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# **Anchoring the Northern Powerhouse: Understanding anchor institutions and their contribution within a complex urban and regional system.**

**Barbara Colledge**

## **Abstract**

The Northern Powerhouse vision (Osborne 2014), to create thriving Northern city-regions with a re-balancing of the English economy (Martin et al 2014, pp. 3-6) is by necessity a long-term ambition (Osborne 2014).

City-regional sustainable development is a complex system (Martin and Simmie 2008; Martin & Sunley 2015; RSA 2014, p15) and will rely on local leadership for policies and decision making in a devolved environment (Cox and Hunter 2015, pp. 11-12). Experience from Anchor Institutions in the United States highlights new models of place-based leadership (Dubb et al 2013, p vii; Serang, Thompson and Howard 2013, p14-17) shared value (Porter 2010; ICIC 2011; Porter and Kramer 2011), investment (Serang, Thompson and Howard 2013, pp. 4-6) and community wealth building (Dubb et al 2013, pp. 24-29) for delivering city-regional development.

New forms of multi-level governance institutions, such as Combined Authorities (Sandford 2015) and Local Enterprise Partnerships (HM Government 2010 pp. 12-14) will be significant in this shaping of place and economies (Cox and Hunter 2015, p 17). This paper provides an early analysis of the role and contribution of Anchor Institutions in the Northern Powerhouse geography. These institutions have the potential in a devolved administration (House of Lords and House of Commons 2015) to make a major contribution to the sustainable development of the Northern Powerhouse and to address the economic, social and environmental factors that contribute to the sustainability of places in the long term.

# **Anchoring the Northern Powerhouse: Understanding anchor institutions and their contribution within a complex urban and regional system.**

**Barbara Colledge**

## **Understanding the Northern Powerhouse Challenge**

Recent devolution in England (House of Lords and House of Commons 2015), the creation of a 'Northern Powerhouse (Osborne 2014a; 2014b) and associated fiscal, investment and public service devolution (HM Treasury and GMCA 2014; GMCA 2015) has set in place new levers, responsibilities, governance models, policies and political powers for stimulating economic, social and regional development.

The case for the Northern Powerhouse vision is a feature of a growing imbalance in economic and social outcomes (Centre for Cities 2015) that have evolved from long-run factors (Parkinson 2013a; Cox 2013 p 81; Martin 2015, p240-243). The Northern Powerhouse cities have lower levels of national GDP output and productivity (Martin, Tyler and Gardiner 2014, pp 64 - 65) and higher levels of social inequality and deprivation (Parkinson et al 2013, p 24). Historical, political and economic history and path dependency play an important role in shaping the performance of place in economic, social and environmental terms. As Martin (2015, p245) highlights, 'economic efficiency and social equity arguments' are not mutually exclusive but 'complementary and mutually beneficial' for the rationale of 'greater spatial balance' (Martin, 2015, p 245).

Whilst quality of life for many in England has improved (Social Mobility & Child Poverty Commission 2014, p7), the challenge remains the same for the Northern Powerhouse, for spatial re-balancing (Martin 2015, p 241; 265), sustainable development ideals (United Nations 2010) and greater social justice (CLES 2015, p17).

The Northern Powerhouse landscape is shaped by historical settlement patterns (Brenner 1998, p6), physical geography, industrial heritage and political power. As Osborne (2014a; 2014b) and others have highlighted the geography is by its nature imprecise (Wharton J. cited in Pidd 2015) and will have 'fuzzy boundaries' (Harrison 2012, p1248).

As Brenner (1998) contends these are 'multiple overlapping forms of territorial organization' which 'converge, coalesce and interpenetrate' (Brenner, 1998, p 6). Brenner argues that these forms of territorial organisational can apply to cities/urban areas as well as states at different geographical scales e.g. urban, regional, national and global (Brenner 1998, p16).

Whether seen as an 'interconnected metro-region' (Cox and Hunter 2015, p 4) or a collection of distinctive northern cities developed on either side of the natural Pennines geography and historical Lancashire/Yorkshire divide there are variances in how this territory is defined. The Northern Powerhouse has a population of ten million people, (Centre for Cities 2015 p2) the Sheffield, North East, Greater Manchester, Liverpool, West Yorkshire and Hull city-regions (Centre for Cities 2015 p5) and 23 Universities (Centre for Cities 2015 p7).

Economic and social development of the Northern Powerhouse is a factor of long run complex evolutionary systems (Martin and Simmie 2008; Martin & Sunley 2015 pp725-728; RSA 2014, p15). Relative GDP performance of UK regions 1985-2012 appears to have changed little with the northern powerhouse regional territories (North East England, Yorkshire and the Humber, North West England) ranked lower than London, the South East, and the Midlands (ONS 1996, 2014 c in Jones 2015, pp. 285-286). If the Northern Powerhouse Region is considered as a collection of the North West, North East and Yorkshire and Humber geography, functional economies, and communities, the scale is larger than London. The economy is delivering a higher proportion of GVA and a larger number of jobs (see Table1).

