

PM speech at Manchester Science and Industry Museum

Good morning everyone and thank you for joining me here in Manchester – in the heart of the world's first industrial city.

A city whose confidence and whose extraordinary future we can see in the changing fabric of the urban landscape, the mighty towers of Deansgate Square, last week's extraordinary International Festival in Manchester.

We can see it in the Christie, the hospital where the future of cancer treatment will be written at the vast new Paterson building, with new therapies saving the lives of people around the world for generations to come.

This is not and has never been a city for negativity or navel-gazing.

Indeed when the University of Manchester's Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov said they were planning to extract a single-atom-thick crystallites from bulk graphite – I hope I've got that right – to give us the super-light super-strong wonder that is Graphene...

I imagine that there were people who had no idea what difference it could make to their lives – and frankly people in this audience who have no idea,

Yet today, we stand on the cusp of the Graphene age, with applications in everything from de-icing of aircraft wings to life-saving medicine.

Their story of those pioneers is told here at the Science and Industry Museum, and it is one of the countless tales of Mancunian pioneers.

Because time and again, when the cynics say something cannot be done – Mancunians find a way to get on and do it.

And the centre of Manchester – like the centre of London – is a wonder of the world.

But just a few miles away from here the story is very different.

Towns with famous names, proud histories, fine civic buildings where unfortunately the stereotypical story of the last few decades has been long term decline.

Endemic health problems. Generational unemployment. Down-at-heel high streets.

The story has been, for young people growing up there of hopelessness, or the hope that one day they'll get out and never come back.

And in so far as that story is true and sometimes it is, the crucial point is

it isn't really the fault of the places and it certainly isn't the fault of the people growing up there – they haven't failed.

No, it is we, us the politicians, the politics, that has failed.

Time and again they have voted for change, but for too long politicians have failed to deliver on what is needed.

Our plan now, this new Government I am leading, is to unite our country and level up.

And I want to explain now what I mean by that.

Now I am absolutely not here to tell you, Mr Mayor, that London has all the answers.

Or that everywhere should be like London, or indeed like Manchester.

Each place in our country has a unique heritage, a unique character, and a unique future.

And indeed I recognise that when the British people voted to leave the European Union, they were not just voting against Brussels – they were voting against London too, and against all concentrations of power in remote centres.

So I'm not here to say that Manchester or London are the template for other places.

But I do believe there are lessons to be learnt from the success of cities like these.

I remember London in the 1970s – how it was stuck in post-war gloom and doom.

Between 1951 and 1981 the population actually declined – it went down 20 per cent it was so miserable.

Yet, over the last twenty years, the capital of our country has been utterly transformed.

London is today one of the world's leading global cities (second only to Manchester!) – with the largest concentration of tech companies, artists, financial services, top class restaurants and all the rest of it.

We can see the same thing happening now in this incredible city.

So today I want to set out what I think are the basic ingredients of success for the UK, and for the places we call home: our cities or our towns, our coastal communities and rural areas.

There are four things I think we need to get right.

First is basic liveability. The streets need to be safe. There need to be enough affordable homes. There need to be jobs that pay good wages. There

need to be great public services supporting families and helping the most vulnerable.

Second thing – connections. That means great broadband everywhere, and it means transport. Inspiration and innovation, cross fertilisation between people, literally and figuratively, cannot take place unless people can bump into each other, compete collaborate invent and innovate.

We need to literally and spiritually unite Britain, and that means boosting growth and bringing our regions together.

The third thing that places need is culture. People love Manchester because of the fantastic arts and entertainment here, the football and music, the heritage and the creative industries that make it such a lively, wonderful place to live and work.

We need to help places everywhere to strengthen their cultural and creative infrastructure, the gathering places that give a community its life.

And finally, the fourth thing – places need power and a sense of responsibility, accountability.

Taking back control doesn't just apply to Westminster regaining sovereignty from the EU. It means our cities and counties and towns becoming more self-governing.

It means people taking more responsibility for their own communities. London and Manchester have boomed partly because they have had Mayors – some better than others, I would say, but all with the power to speak for their cities, to bang heads together, to get things done.

These are the lessons from London and Manchester. Liveability. Connectivity. Culture. And power.

And the first condition of liveability is of course making our streets safer.

Because recorded crime here in the North West is up 42 per cent. I think it's time we got that down, and we will.

Yesterday I met twenty new officers in Birmingham who are graduating after 15 weeks training. They will now join our brave and formidable police men and women who will be putting their lives on the line for our safety.

But you want more of these policemen and women on our streets – and so do I.

That is why I have committed to an extra 20,000 police officers over the next three years.

Their recruitment will begin in earnest within weeks.

And a new national policing board chaired by our dynamic new Home Secretary will hold the police to account for meeting this target.

We will also give the police greater ability to use stop and search in order to drive a reduction in the violent crime that plagues our communities.

But there is no point in arresting, charging and convicting criminals if we do not then give them the sentences they deserve.

In fact the number of offenders with more than 50 previous convictions who were convicted but spared jail rose from 1,299 in 2007 to 3,196 in 2018.

