



HM Government

Decentralisation

An assessment of progress

Rt Hon Greg Clark MP

December 2012

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Chapter one: Purpose

Decentralisation is not just an ideal. It has an essential role to play in achieving the Coalition's core objectives. It is therefore vital that we have a clear picture of our progress in decentralising the power of government. Providing this picture is the purpose of this report.

Core objectives

For more than one hundred years, successive waves of centralisation have pushed Westminster politics and Whitehall bureaucracy into aspects of public life that once belonged to individuals and communities. As a result, our country has become one of the most centralised in the western world.

Now, after a century of centralisation, we have a Government that is determined to turn the tide. The Coalition is bound together by both parties' commitment to return power to those to whom it rightfully belongs.

Decentralisation acknowledges the immense potential of the people and places of Britain. It also requires humility and restraint on the part of those in the highest positions of power. It is, therefore, a good in itself.

However, at a time of unprecedented challenge for our nation, we also recognise the immediate and practical relevance of decentralisation to this Government's core objectives.

By shifting power away from Whitehall and dispersing it to individuals, communities, public service professionals and elected councils, we believe decentralisation will create the conditions for:

- Sustainable growth
- Better public services
- A stronger society

Before introducing the rest of the report – which provides an assessment of the progress made on decentralisation by the Government since May 2010 – I explain why such

progress is so important to the Government's core objectives.

Sustainable growth

This Government's first priority has been to cut the financial deficit and lay the foundations for future economic growth. Naturally, many of the key decisions can only be made centrally – for instance on interest rates, taxation policy and major infrastructure investments. But our prosperity also depends on local factors, including land use and transport connections as well as the availability of public goods and services.

UK economic policy isn't just a matter of north and south. Between 2003 and 2008 the fastest job growth wasn't in London or the south east, but in areas like Leicestershire, Warwickshire and Cornwall. Economic disparities can be greater within regions than between them. In the south east, for instance, average weekly wages ranged from £660 (in Wokingham) to £440 (on the Isle of Wight).

That is why we have scrapped centrally-imposed regional policy in favour of self-defined Local Enterprise Partnerships based on functional economic areas. No one is better placed to understand the strengths and weaknesses of local economies than the people and businesses that depend on them. Some obstacles to growth may be national or global in character, but many are local and require local knowledge to remove.

It is therefore vital that key policy decisions on education, policing, transport and, above all, planning are made locally. Decentralisation recognises that everywhere

has the potential to grow. Through the Localism Act, Local Enterprise Partnerships and other decentralising measures we are putting communities back in charge of their economic destiny. Underpinned by a reformed planning system, we are also ensuring that local communities who take on growth can share in the benefits of that growth – through the New Homes Bonus and by allowing communities to keep a share of the additional revenues from business rates. Allied with Tax Increment Financing, this adds up to a powerful set of incentives for local authorities to break down the barriers to investment, regeneration and job creation.

Better public services

The Government is determined to deliver better public services which are responsive to what people need and want. When budgets are tight, we cannot afford the constraints imposed by centralisation on the quality, responsiveness and productivity of public services. In short, we need better for less and the key to that is decentralisation.

Over the past decade, the centralised model of public service delivery has been tested to destruction. Record levels of spending channelled through top-down management systems have not delivered the excellence that the people of this country deserve and which they have paid for in their taxes. If the public sector had kept pace with average private sector productivity between 1997-2007, then it would be nearly a quarter more productive. Furthermore, fundamental problems like inequality and youth unemployment remain unsolved.

Finally, the attempt to micromanage our public services from the centre has proven not only ineffective, but also expensive. In evidence to the Lyons Review, the National Audit Office estimated the overall cost of monitoring local government alone to be in the region of £2 billion each year.

The Open Public Services White Paper, published in July 2011, and updated in 2012, sets out a new approach. It describes the principles to support a programme of comprehensive reform, already underway, to increase choice, and transform commissioning, funding, transparency and accountability systems across the public sector – putting individuals and communities, not Westminster and Whitehall, in the driving seat.

Just as importantly, we will give public service providers the freedom to respond to the individual needs of newly empowered service users. We will break down barriers to entry so that people can choose from the widest possible range of public, private and voluntary sector providers. Furthermore, by reforming commissioning to incentivise better outcomes rather than compliance with centrally prescribed process, we will unlock innovation in public service delivery – which is the only sustainable path to progress in both effectiveness and efficiency.

A stronger society

As well as creating the conditions for sustainable growth and improving public services, decentralisation is the biggest thing that we can do to build the Big Society. Centralised government is almost always big government – an over-mighty state that ignores and undermines the social economy of families, neighbourhoods, communities and civil society, turning citizens into passive, dependent recipients. The result is a long-term decline in trust and civic duty as recorded by the British Social Attitudes survey.

The Big Society is all about rewiring responsibility throughout our culture in a way which inspires and encourages people to take part in community life and which nurtures trust, neighbourliness and civic engagement – all of which have a positive effect on well-being. We now have a wealth

of well documented research to prove that communities with a good stock of social capital are more likely to benefit from lower crime figures, better health, better local environment, higher educational achievement and enhanced economic growth.

This agenda extends beyond that of decentralisation, but decentralising power to communities lies at the heart of the Big Society. Fully empowered local decision-making is vital for dynamic local economies and responsive public services, but there is a further benefit: the sense and the reality that what happens locally matters; that power is literally within reach; and that getting involved is worthwhile because it does make a difference.

This report

All governments want to achieve better economic, social and environmental outcomes and deliver better public services. What makes this Government different is that we believe that decentralisation, rather than centralisation, is the key to success.

By definition, power can only be dispersed by those who already possess it. But with a long history of using power to gain even more power, it is often not in the nature of central government to give it away. The old habits of centralisation are deeply ingrained in the minds of politicians and civil servants alike. And yet because decentralisation

is so important to the achievement of the Coalition's core objectives, the Government has no option but to overcome its natural inclinations. We have demonstrated our deep seated commitment to decentralisation through taking forward policies such as our City Deals agenda – providing local areas with the tools to deliver economic growth for their communities and testing new and innovative local service delivery models.

The decentralisation agenda cannot be left to chance and we must build on what has been delivered so far. It must be deliberately and systematically driven forward across Whitehall. In this respect, the Government machine needs to take a dose of its own medicine and subject itself to the kind of monitoring and compliance procedures it has long imposed on others.

The difference is that, for once, this medicine constitutes an appropriate treatment. While it is impossible for the centre to truly understand, let alone micromanage, what happens in schools, hospitals, town halls and police stations across the country, it can and should have grip on its own operations.

The purpose of this report, therefore, is to state straightforwardly whether or not Whitehall departments are decentralising power – and to quantify the progress made since May 2010. In chapter five, I put forward my personal recommendations for next steps.

Chapter two: Method

The scope of this report covers the twelve Whitehall ministerial departments that are directly responsible for our main domestic public services. It therefore excludes the Treasury, the international departments and the devolved administrations.

A review of the decentralising measures planned and enacted by each of these twelve departments was undertaken by the DCLG decentralisation team acting under my

direction. Written assessments were agreed with departments – and are reproduced in the annex to this report. These assessments were then used to score the progress made by each

Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy

The first thing that Government should do is to stop stopping people from building the Big Society.

Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way

Getting out of the way is not enough, Government must get behind the right of every community to take action.

Action 3: Increase local control of public finance

Government must will the means, as well as the ends, of community power.

Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services

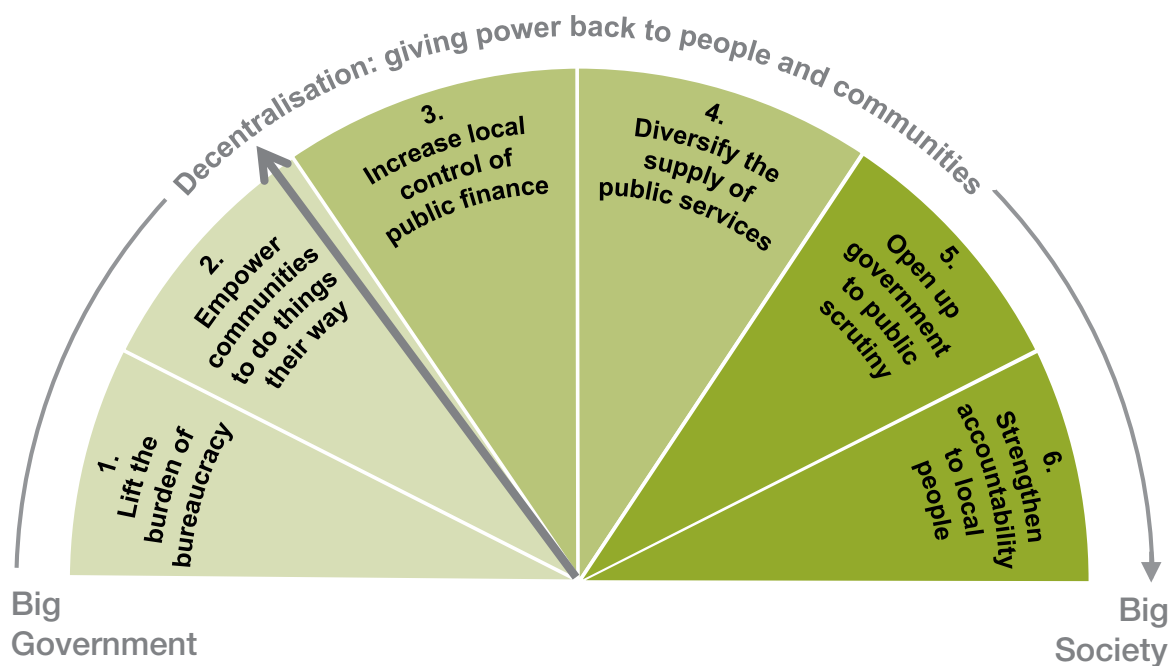
Local control over local spending requires a choice of public service providers.

Action 5: Open up Government to public scrutiny

Public service providers should be subject to transparency not bureaucracy.

Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people

Public services shouldn't just be open to scrutiny, but also subject to the individual and collective choice of active citizens.



department. Though based on consultation with DCLG officials working closely with the departments concerned, the scoring process is inevitably subjective and the judgments made are ultimately my own. However, the scoring does allow a comparative analysis of progress, which is set out in the next chapter.

The six essential actions

Departmental progress on decentralisation was assessed against six headings – what I refer to as the *six essential actions* of decentralisation.

