

DfT announces 650 roles to be created in Birmingham and Leeds

- the Department for Transport (DfT) will create a second headquarters in Birmingham and a northern hub in Leeds as an initial 650 job roles are created in the cities by 2025
- the move demonstrates the government's commitment to levelling up all parts of the UK
- expanding DfT's presence in the Midlands and the North will boost local economies as government builds back better from coronavirus (COVID-19)

DfT has today (15 March 2021) announced the creation of a second HQ in Birmingham and a northern hub in Leeds, as part of a plan to create 650 roles in the cities.

The move is part of the government's commitment to diversifying the Civil Service, ensuring decisions are rooted in the communities it serves.

It is a particularly important step for DfT, given the huge role it has to play in levelling up the UK through investment in vital transport infrastructure and services.

It is the latest step in the government's drive to move 22,000 Civil Service roles from London to communities across the UK by 2030.

Grant Shapps, Transport Secretary, said:

This is a historic move for the department and part of a significant wider culture change across Whitehall.

Transport is absolutely vital to the local communities we serve and having hubs in major cities like Birmingham and Leeds will offer a fresh perspective on how we can better serve these areas.

Chris Heaton-Harris, Transport Minister, said:

Our department has a key role to play in this government's drive to level up across the country. Having hundreds more roles based outside of London will not only bring an economic boost for Birmingham and Leeds, but also ensure we are delivering the changes people around the country want.

The Birmingham headquarters will include new ministerial offices, with ministers expected to spend a significant amount of time there as the government works to rebuild the UK. The news of DfT creating a northern hub in Leeds comes on the back of the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, this month, also

confirming that the UK's first-ever infrastructure bank will also be based in the city.

Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Chair of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Leader of Bradford Council, said:

This is another positive investment recognising our region's strengths, following the decision to locate the UK Infrastructure Bank here, bringing benefits not just to Leeds but Bradford and the wider region. I hope it will help us as we make the compelling case for future investment in our transport system, to better connect our communities and raise living standards while cutting carbon emissions.

Cllr James Lewis, Leader of Leeds City Council, said:

This shows once more the importance of Leeds, not just to our region but to the North of England and the UK. Investment in transport is central to our plans for the future and I hope the presence of more decision-makers in our city helps ensure the case for further investment in Leeds is heard.

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands, said:

The West Midlands has undergone a transport revolution in recent years, with the reopening of old railway lines, expanded tram routes, and an upgraded green bus fleet, along with the rollout of e-scooters and a cycle hire scheme. The DfT will be right at home here, and I look forward to welcoming the team to the best connected region in the UK.

Along with the relocation of MHCLG to Wolverhampton, this is a major vote of confidence in the West Midlands and a huge jobs boost at what is an incredibly difficult economic time. I'm delighted that after months of making the case we've won through, and a second major government department will be calling the West Midlands home.

DfT has already begun recruiting in Birmingham and Leeds, with 100 roles created so far. This includes senior civil servant positions, which otherwise would have been based in London, with attracting senior figures to these locations key to the success of the initiative.

The government is also announcing today that half of senior Civil Service roles will be located outside of London by 2030, addressing the current imbalance with the majority of senior roles being London-based.

Today's announcement will bring economic benefits, with new spending power of those civil servants working in and around the areas outlined. £65 million has been allocated for the overall government hubs programme in 2021 to 2022 for office works and improvements.

Evidence of past relocations of civil servants shows that bringing public sector roles to an area also stimulates the creation of private sector roles, investment in office space and opportunities for local businesses to supply services.

A recent study found that for every 10 public sector roles moved to a town under the Lyons Review of Public Sector Relocation in 2004, 11 private sector roles were created. The move of the 1,150 Met Office roles to Exeter was estimated to add £65 million to local gross value added.