

# **Annex B: How the consultation was promoted to the public and stakeholders**

## **1. Overview**

A communications strategy for the devolution consultation was designed with the aim of engaging members of the public across South Yorkshire and gaining at least 500 responses to the consultation. Whilst the consultation was open to anyone who wished to respond, promotional activity was targeted at people, businesses and communities across South Yorkshire, as the focus of the additional powers that are proposed.

The consultation was widely publicised through a variety of mechanisms including:

- pro-active media releases and pro-active engagement of regional and local media throughout the consultation, including advertisements in the South Yorkshire printed press;
- web content for the SCR website, including a feedback form;
- similar, but locally adapted content for local authority and partner websites;
- social media using local authority and SCR MCA and LEP family channels; and
- staff messaging.

In addition, the SCR directly contacted more than 40 stakeholders from across the region including MPs, business representative organisations, colleges and universities, business leaders, and others.

## **2. Our approach**

To develop and subsequently implement our approach to the consultation a working group was established with Communications leads from the Sheffield City Region Executive and the four local authorities in South Yorkshire, who together agreed key messages, tactics and the design of the campaign materials. Collectively, this formed a common toolkit that was deployed by all throughout the period that the consultation was live.

This suite of campaign materials, featuring images from across the whole South Yorkshire geography, were designed and delivered across all communications channels, with the aim of providing a consistent and coherent message for the campaign.

The working group took part in weekly meetings before, during and after the consultation period, to update each other on communications delivery, share successes and learning points, and ensure the campaign was on track at all stages of the delivery process.

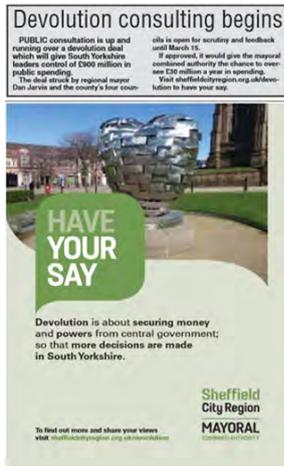
## **3. Traditional media**

A media advisory notice was sent out from the Sheffield City Region on Monday 3 February, to announce the launch of the public consultation. This was issued to 163 media outlets locally, regionally and nationally, across print, broadcast and digital media. Barnsley Council also issued a press release announcing the launch of the consultation, which was sent to local and regional media as well as being published on the local authority's website.

Coverage of the consultation launch was published across titles including the Sheffield Star, the Rotherham Advertiser, the Barnsley Chronicle, the Doncaster Free Press and nationally

in Public Sector Executive magazine, as well as being featured on BBC Radio Sheffield. In interviews given with the media during the consultation period, Mayor Dan Jarvis also encouraged members of the public to take part in the consultation.

Advertisements were also placed in the local media in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield (*see example below*). Each advert used different images to tailored to the four different places within South Yorkshire.



#### 4. Digital media

A dedicated consultation webpage was created on the Sheffield City Region website, at [www.sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/devolution](http://www.sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/devolution)

This page provided information about the consultation and also acted as the portal for members of the public to fill in the online questionnaire.

This website was linked to from all social media posts, and the link was featured in all campaign materials. A total of 11,858 people have visited the webpage since it went live, making it the fifth most-visited page on the Sheffield City Region website since the site was launched in 2018.

Information was also displayed prominently on the websites of all four local authorities in South Yorkshire (*as per example below from Barnsley Council*):

Home > News > Have your say on powers and resources in South Yorkshire

## Have your say on powers and resources in South Yorkshire

04 February 2020

People are being asked to give their views on the South Yorkshire devolution deal, which would see tens of millions of pounds in additional funding, as well as additional powers, pumped into our economy.

Cllr Sir Steve Houghton CBE, Leader of Barnsley Council, said: "Getting the right devolution deal for the people of Barnsley has always been our priority.

"In 2017, our residents and businesses voted in favour of wider Yorkshire devolution deal and we're still very much pursuing this.

"The Government have confirmed that they will work with Yorkshire councils to establish a Yorkshire Committee on the basis that the South Yorkshire devolution deal is brought to a positive conclusion.

