seizing the unique opportunity to use our devolved powers and funding to shape this city region's economy so that it creates wealth and prosperity for all our 1.6 million residents. In doing so, our city region will contribute to sustainable economic growth and greater prosperity for the North of England and the whole of the UK.

*Our vision is for the Liverpool City Region to be the best place to grow up, grow a family, and grow a business - where no-one is left behind.*

## Our Plan

Growing the city region's **economy** by investing in our **people, place, transport, and digital infrastructure**, is at the centre of this Corporate Plan. It will enable us to continue to build on our region's strengths and address its underlying challenges.

Our **economy** has grown by nearly £3bn and there are now 60,000 more residents in employment since the Mayoral Combined Authority was established in 2017. We will deliver on priorities that enable it to continue to grow, and everyone possible to feel the benefit.



Image: Visit Liverpool

Autumn fun in Port Sunlight, Wirral

The **people** who live and work in the city region power our economy. We are making great progress in improving access to opportunity through jobs and skills. We will deliver a range of priorities that will build on this progress and further enhance our skilled and engaged workforce.

Our region is a uniquely creative and innovative **place**. We are competing on the global stage, and attracting ever more skilled workers, visitors and investment. Delivering this plan will build on our strengths, creating an even better place to live, work, visit and invest.

**Transport** is a vital enabler of economic success, and we are transforming our public transport network. Delivering the priorities in this plan will enable us to build a fully integrated London-style transport system, along with better connections to and from the region.

**Digital infrastructure** also powers a successful economy and we have already delivered our 214km LCR Connect ultrafast broadband network, making the region one of the best connected in the UK. Through this plan, we will maximise its benefits by connecting industry and commerce, and harness cutting edge technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI).

We know that despite such positive progress, there remain underlying, long-term structural challenges and inequalities that impact too many of our residents and communities. Talent is widespread, but opportunity is not yet available to all, and too many people have horizons that are affected by inequalities linked to the postcode in which they live.

The Liverpool City Region has continually reinvented its economy to meet the challenges of each new age, but it has not yet fully unlocked the potential of all its people. Removing the multiple barriers to opportunity, empowering our equalities panels and tackling these inequalities is a core part of the region's mission and we are ambitious for what we can achieve.

This Corporate Plan recognises the intrinsic link between **Economy, People, Place, Transport and Digital Infrastructure**, and brings forward coordinated action across all five priorities to help create the opportunity for all people to have a good quality of life, and to be able to build on their potential to lead prosperous lives.

## About the Liverpool City Region

The Liverpool City Region is world-famous for its history, culture and creativity, for its chart-topping music, world-beating sporting prowess, and for the warmth of its people.

It is a place of firsts, with a proud and storied history of **creativity** and **innovation**: the birthplace of the modern passenger railway, public health, home to the world's first commercial wet dock, the first commercial computer and first tropical diseases institute.

But it is not a city region that simply trades on its history. **Liverpool City Region has come of age** - and is looking forwards, not back. The Liverpool City Region is unique in its creativity, its relentless focus on growing good business, and its ability to combine all its strengths to develop **innovative solutions** to emerging challenges. Its economy is diversifying, being transformed through innovation intensive economic clusters in health and life sciences, digital and creative, and advanced manufacturing, with demonstrable **world-leading** strengths in materials chemistry, infection control, Artificial Intelligence (AI), net zero and maritime, driving sustainable economic growth. It is this **spirit of innovation** that sets the Liverpool City Region apart and is enabling it to compete on the global stage, driving economic progress in recent years that means its 1.6 million residents now contribute to and benefit from a **growing economy worth £35 billion** (GVA) a year.



*The Cavern Club, Liverpool*

## How the Combined Authority delivers

Since becoming a Mayoral Combined Authority in 2017, a series of key policy and strategy documents have been formally approved and adopted, providing the policy framework through which the Combined Authority operates. This guides the work of the organisation, informing investment, expenditure, and delivery.

### **The Combined Authority and its partners work together to deliver for the city region by working in partnership with government to advance economic growth by:**

- Directly **delivering** and commissioning projects, such as the 214km LCR Connect ultrafast broadband network, a £105m housing retrofit programme and the region's £500m fleet of new, publicly owned trains.
- **Enabling** partners to help the region deliver and thrive, with each of the six constituent local authorities directly delivering funded projects in their area, attracting businesses to locate in the region, investing to help our businesses grow, and funding projects that create jobs for local people.
- **Connecting** and convening the region's six local authorities, businesses, educational institutions and communities to work together for the benefit of our region.

- **Advocating** for the best deal for our region, using the convening power of the Mayor and the Combined Authority to project a single, powerful voice, and showcasing our strengths, assets and opportunities.

Good governance is crucial to the delivery of the Combined Authority's objectives. Robust arrangements are in place to ensure effective delivery, risk management, and to ensure exemplary financial management so that public money is used effectively and appropriately, and is properly accounted for. These arrangements are detailed in the authority's constitution and published Assurance Frameworks that are agreed with government to guide how the money devolved to us is used.

Scrutiny, challenge and oversight are provided by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Governance Committee, which are made up of elected members from our six local authorities. These Committees have important roles in reviewing and scrutinising our plans, priorities, governance arrangements and finances. The Committees will also have a role in overseeing the delivery of this plan.

### **We will deliver openly and transparently with regular reports to the Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee to outline progress.**

The Mayor has pledged to hold public question times, move Combined Authority meetings around the region, and has committed to appearing before every local council annually.

## Guiding Principles

The Combined Authority's work is underpinned by the guiding principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, social value and sustainability.

The commitment to **Equality, Diversity** and **Inclusion** goes beyond statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty Act (2011) of tackling inequality, fostering good relations and advancing equality of opportunity for all. This ensures that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are key components in the design, development and delivery of all our activities.