The challenge for sustainability and resilience of this complex economic and social urban and regional system, is to foster a whole system approach (Jones, 2015, p288), and partnership working at different scales and across multi stakeholders, political parties and communities (What Works Centre 2015 p7). The Northern Powerhouse is situated within interconnected international, national and local economies operating at overlapping and different scales (Jones 2015, p 286).

Northern Powerhouse Regional Analysis															
		NUTS1 regions (ONS December 2014)		UK Business Count 2015 (NOMIS 2015)									(NOMIS)		
Region	Population 2014	Total GVA Total GVA (£m)2	GVA per head (£)2	Enterprise Micro	%	Enterprise Small 10-49	%	Enterprise Medium 50- 249	%	Enterprise Large 250+	%	Enterprises Total 2015	Population working age 16-64 2014	Jobs 2013	Job Density 2013
North West	7133000	141620	19937	207195	87.8	23765	10.1	4085	1.7	910	0.4	235955	4509800	3,476,000	0.77
North East	2618700	439374	17381	57050	86.8	7105	10.8	1290	2	285	0.4	65735	1663400	1,133,000	0.68
Yorkshire & Humber	5360000	101701	19053	150585	87.4	17870	10.4	3100	1.8	660	0.4	172215	3389600	2525000	0.74
<b>Northern Powerhouse</b>	<b>15111700</b>	<b>682695</b>	<b>56371</b>	<b>414830</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>48740</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>8475</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1855</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>473905</b>	<b>9562800</b>	<b>7,134,000</b>	<b>0.75</b>
NP as % of London	176.98	201.70	140.17	103.52		137.30		125		98.15		106.52	164.21	133.02	80.22
London	8538700	338475	40215	400710	90.1	35500	8	6780	1.5	1890	0.4	444880	5823500	5363000	0.93

**Table 1: Northern Powerhouse Analysis by NOMIS and ONS regions (NUTS1)**

This will require new policy levers and investment to deliver and will rely on local systems leadership and new mayoral governance models for policies and decision-making in a devolved environment (Cox and Hunter 2015, pp. 11-12). Importantly, there is an increasing focus on the significance of ‘institutions and the state’ for regional resilience and growth (Martin and Sunley 2015, p 725; Boschma 2015, pp. 741-742). Jones (2015) suggests that “*embedding capital*” is as important as “*creating it*” (Jones 2015, p289) and argues that greater attention should be placed on how UK regions “*ensure the benefits of their resources...are harnessed to the benefit of the region itself*” (Jones 2015, p 289). Criticism of present devolution approaches suggest that the focus is primarily on fuelling economic growth not addressing inequality or redistribution (Deas 2015, p2311). This interplay of institutions and place is considered central to the success of the Northern Powerhouse.

### **The Role of Anchor Institutions within a complex urban and regional system**

Institutions (Tomaney 2014, p132) and Anchor Institutions (Clarke and Williams 2014) play a significant role in the development and success of city-regions (Martin and Sunley 2015) due to their embeddedness in and interdependence with place (Maurasse 2007, p2; Clarke and Williams 2014). Anchor institutions, institutional thickness (Amin and Thrift 1995) and institutional effectiveness (Beer and Lester 2015, p 223) are central to city-regional development and sustainable economic growth in that they “condition, constrain and enable” economic evolution and are shaped by it. As such, “institutions are both context and consequence of economic evolution’, (Martin and Sunley 2015, p724).

Maximising these Anchor Institutional assets and the mutual benefits for development of place, people and institutions are considered vital lessons from the United States (CLES 2015, p2). These Anchor Institutions in the US and UK typically include Universities, arts, cultural and community organisations, and health providers along with anchor coordinators such as city-regional decision makers and major public service, infrastructure or utility providers (Table 2). Community or Social Anchors are increasingly considered important whether by virtue of their role in co-ordination (Anchor Co-ordinators) or delivery of a range of essential community or voluntary services within a locality. This ‘social sector...is integral’ to

