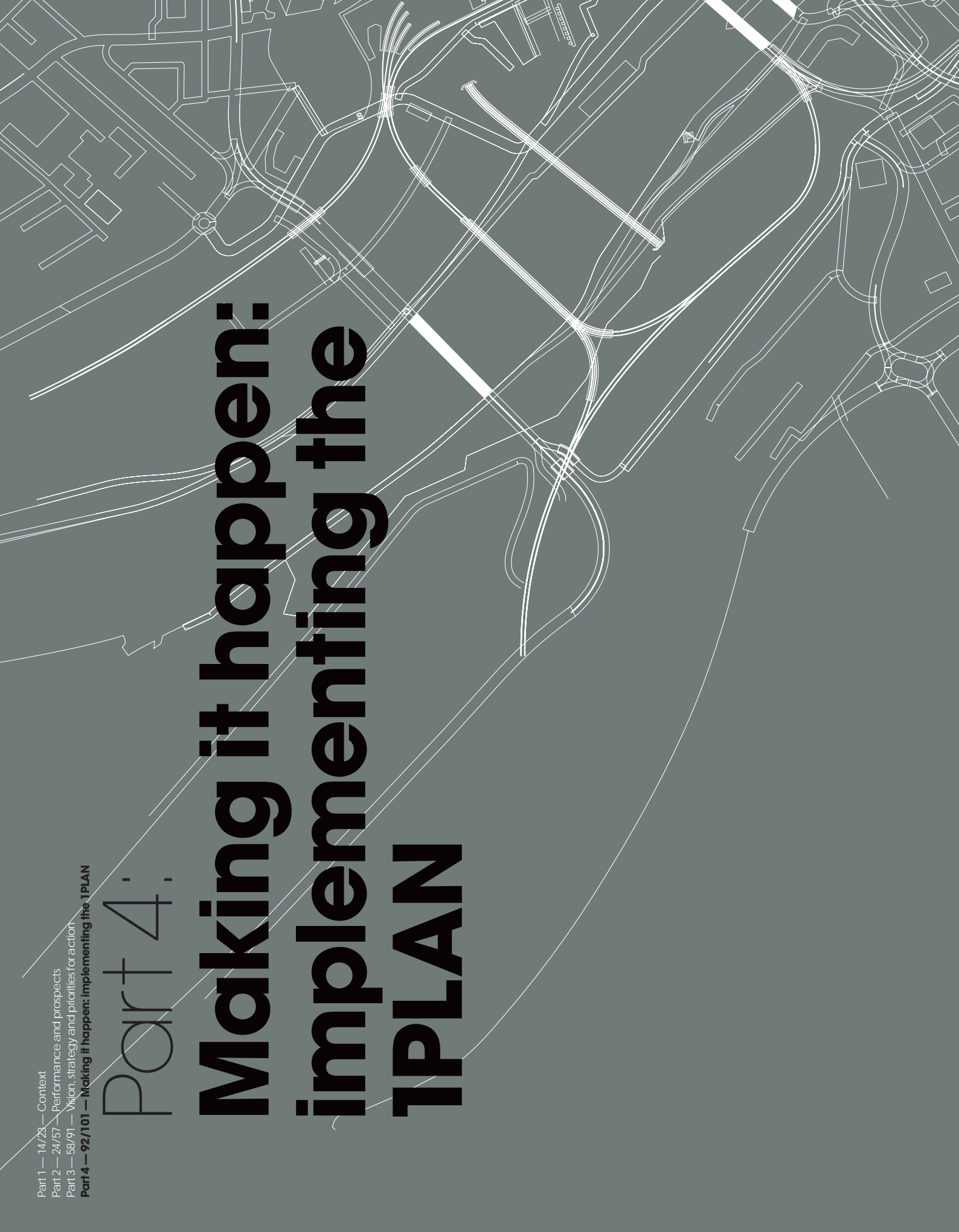


# An economic and spatial strategy for NewcastleGateshead

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Part 1 — 14/23 — Context  
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# Part 4: Making it happen: implementing the 1PLAN





## 4.1 A long-term commitment

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It will take at least 20 years to achieve our vision of prosperity, fairness and sustainability.

### 0–5 years

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In the first five years we will lay the foundations, completing early action projects, establishing the right policy framework, and achieving some key early wins: the ICEC will have been completed, together with the first phase of development at Science Central; the seeds of the knowledge economy will have germinated in the form of new ventures and business innovation; the gateway at Newcastle Central Station will have been transformed; the number of children leaving school with few or no qualifications will be sharply reduced.