It includes championing a robust equality impact assessment process to ensure all decisions show due regard to Equality Duty obligations. Social class is adopted as an additional equality characteristic locally, and we have joined up approaches to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training with partners across the region.

The Combined Authority will continue to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in everything it does through six key priorities.



*Woman smiling*

## The Combined Authority will:

- Actively listen to our communities and build feedback into how we design and deliver our services and policies.
- Take evidence-led decisions.
- Identify and showcase the impact we are having.
- Deliver accessible and inclusive services and practices.
- Work in partnership.
- Champion Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Social value will be embedded in line with the Combined Authority's Social Value Framework.

Sustainability will be considered in the development of all strategies and activities, in line with the Combined Authority's Five-Year climate action plan, and as a key part of delivering the commitment to Net Zero by 2035.

## Race Equality Hub

*Through the pioneering Race Equality Hub the Combined Authority will target employment inequalities and remove barriers in the labour market for people from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic backgrounds through a focus on training, employment support and business assistance.*



*Race Equality Hub team*



## Liverpool City Region's Devolution Journey – Delivering through Devolution

The Liverpool City Region's first Devolution Agreement in November 2015 secured £900 million of funding over 30 years, with a second deal following in 2016.

Since the Mayoral Combined Authority was established in 2017, hundreds of millions of pounds of additional funding has been secured to invest in the region.

The Combined Authority has been focused on delivering the strategic decisions, investments, projects and services that grow the economy and create a prosperous future for its 1.6 million residents - in every community, within each of the city region's six local authority areas.

It has prioritised [innovation](#) to strengthen the city region's global position, working with partners to drive increased inward investment to [grow the economy](#) and launched its new [Life Sciences Innovation Zone](#), with the potential to drive up to £800m of government and private sector investment and create 8,000 jobs.



Sci-Tech Daresbury, Halton

It has invested heavily in [equipping residents with the skills they need for employment](#), through programmes like its award winning Be More platform, Households into Work, and the Adult Education Budget, which support over 30,000 learners each year. Since 2017, there have been over 50,000 apprenticeship starts in the city region.

In transport, the Combined Authority has delivered a new, state-of-the-art fleet of [publicly owned trains](#) on the Merseyrail network, with an investment of £500 million. The new trains are a cornerstone of the Mayor and Combined Authority's programme to deliver a [London-style integrated transport system](#). The re-regulation of the region's buses through bus franchising will be delivered by 2027, and a further £1.6 billion in transport investment will be used to deliver a transport revolution, putting the public at the heart of public transport.

The Combined Authority is also driving forward the city region's strategic ambition to be the most digitally connected in the UK, through a comprehensive [digital programme](#).

In late 2023, [LCR Connect](#) – a £30 million, 214km, full-fibre, ultrafast, gigabit capable network spanning the whole city region – [was completed](#) - providing unrivalled digital access to local businesses and residents.

[Strategic investment in housing](#) has also been a major priority for the authority. It has secured £60 million in Brownfield Land funding to bring former industrial sites back into use to build 4,000 homes. [The first of these was completed in the Borough of Knowsley, in 2023.](#) It has also already secured £105 million in funding to [retrofit thousands of homes across the region](#), and it is positioned to take advantage of further investment opportunities introduced by the government.

The Combined Authority was the first to declare a climate emergency, in 2019, with an ambitious [target to reach Net Zero](#).

Its investment in public transport and retrofitting homes play a key role, in achieving that target, and it has invested [£1.35 million](#) through The Mayor's Community Environment Fund to enable local communities to take local action, empowering neighbourhoods.

The region's 'first of a kind' [Mersey Tidal Power](#) scheme would be the biggest scheme of its type in the world, and generate clean, predictable energy for 120 years. [The formal planning process commenced in March 2024.](#)

The Combined Authority's track record on these big strategic themes, and much more, sets the scene for significant delivery in the next four years, through this Corporate Plan.

**You can read more about the Combined Authority's achievements in its [Annual Reviews](#).**

# 32,000

A net **additional 32,000** homes were added to the city region's housing stock.

# 50,000

There have been over **50,000 apprenticeship starts** in the city region.

# £35bn

The city region **economy** has grown by nearly £3bn (9%) to **£35bn**.

# 44,000

The number of **jobs in the region has grown by 44,000** (7%). The third fastest of all Combined Authority areas nationally and faster than the national average of 5% growth.

## A stronger, fairer economy

Since 2017, the region's economy has continued to grow in strength across a range of key indicators.

# 60,000

There are now **60,000 (10%) more LCR residents in employment**. This is faster growth than the national average (5%) and the second fastest of all Combined Authority areas during that time.

# 1,000

The **number of businesses has grown by 1,000** – at a faster rate than national averages. This is supported by the high business birth rate, which in 2023 was the third highest rate of all Combined Authorities.

# 30%

The **number of residents with at least degree level qualifications grew by over 30%**. This was much faster than the growth seen in any other Combined Authority area and faster than the national average growth of 14%. The city region now ranks second out of all Combined Authority areas in terms of residents with degree level qualifications.

# 74%

The **employment rate increased from 70% to 74%**, this is significantly more than the change seen nationally in the same period. During this time the Liverpool City Region saw the second fastest growth of all Combined Authority areas.



A new Class 77 train

## Deeper Devolution

The Combined Authority and its partners have continually proved that they deliver.

The Government recognised the Combined Authority's capacity and capability in early 2024, when the Liverpool City Region was announced as one of only a handful of Mayoral Combined Authorities to be awarded a **further devolution** opportunity. This signifies the region's status as one of the most mature devolved institutions in England. It provides the region with new levers covering funding, housing, skills and transport together with a welcomed focus on **greater local governance**, scrutiny and accountability.