"We plan to continue to be part of the South Yorkshire devolution deal on an interim basis. I encourage everyone to take part in this consultation, which will help us to unlock significant opportunities and investment for Barnsley, and South Yorkshire."

The consultation will run from Monday 3 February to Sunday 15 March. To take part in the consultation, visit the Sheffield City Region website: [sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/devolution](http://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/devolution)



**Join in**

- > Facebook
- > Twitter
- > YouTube

How would you rate your online experience?



### 5. Social media

Organic (*ie – not paid-for*) social media updates were posted throughout the six-week consultation period, across Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Posts were issued on the Sheffield City Region accounts, as well as by the local authorities in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield, all using the various campaign imagery and with a link to the online consultation (*example of Facebook posts below*).

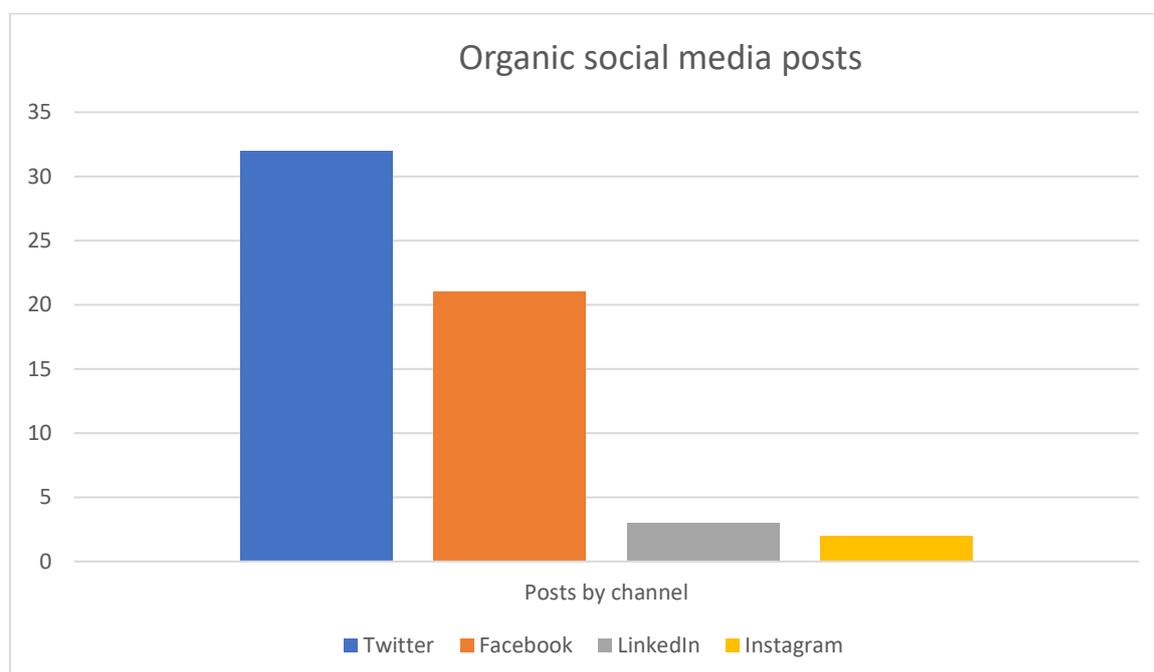


These posts had the potential to reach 257,100 followers across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn; broken down by channel and organisation as below:

### Numbers of followers, on social media channels used during the consultation

Channel	Barnsley Council	Doncaster Council	Rotherham Council	Sheffield City Council	Sheffield City Region
Twitter	16,200	23,200	13,300	105,700	13,000
Facebook	20,924	28,831	5,992	13,843	967
Instagram	2,948	Did not use	Did not use	Did not use	1,273
LinkedIn	Did not use	Did not use	4,237	Did not use	6,685
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,072</b>	<b>52,031</b>	<b>23,529</b>	<b>119,543</b>	<b>21,925</b>

During the course of the consultation period, a total of 58 posts were issued across these channels, averaging almost 10 posts across social media per week of the consultation. The below chart indicates the breakdown of posts by social media platform:



Paid-for social media posts were also issued from the Sheffield City Region corporate accounts across Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. These posts were specifically targeted to people living in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield, and included a button to click through to the online consultation.