Together the six actions constitute a gold standard for decentralisation – which was communicated across Whitehall (and beyond) in a guide to the Government’s decentralisation programme published in December 2010. The six actions emphasise our position that decentralisation cannot succeed if implemented in a selective, piecemeal manner.

Actions 1 and 2 are the most fundamental, because decentralisation can’t get started without them. Actions 3 and 4 provide the resources and the freedom of choice needed to sustain progress. Actions 5 and 6 complete the picture by enabling people to take control

of the process of decentralisation as it unfolds in their communities.

As an agenda for reform, decentralisation cannot succeed unless all of its components are implemented. Therefore, evidence of determined progress across the board is a key consideration in assessing departments.

Additional considerations

Of course, not every action will be as equally important to every department. Furthermore, the overall potential for decentralisation varies between departments and services, depending on their nature. Most importantly, it should be recognised that in making progress on decentralisation, different departments have different starting points, with the culture of centralisation more deeply ingrained in some than others. Nevertheless, despite these differences, the twelve departments that were assessed all have a significant contribution to make to the Coalition’s reform agenda. Taking all relevant factors into consideration, this report is a reflection of the degree to which each department – and the Government as a whole – has made the most of the potential for change since May 2010.

Chapter three: Results

Extensive decentralising reforms are underway across Government. Most departments are doing something significant under each of the six essential actions, with no major services untouched by the decentralisation agenda.

Assessments of the progress made by each department on each action can be found in the annex to this report. This chapter summarises the results of this analysis – firstly in terms of the overall progress made by the departments, and then the progress made by the Government as a whole on each of the six actions.

Departmental progress

Over the past two years, Whitehall has echoed to the sound of crunching gears as the machinery of centralisation has been thrown into reverse. Given the degree of the adjustment required, it is not surprising there are no departments that can yet claim a ★★★★★ rating. However, all departments have engaged constructively with the decentralisation agenda and so none merit a ★☆☆☆☆ rating or below. In every case, departmental progress lies between these two extremes.

I have awarded a ★★★★★☆ rating to two departments. These are the ministries that have shown the greatest determination in driving through flagship decentralising reforms, while also developing further reforms for the longer term – as detailed in the annex to this report:

- Department for Communities and Local Government (★★★★☆)**
 DCLG has lead responsibility for decentralisation, so achieving anything less than a ★★★★★☆ rating would be unacceptable. Through the Localism Act and related measures, the department has given important new powers to local authorities and rights to communities and has substantially reduced the burden of central government prescription and control. The Local Government Finance Act will enable authorities to benefit from growth by allowing them to keep a share

For both summaries, the following scoring system is used:

★★★★★ Full speed	Optimum rate of progress across all areas of opportunity – on course for substantial decentralisation.
★★★★☆ Well on the way	Ambitious decentralisation programme underway – further action required on some issues.
★★★☆☆ In the pipeline	Significant progress on individual reforms – full programme of reform still in development.
★★☆☆☆ Getting ready	Major reforms not yet at implementation stage, but opportunities are under active consideration.
★☆☆☆☆ Chances missed	Despite significant potential for decentralisation, opportunities are not being taken.
☆☆☆☆☆ Heading in the wrong direction	Overall impact of policy and practice is to centralise rather than decentralise power (would apply to previous governments).

of business rates and the growth on those revenues.

Reforms to the planning system coupled with the abolition of regional structures are enabling communities to take control of their future development. DCLG's housing reforms and Housing Strategy have made a further contribution – by giving councils greater flexibility to manage their own housing stock and introducing personal budgets and payment by results into the Supporting People programme. Further reforms have been initiated on local government finance and community budgets.

- **Department for Education** (★★★★☆)

The school reforms show a clear determination to empower schools by reducing bureaucratic burdens and increasing their control over resources. In particular, the Free Schools policy is a radical way of allowing communities to use public funds where existing provision does not meet local needs. Along with the Academies programme, accountability will need to be rooted in the power of parents and pupils to choose and move school. In the field of child protection, DfE has the opportunity to take forward the recommendations of the Munro Review.

Eight departments merit a ★★★★★ rating. They are already implementing a number of important decentralising reforms, but could be doing more to build these into a comprehensive programme of change:

- **The Home Office** (★★★★☆)

The Home Office stands out as a major spending department showing strong leadership on this reform agenda. Its newly elected Police and Crime Commissioners hold out the hope of a breakthrough improvement in the accountability of police forces to local people. Supporting reforms are already underway at a local level by

making regular beat meetings mandatory while the release of accessible crime mapping data has set a new benchmark for transparency and open government.

- **Cabinet Office** (★★★★☆)

Though not one of the major spending departments, Cabinet Office deserves credit for its strong commitment to decentralisation. From its central position in Whitehall, the department is driving through a number of key policy initiatives that will have profound implications across Whitehall and the public sector as a whole. Examples include the Open Public Services White Paper, the reform of public procurement and the coordination of efforts on transparency and open government. Particular mention should be given to the department's work on Public Service Mutuals and Rights to Provide, and its systematic dismantling of the machinery of unaccountable, centralised control. The Cabinet Office is in a very strong position to monitor and coordinate the Government's overall decentralisation programme, but at present this is not within the department's remit.

- **Department of Health** (★★★★☆)

The health reforms introduced by DH showed a clear determination to take forward all six actions to decentralise healthcare. Responsibility for commissioning of public health services has been decentralised to democratically accountable local government. Modifications have been made so as to improve the reforms following the listening exercise, which among other concerns, further address gaps in democratic accountability among other concerns. It is, however, important that these changes still allow for the key decentralising objectives of greater competition among providers and choice for users.

- **Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (★★★★☆)**

BIS is taking the lead across government on reducing regulatory burdens on business, in particular through the introduction of the *One In One Out (One In Two Out* from January 2013) approach to regulation. The abolition of Regional Development Agencies and their replacement with Local Enterprise Partnerships means that the economic development needs of areas can be tackled by self-defining partnerships at the level of the functional economic area, rather than by bodies whose administrative boundaries are set for the bureaucratic convenience of Whitehall.

BIS' reforms to higher education mean that funding now follows the individual student, so that universities have every incentive to respond to their needs. BIS is reforming the Further Education and skills system to empower individuals to shape the system, using information to inform choices. The reforms free colleges and training providers by reducing bureaucratic burdens and increasing their control over resources so that they can respond directly to the needs of their communities.

- **Department for Work and Pensions (★★★★☆)**

Through the Universal Credit, DWP is taking a bold approach to reform: giving individuals more power to take control of their lives through a simpler benefits system and the removal of disincentives to work. The Work Programme has been procured with contracts awarded below national level. This has been accompanied by a more flexible approach to delivery at a local level, with contractors having the freedom to develop the partnerships with smaller providers that might otherwise be excluded by the system. Care should be taken to ensure that these vital reforms

allow space for locally-led initiatives on welfare.

- **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (★★★★☆)**

By far the biggest programmes for which DEFRA is responsible are currently determined at a European level. But beyond these constraints the department is introducing a number of decentralising measures such as the new Local Nature Partnerships, the transfer of British Waterways in England and Wales to a charity and the launch of the Big Tree Plant. It is also establishing new democratic accountability mechanisms in the form of the Commons Councils.

- **Department of Energy and Climate Change (★★★★☆)**

DECC is taking forward the Green Deal – a programme which, along with the introduction of smart meters and incentives for renewables, will put householders, businesses and communities in a much more powerful position to control their energy needs, reduce waste and save money.

Through DECC's Low Carbon Pioneer Cities Programme, DECC has been supporting local authorities in planning local low carbon infrastructure in particular heat networks.

- **Department for Transport (★★★★☆)**

DfT is working towards devolving franchising powers for local rail services and is set to decentralise local transport major scheme funding from 2015 to consortia of Local Enterprise Partnerships and local transport authorities. The department is also in the process of enhancing the powers of local transport authorities – for example, by giving them more flexibility in tackling traffic

problems and more responsibility for road classification.

There are two departments which merit a ★★☆☆☆ rating. While less advanced than other departments, they have nevertheless started the process of reform and are well on their way to achieving a ★★☆☆☆ rating:

- **Ministry of Justice (★★☆☆☆)**

MoJ is accelerating plans to roll-out payment by results at scale across the offender management system by 2015 as part of a commitment to introduce a rehabilitation revolution. This is all about delivery of value at the local level and will bring a diversity of providers who will be measured against performance in achieving results within specific local areas. It will also enable local providers, including voluntary and community sector organisations to tailor services to meet local needs as part of a supply chain.

- **Department for Culture, Media and Sport (★★☆☆☆)**

DCMS is bringing forward reforms to media regulation which will pave the way for local television, which has the potential to make people more familiar with issues of local importance and thus better equipped to hold local leaders to account.

Progress on the six actions

The assessments also allow us to draw some conclusions on Government's overall progress under each of the six actions:

- **Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy (★★★☆☆)**

There has been widespread action across Government to reduce bureaucratic burdens, including centrally coordinated initiatives such as the Red Tape Challenge. Furthermore, introducing Universal Credit will simplify the welfare system and ensure that the system always incentivises work and that work always pays. Nonetheless,

this is unfinished business. For example, the introduction of the Single Data List makes it easier for local government to be clear as to what information is required by central government – but it also exposes the fact that the extent of these data demands should be reduced even further.

- **Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way (★★★☆☆)**

Through the Localism Act and other decentralising reforms, the Government is giving individuals and communities important new rights. However, as I recommend in chapter five, additional rights should be enacted to give local people access to powers, resources and information still monopolised by the centre.

- **Action 3: Increase local control of public finances (★★☆☆☆)**

The removal of the great majority of ring-fences is an important step towards localising control over finances. Nonetheless, little has been done so far to reduce the proportion of public funding that is determined and raised centrally or to put those resources directly in the hands of communities. Enabling the retention of a local share of business rates, through the Local Government Finance Act, will be an important step towards redressing the balance of funding – as will further progress on Community Budgets. City deals are helping to test and develop thinking in this area further – through examples such as the earnback model to be piloted with Greater Manchester.

- **Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services (★★★☆☆)**

The Government has taken some important first steps to diversify supply, and Cabinet Office initiatives on public service mutualisation will reinforce this. Work to map barriers to entry will help foster a level playing field. Some departments are also pushing ahead on the choice agenda.