This represented a critical milestone in moving towards deeper devolution ambitions in future, provides an enhanced platform for meaningful engagement with central government, and gives further confidence to businesses and institutions to invest in the region.

But the Liverpool City Region does not yet have all the devolved powers and funding it requires to achieve its vision. The Combined Authority will continue to demonstrate that it is delivering and present the evidence-based case for deeper devolution – and the greater powers and flexibilities that single settlement devolved funding will bring.

## COMBINED AUTHORITY PRIORITIES 2024-28

Over the next four years, the Combined Authority will work with the new government to deliver on its strategic priorities and deliver a comprehensive programme of activity to **grow the city region's economy**, focusing on delivering for its **People**, the region as a **Place**, on its **Transport** system, and on **Digital Infrastructure**.

A photograph of an industrial robotic welding process in a laboratory. Two robotic arms are positioned to weld a metal component. A large volume of bright orange sparks is being emitted from the welding point, creating a dramatic visual effect. The scene is lit with a cool blue light, and several thin, colorful lines (yellow, red, blue) are overlaid on the image, suggesting a digital or data-driven environment.

# Economy

*Advanced Manufacturing in a laboratory*

## Economy

The Combined Authority is primarily a strategic economic development organisation, with the economic needs of the region at the centre of everything it does.

**It is investing hundreds of millions of pounds to grow the economy in every part of the Liverpool City Region:** investing in start-ups and fast-growing business, attracting companies to locate here, and delivering the transport, digital infrastructure and skilled workforce that they need to thrive – and create jobs for local residents.



*Alstom Train Care Depot, Liverpool*

## Delivering a Stronger, Fairer Economy through Growth and Prosperity

**The Combined Authority will create the right conditions, infrastructure, and partnerships to deliver economic growth and prosperity,** securing good, purpose-driven growth that benefits everyone.

It will realise the ambitions and actions within its [Economic Opportunities Framework](#), continuing to develop and mature its approach to commercial investment, attracting and unlocking a diverse mix of funding to the City Region.

### **The Combined Authority will:**

- Work with business, industry, local authorities, trade unions and partners to produce a ten-year local growth plan in line with government guidelines, that provides a blueprint for local growth.
- Use the Life Sciences Innovation Zone to catalyse investment, drive specialisms and enhance global competitiveness, create 8,000 jobs and unlock over £800 million of public and private investment by 2034. We aim to invest in rapidly increasing laboratory capacity to capitalise on local strengths and address national shortages.
- Exploit the opportunities afforded through the Freeport, attracting new business to the city region and creating 13,000 jobs over the next 20 years.



- Support the growth of key clusters, including working with partners to capitalise on our strengths in Life Sciences, Advanced Manufacturing and Digital and Creative, including the development and delivery of bespoke cluster plans from 2024/25.
- Ensure the city region remains at the forefront of innovation, maximising existing capabilities and pioneering new technologies, including supporting the creation of a Materials Innovation and an Infection Control Supercluster.
- Work with partners to make it easier for entrepreneurs, business start-ups and businesses across the whole economy to achieve their growth potential and create quality jobs, establishing a business scale-up vehicle to support more than 100 businesses by 2026.
- Continue our approach to creating a truly inclusive economy, supporting the voluntary and community sector, and further embedding Community Wealth Building approaches to economic development activities by 2025.
- Embed the voice of local business within the work of the Combined Authority, capitalising on the expertise and insight of the Business and Enterprise Board and Clusters.
- Continue to promote better working standards through the LCR Fair Employment Charter, supporting the TUC and Government's New Deal for Workers and a procurement approach where the Combined Authority does not contract with companies that use fire and rehire tactics.
- Create the right environment to support our aspiration to incubate an LCR Unicorn within the next 10 years.



*The Mayor of Busan with Mayor Steve Rotheram*

## Accelerating Inward Investment and boosting International Trade

The Combined Authority will commit to further expanding our relationships with other countries including within the USA, Europe and across East Asia to build links and opportunities to promote the Liverpool City Region, and consolidating links with Ireland, Hamburg, Bordeaux, Busan and Surabaya.

It will capitalise on the city region's strengths and assets creating a world class investment offer, building new partnerships and investments across the whole of the city region.

### The Combined Authority will:

- Develop an Inward Investment Strategy and delivery plan, that focuses on key markets to increase Foreign Direct Investment by 25% by 2030.
- Continue to raise the profile of the Liverpool City Region internationally, delivering a programme of trade and learning missions, developing a refreshed and ambitious International Strategy in 2025.
- Support the promotion of the Liverpool City Region as a place to set up and scale up a business to a national and international audience through the establishment of a Business Location Taskforce by the end of 2024.



*A world-first biofuel trial for glassmaking  
in St Helens, led by Glass Futures, St Helens*

# People

*Rockpoint Records, New Brighton, Wirral*

## People

The city region's economy is powered by the diverse, innovative, creative and hard-working people who live and work here. There is real strength and depth in the region's workforce.

However, there remains much unlocked potential in communities across the region that could be released through residents having the right skills and access to opportunities to thrive in the regional economy.

Improving health and reducing health inequalities will create the conditions for people to flourish, enabling our residents to better access opportunities, develop better skills, be more productive and prosperous.



*Scientists working in a laboratory*



*A young learner  
accompanied by an adult*

## Ensuring the Best Start in Life

**Working with partners and families we can enable more young people to have the best start in life**, including access to high quality childcare and early years provision.

