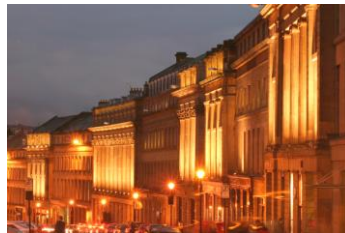


Why an OECD Review of Newcastle & the North East?

Ian Stratford, Chief Executive

- Increasingly relevant in advance of any central proposals for reform of local government and/or devolution
- An historic period of sustained economic growth but initial evidence that our European comparator cities are progressing faster
- Perception that national and regional policies are spatially blind
- No consensus over the leading role of our city within the region
- To open up new strategic relationships with regional & national institutions
- To promote our brand



Our Initial Reaction (1)

- The genuine value of the outward looking process as much as the product of the Review
- Independent, authoritative and objective – all that we asked for !
- Extremely clear analysis which expertly articulates need for fundamental debate over the basis for forward strategies and any new institutions of governance



Our Initial Reaction (2)



- **Need for a mature and considered response to the challenges properly identified**

- **Emphasises a leading role for central government in supporting difficult structural change – and the need for parallel reform of higher education**



- **Ensure that we rigorously and critically evaluate any new strategies or institutions against the very sound benchmark set in our Review**

- **Real challenge is to avoid temptation to ignore or refute well founded criticism**