So we need to restore the public's faith in our criminal justice system, by ensuring that people who repeatedly commit crimes are punished properly,

and that means those that are guilty of the most serious violent and sexual offences are required to serve a custodial sentence that reflects the severity of their offence.

And it is only by making the streets safer than you can create the neighbourhoods that people want to live.

One of the biggest divides in our country is between those who can afford their own home and those who cannot.

This is a long-term problem which all governments have failed to fix.

So we will review everything – including planning regulations, stamp duty, housing zones, as well as the efficacy of existing Government initiatives.

And, we will also emphasise the need, the duty, to build beautiful homes that people actually want to live in, and being sensitive to local concerns.

And then of course to get great, great neighbourhoods, safe streets, allow people to own their own homes – we need great public services to make that possible.

Which is why I have committed to delivering the funding promised to the NHS by the previous government in June 2018 and to ensure this vital money goes to frontline services as soon as possible.

This will include urgent funding for 20 hospital upgrades and winter readiness.

And proposals drastically to reduce waiting times for GP appointments.

The NHS represents a sacred promise between the state and its citizens. A promise that says we will protect and support one another when we are at our most vulnerable and weakest.

And the same should go for the other great service of wellbeing; particularly social care.

Yet many people who have worked hard all their lives have had to struggle with the financial burden of care in their final years and been forced to sell their homes.

The British people cannot understand why the health service is able to provide the same care for everyone, regardless of income,

And yet the social care system cripples those with savings.

For too long, I think politicians have simply kicked this can down the road. I want you to know, that can-kicking stops now.

So I have promised to find a long term solution to social care once and for all.

And that is what we will do – with a clear plan that will give every older person the dignity and security they deserve.

At the same time, we will give every child the world class education they deserve.

Which is why we will increase the minimum level of per pupil funding in primary and secondary schools and return education funding to previous levels by the end of this parliament.

And we cannot afford any longer the chronic under-funding of our brilliant FE colleges, which do so much to support young people's skills and our economy.

We have a world class university sector; in fact it is one of the biggest concentrations of higher education anywhere in Europe right here in this city – why should we not aspire to the same status for our further education institutions, to allow people to express their talents?

If you're going to allow people to express their talents properly, then you need proper connectivity. It is absolutely crucial.

Because if you are someone with a bright idea, or you are running a fantastic business, but you can't get the connectivity you need and instead spend an eternity staring at that pizza wheel circle of doom on your computer screen – then you won't be able to get your idea off the ground, you won't be able to grow your business, and you won't be able to find customers.

And you can have all the talent in the world

but if you are a young kid in a deprived town, with intermittent transport, and you can't get to the places where the jobs are then you won't have the opportunities you deserve.

But people are able to meet each other, and compete with each other, challenge each other, spark off each other – around the water cooler or elsewhere –

That's when we get the explosion, or flash of creativity and innovation.

That is what we are going to make that happen – not just here but across the country.

First we're going to invest in fibre roll-out and indeed we have just completed the build of a large fibre cable between Manchester and York alongside the Trans-Pennine railway route.

This interconnects the Manchester and Leeds Internet Exchanges and strengthens the internet infrastructure for the Northern Powerhouse.

I am delighted to see Jake Berry, sitting in the Cabinet, expressing this Government's commitment to the Northern Powerhouse.

And just now, before coming here, I met Barry White – at the Pomona site – part of a huge stretch of new tramline that will link up to Northern Powerhouse Rail.

I want to be the Prime Minister who does with Northern Powerhouse Rail what we did for Crossrail in London.

And today I am going to deliver on my commitment to that vision with a pledge to fund the Leeds to Manchester route.

I want to stress it will be up to local people to decide what comes next, as far as I'm concerned that's just the beginning of our commitment and our investment. We want to see this whole thing run.

I have tasked officials to accelerate their work on these plans so that we are ready to do a deal in the autumn.

It is the right thing to do, it's time we put some substance into the idea of the Northern Powerhouse Rail, and that's why we are here this morning.

We want to inject some pace into this so that we can unlock jobs and boost growth.

But I know people can't wait and they want to see change faster. They want change now. It takes a while to build a railway, believe me.

They want reliable, everyday services – so that the 18-year-old in Rochdale just starting out as an apprentice knows that they can get into Manchester for 8 o'clock each morning.

So that people can get out and about in the evening, for a drink and a meal – boosting local businesses and growth.

Services within cities, not just between cities. Services that mean people don't have to drive. Services that don't just give up at the end of the working day.

So I am going to improve – with your help – the local services which people use every day. And I want that to start now with improvements that can happen in the short term.

That means buses. I know a lot about buses, believe me. I love buses. I helped to invent a new type of bus, very beautiful that it is.

I will begin as a matter of urgency the transformation of local bus services – starting here today in Manchester.

I will work with the Mayor of Greater Manchester on his plans to deliver a London style bus system in the area under powers we gave to him – you Andy – in the Bus Services Act.