### **The Combined Authority will:**

- Work with Councils, Early Years settings, Colleges, Training Providers and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to address the recruitment and retention challenges that childcare and early years settings have. This will include making sure that those who want to work in early years and childcare can access the right training and those in the sector can receive upskilling support.
- Promote exceptional practice on parental leave as part of the Ambassador Level of the Fair Employment Charter from 2025.
- Launch a commission into childcare to identify systemic challenges and work with local and national partners to implement actions.
- Continue to support and invest in the locally developed Cradle to Career programme, working to identify the next wave of areas to extend Cradle to Career, expanding from 18,000 to 36,000 children and young people supported each year by 2030.
- Directly support over 200 economically inactive residents into employment, education or training by April 2025.

## A City Region of Learning – delivering employment and skills

**The Combined Authority will invest to ensure that residents have the skills they need to get the high-skilled, well-paid and sustainable jobs being created in our economy.**

Skills programmes are central to unlocking the potential of our residents, strengthening our local employment and skills system, so providing flexible and relevant learning is important to our region's future.

### **The Combined Authority will:**

- Continue to maximise the impact of devolved skills funding, targeting over £50m per year and prioritising investment to support those facing the greatest barriers. Enabling 120,000 adults to upskill, re-train or access employment by 2028.
- Continue to push for devolution of 16-19 education, including powers over technical and academic education for 16–19-year-olds.
- Develop local technical learning pathways aligned to the current and future needs of employers, including working to develop a Liverpool City Region Screen Academy by 2028 and the development of a Green Jobs and Skills Plan.
- Publish in Autumn 2024, a Long-Term Skills Plan, ensuring individuals and businesses are able to access the skills they need to thrive.
- Continue to push for the devolution of Apprenticeship Levy (growth and skills) funding and the power to reintroduce Foundation Apprenticeships.
- Support 142 schools and colleges per year with quality careers education provision through the Careers Hub.
- Provide digital badging, skills, careers and apprenticeship information, advice and guidance through the award winning Be More portal.
- Pilot the introduction of AI technology into schools from September 2024.
- Continue to provide skills brokerage services to support regional employers to access funding and government incentive schemes to help up-skill or re-skill employees.
- Expand our digital inclusion programme to support 10,000 residents with digital inclusion provision and continue to tackle the digital divide with partners across the region by 2028.



# Place

*Friends on board the Mersey Ferry, Liverpool*



## Place

The Liverpool City Region is a place of diversity and vibrancy. Culture is at the very heart of what makes our city region unique.

Despite this, the region faces place-based challenges which impact on the quality of life for many of our residents. Homelessness, access to quality housing, air quality and the challenges arising from climate change require a coordinated strategic place-based approach.



Image: Knowsley Council

*Moments of Light, Knowsley*

## Maximising our Cultural Capital

**The Combined Authority will build on the city region's strong cultural offer and vibrant visitor economy**, ensuring the culture and visitor economy plays a transformational role as a catalyst for economic development, as a source of well-being, and as a way to strengthen the national and international profile of the city region.

### **The Combined Authority will:**

- Work in partnership to develop a compelling, unified Place brand, positioning the city region as a place of science, innovation and creativity by end of 2024.
- Create a Liverpool City Region crest and flag by the end of 2024.
- Support, grow and celebrate our cultural, heritage and tourist attractions, through a strong LCR Visitor Economy Partnership, developing a new and ambitious Destination Management Plan by the end of 2024.
- Develop a Major Events Strategy by 2025 to ensure the city region continues its success in bidding for and hosting major events across all boroughs.
- Re-focus our Borough of Culture programme to expand its reach and impact, maximising the 2% culture budget from 2025.

## A Greener Cleaner Future

**We will strengthen our efforts to reach net zero**, taking advantage of the opportunities afforded through our position as Britain's Renewable Energy Coast. The Combined Authority has made good progress in leading the decarbonisation agenda across the region, however climate change continues to pose a significant threat to our communities and further and faster action is required.

### **The Combined Authority will:**

- Accelerate delivery of our climate actions and activities, lobbying the Government and others to secure the resources to enable us to deliver our aim to achieve net zero by 2035.
  - Continue to convene, lead, and enable the actions of the Five-Year Climate Action Plan.
  - Develop a Water Management Plan for the city region as part of a wider approach to improving our waterways and delivering a discharge-free River Mersey by 2030.
- Adopting a locally led approach to nature recovery, working with partners to produce an evidence-based Local Nature Strategy by March 2025.
  - Work with local Leaders and communities to identify suitable plots to deliver six new urban parks and the planting of 100,000 new trees by 2030.
  - Continue to drive the Mersey Tidal Power Project, delivering a full business case by 2028.
  - Invest £10m to kick start public Electric Vehicle charging points across LCR by 2028.
  - Work with our Local Authorities and the Liverpool City Region air quality task force to improve regional air quality. This will include exploring the use of digital innovation to improve data on air pollution to inform interventions across the city region.



*Computer Generated Image (CGI) of the Mersey Tidal barrage*

# Housing

**The Combined Authority will work with partners in local authorities, housing associations, developers and communities to ensure that the city region provides quality homes for the people who need them,** and that the homes are well designed, energy efficient and meet a wide range of housing needs.

## **The Combined Authority will:**

- Champion a refreshed approach to strategic housing planning and delivery, improving the design and accessibility of housing by 2027. In line with local planning policy we will deliver 20% affordable housing across any new funding programme.
- Explore options to address the housing challenges across the city region including council house building and affordable housing.
- Lead the decarbonisation of over 1,000 homes and public buildings per annum through housing retrofit and heat networks.
- Provide a clear framework for spatial planning, continuing our approach to public engagement and participation during 2025 ahead of submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

- Enable the construction of 200 homes per annum through Brownfield Land Funding for housing delivery.
- Build on the work of our Councils, registered providers, and private landlords to accredit good practices and lobby for improvements to the housing sector. Develop a Good Landlord Charter by 2026.
- Ensure a Design Review Panel is embedded in the region's Investment Strategy by the end of 2024.