- **Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny (★★★★☆)**

All departments are taking forward the transparency agenda, and all departments are committed to publishing individual items of expenditure over £25,000. Some departments have gone further, with the DCLG adopting a level of £250 or more. A threshold of £500 has been set for local government. Home Office's crime mapping is an example of how central government can make information accessible to users in imaginative new ways. With the launch of the Open Data White Paper in June 2012, all government departments have Open Data Strategies that set out how they will seek to release information in more open and useful forms.

- **Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people (★★★★☆)**

Choice (see action 4) is the main way of increasing accountability in the case of 'individual' services like adult social care. But when it comes to 'collective' services like neighbourhood policing, the key is the development of new forms of democratic accountability. A good example is the elected Police and Crime Commissioners. Carefully considered progress on democratic accountability mechanisms now needs to be demonstrated across a wider range of public services. Following the work led by Sir Bob Kerslake, Government is taking steps to ensure appropriate accountability to Parliament of decentralised systems.

Chapter four: Lessons

In this chapter I set out some of the most important lessons that have been learned from my assessment of progress since May 2010. They provide the basis for the policy recommendations that are made in chapter five.

A long-term commitment

The reforms assessed in this report have all taken place within the first two years of the first British government to put decentralisation at the heart of its aims and objectives. In this brief period of time, we have begun the task of tackling the legacy of decades of centralising government. The reforms already undertaken are both significant and substantial, a fact which is widely if not universally recognised. However, what we do need to put more effort into communicating is that we see the reforms already underway as the first wave – and not the end point – of our reform agenda. Decentralisation is not what the Government is doing this year, it is what we are doing every year until the job is done.

Emerging challenges

The fact that genuine reforms *are* being delivered makes the follow-through more, not less, important. The analogy I use is that of repainting a neglected house: it's not until you've done one bit that you see just how dirty the rest of it is. In much the same way, the process of decentralisation not only exposes the extent of centralised control in our power structures, but also makes it that much more intolerable. The main challenges that have been brought to the surface during the first wave of reform are as follows:

Competing claims

It is obvious where power is being decentralised *from* – i.e. central government – but there are alternatives as to where it should be decentralised *to*. This is especially the case when it comes to the competing claims of local

government versus other local institutions such as schools or community groups.

We have been clear that localism is not *solely* about local government and that decentralisation from Whitehall does not stop at the town hall. The Open Public Services White Paper sets out a range of principles for reforming public services and how they apply to existing policies, including that we should continue to decentralise power to the lowest appropriate level. We should therefore use these to inform how we take decisions going forward. Adhering to these principles would go a long way to building trust and understanding among different local institutions and also between local and national government.

This issue also underlines the importance of sustaining and expanding our programme of decentralisation: the meaner the transfer of power from the centre, the keener the conflict between potential recipients at the local level.

The role of the centre

Determined decentralisation forces central government into a conscious consideration of what its own role should be. The irony is that in a centralised system no such thought is required: central control is the norm and local control the deliberate exception – it is a decentralising government that has to define the extent of its power. Inevitably, this exposes us to charges of inconsistency when we do decide to reserve particular powers at a national level.

Yet, far from being embarrassed about these decisions, we should be up-front about them – actively encouraging debate over which

powers belong at a national level and which at a local or personal level. Furthermore, by giving local institutions the right to bid to exercise any power not expressly reserved as the exclusive domain of central government, the process of defining the role of the centre could – and, indeed, should – be used to drive the process of decentralisation.

Structural versus relational reform

Most of the decentralising measures described in this report can be described as *structural reforms* – changes to the system of government that allow local people and communities to exercise powers and responsibilities previously withheld by the centre. However, changing the system, though necessary, is not sufficient; we also need to change the way that people within central government work with others – so that local initiative is not merely permitted, but actively encouraged and supported. This is what I call *relational reform* and it has a vital role to play in helping local people access the new opportunities opened up by structural reform.

The structural and relational aspects of reform need to come together in the design of new decentralised systems. Policy makers within central government should involve and listen to the full range of service users and providers for whom decentralisation needs to work. Above all, we must learn the lesson that decentralisation works best when it gives

people new options, not when it is imposed upon them as a top-down reorganisation.

A work in progress

Decentralisation starts with the realisation that government – at every level – is not infallible. Imperfection is a fact of life that applies to everything that governments do – even to programmes of decentralisation. At a time when departments are dealing with many other urgent demands for reform, it is inevitable that improvements will be made when it comes to decentralising power. The important thing is that as well as maintaining the pace of change, we should be willing to learn from the experience of those to whom power is devolved and make decentralisation the genuinely co-operative process that it should be.

Driving progress

My final observation on the last two years is that the process of assessment of which this report is a product has made a real contribution to driving progress on decentralisation across Whitehall. I believe it should continue. The assessment of departmental progress is not only valuable in terms of comparison between departments, but also in tracking the performance of individual departments from one year to the next. However, as with all other aspects of the decentralisation programme, I believe that improvements can be made. These are proposed, along with other policy recommendations, in the next chapter.

Chapter five: Recommendations and next steps

This chapter contains three sets of policy recommendations:

- **firstly, a submission on the ongoing assessment of departmental progress on decentralisation;**
- **secondly, proposals for the next wave of decentralising reforms; and**
- **thirdly, a strategy for the support services provided by the centre to the local people and institutions seeking to make the most of the opportunities created by reform.**

My recommendations are intended to help inform our strategic direction and how we approach the next wave of decentralising reform across Government. They are my personal recommendations and therefore are not binding on Government.

Keeping up the pressure

Reforming one of the most centralised countries in the western world requires an ongoing commitment of political will and attention. The systematic assessment of departmental progress on decentralisation should therefore be maintained – with the continued backing of the Prime Minister’s authority. Because of the prominence of the Localism Act and related reforms in the Government’s first two years, DCLG has rightly taken the lead. I would recommend that further reports on the progress of decentralisation should be published each year – associated with an annual debate in Parliament starting with a ‘decentralisation statement’ delivered by a minister.

In addition, with the decentralisation agenda being applied across government, and to a much wider range of public services, the Cabinet Office should continue to help secure further progress, in particular through its oversight of Structural Reform Plans and its leadership of the drive to open up public services.

The next wave of reform

Free Schools; neighbourhood planning; the community right to challenge; personal budgets for social care: this Government’s best and boldest reforms all have one thing in common – they allow people to take charge when they want to.

It is time to apply this principle across the public sector. Decentralisation should not rely on central initiative alone. The state as a whole should operate on the presumption that local communities should be enabled to take the initiative wherever a reasonable supporting case can be made.

The next wave of reform should be all about giving effect to this presumption. In particular, I would make the following recommendations for reform:

- **An extended community right to challenge**, so that it applies to services provided by a broader range of public bodies, including central government.
- **A general right of initiative**, so that, in response to local needs, any community can make the case to modify national policy wherever central prescription would unjustifiably restrict local discretion.
- **A local stake in social innovation**, so that communities can share in the

financial benefits of locally-led initiatives.

- **A data visualisation project**, so that information about what the state spends is not only accessible but also understandable.

An extended community right to challenge

So that it applies to services provided by a broader range of public bodies, including central government.

One of the key reforms introduced in the Localism Act is the community right to challenge. This gives community groups the right to bid to run services on behalf of local authorities and fire and rescue authorities. This is an important change, but it needs to go even further. The community right to challenge shouldn't only apply to services provided by local government, but also to those of other public bodies. We should consider opening up central government and its agencies' services to challenge and giving local authorities the right to bid to run those services on their behalf.

Thus an extended right to challenge could promote decentralisation from Whitehall to town halls, as well as from town halls to communities – a fair and consistent approach.

A general right of initiative

Of course, allowing new providers to run public services will be of limited benefit if they are forced to comply with the narrow prescriptions of an overbearing centralised bureaucracy. While central government has a role in setting minimum standards for service *outcomes*, micromanagement of *process* kills the innovation and diversity that is the point of decentralised service delivery. It also imposes compliance costs that effectively exclude smaller providers, especially those in the voluntary sector.

We should therefore create a general right of initiative that would – on the condition of a reasonable case being made – allow councils, other local institutions and providers to act differently in response to local needs and priorities. This is the approach I have taken with cities and I believe it could have much more general application. This should be supported by a renewed effort to reduce the burden of regulation. Bureaucracy that has no purpose other than to facilitate the micromanagement of frontline public services is already being scrapped, but reform is also needed when it comes to useful regulation and guidance. A good example is the new National Planning Policy Framework, in which over one thousand pages of documentation was reduced to just 52. This is a discipline that needs to be applied across Whitehall. By limiting regulation to its irreducible core we can greatly increase the capacity of newly empowered communities to engage with and modify national policy.

A local stake in social innovation

The rights created in the first and second wave of decentralisation will enable local communities to pioneer new innovations in the delivery of public services. But having the legal freedom to do things differently is not enough – they should also have the financial incentive to do so.

Local authorities and other frontline providers who are prepared to take the risks of social innovation should have a fair share of the financial rewards – especially when these are re-invested in further reform. This will require the willingness to review central government funding practices. Clearly, the attitude and approach of the Treasury will be crucial in this regard. For this reason, I propose that in future years, HM Treasury should be included in the assessment of departmental progress on decentralisation.

A data visualisation project

Of the six essential actions that define our programme of decentralisation, none has seen more progress than the opening up of government to public scrutiny. Huge amounts of information that previous governments had kept secret have now been made freely available. However, there is more to transparency than the release of raw data. As the successful Home Office crime maps have demonstrated, it is the visualisation of data that makes information not only accessible but truly understandable.

This is especially true when it comes to financial information. One of the key achievements of the last eighteen months has been the release of detailed figures on central and local government spending. Even in terms of the raw data, publication is providing councils, agencies and Whitehall departments with a strong incentive to ensure value for money. But this is just the beginning of what could be achieved.

Financial data across the public sector should be released in a consistent visual format that depicts each funding stream, the amount of money involved, where it is being spent, what on and by whom. A concerted government effort of this kind would set a new global standard for public transparency and communities seeking to exercise new rights and other decentralising reforms such as Neighbourhood Community Budgets.

There is an agenda here that goes beyond decentralisation. The future of the internet is all about adding layers of meaning to raw data and unorganised information. This is the so-called ‘semantic web’ or ‘web 3.0’. A high-profile data visualisation project of the kind described above would provide a global showcase for British expertise and creative achievement in what is likely to be one of the most important emerging industries of the 21st century.

Supporting decentralisation

Decentralisation is not something that the Government can do *to*, or even *for*, local people and institutions – it is something that we have to do *with* them.