## 10–20 years

After 10 years, there will have been a measurable change in the business base and the occupational structure of NewcastleGateshead: the proportion of jobs in the knowledge industries and at managerial/professional level will be rising faster than in any other core city; the development of Science Central and the other knowledge hubs will be well advanced, investments in public transport combined with a new appetite for living and working in the urban core will start to create a place of short distances; the number of young people not in employment, education or training, and of workless households will be reduced to an historic low.

## 20+ years

After 20 years, the essential features of the vision will be in place: a thriving knowledge economy; the heart of NewcastleGateshead encircled by an arc of knowledge and creativity; a beautiful and dynamic heart of the region; a model of sustainable urbanism and the most equitable core place in the UK.



## 4.2 A time of change and uncertainty

The UK economy is emerging from a deep recession, with the prospect of a slow recovery and a backdrop of unprecedented levels of public debt.

Capital grants to local government will inevitably be reduced, the prudential borrowing regime may come under review, and the Private Finance Initiative will be threatened by the lack of liquidity in money markets. A report by the New Local Government Network (NLGN) concludes that “the prospects for the future of infrastructure and regeneration are bleak”.<sup>16</sup>

The 1PLAN sets out a powerful case for prioritising investment in development and regeneration, universities and colleges, transport infrastructure, sustainable landscapes, business development and skills. It is clear that, in a time of acute uncertainty and risk aversion, the public sector has a vital role to play. Turning off the tap at a time when there is still so much to do would be extremely damaging but we have to face the harsh realities of budget cuts. So the onus is on the local and regional partners to be disciplined and to focus only on projects which will make a real difference to the sustainable competitiveness of NewcastleGateshead, and coordinate our efforts to get the best possible value from our investments. That is what the 1PLAN is about.

A strong public sector is not a bad thing. In Newcastle-Gateshead the public sector is an important source of knowledge-based jobs, and it helps to attract and retain talented people. The universities and hospitals have become vitally important players in the economy and investment in cultural projects has fuelled growth in the tourism and retail sectors. Nevertheless, our dependency on the public sector is not healthy or sustainable, and the 1PLAN is predicated on the understanding that future growth needs to be founded on a vibrant, innovative and enterprising business base. Creating a more competitive economy and accelerating wealth creation are absolute requirements of the 1PLAN.

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**The 1PLAN sets out a powerful case for continuing investment in development and regeneration, universities and colleges, transport infrastructure, sustainable landscapes, business development and skills.**

<sup>16</sup> Tom Symons and Chris Leslie, *Capital Contingencies: local capital finance in an era of high public debt*, New Local Government Network, 2009

But getting there will take time, and the public sector still has a vital role to play. Major projects like the ICEC and the knowledge hubs – Science Central, the Toffee Factory and the Northern Design Centre, will only happen if the public sector takes a leading role. On the understanding that the public sector should only intervene when the private sector is unwilling or unable to do so (or when intervention will accelerate development and/or raise quality) the 1PLAN sets clear priorities for investment, based on the following criteria:

- supporting investment in higher education and healthcare – eds and meds – as the sectors which will be co-producers of the knowledge economy
- projects which directly support the goals of growing the knowledge economy and creating a low-carbon economy in NewcastleGateshead
- projects which will generate net additional wealth and employment at the regional and UK level
- property and infrastructure projects which will significantly enhance the place competitiveness of NewcastleGateshead, by creating locations for new knowledge hubs
- public realm projects which will have a transformational effect on the urban core
- projects which will have a measurable impact on the goal of a more sustainable and equitable place.

Projects which do not meet these criteria or which will have little impact will not be supported. The success of the 1PLAN will depend critically on our ability to make tough choices and to prioritise investment.

## The new activism

Faced with unprecedented challenges, the 1PLAN partners will take a new approach to economic development and regeneration.

### We propose a new activism which will:

- accelerate the development of the City of Science by developing a triple helix alliance between universities, business and the public sector; we may use our assets to help key players to co-locate in industry quarters and knowledge hubs
- embed the concept of sustainable urbanism by coordinating planning policy and transport planning, actively promoting the urban core as the place to be for knowledge businesses and knowledge workers, and stemming the tide of suburbanisation
- bring a more aggressive approach to business winning for NewcastleGateshead, this may mean attracting inward investment, students, key workers, conferences, events or visitors; we will develop compelling market propositions and we will offer a business friendly service for prospective investors.



