

## **New commission calls for evidence to transform non-metropolitan England**

**LGA media release 27 May 2014**

A major new inquiry has been launched into the economic and social future of the half of England that is not a major city.

Non-metropolitan areas account for roughly half of England's economy and population. This means that their economic contribution, and their growth potential, is as significant for the nation as for that of big cities; indeed on average, non-city areas contribute more to national output per head of population than cities outside London. This the first time an independent body of distinguished experts has examined the role of non-metropolitan areas and their potential for supporting balanced economic growth.

The non-political and independent commission will be chaired by Sir John Peace, who is also the Chairman of Standard Chartered PLC, and Burberry, as well as Chairman of Nottinghamshire's local Growth Board. Sir John has been asked by the Local Government Association, which represents almost 400 councils, to lead this major review alongside a panel of leading figures from business, the voluntary and public sectors.

They will explore the unique characteristics of non-metropolitan economies and their drivers, as well as what more can be done to free up their public services to promote growth and deliver better outcomes for residents. By the autumn, it will make recommendations for reform to shape the way economic growth and public service transformation are supported in the future.

As part of the review, the commission wants to hear from everyone who has a stake in non-metropolitan areas. It is calling for evidence from business leaders, voluntary and faith groups, community and public service leaders. It has today launched a public Call for Evidence.

Sir John said: "As Chair of the Commission, I look forward to working with my fellow commissioners to help release the enormous potential of non-metropolitan communities across the country. The review will examine many of the economic, social and demographic trends facing these areas with the aim of stimulating economic growth regionally, creating new jobs and helping people to live their lives better."

Local Government Association Chairman Sir Merrick Cockell said:

"I am delighted that such a distinguished and highly qualified team has agreed to assist with this important initiative.

"Councils are committed to driving economic growth and improving residents' lives in every part of the country. The policy debate has largely ignored the half of the economy outside the big cities and I am confident this Commission will start to put that right."

The commission – its full title is the Independent Commission on Economic Growth and the Future of Public Services in Non-metropolitan England - will be tasked to:

- review the economic, social and demographic trends facing non-metropolitan areas

- assess their strengths and challenges and identify in particular where their most powerful potential for future economic prosperity lies
- review steps taken so far by businesses and the public sector to meet those challenges and promote growth
- make recommendations about the most effective further steps which business and the public sector could take to maximise the potential of non-metropolitan areas for environmentally and socially sustainable growth, supported and underpinned by efficient public services.

The Commission consists of members drawn from a range of backgrounds, who are leaders in their fields. It will be supported by independent advice, working together with the LGA, CCN (County Councils Network) and DCN (District Councils Network). The Commission will be taking evidence until late June and publish the final report by the autumn (2014).

The full list of commissioners:

Sir John Peace (Chair)	Chairman of Standard Chartered PLC, Burberry Group plc and Experian plc
Lady Cobham	Chair of VisitEngland
Sir Tony Hawkhead	Chief Executive of Action for Children
Grainia Long	Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Housing
Professor Henry Overman	Professor of Economic Geography of London School of Economics (LSE)
Jane Ramsey	Chair of Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
The Lord Teverson	Liberal Democrat Spokesman for Energy and Climate Change in the House of Lords

### Key link

[Non-Metropolitan Commission web resource](#) – for further information, to see the Commission's Terms of Reference and Call for Evidence, and to submit evidence.

### Contact

Matthew Cooper, Senior Media Relations Officer  
 Local Government Association  
 Telephone: 020 7664 3007  
 Email: <mailto:matthew.cooper@local.gov.uk>  
 Media Office (for out-of-hours contact): 020 7664 3333  
 Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

[www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

Follow the LGA press office on [www.twitter.com/LGANews](http://www.twitter.com/LGANews)