Active and empowered local service providers will need the kind of high-level support that Ministers rely on when undertaking far-reaching initiatives. The idea of ‘turning government on its head’ – redeploying the resources of the civil service to support, not override, local initiative – is one that we have already put into action through DCLG’s ‘bureaucracy busting’ teams.

My own role as Cities Minister, supported by the Cities Unit, is helping to take this to a new level – providing dedicated support for locally led reform on a truly ambitious scale. In *Unlocking Growth in Cities* (Dec 2011), the Government set out its intention to agree a series of bespoke city deals designed to give cities the freedoms and flexibilities they need to drive local growth.

In pursuit of this agenda I have worked with the core cities the eight largest cities outside London – Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham, Nottingham, Newcastle, Leeds and Sheffield – to agree these city deals. The first phase of the Liverpool deal and the Manchester deal were agreed earlier this year, on 5 July Government announced completion of the remaining deals and joint implementation plans were put in place by September.

Each deal represents a genuine transaction, with cities taking ownership of the local growth agenda, strengthening governance and accountability to local people and in return seeking freedoms and the means to support delivery. The deals are bespoke and reflect the different needs of individual places, but every deal aims to:

- pass on to cities the powers and tools they need to drive local economic growth;

- unlock projects or initiatives that will boost their economies; and
- deliver a step change in local governance arrangements.

The core cities estimate that the first wave of deals should create an estimated 175,000 jobs over the next 20 years and 37,000 new apprenticeships. Once the core cities can demonstrate delivery of the outcomes to which they are committed in their city deals, it is my intention that they should pursue further discussions with Government to build on their initial deals with more delegated powers and functions.

On 29 October the Deputy Prime Minister and I launched a second wave of city deals inviting 20 more cities to develop initial deal proposals. Through this process I intend that we establish a different relationship with cities at the heart of which is a determined focus on unlocking the barriers to local economic growth to support wider UK economic recovery.

The actions I have set out in this report would form the basis of how we continue to secure our ambition of returning power to the people of this country.

Annex: Assessment of departments

The following pages set out an assessment of the progress departments have made since May 2010 on decentralisation, focusing on the six essential actions. These assessments have been agreed with departments.

The departments covered by the assessments are the departments responsible for the major areas of public services, namely:

Department

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

Department for Education (DfE)

Home Office (HO)

Cabinet Office (CO)

Department of Health (DH)

Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)

Department for Business, Industry and Skills (BIS)

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Department for Transport (DfT)

Ministry of Justice (MoJ)

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

For each department, we have set out:

- an overview of the department's key reforms;
- potential opportunities to go further over the life of this Parliament; and
- a table showing significant steps taken under each of the six actions, i.e. measures which significantly transfer power away from government to individuals, neighbourhoods, communities and lower tiers of government.

The assessments cover the reforms that apply to England and to those reserved matters for which Government retains responsibility in the devolved nations. Decisions on decentralisation policy within the devolved nations are matters for the devolved administrations.

We have not prepared assessments relating to:

- departments whose focus is international (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence, Department for International Development);
- departments with no direct service remit (Attorney General's Office, HM Treasury, Northern Ireland Office, Scotland Office, Wales Office, Office of the Leader of the House of Commons, Office of the Leader of the House of Lords, Privy Council Office); and
- non-Ministerial departments (HM Revenue & Customs).

However, this should not underestimate the strategic role played by such departments.

Department for Communities and Local Government

Key decentralising reforms

- Abolition of Government Offices, Comprehensive Area Assessments, Local Area Agreements, Audit Commission and Infrastructure Planning Commission.
- Localism Act introduces important measures across all six actions of decentralisation.
- Removal of most ring fences across government in the Local Government Finance Act.
- Pioneering transparency agenda by publishing all spend data over £250 and encouraging all local authorities to publish details at the £500 threshold.
- Local Government Finance Act will deliver local retention of business rates, incentivising councils to promote and enjoy the benefits of economic growth, including through Tax Increment Financing.
- Housing Revenue Account reforms giving councils resources, incentives and flexibility to manage their own housing stock for the long-term and to drive up quality and efficiency.
- Publishing a smaller, simpler and single National Planning Policy Framework.
- Removal of top-down housing targets that imposed development on local communities by returning decision-making powers on housing and planning to local communities.
- Empowering local people through the introduction of new rights and powers in the Localism Act.
 - Neighbourhood planning enables communities to gain real power over planning in their neighbourhood. Neighbourhood plans are now being brought forward by over 300 communities across England.
 - The community right to build, as part of neighbourhood planning, gives groups of local people the power to deliver the development that their local community wants.
 - The community right to bid gives people the chance to bid to buy and run assets that are of value to the local community.
 - The community right to challenge enables voluntary and community bodies, employees of a relevant authority, and parish councils, to express an interest in running local authority services.

Potential opportunities over the life of this Parliament

- Encouraging locally-led community budgets that are more ambitious in scope and coverage in their next phase and translating these into delivering higher quality and more efficient public services.
- Making it easier for people to set up, run and make the most of town and parish councils.
- Devolve powers to elected mayors and strong strategic councils and move to a more settled but ambitious view of the role of local government and communities and neighbourhoods.
- The Government's response to the Fire Futures supported a more decentralised approach to fire and rescue services, reflected in the new Fire and Rescue National Framework.

Department for Communities and Local Government: Analysis of reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Localism (Decentralisation, Big Society, Local Government, Fire and Resilience)	<p>Abolished targets and inspection regimes.</p> <p>Audit Commission closing.</p> <p>Government Offices closed.</p> <p>Review of local government duties.</p> <p>Consolidation of Best Value legislation.</p> <p>Fire Futures: sector led review to shape the future direction of fire and rescue services in England.</p> <p>80% reduction in data returns from fire and rescue authorities.</p>	<p>General Power of Competence and General Powers for local authorities and fire and rescue authorities.</p> <p>Barrier Busting approach (the Department has to date received 304 barrier busting portal cases) to identify bureaucratic hurdles that get in the way of locally driven social action.</p> <p>New regulations under the Sustainable Communities Act also provides a way for people to ask, via their local council, that central government removes barriers that hinder them from improving their area We are also consulting on whether powers to submit proposals under the Sustainable Communities Act should be given to town and parish councils.</p> <p>Giving communities a right to challenge and right to bid.</p>	<p>Proposals to allow local retention of business rates, to help set free many local councils from dependency on central government funding and provide incentives for them to promote economic growth.</p> <p>Community Budgets – initially 16 areas focused on delivering integrated services for families with complex needs. Working with four areas on ‘Whole Place’ Community Budgets and ten areas on Neighbourhood Community Budgets, exploring the practicalities of giving local places real control over the public money spent there.</p> <p>Looking at how a right to a Community Budget might work.</p>	<p>The Right to Challenge creates the conditions for a more responsive, innovative and efficient local public service delivery.</p> <p>The Right, which was introduced in the Localism Act and came into force in June 2012, allows communities, social enterprises and parish councils with good ideas about how they could run services differently and better the opportunity to express an interest in doing so.</p>	<p>Local authority, including fire and rescue authority, spend data over £500 published.</p> <p>Published Local Government Code on Transparency to set out the process and standards for publishing data.</p> <p>Increased public’s right of access to council executive meetings, including bloggers and hyper-local journalists.</p>	<p>Referendums on Directly Elected Mayors in May 2012.</p> <p>Referendums on council tax increase to ensure that excessive increases occur only where these have a clear mandate from local people.</p> <p>Fire and Rescue National Framework strengthening accountability to local communities.</p> <p>Regulations to give the public greater right of access to councils’ meetings by creating, for the first time, a presumption that all meetings of the executive cabinet, its committees and sub-committees are open to the public except in limited defined circumstances.</p>

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Localism (Decentralisation, Big Society, Local Government, Fire and Resilience)			Local areas and Whitehall to continue to support a Community Budgets approach that (a) enables public service partners to come together to rewire how public services are delivered; and (b) encourages locally-led Neighbourhood Community Budgets that are ambitious in scope and coverage and translate into delivering higher quality and more efficient local public services.	We are providing support to groups eligible under the right to challenge and expect to have referred over 100 groups for specialist support by March 2013.		
Neighbourhoods (Planning, Housing supply and growth, Building Standards and Regeneration)	Abolished the Tenant Services Authority. Single National Planning Policy Framework. Abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies subject to the Strategic Environmental Assessment process.	Community right to bid came into force in England on 21 September 2012. By the end of March 2013 we expect there to be 200 assets of community value to be listed nationally. Neighbourhood planning allows local communities to have real say in local planning decisions.	Develop personal budgets and payment by results proposals for the Supporting People programme. New Homes Bonus will ensure the economic benefits of growth are returned to those local authorities and communities who promote growth. Community Infrastructure Levy to provide more funding directly to communities.	Self financing housing revenue accounts for local authorities from April 2012. Right to challenge to give communities the right to challenge local authorities where they believe they could run services differently or better.	Launch of a demonstrator map to show land and buildings owned by almost 600 public sector bodies in England.	

Department for Education

Key decentralising reforms

- Increase the number of Academies and Free Schools, adding to the stock of more autonomous schools.
- Introduce a new and transparent pupil premium for disadvantaged pupils, paid to schools.
- Slim down the National Curriculum and refocus it on core knowledge, allowing teachers to decide how to teach and to design a school curriculum that best meets the needs of their pupils.
- Reduce regulatory and other burdens on schools and sixth form colleges and reform the inspection regime for schools, children's services and Early Years providers.
- Cease top down improvement strategies and stimulate more school-to-school support.
- Ensure Sure Start Children's Centres deliver proven early intervention programmes to support families in the greatest need. This will include an increase in voluntary and community sector involvement.
- Rationalise funding streams for early intervention to increase local authority financial freedoms and flexibilities.
- Strengthening accountability to local people by improving access to information for local authorities, Early Years providers, parents and others through publishing foundation years benchmarking data.
- Strengthening accountability by enhancing information for the public on gov.uk about Sure Start children's centres in England, and the total number of children's centres in England based on information provided by local authorities.
- Increased local control of public finances through the Early Intervention grant going into local government funding.
- Opportunity to diversify supply of public services.