**Table 2: Anchor Institutions in the US and UK literature**

<b>Anchor Institution Type</b>	<b>Anchor Type by Reference</b>	<b>References</b>
University - Higher Education Institutions	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19 (15 sources)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. McInroy N. and Jackson M.; and Paul Hackett (ed) (2015) pp 1-19.</li> <li>2. Netter Centre for Community Partnerships (2008) ‘</li> <li>3. The Work Foundation (2010) ‘pp 1-28.</li> <li>4. McInroy, N. and Longlands, S. (2011)</li> <li>5. Gold and Devids (2014)</li> <li>6. D Maurrasse (2007)</li> <li>7. Hahn A. with Coonerty C. and Peaslee L. (2003)</li> <li>8. Inner City Insights (2011) pp 1-10.</li> <li>9. McClure C. R, Mandel L. H., Saunders J., Alemanne M. D., Spears L. I. and Bishop B. W. (2012) pp 1-83.</li> <li>10. Dubb S. and Howard T. (2012),</li> <li>11. Stasch J. (2014)</li> <li>12. Penn Institute for Urban Research (nd)</li> <li>13. Birch E. L. (2014) ‘Chapter 11, at page 2017 in Watcher S.M. and Zeuli K. A. (Eds) (2014)</li> <li>14. Ehlenz M. M. and Birch E. L. with Agness B. (2014), pp 1-50, at p1.</li> <li>15. Smallbone D., Kitching J., Blackburn R. (2015), p vii.</li> <li>16. Taylor H. L. Jr. and Luter G. (2013)</li> <li>17. Fulbright-Anderson K., Auspos P. and Anderson A.(2001) ‘p1.</li> <li>18. Witty A.(2013) ‘BIS, 13/1241</li> <li>19. Mosavi S. (2015)</li> </ol>
College – Further Education Institutions	3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 17, 19 (9 sources)	
Utility Provider (infrastructure services water, energy, transport)	3, 10, 14, 15, 17, 19 (6 sources)	
Arts, Cultural, Community Organisations, libraries, religious/churches	3, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19 (10 sources)	
Sports Organisation, Venues, Teams	3, 8, 13, 14, 15, 19 (6 sources)	
Housing Association	1, 5 (2 sources)	
Hospitals, Medical Centres, NHS Trust	1, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19 (10 sources)	
Private Sector Business (Can be large corporates with strong local links such as banks (UKES); those with Headquarters in place; longevity in place)	1,3,5, 12, 14, 15, 19 (7 sources)	
Military Installations	12, 15, 19 (3 sources)	
Law Enforcement Agencies	9 (1 source)	
Schools and local education agencies	9 (1 source)	
Local and Regional Government Agencies	1, 3, 5, 9,19 (5 sources)	

support people holistically in a locality to connect to skills, welfare or economic opportunities and for quality of life (CLEES 2015a, p17; RSA 2015, pp48-67).

The central premise is that Anchor Institutions have an important presence or role in the shaping of places in which they are located. They often have a large stake in these places that in turn have an important influence on their operation. Frequently these anchor institutions display longevity of location in the place and have a significant influence and impact on place through the jobs they generate (as employer and indirectly), procurement practices and purchasers in locality, their investments in physical assets and their substantial human and intellectual capital. These Anchor Institutions provide a range of functions within a place that form part of the place's attraction for business and economic growth, for migration and settlement of people and for sustaining the functioning and operation of the place over time. Anchor Institutions are therefore institutions with influence and impact in the wider functional economy and settlement that have a strong connection and mutual dependency (embeddedness and co-evolution) with the places in which they are located.

The changing governance arrangements of English city-regions with Combined Authorities, (Sandford 2015) Local Enterprise Partnerships (HM Government 2010 pp. 12-14) and further devolution deals under consideration (e.g. North East deal 23 October 2015) lead to a growing significance of economic, social and environmental development of place.

These new forms of multi-level governance institutions will be central to the shaping of place and economies (Cox and Hunter 2015, p 17) for "The key [to growth] appears to be how assets are used, how different stakeholders interact and how synergies are exploited in different types of regions", (OECD 2009, p7).

Anchor Institutions in Northern Powerhouse city-regions affords a rich talent pool, strong public, private and community organisations and substantial employment, expenditure and procurement capacity vital for future growth. Analysis of typical Anchor Types (Higher Education Institutions, Medical/Health and Fire/Police Federations highlights a total of 275 Anchor Institutions with a combined spend of £76,087M. These Anchor Institutions are major employers in the region accounting for 1,133, 371 jobs, some 15% of all employee jobs in this geography (as defined by a sub set of 75 Local Authorities).

This has particular import for major city-regions such as Leeds City Region, Liverpool City Region, Greater Manchester and the North East in supporting the



**Table 3: Northern Powerhouse Analysis by Anchor Institution Type**

Anchor Type	No. Anchors	Spend £M	Notes	Anchor Institution Jobs	Students HESA 2013/14	Population (75 Local Authority Areas) NOMIS 2014	Local Employee Jobs Head count NOMIS 2014	AI jobs as % of total employee jobs
Local Authorities	75	14124.60	1a-c	527,876				
Higher Education Institutions	32	6161.88	2	103,395	520,685			
Fire and Rescue	11	571.33	3	12853				
Police and Crime Commissioner	12	3018.95	4	54277				
NHS	145	52210.73	5	434,970				
<b>NP TOTAL</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>76087.49</b>		<b>1,133,371</b>	<b>520685</b>	<b>17,292,503</b>	<b>7,325,300</b>	<b>15.47</b>