# Homelessness

Working with Local Authorities and partners from across the system, we will continue delivering innovative programmes to bring an end to repeat and chronic homelessness and rough sleeping.

## **The Combined Authority will:**

- Work with the city region's Local Authorities and the Government to develop effective solutions to homelessness across the region, testing the feasibility of homelessness hubs and advocating for Housing First.
- Establish a cross-sector Homelessness task force by 2024.



*Workers install solar panels on a home*



# Transport

*A mother disembarking from a new Class 777 train with her children*

## Transport

The city region has seen improvements in its transport network, with significant investments such as the delivery of new stations and trains. It will continue to innovate to deliver improved mobility through our transport system.

### **A modern, integrated and publicly controlled public transport system**

The Combined Authority recognises the strategic need to increase connection and promote mobility across the region for our communities and businesses and the social, economic and climate benefits that a future low carbon transport system brings.

The Combined Authority will deliver its fully integrated METRO transport network through Transport for Liverpool City Region (TFLCR), which will replace Merseytravel and implement a whole system approach. It will promote mobility across the region for our communities and businesses, by creating increased linkage between rail, bus, ferry, tunnels, and active travel.



*New Hydrogen bus at Mann Island*

## The Combined Authority will:

- Continue to roll out the METRO brand across the public transport network.
- Deliver the programme to implement bus franchising to ensure publicly controlled bus services operate in St Helens in 2026 with a view to accelerating a fully franchised network in LCR by the end of 2027.
- Design a new operating model for Merseyrail with increased public control.
- Continue to take forward discussions with the Government to enhance devolved control of local rail operations and infrastructure.
- Develop and implement a programme to deliver new Merseyrail stations and expand to new key services with
  - Construction start for the Baltic Station in 2025 to allow opening in 2027.
  - Design plans and funding package in place by 2027, to allow the transformational project to re-develop Liverpool Central station to commence.
  - Development plans for stations at Carr Mill, Daresbury and Woodchurch.
- Operate fully accessible rail platforms and stations by 2030 and commit to maintaining concessionary travel.
- Develop and implement new Bus Rapid Transport connections between the city centre and Liverpool John Lennon Airport and to Anfield and Bramley Moore stadia by 2028.
- Work with partners to deliver the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS1) investment programme by March 2027 and to develop and secure CRSTS2 investment funding by March 2025.
- Decarbonise transport and infrastructure to support our net zero target with cleaner and greener vehicles and assets.
  - By securing funding and starting procurement of new Battery Electric Vehicles by March 2025 (ZEBRA).
  - By developing and deploying on-street EV chargers from March 2026 (LEVI).
  - By launching the new Mersey Ferry by summer 2026.
- Continue to modernise our transport ticketing systems including fare/concession options with the next phase of smart ticketing from March 2025.
- Operate the Mersey Tunnels and Mersey Ferries recognising the important part they play in the region's connectivity.
- Continue to invest in enhanced facilities that are attractive, accessible and safe places for all our communities including Merseyrail in Bloom, and the construction of a new interchange in St Helens before the end of 2026.
- Continue to oversee the city region's integrated transport network including exploring how we deliver high speed regional connections to Manchester.





*Friends enjoy a summer's day in the park*



# Digital Infrastructure

*A person wearing a Virtual Reality headset*

## Digital Infrastructure

In today's rapidly evolving world, digital connectivity is paramount for driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and enhancing quality of life for our residents.

Its existing assets mean that the Liverpool City Region is already **one of the most digitally connected city regions** – and we have the potential to be the best. We will use our regional digital assets to be innovative as a leader in responsible AI.

### Creating the most digitally connected city region

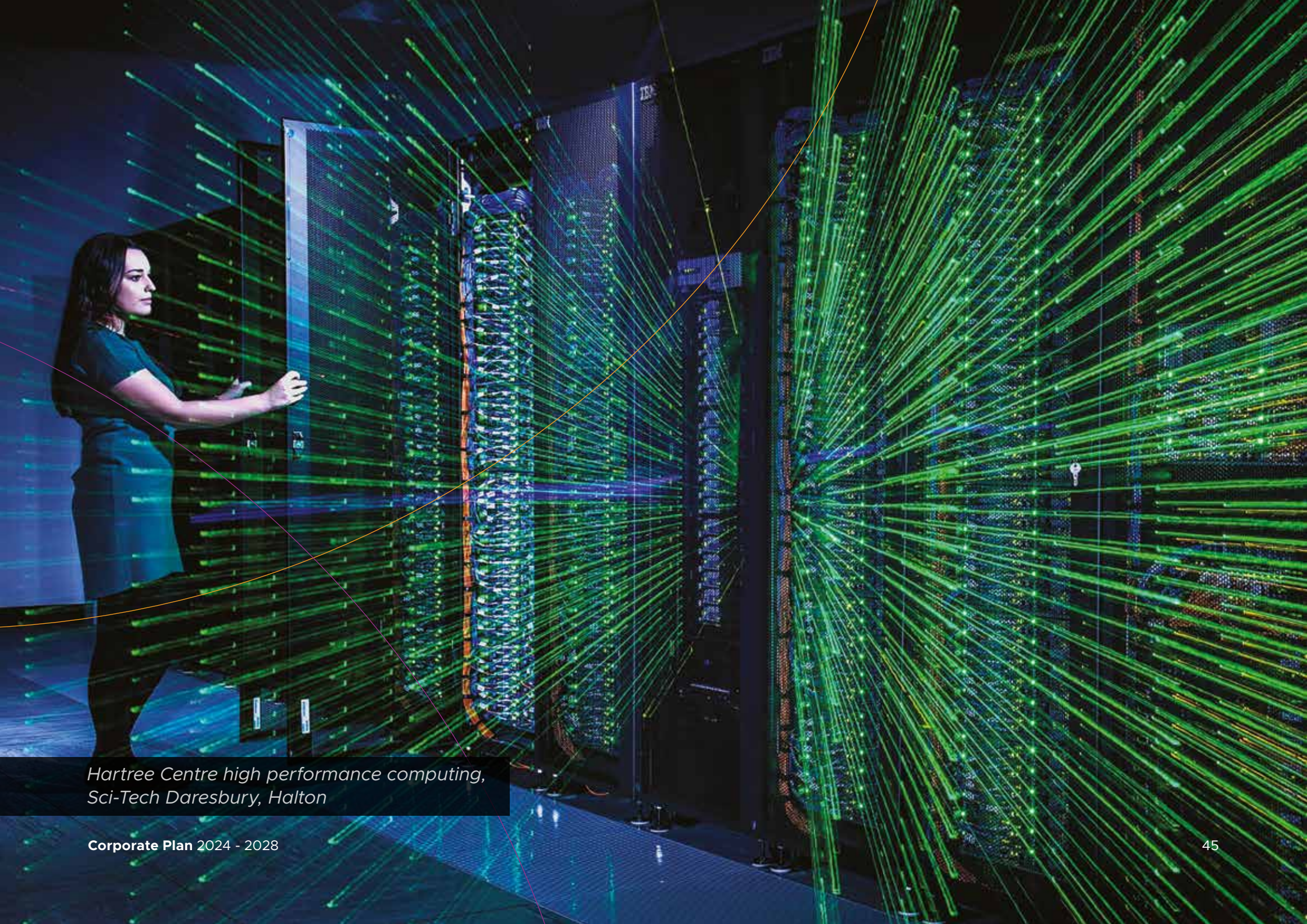
Building upon the installation of the 214km LCR Connect ultrafast, full fibre network we are embarking on a journey to leverage technology to create a vibrant, inclusive and resilient city region.