Potential opportunities over the life of this Parliament

- Taking forward the Government response to the recommendations from Professor Munro's child protection review.
- Developing Green Paper proposals on children with special education needs and disability.
- Increasing community involvement in Sure Start children's centres.
- Clarifying the strategic commissioning role of local authorities in education.
- As the decentralised education system evolves, continuing to refine and strengthen the accountability systems for public funding.
- Reducing central prescription and bureaucracy about Criminal Records Bureau checks.

Department for Education: Analysis of reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Schools and Education Standards	<p>31 of 114 data sets have now stopped or will be stopping shortly.</p> <p>Removed all 7 statutory targets for schools.</p> <p>Proposals to simplify the National Curriculum.</p> <p>Ending of the national strategies field force and other arms length bodies.</p>	<p>Introduction of Free Schools gives parents the opportunity to establish new schools. Over 800 Free School applications have been received to date from groups of parents, teachers and others. 24 Free Schools (FS), 2 University Technology Colleges (UTC) and 6 Studio Schools (SS) opened in September 2011. A further 55 FS, 3 UTC and 11 SS opened in September 2012.</p>	<p>Reduced the number of ring fenced grants from 24 to 2.</p>	<p>Academies and Free Schools create choice and competition. In total, 2519 schools have applied for Academy status. There are currently 2456 open academies in England of which 282 opened on 1 September 2012.</p> <p>Academies can choose who to buy their services from.</p> <p>School improvement provision by a wider market of providers.</p>	<p>Published new and accessible school performance and spend data.</p> <p>Parents can see how every single secondary school in England performs in each GCSE subject.</p>	<p>People will be able to compare data about local schools so as to increase informed choice for parents and so they can hold schools to account.</p> <p>Parents will be able to submit their confidential views about schools to Ofsted via their new online tool Parent View.</p>
Wider Children's Services	<p>Removed all 14 statutory targets for local authorities.</p> <p>Decision to stop annual assessment of children's services.</p> <p>Reducing the number of early learning goals from 69 to 17.</p> <p>Planned radical streamlining of statutory guidance for safeguarding children.</p>	<p>Supported the work of local youth councils to ensure that young people are involved in the design and delivery of services.</p>	<p>New power (in the Education Act 2011) to allow the testing of direct payments to parents for special educational provision.</p>	<p>Professionals forming mutuals in both Social Work Practices and Youth Services.</p> <p>Invested in strategic development and capacity building of the children's voluntary community and social enterprise sector in support of a growing role in the design and delivery of services.</p>	<p>Proposals to make special educational needs and disability services more transparent for families, with local services publishing a 'local offer' of what is available.</p> <p>Publication of adoption score cards.</p>	<p>Youth policy statement Positive for Youth urges every local area to engage young people in the auditing of services.</p> <p>Trials of payments by results for Sure Start Children's Centres are underway. Payments by results could help increase the information available to parents and communities on the outcomes being achieved in centres.</p>

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Wider Children's Services	<p>Introduced a revised Early Years Foundation Stage Framework which puts more power into the hands of early years professionals.</p> <p>Front line professionals in the child protection system freed from central prescription, allowing professional judgment and local innovation to flourish and greater focus on the needs of each individual child.</p>		<p>Rationalise the number of funding streams from 22 to 1, through the creation of the un-ringfenced Early Intervention Grant. In 2013-14, the Early Intervention Grant will roll into the new Business Rates Retention Scheme which increases local authorities' existing financial freedoms and flexibilities.</p>	<p>Proposals to diversify children's centre provision both through encouraging voluntary and community sector delivery and by increasing the level of parental involvement.</p> <p>Opportunity to diversity supply of public services.</p>	<p>New children's safeguarding performance information framework (published in June 2012) will enable greater public scrutiny of local and national child protection activity and outcomes.</p> <p>Ofsted now routinely publish all inspection reports across all children's service (including schools).</p>	<p>Strengthened accountability by enhancing information for the public on gov.uk about Sure Start Children's Centres. Parents can see information about children's centres in their area, a list of children's centres in England and their total number in England based on information provided by local authorities.</p> <p>Improved access to information for local authorities, early years providers, parents and others through publishing benchmarking data on early education services.</p>

The Home Office

Key decentralising reforms

- Introducing directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners and Police and Crime Panels from November 2012.
- Removed the Policing Pledge, top-down targets and the 'stop' form and scrapped ID cards and the National Identity Register.
- The Winsor Review made recommendations that would increase the flexibility for PCCs and Chief Constables to be able to respond to local needs and local variations in the labour market, for example, through enabling variations in regional allowances. Recommendations from the final report have been referred for negotiation and consultation, including through the formal negotiating machinery. The Home Secretary will consider the outcome of this carefully, in line with her statutory responsibilities.
- Introduced street-level crime maps, which provide crime and anti-social behaviour data, and from May 2012 has started to provide information on 'what happened next', i.e; police action or justice outcome. Police.uk recently launched the 'Compare My Area' tool, enabling people to accurately and consistently compare crime rates in their local area with those in other similar areas. Work is continuing with the 'trailblazer' areas to increase transparency and enhance these maps with further data and information.
- Rebalanced licensing laws to enable greater community involvement in licensing decisions and to allow licensing authorities to raise a contribution from late-opening alcohol retailers towards policing the night-time economy.
- Developing a statutory code of practise for surveillance cameras in public places through the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. This will promote greater transparency on the part of camera system operators so that communities can be more confident that CCTV use is necessary, proportionate and effective, and engage more easily with operators to gain assurance that the right balance is struck between public protection and privacy.
- Removing ring fencing from almost all central policing grants, ensuring Police and Crime Commissioners have the flexibility to enter into local pooled budget arrangements if they so wish.
- The Government's Equality Strategy is taking a new, more decentralised approach to promoting equalities, based on transparency and behaviour change rather than process and bureaucracy.

Potential opportunities over the life of this Parliament

- Continue to develop crime maps to provide communities with a greater range of information, for example on how offences are dealt with by the criminal justice system.
- Respond positively to Baroness Newlove's report 'Our Vision for Safe and Active Communities', enabling more flexibility and innovation in police engagement with communities.
- Enable sub-local authority variation in spending of revenues from late night licences.
- Introduce a simplified crime recording system and restore more charging decisions to police officers, further to reducing bureaucracy and empowering the frontline.
- Working with the Ministry of Justice to explore the ways in which Police and Crime Commissioners can take a greater role in supporting the delivery of justice.
- Introduction of more effective measures to tackle anti-social behaviour, including a 'Community Trigger' that gives victims and communities the right to require agencies to deal with persistent problems where they have failed to do so.
- PCCs will assume responsibility for commissioning the majority of victims' support services at a local level. We are aiming for them to do so in 2014.

The Home Office: Analysis of key reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Policing and community safety	<p>Scrapped the last top-down policing target, ‘stop’ form and the Policing Pledge.</p> <p>Piloting returning more charging decisions and granting greater prosecuting powers to police officers.</p> <p>Completed HMIC review of working practices across the criminal justice system, identifying opportunities to reduce duplication.</p> <p>Removed unnecessary regulations governing Community Safety Partnerships to enable more flexible local delivery.</p>	<p>Requirement to hold regular beat meetings from January 2011.</p> <p>Introducing a new ‘Community Trigger’ – exercisable by the community to deal with persistent anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The ‘Safer Future Communities Fund’ awarded £1.1 million to support frontline voluntary and community sector organisations that support Home Office objectives (this fund ends on 31 March 2013).</p>	<p>Allowed licensing authorities to raise a contribution from late-opening alcohol retailers towards policing the night-time economy.</p> <p>Police and Crime Commissioners will set the policing budget including the police precept on the council tax.</p> <p>Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime received un-ringfenced funding to support their strategic and operational approaches, i.e. tackling drug related offending and preventing youth crime and substance misuse by young people in contact with youth justice system.</p>	<p>Working with the police to develop the NPIA procurement hub and other approaches to collaboration, helping small and medium enterprises achieve a bigger footprint in the policing market.</p> <p>Working with practitioner-led organisations to build local capacity</p>	<p>Crime maps on police.uk providing street-level crime and anti-social behaviour data, updated every month. Included justice outcomes on police.uk in May 2012, which have started to show police action and justice outcomes from courts. Launched the ‘Compare my Area’ tool, enabling people to accurately and consistently compare crime rates in their local area with those in other similar areas.</p> <p>Police and Crime Commissioners will be required to publish information to enable the public to hold them to account.</p> <p>Release annual data on police complaints.</p>	<p>Introducing democratically elected Police and Crime Commissioners in November 2012.</p> <p>Abolition of Police Authorities and introduction of Police and Crime Panels in November 2012, providing local scrutiny over Police and Crime Commissioners.</p>

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Immigration	Scrapped ID cards and the National Identity Register.			Piloting contracting out support for asylum seekers to the voluntary and private sectors.	From August 2011, the regular release of migration statistics was substantially reformatted, with much more extensive data available and more accessible commentary.	
Civil liberties	The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 introduces a range of measures to scale back state intrusion into citizens' lives, such as a code of practice for using CCTV.	Scaling back the disclosure and barring services provided by the CRB and the ISA to common sense levels will rebalance the responsibilities of employers and other organisations, without deterring volunteers.			Extend Freedom of Information rights by requiring data to be available in a re-usable format.	
Identity and passport services	Scrapped ID cards and the National Identity Register.	Options for improving the delivery of civil registration in England and Wales are being explored, including better use of local authorities.		Discrete functions within the passport issuing process have been outsourced to the Post Office.		

Cabinet Office

Key decentralising reforms

- The Open Public Services White Paper puts decentralisation at the heart of the Government's modernisation agenda, giving local government, communities and neighbourhoods more power, control and contestability over standards of services.
- Driving the transparency agenda. Reforms have included establishing a Public Data Corporation, by setting up two bodies – the Data Strategy Board and the Public Data Group, (as announced in the 2011 Autumn Statement) – to bring together public sector organisations in providing easily accessible data and extending the FOI Act through a new datasets section which ensures these are released in a reusable format.
- The Open Data White Paper (June 2012) set out a 'presumption to publish' alongside open data strategies produced by every government department and an overhaul of **data.gov.uk** to make it more searchable and user-friendly.
- Developed a Digital Strategy, making government services digital by default to improve the customer experience and deliver efficiency gains. As part of giving easier access to transparent data, all government information and services will ultimately be delivered through a single online domain. The first stage of this single domain – gov.uk – was launched in October 2012.
- Published an ICT Strategy for Government setting out a common infrastructure for government which will deliver more efficient public services both through supporting online transactional services and by creating channels for collaboration and policy debate.
- Driving the open policy making agenda as outlined in the Civil Service Reform Plan in collaboration with a range of stakeholders. Creation of the Contestable Policy Fund to draw on thinking, evidence and insight from beyond Whitehall.
- Supporting new commercial models, including driving the creation and growth of mutuals in the wider public sector through cross government engagement, policy development and support services – such as the Mutual Support Programme and new Rights to Provide. Recently appointed 15 Mutuals Ambassadors to support new and fledging ventures.
- The first central government mutual joint venture, MyCSP, was vested on 1 May 2012 to give employees a stake in what they do while bringing in private investment and expertise.
- Cross-government lead in developing the Big Society. Working with departments on reforms including Community First, Community Organisers, Local Integrated Services and Big Society Capital.
- Cutting bureaucracy through the Red Tape Challenge – through which people and businesses can tell government which regulations are working and which are not; what should be scrapped, what should be saved and what should be simplified.