I want higher frequency, low-emission or zero-emission buses, more bus priority corridors, a network that's easier to understand and use.

I want local partnerships between the private sector, which operates the buses, and a public body, which coordinates them.

In London – where they have all these things – bus passenger journeys have risen by 97 per cent in 25 years.

In other metropolitan areas – where they do not – it has fallen by 34 per cent over the same period.

I think we can see the first results, here in Greater Manchester, within a few months.

And I want the same for any other part of the country where local leaders want to do it.

Good bus connections, good transport connectivity, is also vital to so many of the towns that feel left behind.

We are also going to start answering the pleas of some of our left behind towns,

And this might come as a surprise to some, but not everyone wants to live in one of our country's great cities.

Too many places – towns and coastal communities – that don't feel they are getting benefits from the growth we are seeing elsewhere in the UK economy.

Now I reject the ridiculous idea that everybody's ambition is to get on their bikes and move to the city.

Our post-industrial towns have a proud, great heritage – but an even greater future. Their best years lie ahead of them.

So we are going to put proper money into the places that need it.

We will start by ensuring there is investment from central government – by bringing forward plans on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund – and we have growth deals as well for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

And we're now going to have a £3.6 billion Towns Fund supporting an initial 100 towns. So that they will get the improved transport and improved broadband connectivity that they need.

They'll also get help with that vital social and cultural infrastructure,

from libraries and art centres to parks and youth services: the institutions that bring communities together, and give places new energy and new life.

Finally, of course, there is an even more radical shift that we need to make now to deliver this and I have seen myself the changes that you can bring about in towns and cities and regions, when local people have more of a say over their own destinies. A say over their own destinies.

And I do not believe that, when the people of the United Kingdom voted to take back control, they did so in order for that control to be hoarded in Westminster.

So we are going to give greater powers to council leaders and to communities.

We are going to level up the powers offered to mayors so that more people can benefit from the kind of local government structures seen in London and here in Manchester.

We are going to give more communities a greater say over changes to transport, housing, public services and infrastructure that will benefit their areas and drive local growth.

And in doing so, we will see to it that every part of this country sees the benefits of the potentially massive opportunity that will come from Brexit.

Over the last three years, we have tended to treat Brexit like some impending adverse weather event.

I campaigned to leave the EU because I believed it was a chance to change the direction of the UK and make us the best country in the world to live.

Leaving the EU is a massive economic opportunity – to do the things we've not been allowed to do for decades, to rid ourselves of bureaucratic red tape, create jobs, untangle the creativity and innovation for which Britain is famous.

And we do not need to wait to start preparing to seize the benefits of that project.

So we will begin right away to create the free ports that will generate thousands of high-skilled jobs – and revitalise some of the poorest parts of our country.

We will begin right away on working to change the tax rules to provide extra incentives to invest in capital and research

We will double down on our investment in R&D, we will accelerate the talks on those free trade deals

And prepare an economic package to boost British business and lengthen this country's lead as the number one destination in Europe for overseas investment.

At the same time we will unite and level up across our country – as I say, with infrastructure, better education and with technology.

And in so doing, making our whole nation not just an alright kind of place to live, or a better-than-average place to live but the greatest place on earth. The greatest place to live, to raise a family, to send your kids to school, a great place to start a business, to invest and to have a life –

And where better than Manchester, where better than the Science and Industry Museum, to set out our ambition for doing so.

Here today we can look back at centuries of progress, the inventions, ideas and breakthroughs that came out of Manchester, came out of the North, came out of the United Kingdom and shaped the world we know today.

I just want you to imagine, if we were to reconvene here 30, 40, 50 or more years hence, what treasures this museum might hold then.

I'm absolutely certain there will be displays celebrating the dawn of a new age of electric vehicles, not just cars or buses, but electric planes, made possible with battery technology being developed now in the UK.

You will see tributes and dioramas commemorating the men and women who use new gene therapies to cure the incurable and achieve the impossible.

Here in Manchester, home of the world's first passenger railway, with Stephenson's rocket behind me, we should remember that there were people back then who thought that the whole project should be abandoned as a danger to public health, because the speeds that were being proposed would be intolerable for the human body.

So I can imagine in the future of this wonderful museum there will exhibit recording not only the breakthroughs in bioscience, here in Manchester and elsewhere that allow the UK to lead the world in producing genetically modified crops – blight-resistance potatoes will feed the world.

But also a memorial to the sceptics and doubters, complete with bioengineered edible paper, with which they were forced to eat their words.

I don't blame the doubters and the sceptics, but all I will say, is that the evidence is behind us, there's Stephenson's rocket behind us, we're sending rockets into space – we will expand our space programme as well.

I don't blame the doubters and the sceptics, it's a natural human instinct, but time and again, they have been proved wrong.

I think they will be proved wrong again.

If we unite our country, with better education, better infrastructure, with an emphasis on new technology, then this really can be a new golden age for the UK.

Time and again Manchester has shown the UK that anything is possible. Time

and again this extraordinary country has delivered the same message to the world. That's what we are going to do once more.