**NOTES**

1a. Spend: 2014-15 £M Revenue Spending power tables 2014/15 in 2015/16 Supporting Information Final 9

1b. Jobs: Employment 2014-15 Total Headcount QPSES 2014 Q1

1c. Population, local employee jobs, Local Authority NOMIS data 2014

2. HESA Staffing 13/14; HESA Institution HE students 2013/14

3. DCLG Fire Statistics 2013-14 p 5; National Statistics release data by Local Authority; Employment Appendix 1-13, 31 March 2014

4. Police and Crime Commissioner 31 March 2014; Guardian police staff FTE 2014

5. NHS Workforce at 30 Sept 2014 health and social care information centre ccg financial allocations 2013/14; health providers Dec 2014 NHS role count

development of the Northern Powerhouse economy (CLES 2015b) and national prosperity.

In the United States, Anchor Institutions have been mobilised and integrated into city-regional development processes. Multi stakeholder collaboration by public service or not for profit institutions such as Universities, Colleges, hospitals, housing associations, libraries and sporting/cultural venues is supporting the creation of institutional and place-based (shared) economic, social and environmental value (Porter 2010; Porter 2011, pp 64; 66; ICIC 2011, p3; Taylor and Luter 2013, p1; Dubb, McKinley and Howard 2013a and 2013b; CLES 2015a, p3).

There is a growing recognition that Anchor Institutions merit greater prominence in decisions and policy (CLES 2015a; 2015b). Experience from Anchor Institutions in the United States highlights new models of place-based leadership (Dubb et al 2013, p vii; Serang, Thompson and Howard 2013, p14-17), partnerships (CLES 2015a, p15) shared value (Porter 2010; ICIC 2011; Porter and Kramer 2011), investment (Serang Thompson and Howard 2013, pp. 4-6) and community wealth building (Dubb et al 2013, pp. 24-29) for delivering city-regional development

Influenced by these US experiences, new forms of collaboration, public service innovation, community anchor strategies and anchor institution developments are emerging in the Northern Powerhouse region to realise economic and social development objectives in the context of continuing reductions in public services funding (see Table 4).

Private sector institutions sometimes display similar characteristics to Anchor Institutions, with significant potential to contribute to economic and social development of places (Netter 2008; Community Wealth Organisation 2015; McInroy et al 2015; Penn Institute for Urban Research nd; Smallbone, Kitching and Blackburn 2015). Utility companies, financial institutions and some 'embedded' major employers in cities or regions have been identified as having this potential and significance in their wider engagement through their assets, employment base and supply chain (The Work Foundation 2010, p1). This strategic role of large private sector businesses as major employers or headquarters in city-regions and their role and influence as magnets for investment and in the growth of supply chains or networks of small and medium sized enterprises,

<b>Table 4: Innovation in engagement of Anchor Institutions</b>			
<b>Location</b>	<b>Innovation Type</b>	<b>Anchors Engaged</b>	<b>References</b>
Leeds City Region	Good Growth and Procurement to address poverty	Higher Education Further Education NHS Trusts Clinical Commissioning Groups Housing Associations Transport Provider	Joseph Rowntree Funded Research 2015
Preston	Anchor Procurement	Good growth fostered by local Procurement	CLES (2015b)
Wakefield District Council and Calderdale County Council	Community Anchor Strategy	Development of strategies to utilise community anchors for social development	Wakefield District Council and Calderdale County Council
Greater Manchester	Health Service Innovation	Health service integration through innovation and partnership	GMCA 2015

contributes to the development of place. CLES (2015a) argues for businesses to act more like ‘citizens in which they are based’ to support better utilisation of the institutional assets for economic development and to address inequality’ (CLES 2015a, pp 15-16).

## **Conclusions**

This early analysis of the Northern Powerhouse region has focused on Anchor Institutions and their significant contribution and scale. A greater focus on institutions and integrated place-based and people-based policy will be important in realising the full potential of the Northern Powerhouse. Understanding and actively developing the vital role of anchor institutions as components, nodes or networks within this urban and regional system will support a more aligned and sustainable vision of place-based regional economic, social and environmental development to be realised. The ongoing public sector funding reductions will have a major impact on some Anchor Institutions and the necessity for public service transformation and reform. It is important to understand how these public services can be maintained utilising the assets of Anchor Institutions of all types, including community and private sector institutions. These Anchors contribute substantially to the fundamental requirements of place and sustainable communities which is important for future economic growth over the long run.

Place-based policy and practice of these Anchor Institutions have the potential to support a Northern Powerhouse that is not only prosperous, efficient and productive but that delivers a distinctive approach to shared sustainable economic, social and environmental value to re-balance quality of life for all. The risks and consequences otherwise are stark (RSA 2014, p 10; United Nations 2010).

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