- Taking forward a number of constitutional reforms including legislation introducing a power to recall Members of Parliament, establishing fixed-term parliaments and publishing a white paper and draft bill for a wholly or mainly elected second chamber.
- Continuing the decentralisation of policies to the devolved administrations, by transferring responsibility for police and justice to Northern Ireland; giving Scotland more control over its locally raised revenue; and giving enhanced law-making powers to the National Assembly for Wales.

Potential opportunities over the lifetime of this Parliament

- Use its role at the centre of government to embed the decentralisation principles within departments, including through the Government's Open Public Services and Open Data agendas.

Cabinet Office: Analysis of key reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Civil Society	<p>The cutting red tape task force reported in May 2011.</p> <p>Red Tape Challenge –publicly reviewing legislation (launched April 2011).</p>	<p>Community First will help deprived neighbourhoods to improve their area, plan for their future and become more resilient.</p> <p>Community Organisers will be supported to catalyse social action in local communities.</p>	<p>Local Integrated Services: the nine early adopter areas are enabling communities to develop and design their own local services.</p>			
Efficiency & Transparency	<p>Launching a programme to tackle burdens across the public sector, giving frontline workers the opportunity to put forward ideas and suggestions on how we can improve efficiency and productivity.</p>	<p>Launching the Open Business Forum to create comparable measures of businesses’ corporate responsibility performance in areas such as support for their workforces, contribution to local communities and environmental impact.</p>	<p>Cabinet Office acting as a strong corporate centre enables resources to be directed to frontline, decentralised services.</p> <p>Whitehall commitment to publish spend data over £25,000 (from January 2011).</p>	<p>Simplifying the pre-qualification process and launching a contracts finder to simplify access to government contracts for small and medium size enterprises and the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>Working on the first central government mutual joint venture, MyCSP, to give employees a stake and bring in private investment and expertise.</p>	<p>Progress towards aspiration that 25% of Government contracts awarded to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.</p> <p>Establish the Public Data Group. Extending the Freedom of Information Act to publish datasets in a reusable format.</p> <p>Re-launching a more user-friendly data.gov.uk.</p>	<p>Embed a presumption to publish through the measures in the Open Data White Paper (e.g. Sector Boards, simplified right to request data) and Departmental Open Data Strategies.</p>

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Constitutional Reform		Power of Recall (legislation being brought forward).	The Scotland Bill – proposing to reduce the income tax rate in Scotland to give them control over the levy in Scotland.			Alternative Vote referendum May 2011. Enhanced law-making powers for the National Assembly for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Department of Health

Key decentralising reforms

- Devolving power and responsibility for commissioning services to healthcare professionals closest to patients by introducing clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to ensure services are designed by those who know patients best.
- Establishing an independent and accountable NHS Commissioning Board to support and hold to account new clinical commissioning groups. Reducing bureaucracy by abolishing Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts.
- Greater patient choice of provider including choice of Any Qualified Provider for selected community and mental health services, incentivising providers to improve their quality and efficiency.
- Ensuring a focus on improving health outcomes through new outcomes frameworks for the NHS, public health and adult social care, rather than through top-down process targets. The NHS Commissioning Board will support CCGs to improve outcomes through the Commissioning Outcomes Framework.
- Ensuring people are able to exercise choice and control over their care and support by creating a legal entitlement to a personal budget and by supporting local authorities to shape and develop a strong and diverse local care market.
- Strengthening and empowering local communities, making the most of available skills and resources, including volunteering, time-sharing and other forms of reciprocity to support people to stay well and independent for as long as possible and so prevent or delay the need for formal care.
- Increasing local democratic legitimacy by introducing health and wellbeing boards to ensure that health and social care commissioning are joined up across the local area and to provide strategic leadership to commissioning for health and wellbeing, including through pooled budgets.
- Giving power and responsibility to local authorities to lead on public health provision, resourced by ring-fenced public health budgets.

Potential opportunities over the lifetime of this Parliament

- Integrating personal budgets between health and social care, for example on chronic illnesses and respite care.
- Implement the Government's plans to transform the care and support system as set out in the Care and Support White Paper, draft Care and Support Bill and Progress Report on Funding, published in July 2012.
- Promoting a diverse range of services and innovative social care models within communities, such as time banking approaches.

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
The National Health Service	<p>Establish NHS Commissioning Board by October 2012 and abolish Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts in April 2013.</p> <p>All trusts to become Foundation Trusts as soon as clinically feasible.</p>	<p>Duty on clinical commissioning groups, NHS Commissioning Board, Monitor and health and wellbeing boards to involve patients, users and the public*.</p> <p>The healthcare regulator Monitor will promote and protect patients' interests and ensure a level playing field between providers- October 2012.</p>	<p>Introducing Clinician-led commissioning by clinical commissioning groups from April 2013.</p> <p>Testing the expansion of personal budgets in health and social care, evaluating personal health budget pilots in 2012 for potential national rollout.</p>	<p>Planned phased introduction of Any Qualified Provider approach from April 2012, in selected community and mental health services where patients say they want more choice.</p> <p>Payment by Results will focus on outcomes not outputs.</p>	<p>Publishing the Government response to the Information Revolution consultation and a new Information Strategy*.</p> <p>Embedding transparency in NHS reforms, for example by requiring clinical Commissioning Groups to publish details of contracts with health service providers.</p>	<p>Introducing health and wellbeing boards, which will provide strategic leadership for commissioning in shadow form from April 2012 and formally established in April 2013*.</p> <p>Strengthening the internal governance of Foundation Trusts and promoting transparency and accountability of Foundation Trusts to their governors, members, HealthWatch and the public.</p>
Public health	<p>NHS, Public Health and Adult Social Care outcome frameworks will replace targets and be published in an accessible and transparent way.</p>	<p>Establish national and local Healthwatch to represent patients' service user and community views by October 2012 and April 2013 respectively*.</p>	<p>Devolving public health budget to local authorities in April 2013.</p>	<p>Ring-fenced resource for local authorities to spend on their new public health functions opens up new opportunities to diversify the supply of public health services.</p>	<p>Publishing the cost, evidence-base & impact of public health services via a web-based system, informing professionals and the public (April 2013).</p>	<p>New duty on Local Authorities to promote public health from April 2013.</p> <p>Publication of a new Public Health Outcomes Framework as means for benchmarking local performance (January 2012).</p>

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Social care	<p>Annual performance assessment of local authorities has been abolished, and replaced with a sector-led programme of improvement for councils' adult social care.</p> <p>The draft Care and Support Bill will simplify the law to reduce the burden on social workers with less interpretation of legal issues.</p>	<p>New power for local authorities in draft Care and Support Bill to delegate certain care and support functions to a third party¹.</p> <p>New duty for local authorities in draft Care and Support Bill to provide a comprehensive information and advice service in relation to care and support, available to anybody who requests it. This will ensure that information is available for people to plan for their needs, and to access the care and support needed.</p> <p>Stimulating the development of initiatives that help people share their time, talents and skills with others in their community.</p>	<p>100% commitment to personal budgets for all eligible people, where possible by direct payment by April 2013.</p> <p>Developing a number of trailblazer areas trialling new approaches to investment in prevention and early intervention, such as Social Impact Bonds.</p>	<p>Social Work Practice pilots (mutuals) launched autumn 2011 – bringing social workers and service users closer together.</p> <p>New duty for local authorities in draft Care and Support Bill to promote diversity and quality in the market of care and support providers in their local area.</p> <p>Providing £200 million capital funding for development of new housing options, giving more choice to older people and disabled adults.</p>	<p>The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, first published in 2011 and updated annually, will provide robust, comparable information on outcomes delivered by local authorities, supporting people to hold their council to account.</p>	<p>The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework will be supported by the publication of 'local accounts', which, as part of the sector-led approach to improvement, councils are already using to set out their progress and priorities for scrutiny by local people.</p> <p>Every registered residential or home care provider now has a provider quality profile at www.nhs.uk to ensure people have access to timely and reliable information about care services.</p> <p>Government will provide training for local Healthwatch organisations to take on their responsibilities in relation to care and support.</p>

¹ The Care and Support Bill has only been published in draft and the provisions will not come into force until April 2015 (subject to a slot in the third session).

* These reforms span the NHS, public health and social care.

Department of Energy and Climate Change

Key decentralising reforms

- Introducing the Green Deal, involving a broader range of participants than predecessor schemes such as the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target.
- Rolling out smart meters by 2019, giving householders and businesses access to near real-time information on their energy consumption.
- Signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Local Government Group for central government and local government to better work together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, recognising the pivotal role that councils have at the local level.
- Undertaking work with local authorities to support the large-scale deployment of energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating technologies.
- Allowing local authorities to sell electricity.

Potential opportunities over the lifetime of this Parliament

- Develop a strategy for transforming the electricity grid to a smart grid, empowering people to contribute to energy security through localised demand management and decisions.
- Open up the wholesale energy market to new entrants.
- Simplify the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme.
- Allow communities that host renewable energy projects to retain the business rates they generate.
- Enable local delivery of the Green Deal through local authorities and communities.
- Support the launch of a new Nottingham Declaration, enabling local authorities to set their own challenging carbon reduction targets.