*A woman smiling using a tablet*

### **The Combined Authority will:**

- Work to maximise the benefits of the LCR Connect ultrafast, gigabit capable broadband network by signing up 3,000 businesses and organisations to LCR Connect by the end of the decade.
- Identify and trial use-cases for advanced wireless technologies (i.e. Smart Cities) and explore the potential benefits for the city region of widespread, cross-sectoral uptake of 5G.
- Harness the power and opportunity of AI to address social, economic, and environmental challenges across the city region, promoting 'AI for Good' including establishing an AI Task Force, chaired by a newly appointed Chief Digital Officer by 2025.
- Collaborate with the city region's six Local Authorities and other partners to create the Office for Public Service Innovation, beginning to move to a different approach in Spring 2025, bringing together existing skills and assets from across the region, enhanced by additional innovative capabilities.
- Use our digital assets to be a leader in responsible AI, working alongside our trade unions on the development of a model of best practice for the use of AI.



*Hartree Centre high performance computing,  
Sci-Tech Daresbury, Halton*



# Delivery Plans and Measuring Performance

*Cyclists using a cycle path, Halton*

## Delivery Plans and Measuring Performance

This Corporate Plan will be underpinned by robust annual delivery plans that drive the work each year. The Corporate Plan itself will be reviewed annually.

**The Combined Authority will closely monitor its progress to deliver the activities highlighted in this Corporate Plan** and the associated Delivery Plans, to assess and report on our progress and understand the impact and difference that our activities have made to the city region's economy and people. This will include:

- **Tracking progress in delivering activities:** delivery of the activities in this plan will be closely monitored and managed through regular reporting against agreed delivery milestones.
- **Collecting data about outcomes:** wherever feasible collecting data about the outcomes of activities as they arise, so that we can understand where and how those activities are making a difference.
- **Periodically evaluating impact:** to understand the longer term changes these activities are creating in the economy and capture the lessons about what has made a difference, what has worked well and where there are lessons to be learned.



Photo by Visit Liverpool

*Mann Island at night, Liverpool*

## An Efficient and Effective Organisation

**The Combined Authority has responsibility for significant sums of public money to deliver services and improve outcomes for people across the Liverpool City Region.**

Delivery of services and significant and complex programmes is underpinned by a skilled workforce, partnership with its six constituent Local Authorities, businesses, institutions and communities, transparent decision-making and effective financial management.

### People

**The Combined Authority cannot deliver this plan without its own people, those within our six constituent Local Authorities and our partners.**

Who we are, how we demonstrate our behaviours and how we work together will determine the successful delivery of this Corporate Plan and the difference we will make across the city region.

To make this difference, we need diverse, motivated, high-performing teams that always put the city region first and are representative of the people we serve. We want all our staff to be engaged in our purpose and vision, understand the contribution they can make, and be committed to delivering for our residents.

**We understand that to do this we need to be clear on our expectations of each other, listen to and understand the different views of all who work here, develop the potential of our employees and support their wellbeing.**

To deliver this Corporate Plan, we must ensure we have the right people with the right skills. Through our People Strategy, we will focus on attracting the best talent to work at the Combined Authority and enabling all employees to feel valued and nurtured so they can thrive during their careers with us.



## Our Behaviours

**Our organisation's behaviours will be at the heart of all we do and will shape our future, putting the Liverpool City Region first, acting with respect and being action focused.**

We will take this opportunity to consider how we can develop as an organisation and redesign how we work, remembering that what we do will set an example for our partners and other businesses in our region.

### Strengthening our Organisation

Since its inception, the Combined Authority's devolved powers, funding and scope of influence has increased substantially. As we secure deeper devolution, **the Combined Authority continues to evolve and transform with a wide programme of change and improvement to realise our ambitions for the future**, ensuring that our organisation is set up to deliver our ambitious Corporate Plan.

