

Q. What is the benefit of Devolution?

A. Devolution moves decisions currently made by central government in Westminster to a local level, offering greater local control over the decisions that impact on our lives. It gives us the chance to prioritise and accelerate improvement of our roads, railways and digital connectivity, as well as creating jobs and building homes where they are needed.

Q. What are the costs associated with a Combined Authority and a Mayor?

A. There will be costs but we will be looking to reallocate resources and expertise from within member authorities to deliver the work of the Combined Authority

Q. Isn't this just an additional tier of Government?

A. These are decisions that are currently being made by central government. Devolution is about taking powers from central government and making decisions locally on local issues.

Q. Won't it be impossible to get anything done as all leaders will only be after what benefits their area?

A. Not at all, the Governance Scheme requires the members of the Combined Authority to act in the best interests of the area as a whole and proposes the way in which decisions will be taken to ensure that devolution delivers for Norfolk and Suffolk

Q. What proposals are in future deals?

A. Whilst these are being developed our main focus is the proposed deal in front of us right now. However, if the Combined Authority goes ahead we are looking to negotiate our second deal this autumn.

Q. How do you know government will sign off on the proposed deal?

A. The proposed deal is based on the devolution deal for East Anglia announced by the Chancellor in the March Budget. Since then, we've been working closely with Government to develop the two sister deals now proposed for Norfolk and Suffolk and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Q. What if Government changes your proposed deal?

A. As we've been working closely with Government over a number of months on developing the proposed we think this is unlikely. However, in the event of significant changes being made, councils would have to consider the deal again.

Q. Where would the Combined Authority and Mayor be based?

A. This is still to be decided but in the spirit of efficiency, we would expect to use our existing buildings

Q. Who can be Mayor?

A. Anyone. Elections are due to take place in May 2017

Q. When would the Combined Authority and Mayor come into being?

A. Mayoral elections are due to take place in May 2017. The creation of a Combined Authority requires parliamentary debate and approval. If the participating councils agree to the draft Order to create the Combined Authority in October it would probably be created by the end of the calendar year. In any event it would need to be created before the Mayoral elections in May 2017

Q. Would the Combined Authority take powers away from local areas?

A. No, devolution is about getting new powers and funding from central government. How these powers are delivered will be decided locally and could involve existing authorities taking on responsibilities for local delivery.

Q. Can any Government really give a commitment for 30 years?

A. If Government enters into an agreement with us on those terms we expect them to be honoured. However, we don't have the power to bind future administrations.

Q. How will the money be shared out across the areas?

A. The proposed deal document set out how much funding Norfolk and Suffolk would receive. It will be for the Combined Authority and Mayor to decide on spending priorities.

Q. My council didn't endorse the proposed devolution deal. What does that mean for me?

A. As a resident of the county you can still provide your views in the consultation. Your Council could join the Combined Authority, if created, at a later date.