Department of Energy and Climate Change: Analysis of reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Energy Consumption	<p>Local authorities are no longer required to provide fuel poverty data.</p> <p>Promoting through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Local Government Group a more localist approach to tackling climate change, recognising the pivotal role played by local authorities in doing so.</p>	<p>Introducing smart meters by 2019, giving consumers near real-time information on their energy consumption, helping them to control energy use, save money and reduce emissions.</p>	<p>Introducing a Green Deal by October 2012, enabling all householders to improve the energy efficiency of their home and reduce their energy bills.</p>		<p>Established a new process for local authorities to make data on emissions from their own estate and operations available to local people.</p>	
Energy Production	<p>Engaged key stakeholders to identify the regulatory burden placed on business and where this could be reduced.</p>		<p>Feed-in tariffs encourage investment in small scale energy generation in return for a guaranteed payment for their investment.</p>	<p>Local authorities allowed to sell electricity generated from renewable sources, enabling them to fully benefit from feed in tariffs.</p> <p>Promoting micro-generation through the new Community Online website and strategy consultation.</p>		<p>Taking a voluntarism approach to strengthen accountability over decisions to host a geological facility for higher activity radioactive waste.</p>

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Key decentralising reforms

- Reducing the regulatory burdens being placed on business, including through ‘one in, one out’ and from January 2013, ‘one in, two out’.
- Local Enterprise Partnerships will ensure that decision making takes place at the right economic spatial level, replacing Regional Development Agencies.
- Reforming Further and Higher Education so that funding follows the individual student and universities and colleges are incentivised to respond to the needs of students.
- The Department is giving greater freedom to the Further Education and skills sector to encourage more innovation and ensure that skills provision responds to real demand from learners and business.

Potential opportunities over the lifetime of this Parliament

- Education Act 2011 frees colleges to manage their own business and respond more effectively to the needs of their localities.
- Getting the right mixture of incentives and pricing in the higher education system i.e. research, teaching and course offering system etc.
- Create conditions for closer collaboration between colleges and local authorities.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: Analysis of key reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Economic Growth and Regulation	<p>Abolishing the Regional Development Agencies: (see also Action 6).</p> <p>Introduction of the ‘one in, one out’ (‘one in, two out’ from January 2013) process for new regulation.</p>	<p>The consumer empowerment strategy aims to put consumers in charge by increasing delivery of consumer services at a local level through Citizens Advice and Trading Standards, and through improving consumers’ access to their personal transaction data, midata, (http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/consumer-issues/consumer-empowerment/personal-data) so that consumers are better able to get the best deals individually and collectively and to hold local decision-makers to account.</p> <p>Allowing the public and businesses to challenge regulations through the Red Tape Challenge.</p>	<p>To give greater responsibility for national and cross-boundary enforcement to Trading Standards by setting up the National Trading Standards Board to identify and co-ordinate priority consumer enforcement activities from April 2012. This is supported by a budget of £9.67 million in 2012/13.</p>			<p>Local Enterprise Partnerships are more in line with functional economic areas than the previous Regional Development Agencies structure. Local Enterprise Partnerships should have strong links with local authorities, local business and local communities.</p>
Universities and Skills	<p>Removed central skills targets; taken action to abolish or streamline more than a dozen skills bodies; taken action to streamline funding and performance management processes; and have reduced regulation and controls through the Education Act.</p>		<p>New funding mechanisms for higher education will see the money follow the student.</p> <p>Established the single adult skills budget for colleges in which funding follows demand from business and learners.</p>	<p>Making it easier for new and alternative providers to compete in the further and higher education system will make it more diverse and mean greater choice for students.</p>	<p>All colleges and training organisations are to publish full details of their customer satisfaction scores, success rates and outcomes.</p>	<p>Colleges and providers working as partnership of equals with Local Enterprise Partnerships and other local partners to agree the communities’ skills needs and priorities.</p>

Department for Work and Pensions

Key decentralising reforms

- The Universal Credit will simplify and make fairer an overly complex, outdated and expensive benefits system which has acted as a barrier to work.
- The Work Programme supports people back to work through greater diversity of local support.
- The Right to Control in England (started under the previous government) where disabled adults have greater choice and control over how money is spent to meet their needs and aspirations.
- Reform of the Social Fund where, in England, local authorities will be given responsibility for administering the reformed system of Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans.
- Raising the minimum retirement age and redefining retirement as an increasingly active phase of life where people have opportunities to continue to contribute by working longer and/or volunteering in their communities.
- DWP has reformed the way it does business by removing process targets, increasing local discretion, and developing opportunities to join up service delivery with other agencies locally.

Potential opportunities over the life of this Parliament

- Working with local government in particular to ensure the effective provision of face-to-face support for universal credit alongside other public services that help people into jobs, capitalising on local authorities' incentives for promoting growth and tackling unemployment and dependency.
- Building on greater freedoms and flexibilities for local DWP Operational Managers, for increased joint working on worklessness at local level, including joining up service delivery, tailoring services to the needs of local communities and labour markets and co-location, where possible.
- Exploring with other local partners (e.g. local authorities, careers services, voluntary and community sector) the scope for better use of public assets, outreach activity and co-location in delivering a more integrated service for claimants.
- Supporting more effective, locally-focused data strategies to improve local employment outcomes (e.g. through consistent 'myth busting' and local level training regarding the Data Protection Act).
- Further testing of the Right to Control and consideration of expansion.

Department for Work and Pensions: Analysis of key reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Work	Streamlining DWP Performance Management Framework for 2011 – 2012 to have fewer targets and to focus more on outcomes.	Work Clubs provide unemployed people with a place to meet and exchange skills, share experiences, find opportunities, make contacts and get support to help them in their return to work. Merlin Standard to ensure that Work Programme prime contractors create effective and diverse supply chains for service delivery.	Flexible Support Fund will allow DWP Operational Managers to better meet local conditions and priorities.	Almost 300 voluntary sector organisations are involved in the Work Programme supply chain.	Release of new aggregate data on Jobcentre Plus and the Pension, Disability and Carers Service spending at local levels. Release of DWP guidance on Local Data Sharing for partnerships, in the areas of tackling worklessness and use of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit data.	
Welfare and Pensions	Universal Credit will simplify benefits for claimants, replacing six benefits with one.	Empower individuals to take more control over the benefits that they require and receive. Removing the default retirement age.	Discretionary Social Fund to be partially localised (to local government) from 2013.	Universal Credit to encourage locally tailored services to meet the needs of individual support.		
Disabilities		Seven Right to Control pilots in England– empowering disabled adults to have more control over the payments and services they receive.	The Right to Control pilots will focus on personal budgets for service users.			

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Key decentralising reforms

- Transferring the duties, assets and functions of British Waterways in England and Wales from a public corporation into a new waterways charity.
- Reforming funding of flood and coastal erosion risk management.
- Reviewing governance arrangements for the National Parks to increase local accountability.
- Conducted a sector-led review of farm regulation and inspection, which made more than 200 recommendations to reduce red tape.
- Introducing Local Nature Partnerships: harnessing local expertise and enthusiasm to help protect the environment.

Potential opportunities over the lifetime of this Parliament

- Take forward reforms arising from the review of inspection and regulation in farming policy to remove the burden of bureaucracy which creates barriers to effective local decision-making.
- Implement actions arising from the Review of Waste Policy to help local communities to develop and deliver fit for purpose local solutions for collecting and dealing with waste from households and businesses.
- Seek advice from the Independent Panel on Forestry on the engagement and participation of civil society in the future direction of England's forest and woodland policy.
- Explore ways to encourage water companies to better engage with customers when setting price limits, including ensuring water companies seek the views of local people on priorities for future investment.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Analysis of reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Environment (biodiversity, climate change resilience, the Green economy, forestry, water resource protection)	<p>Reviewed waste policy to remove barriers to local decision making and ensure a level playing field in delivery.</p> <p>Removing requirements for local authorities to report on planning to adapt to climate change.</p> <p>Consulting on proposals to streamline the legal processes relating to public rights of way. This would enable claims to be more readily resolved or alternative solutions found at a local level.</p> <p>Industry-led review of forestry regulation, which reported in October 2011. The government provided a full response in March 2012.</p>	<p>The transfer of British Waterways in England and Wales to a charity (the Canal and River Trust) in July 2012.</p> <p>Introducing approximately 50 Local Nature Partnerships in 2012.</p> <p>An independent panel looking at the future of forestry policy, which reported summer 2012, included civil society participation/engagement. Government are now considering their response, to be published January 2013.</p> <p>Launched the Big Tree Plant in December 2010 to encourage people and communities to plant more trees in England's towns, cities and neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>Reforming flood and coastal erosion risk management funding, giving local areas more say over resources spent there and greater certainty of funding.</p> <p>Piloting biodiversity offsetting to work with developers to deliver compensation for unavoidable habitat loss due to development. Six pilot areas established November 2011 and commenced 1 April 2012.</p>	<p>Promoting an increased role for environmental charities and volunteer networks in collecting biodiversity data for policy development and reporting.</p>	<p>Already published over 400 datasets and will continue to increase this number on a monthly basis, taking forward a right to data approach.</p> <p>Making environment information more accessible to help people get involved in their local area e.g. My Environment web portal.</p>	<p>Implementing the outcomes of the 2011 National Park governance review, which will mean improved accountability and more local engagement in relation to decision making.</p> <p>Supporting the establishment of commons councils, with the first one expected to be in place by April 2013.</p>
Food and Farming	<p>Industry-led review of farm regulation and inspection, which reported in May 2011. Government's full response was published February 2012.</p> <p>Further work to improve transparency in the food chain, in particular to improve origin information on food served in catering establishments.</p>	<p>25 pilots to develop a catchment-based approach to delivering water quality improvements, sharing evidence at a local level to mobilise funding and action to address water pollution.</p> <p>Launching the Paths for Communities fund to help local communities negotiate permanent new rights of way.</p>				

Department for Transport

Key decentralising reforms

- Simplifying local funding streams from 26 to four and removing almost all ring-fencing of revenue funding. This will allow local authorities to set their own plans for their areas and improve local accountability – for example through local transport plans and local implementation plans.
- Following consultation, announcement made on key principles in September 2012 of how decisions on local major transport schemes will be decentralised from 2015 onwards.
- Devolving franchising powers for local rail services, building on informal discussions with sub national bodies in the north and south west, with a formal consultation launched in March 2012.
- Moving to a less prescriptive rail franchising regime with longer franchises and fewer detailed specifications from the centre, so train operating companies have flexibility to respond to customer demand.
- Announced commitment to work with train operators and Network Rail so they collaborate more effectively to build on Network Rail’s decision to devolve managerial responsibility to a regional level.
- Given local highway authorities the freedom to classify roads and choose primary routes, instead of being forced to seek permission from the Department.
- Announced that a significant proportion of around £360 million in bus subsidy paid annually by central Government to bus companies in the form of Bus Service Operators Grant is to be devolved to local authorities.
- Reducing the bureaucratic burden for local authorities wanting to respond to the wishes of local people, including less red tape for traffic and other regulations needed to implement changes (such as 20 mph zones, changed publicity arrangements for traffic orders, a wide review of parking controls and electric vehicle parking facilities).
- Increased freedom to local authorities with a less prescriptive Strategic Framework for Road Safety, moving from centrally imposed solutions and top down targets to an outcome based framework.

