



Urban Policies, Spatial Re-balancing and City-Regions Conference

Date: Wednesday 20 May 2015

Location: University of Manchester,
Humanities Bridgeford Street Building, Room 1.69/1.70

Organisers: Cecilia Wong and Iain Deas
Centre for Urban Policy Studies

Context

Britain's experience with policy to address spatial inequality in cities extends over a period of nearly 50 years. While much has been learnt over that time about the principles that underlie successful policy intervention, challenges remain in many cities. The recent surge of interest in city-regions is connected in part to the continuing challenge presented by the unbalanced spatial patterning of development across the UK. Recognition of the potential for new city-regional governance structures to correct spatial imbalances in Britain's economy has been important, but there are continuing issues confronting urban policy:

- There is evidence that social polarisation has increased within some major cities, even where economic circumstances have improved.
- There is concern over the fortunes of smaller ex-industrial places such as Stoke, the Colne Valley, seaside towns, cul-de-sac towns, continuing to struggle with a legacy of long-term economic decline and attendant social problems.
- Interregional economic disparities, linked to the London-centric nature of decision-making and the concentration of economic power in the capital, have been thrown into sharper focus by proposals for further devolution to Scotland.
- Major infrastructure investment can have transformative effects, but may further reinforce agglomerative growth in London and the South East at the expense of other regions.
- There is a growing crisis about housing shortages (but almost entirely in London and the South East), and housing affordability is a concern across the country.

Responding to these issues raises further challenges. Different places have variable capacity to respond, to harness opportunities or combat existing problems. Whilst central government prioritises economic growth, there is a need to consider the social and environmental consequences of new development – not only in cities but in their wider hinterlands. Debate is now beginning to emerge about alternative approaches to urban development, some of which challenge established thinking about spatial agglomeration models of growth and the need to facilitate further growth in the London region.

As new investment linked to infrastructure and the knowledge economy begin to impact on cities like Manchester, and as innovation around city-regional governance continues via more reforms to local government finance and the planned election of a mayor, Greater Manchester provides an interesting case through which to explore how best to manage the spatial patterning of development and address socio-spatial inequalities.

Structure of the Conference

10:30 Arrival, provision of tea/coffee

Morning session - National perspective with presentations and roundtable

11:00 Andy Pike - Newcastle University:

Spatially rebalancing the UK economy: the need for a new policy model

11:20 Vincent Goodstadt - Trustee and the Chair of the Policy, Practice and Research Committee of the RTPI, Vice-president of the TCPA:

Delivering an effective spatial policy – implications for the planning system

11:40 Diane Coyle - Manchester University:

Why the market economy delivers regionally unbalanced growth and why it matters

12:00 Roundtable discussion

13:00 Lunch

Afternoon session - Spatial inequalities in Greater Manchester and the wider region

14:00 Ruth Lupton: **Introduction of Just GM**

14:10 Cecilia Wong and Moozhan Shakeri:

Spatial Inequality of local development over time and across Greater Manchester

14:30 Iain Deas and Seyedehsomayeh Moosavi:

Experiences of inequality in two Greater Manchester neighbourhoods

14:50 Andreas Schulze Bäing and Sebastian Dembski:

Spatial inequality in the wider NW region – the case of St Helens

15:10 Tea break

15:20 Roundtable discussion

15:50 Conclusion and closing of the day

For more information, please contact

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This conference is free to attend but please register via:

<http://urbanpolicies.eventbrite.co.uk>