Tall Ships, NewcastleGateshead Quayside 2005

This document has set out a vision of prosperity, fairness and sustainability in NewcastleGateshead. It has described the 4 Big Moves and the 10 Key Steps which will form the basis our work programme in the coming years. But we know that we will be judged not by what we say but by what we do, by our ability to do things differently and to make change happen.

The 1PLAN is being launched at a challenging time but we are determined to press ahead with the programme outlined here. The economy is recovering only slowly from recession, and we are facing budget cuts, but this only makes us more determined to work together effectively and to make the best possible use of available resources.

We know that working together we are stronger. One North East, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, the Homes and Community Agency and 1NG decided to commission this strategy and we are committed to a joint effort to implement it. We have already started to review our respective programmes, looking for opportunities to cut out duplication, bureaucracy and waste. We will focus our efforts on the 10 Key Steps and only act when it is clear that we can add value. If the private sector can do the job better, we will step aside. Wherever possible, services will be planned and delivered across NewcastleGateshead; we will learn from best practice – local, national and international – and share skills and resources. We also intend to extend the partnership by engaging with the private sector and other agencies.

## 4.3 The 1PLAN partnership



High Level Bridge, NewcastleGateshead

## Governance and project management

The 1PLAN has been formally endorsed by the Gateshead and Newcastle Partnership (GNP) and they will oversee the implementation of the plan. The GNP has already played an important role in testing and shaping this strategy and their involvement in the delivery of the plan will help to ensure democratic accountability and transparency.

GNP will monitor progress and commission an annual report which will be presented to the annual 1PLAN summit which will be attended by business leaders and other partners. GNP is committed to engaging with the private sector and during 2010 they will invite prominent figures from business, the universities, the development industry and the voluntary sector to support the 1PLAN by acting as champions for the key steps.

Day-to-day supervision of the 1PLAN and the delivery plan will be the responsibility of the 1PLAN Management Group, comprising senior managers from the partner bodies. The group, which will be assisted by a dedicated project manager, will be responsible for:

- the preparation of a detailed, costed action plan, renewable every three years
- establishing a performance management framework and targets
- securing funding for the action plan
- ensuring that the plan is delivered on time and on budget
- providing briefing and reports to GNP, including an annual report.

## Work programme

Work is already under way on the production of the action plan: an interim plan is being published in June 2010 to coincide with the launch of the 1PLAN. The first full action plan will be published in autumn 2010, and thereafter at 3-yearly intervals. The first 1PLAN summit will be held in autumn 2011, and annually thereafter. A comprehensive performance review will be undertaken in 2013.

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**The success of the 1PLAN will depend critically on our ability to make tough choices and to prioritise investment.**

## 4.4 Conclusion

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This document has set out the results of a wide-ranging review of the competitive advantage of NewcastleGateshead. The results give us some cause for encouragement but they are also very challenging.



They reflect the real progress made in the past 15–20 years, which goes well beyond the iconic symbols of the cultural renewal. But the OECD report and number of the other studies show that NewcastleGateshead continues to lag behind the most prosperous and successful cities in Europe.

We want to join that elite group and realise a vision of prosperity, fairness and sustainability. We have identified 4 Big Moves for a prosperous, attractive, equitable and sustainable place, offering opportunity and an unrivalled quality of life for the people who live and work in NewcastleGateshead.

The 1PLAN sets out 10 Key Steps, which describe the practical actions we need to take in the next 3–5 years and the priorities for action. These are underpinned by a placemaking strategy which establishes a robust but flexible framework which will guide development and investment in infrastructure and the public realm.

This is a plan for the people of NewcastleGateshead. It will create opportunities for all, regardless of race, gender, disabilities or sexual orientation.

In this final section of the document we have outlined our proposals for implementing the 1PLAN. We propose light touch arrangements for governance, project management and performance management. Wherever possible, the partners will pool resources and work together across NewcastleGateshead.

The 1PLAN is being launched at a tough time, at the end of a deep recession and with the prospect of a slow recovery and tight constraints on public expenditure. But we have not compromised our aspirations for NewcastleGateshead.

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**We believe in NewcastleGateshead and we are excited about the future.**