



3LE on.....government's overall approach to local growth and 'Picklemania'

It is fairly evident that, by and large, I am quite sceptical of government's approach to local growth. Their credibility is not assisted by the idiosyncrasies of their 'larger than life' Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

For a serious look at the evolution of government's overall approach, look at:-

- ['Localism – all bang and no buck'](#) – Guardian November 2010 on the aftermath of the Spending Review 2010 and the Local Growth White Paper
- ['It's been Year Zero for economic development'](#) – Local Government Chronicle, May 2011, reviewing the first year of the coalition's approach to local growth and development

By Autumn 2011 I was pretty pessimistic, but also identified opportunities for ambitious local leadership teams in:-

- ['Are we in the autumn of local economic development'](#) – R&R, October 2011....and
- ['Learning to love the autumn statement'](#) – R&R December 2011

By the start of 2012, government's search for elusive local growth spawned a comment on their attempt to replace GVA with a 'happiness index' as a measure of progress in:-

- ['Measuring happiness: will 2012 be a happy new year?'](#) – Guardian, January 2012

And, of course, government's contributions to specific policy areas – LEPs, town centres, industrial policies, funding programmes etc., – can be found in the relevant specific sections of the web site.

More light-heartedly, Eric Pickles has been an 'easy target' in a range of pieces, although I would argue that each of them has a serious point to make:-

- ['A man for all regions...'](#) – Local Government Chronicle, September 2010 – showing how Pickles' 'localism...' went regional in his patronage of Greater Essex, Kent and East Sussex LEP
- ['Avoiding the fear factor in LEPs'](#) – Guardian November 2010 with Eric as the 'wicked witch of west(minster)' in his own version of Wizard of Oz
- ['Absurd, brainless, contrived...'](#) – Personal blog, June 2011, an alternative take on Pickles' 'ABC...' of excellent local authorities
- ['Do they know it's Xmas...'](#) R&R December 2011 with Eric as 'Mr Blobby' in a light hearted look at the relevance of Xmas Number Ones to local economic development
- ['Don't think of an elephant...'](#) Personal Blog, January 2012 – how contrived moral outrage is used propagandistically by Pickles and his colleagues to shape the terms of political debate

If you are unable to access any of these pieces (e.g. because you are not a subscriber to the journal/service), please contact me direct for a complimentary copy.