A total of £2434.37 was spent on promoting the consultation on social media during the course of the six-week consultation. Broken down by channel, this included a £1549.99 spend on Facebook and Instagram, £556.88 on LinkedIn and £327.44 on Twitter.

Interim results from the consultation were monitored throughout the delivery process, and the online adverts were re-targeted in response to this. For example, two weeks into the consultation period, it became clear that increased numbers of respondents stated they were from Sheffield, in comparison to in Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham. In response to this, the social media adverts were re-targeted, so more people outside of Sheffield were reached, in a bid to gain a more even spread of responses across the full South Yorkshire geography

During the course of the consultation, paid-for social media posts received the following number of impressions across each channel:

Channel	Impressions ( <i>number of times the posts were viewed</i> )
Facebook and Instagram	315,197
Twitter	75,863
LinkedIn	29,555
	<b>Total impressions: 420,615</b>

## 6. Stakeholder engagement

Emails were sent directly to a more than 40 stakeholders from the following groups, directing them to online information about the devolution consultation, inviting them to take part, and also inviting them to share the information with their own networks. Stakeholders engaged with in this way included representatives from:

- Confederation of British Industry
- Education and Skills Funding Agency
- English Heritage
- Federation of Small Businesses
- South Yorkshire's Chambers of Commerce
- Government departments, including MHCLG and BEIS
- Institute of Directors
- Job Centre Plus
- Local Authorities, including South Yorkshire's constituent and non-constituent councils
- Local Enterprise Partnership members in the Sheffield City Region, D2N2 and Leeds City Region
- Members of Parliament for South Yorkshire constituencies
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority
- South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner
- Trade Union Congress
- SYPTE
- Universities and colleges in South Yorkshire

- Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust

## 7. Direct mail

Information about the devolution consultation was also sent to a number of mailing lists, where people had proactively opted-in to receive information. These included a mailing list comprising some 36,000 people who signed up for GovDelivery alerts from Sheffield City Council; and a mailing list of 653 businesses who receive updates from the Sheffield City Region Growth Hub (*see example from Growth Hub newsletter below*).

# News in Brief

## *Devolution for South Yorkshire*

Last week, consultation for the Sheffield City Region Devolution deal was opened. Devolution is about transferring money and powers from central government; so that more decisions are made locally, which would otherwise be made nationally. Securing extra powers means that more decisions about your place will be made by the locally-elected Mayor and the Mayoral Combined Authority (including your council Leaders).

[Make sure you have your say](#)

## 8. Internal staff engagement

Posts were issued on the intranets of the Sheffield City Region, Sheffield City Council and Rotherham Council, in order to engage with employees and encourage them to fill in the online consultation.

Barnsley, Rotherham and Sheffield councils also issued an e-bulletin to all staff, making them aware of the consultation and providing a link to the online questionnaire. Below is an extract from Barnsley Council's "Straight Talk" bulletin, as an example of the internal communications delivered.

## Have your say on powers and resources in South Yorkshire

We're asking you to give your views on the South Yorkshire devolution deal, which would see tens of millions of pounds in additional funding, as well as additional powers, pumped into our economy.

Cllr Sir Steve Houghton CBE, Leader of Barnsley Council, said: "Getting the right devolution deal for the people of Barnsley has always been our priority.

"In 2017, our residents and businesses voted in favour of wider Yorkshire devolution deal, and we're still very much pursuing this.

"The Government have confirmed that they will work with Yorkshire councils to establish a Yorkshire Committee on the basis that the South Yorkshire devolution deal is brought to a positive conclusion.

"We plan to continue to be part of the South Yorkshire devolution deal on an interim basis. I encourage everyone to take part in this consultation, which will help us to unlock significant opportunities and investment for Barnsley and South Yorkshire."

The consultation will finish on **Sunday 15 March**. To take part in the consultation, visit the Sheffield City Region website: [sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/devolution](http://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/devolution).

## 9. Collateral

Posters advertising the consultation were displayed in public buildings including transport interchanges, council offices and some libraries across Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. (*Example below shows a poster on display at Doncaster Interchange*).

Two hundred paper copies of the consultation document were also printed and made available to collect from council offices, and also from the Sheffield City Region head office at Broad Street West.

