

Press release -EMBARGOED UNTIL 06:00, THURSDAY 16 JULY 2015

CORNWALL TO BE FIRST COUNTY TO GAIN HISTORIC NEW POWERS

- Cornwall to be the first county to gain historic new powers - giving local people tools to take charge
- Cornwall to be in control of bus services, adult skills and regional investment. Health and social services will also come together
- Major step in Government's One Nation commitment to extend opportunity to every corner of our country

An historic devolution deal will for the first time, give Cornwall new powers to control local services and bring jobs, prosperity to the area.

As part of a major decentralisation in decision making, Cornwall will become the first rural county to benefit from devolution - gaining more control so it can set its own course to grow the local economy.

The move is a key part of the Government's One Nation commitment to devolve powers to local authorities across the country and ensure hard working people can benefit from the stronger economy and decide on issues that affect them.

This includes giving areas more freedom to tailor services to local needs, support local businesses and create jobs.

The Cornwall devolution deal will:

- Give Cornwall Council powers for franchising and improving bus services in the area – the first rural unitary authority to gain this power;
- Give the Local Enterprise Partnership more say on boosting local skills levels;
- Give the council powers to select the projects, working with partners, it wants to see benefiting from millions of pounds of inward investment funding;
- Make it easier for the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership to integrate national and local business support services to help local firms grow;
- Enable Cornwall Council and the Council of the Isles of Scilly to work with local health organisations on a plan for integrating health and social care services.

Prime Minister David Cameron said:

"At the heart of this One Nation Government is the belief that everyone, no matter what their background or where they're from, has the opportunity to get on in life.

"This devolution deal marks a major shift for the people who live and work in Cornwall – putting power in their hands and giving them the tools to take charge and make the most of the fantastic potential that Cornwall holds.

"And, alongside our long term economic plan, which has created 19,000 jobs in Cornwall since 2010 and will deliver tax cuts to benefit 2.6million people in the region, we are determined to continue to deliver and make sure opportunity and prosperity reaches every corner of our country."

Communities Secretary Greg Clark said:

"This deal is great news for Cornwall and I hope the first of many devolution deals for counties around the country as part of our long-term economic plan.

"This One Nation Government is determined to end the hoarding of power in Whitehall and put it in the hands of local people who know their area best.

"This historic deal ensures Cornwall has the powers and resources that will allow it to create the jobs and services it knows are best suited to the area and that will help local people and the county thrive."

Cornwall Council Leader John Pollard said:

"This Devolution Deal is brilliant news for Cornwall. We were early in recognising the growing momentum of the national agenda for devolving powers from Westminster and, by creating a Case for Cornwall which was strong and realistic we have had a positive response from the Government. Cornwall is, therefore, the first rural authority in the country to be given a devolution deal. This gives Cornwall greater powers over public sector funding.

"This is the first stage of a longer journey towards delivering the full case for Cornwall. We will now be working with partners to develop an integrated health and social care system, and deliver significant economic growth, with enhanced business support, greater access to employment and training opportunities, together with a much improved public transport network and more efficient use of public sector buildings."

This devolution deal is not the end of handing powers to the county. If there is a strong case put by Cornwall Council the Government will continue to listen to proposals put forward on devolving more powers in the future.

The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill is currently passing through Parliament and puts in place the legal framework across the country that will make it simpler for devolving more powers to more places.

The Bill sets out far reaching powers to be devolved to Greater Manchester and for creating a city-wide elected metro mayor who will provide strong leadership and a clear vision.

The Government has been clear that strong leadership needs to be in place for areas seeking additional powers.

Notes to editors

1. Cornwall Council will take over responsibility for franchising bus services by 2018
2. Cornwall Council will have intermediate body status – for European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund – which will allow it to select projects from April 2016

End

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