Potential opportunities over the life of this Parliament

- Giving Integrated Transport Authorities, local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships working together greater responsibility for re-franchising regional and local rail services.
- Deliver significant changes to the traffic regulation order system by removing the requirement to advertise traffic orders in local newspapers, scrapping the need for central government approvals, and giving far more flexibility to local authorities to tackle local issues.
- Stop Whitehall interference on Street Works permit schemes by removing the Ministerial approval role – consultation issued 31 January 2012.

Department for Transport: Analysis of reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
National Infrastructure	Comprehensive review of traffic regulations to reduce the need for central government approvals and give freedom for local authorities to tackle their traffic situations their way.		Simplified available funding streams into four main streams (from the previous 26) and reduced almost all ring-fencing.	Alter advice on Motorway Service Areas to allow more competition. The review conducted of the rail franchising system has potential to further diversify the suppliers in that sector.	Publish data on the cost of providing rail services through franchises. Releasing more data on transport including public transport timetables, publishing expenditure over £500. Website proposed in Strategic Framework for Road Safety allowing communities easy access to local safety information for national and local roads.	Joint working with local partners on national schemes such as A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton to include key local authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership.
Sub-National and Local Transport	Given local authorities additional responsibility for roads classification. Reform management of roadworks, ending the need for government approval of local authority permit schemes.	Encourage and facilitate an increased role for Community Rail and Community Transport as an alternative supplier of transport services to those currently part funded by the public sector. Consulted on and now implementing the decentralisation of decisions on local major schemes.	Announced key principles of how the department will devolve responsibility for funding decisions on local major transport schemes from 2015 onwards. Devolve to local authorities greater say over how bus subsidy funding is used.	Encourage and facilitate an increased role for Community Rail and Community Transport as an alternative supplier of transport services. These suppliers are currently part funded by the public sector (i.e. train operating companies running franchises and bus companies running local authority tendered services).	Published full background information on funding decisions for local major schemes. Made available information and feedback on funding decisions, especially those involving competitive bidding for limited funding pots. Publish other relevant local authority data to allow comparison and benchmarking across authorities.	Informally consulting with the sector on ways to decentralise rail franchising, to encourage greater involvement of local communities in decisions about their local rail services. Subject to the outcome of a public consultation in summer 2012, proposals could give local authorities the opportunity to take fuller direct responsibility for aspects of rail franchises.

Ministry of Justice

Key decentralising reforms

- Piloted a number of approaches to test and evaluate a number of different payments by results delivery models as part of our commitment to introduce a rehabilitation revolution.
- Accelerating plans to roll-out payment by results at scale across the offender management system and apply the payment by results approach to our rehabilitation work with offenders by 2015.
- Launched a competition to open up delivery of Community Payback, appointing a Community Payback provider for London through competition and we are working to give a greater voice to the community in Community Payback.
- Work has commenced on testing the approach of Neighbourhood Justice Panels with 15 panel areas.
- Work has commenced with the Family Mediation Council (FMC) to implement the recommendations of the recent Family Mediation Council Review. This will help the FMC develop a profession led regulatory framework that will ensure that more family mediation is practised to a high standard.
- Publishing justice outcome information alongside street level crime data on Police.uk to enable the public to see what happens after a crime is reported.
- Published a comprehensive competition strategy for offender services which has been updated annually.
- Reform of the sentencing framework to make it simpler and making sentencing outcomes more transparent.
- Extending the Freedom of Information Act to cover more organisations.

Potential opportunities over the lifetime of this Parliament

- Facilitate the growth of community, voluntary and private sector family mediation services to help people resolve issues out of court.
- Use learning from the Payment by Results pathfinders to inform the future approach to delivering probation services from 2014, opening up probation services to competition and applying payment by results.
- Working with the Home Office to explore the ways in which Police and Crime Commissioners can support the delivery of justice.
- Strengthening the pre application protocol, which seeks to ensure that all separating couples and parents consider mediation prior to taking court action, by putting it on a statutory footing. Where appropriate and safe this will help more people to find their own solutions to their family dispute, rather than seeking a court resolution.

Ministry of Justice: Analysis of key reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
The Justice System (prisons, rehabilitation and courts)	<p>Consulting on a single reoffending measure through the Breaking the Cycle Green Paper.</p> <p>Simplifying sentencing, ensuring future sentences are subject to a single set of release arrangements, and removing restrictions to allow greater professional discretion over when lower risk prisoners who have been recalled to custody may be re-released on licence.</p> <p>Increasing the digitalisation of courts, developing greater use of electronic information.</p> <p>Consulting on lighter touch performance management and more risk-based inspection for Youth Offending Teams.</p>	<p>Introduced protocol to promote greater use of family mediation instead of courts.</p> <p>Increasing community say in Community Payback.</p> <p>Started work to test the approach of Neighbourhood Justice Panels with 15 panel areas against an agreed framework for appropriate cases, whilst recognising local autonomy in developing an effective Panel for their community.</p>	<p>Removed ring-fencing on Youth Offending Team grants.</p> <p>Piloting the local financial incentives model (also relevant to Action 2).</p>	<p>Piloted a number of approaches to test and evaluate a number of different payment by results delivery models including social impact bonds.</p> <p>Accelerating plans to roll-out payment by results at scale across the offender management system and apply the payment by results approach to our rehabilitation work with offenders by 2015, including Probation Services.</p> <p>Opened up delivery of Community Payback.</p> <p>Published strategy for competing offender services.</p> <p>Reforming Legal Aid so as to open up provision further.</p>	<p>Released reoffending rates against prisons, Probation Trusts and local authorities.</p> <p>Released court sentencing statistics and spending data since October 2010.</p> <p>Consulted on increasing accessibility of criminal justice system information.</p> <p>Producing both aggregate and anonymised individual-level sentencing outcome data for every court.</p>	<p>Introducing duty to cooperate between Police and Crime Commissioners and local criminal justice partners.</p> <p>Publishing justice outcome information alongside street-level crime data on Police.uk.</p> <p>Published Quality of Service Standards across the Criminal Justice System on Directgov.</p>
Other (victim support, information and human rights)		<p>Victims Fund (funded by prisoner pay deduction) now in force.</p> <p>Established the Commission on UK Bill of Rights.</p>		<p>Introducing more local commissioning of victim support services by 2014.</p>	<p>Extending Freedom of Information Act to cover more organisations via legislation.</p>	

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Key decentralising reforms

- Ensuring the legacy of the Olympics and Paralympics through supporting London 2012 partners to deliver opportunities for grass-roots participation and community engagement in sport across the UK. This includes upgrading 1,000 local sports facilities and recruiting 40,000 sports leaders to organise and lead community sport.
- Taking forward deregulation of entertainment licensing, getting rid of unnecessary red tape and allowing local communities much more freedom to put on events such as plays, dance and film showings.
- Leading the roll-out of superfast broadband nationwide by working with local authorities, the Devolved Administrations, and local communities, to ensure the UK has the best superfast broadband network in Europe by 2015. This will widen access to digital technologies and their potential to transform the provision of services and enable communities to hold service providers to account.
- Facilitating the extension of mobile voice coverage to 60,000 premises and 10 key roads where existing coverage is poor or non-existent.
- Supporting commercially viable local television, with the first local TV services licensed by the end of 2012 and in operation by 2015.
- Encouraging communities to get more involved in the running of local library services, including by delivering, with Arts Council England, a wide-ranging consultation on how people will interact with library services in the future.
- Completing the reform of the National Lottery to ensure that more funding goes to local arts, sport and heritage causes and that the Big Lottery Fund is focused on the voluntary and community sector.

Potential opportunities over the life of this Parliament

- Making a number of reforms to the heritage protection system to simplify processes for developers and local communities, while maintaining the protection of heritage assets.
- Deregulating the broadcasting and communications sectors to reduce the burden placed on business.
- Bringing forward further deregulatory proposals by March 2015.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Analysis of key reforms against the six actions of decentralisation by service

	Action 1: Lift the burden of bureaucracy	Action 2: Empower communities to do things their way	Action 3: Increase local control of public finance	Action 4: Diversify the supply of public services	Action 5: Open up government to public scrutiny	Action 6: Strengthen accountability to local people
Tourism and Leisure	<p>Removing red tape from live entertainment licensing.</p> <p>Reforms to non-planning heritage consents.</p> <p>Reviewing and streamlining regulation on gambling.</p>	<p>Encouraging communities to get more involved in the running of local library services.</p>	<p>Big Lottery Fund to focus on voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>Ensuring that more Lottery funding goes to local arts, sport and heritage causes.</p>		<p>DCMS and its agencies have opened up their data for public scrutiny, including spend over £500.</p>	<p>Look at increasing representation of destinations on VisitEngland Board.</p>
Media	<p>Removing the local cross media ownership rules, and the barriers to independent producers' involvement, to facilitate the development of local TV.</p> <p>Deregulating the broadcasting and communications sectors to reduce the burden placed on business.</p>	<p>Delivery of national programme of rural and urban superfast broadband projects, including ensuring that all businesses in Enterprise Zones have access to superfast broadband.</p> <p>Delivering extension of mobile voice coverage to 60,000 premises and 10 key roads where existing coverage is poor or non-existent.</p>	<p>Broadband roll-out is on basis of local broadband plans.</p>	<p>Supporting the creation of a network of local TV stations.</p>	<p>National Audit Office given access to BBC accounts.</p>	<p>Local media will provide additional accountability mechanisms (TV, radio and online by 2015).</p>
Sport	<p>Bringing forward further deregulatory proposals by March 2015.</p>	<p>Upgrading 1000 local sports facilities and recruiting 40,000 sports leaders to organise and lead community sport.</p> <p>School Games, part of the Olympics Legacy Programme, launched in 2012.</p>	<p>Developing Payment by Results methodology to be applied to local Whole Sports Plans, plus open access community fund as part of Youth Sport Strategy.</p>			

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