*This programme will span the life of this Corporate Plan and beyond, and will modernise ways of working, create efficiencies, and embrace digital capabilities to drive service excellence.*

The programme has already seen investment in some of our back-office functions, such as the realignment of our HR and Organisational Development functions to provide a better service to the organisation, supported by the introduction of a modern integrated HR and Payroll system, replacing multiple legacy systems.

Additionally, the introduction of self-service ticket machines at our Mersey Ferries terminals demonstrates our ongoing commitment to providing the best customer-facing digital offer across our transport services, to enable self-service across a range of digital channels to improve the overall customer experience.

The programme will seek to use new modern technology, making processes quicker and simpler, and bringing data into one place to enable our decision-making and support our ongoing financial sustainability.

In the coming years, the programme will see further upgrades to our back-office and customer infrastructure, ensuring that our organisation is **designed and set up to achieve success** and underpin our delivery activities, and that staff and customers are supported by the best systems.

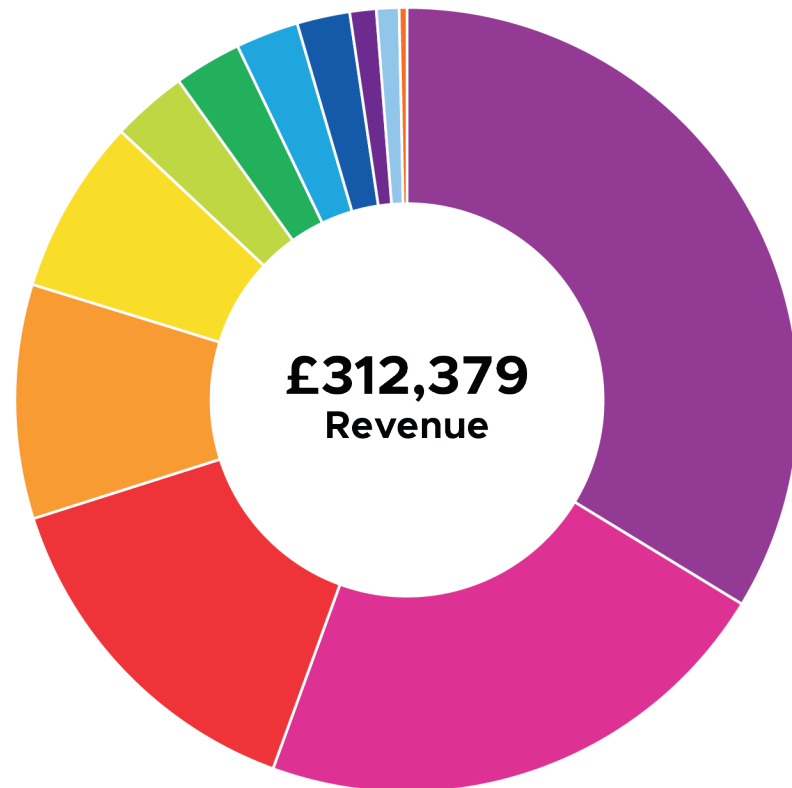


*Friends enjoy a stroll in front of 'The Dream', St Helens*

## Our Funding

The Combined Authority budget is set each year and to deliver this plan, the authority has also agreed a medium-term financial plan aligned to its strategic priorities and funding available.

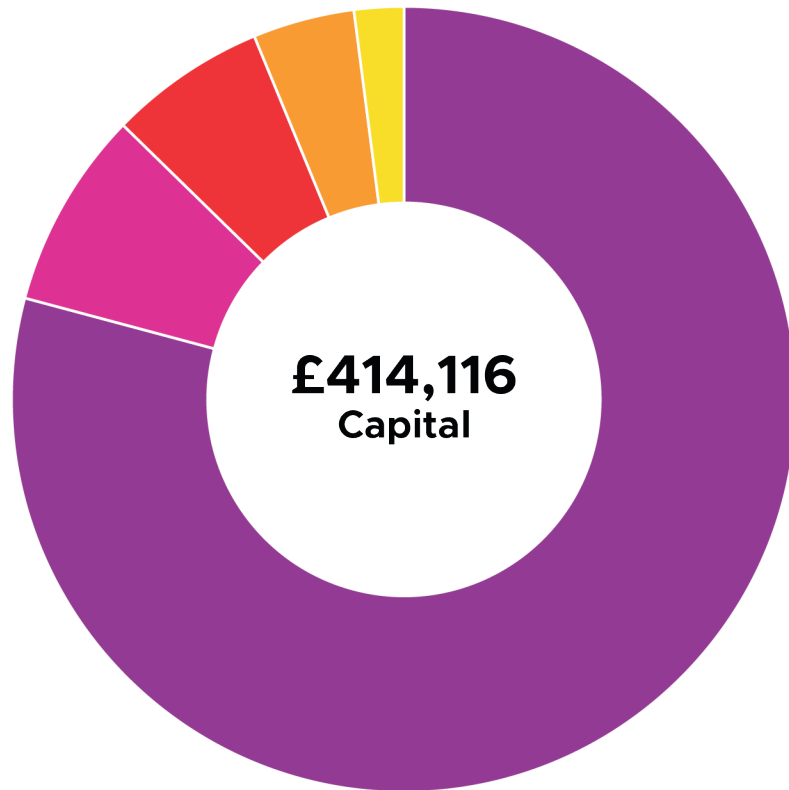
The following charts illustrate how our revenue and capital budgets are currently funded and spent:



## 2024/25 CA Revenue Funding - where our money comes from (£000's)

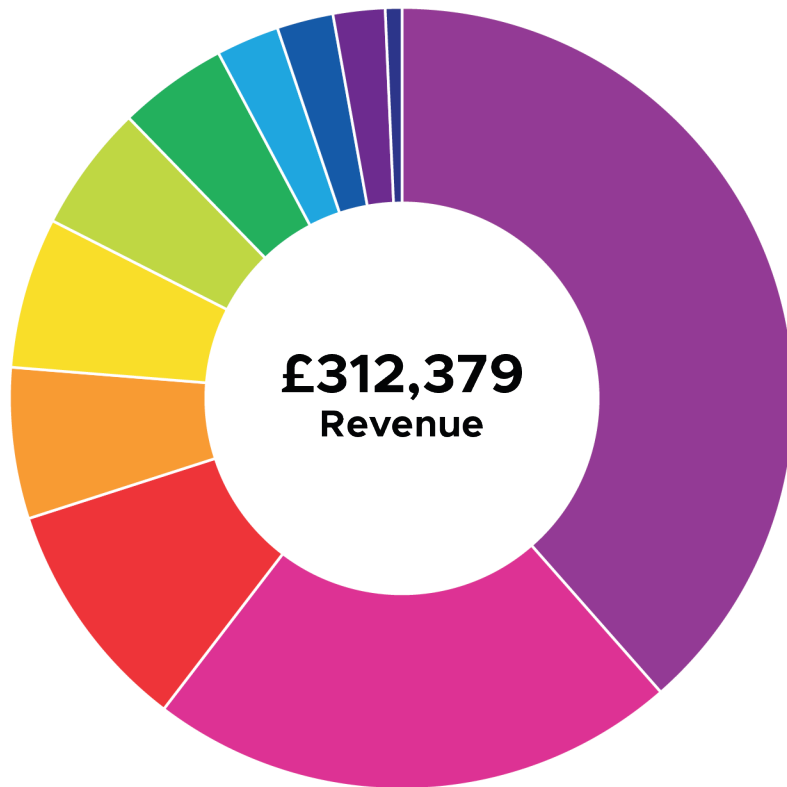
- Transport Levy £105,300
- Adult Skills £68,239
- Tunnel Tolls £45,472
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund £30,133
- Investment Zones £22,599
- Gainshare £9,732
- Other Revenue Grants £8,685
- Mayoral Precept £8,098
- Use of Reserves £6,811
- Halton Differential Levy £3,397
- Homelessness £2,913
- Mayoral Capacity Grant £1,000

**2024/25 CA Capital Funding - where our money comes from (£000's)**

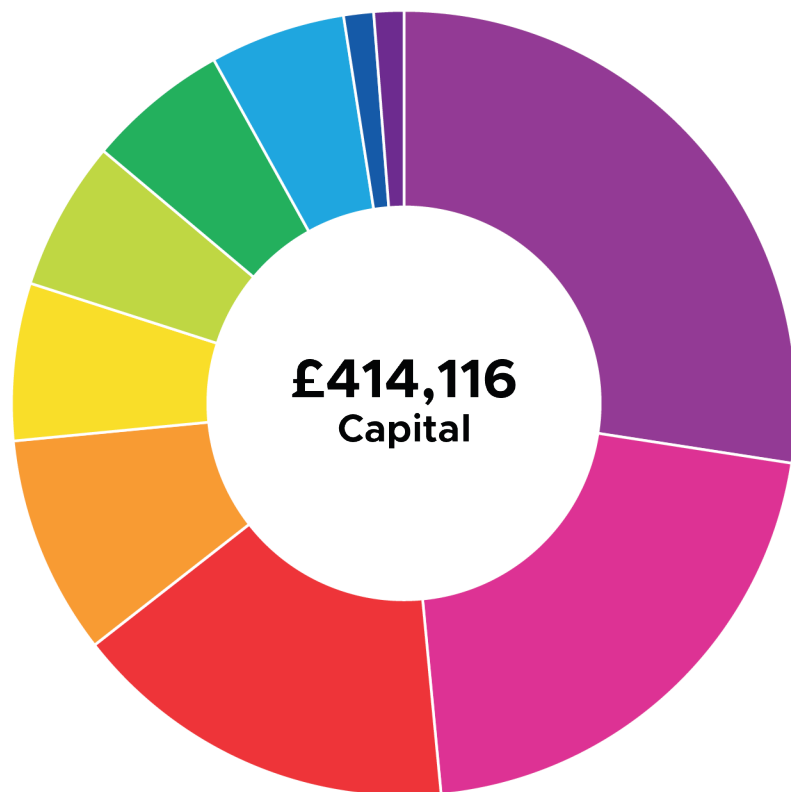


• Government Grants	£327,789
• Borrowing	£33,733
• Reserves	£26,802
• Other	£17,346
• Revenue Contribution to Capital	£8,446

## 2024/25 CA Revenue Funding - where our money goes (£000's)



• Transport Services	£120,379
• Adult Skills	£68,239
• UK SPF	£30,133
• Other external grant projects	£19,509
• Other investment and delivery	£19,483
• Net debt servicing	£16,351
• Corporate Delivery	£14,085
• Corporate Services	£8,133
• Policy and Strategy	£7,255
• Housing	£6,685
• Other	£2,127



### 2024/25 CA Capital Funding - where our money goes (£000's)

- Transport with Local Authorities £113,614
- Other CA transport £87,191
- Housing £66,118
- Bus Franchising £37,346
- New trains enabling costs £26,802
- Business Ecosystems and Innovation £25,530
- Other £24,165
- Place and Infrastructure £23,142
- Low carbon £5,105
- UK SPF £5,103

*\* including spend for prior year slippage*



*Shakespeare North, Knowsley*

**Corporate Plan 2024 - 2028**

# Liverpool City Region: INNOVATING FOR GROWTH

*The best place to grow up, grow a family, and grow a business.*

Learn more about the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority at:  
[www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk](http://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk)

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 Liverpool City Region Combined Authority



**METRO MAYOR**  
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION



Sefton Council 



 **WIRRAL**