

>EAST ANGLIA DEVO^LUTION

Background

The day after the Scottish Referendum in September 2014 the Prime Minister announced a 'devolution revolution' for all of the United Kingdom. Devolution is the redistribution of power and funding from central to local government.

The Government continued to develop the "Northern Powerhouse" and devolution deals across several northern cities, based on a model of closer co-operation amongst existing councils.

Last September, Norfolk and Suffolk independently put in devolution bids. The Government then asked for a joint bid and suggested that the two counties worked with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

In his budget speech in March 2016 the Chancellor proposed a devolution deal for East Anglia. The draft deal covered the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and all the county and district councils in East Anglia, with the exception of Cambridge City Council.

Following further reflection on what would be best for local people, it was decided to pursue two distinct devolution deals - one for Norfolk and Suffolk and one for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The proposed Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution Deal was published on 17 June 2016. Since then, all of the councils in Suffolk, along with Norfolk County Council, Broadland District Council, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and South Norfolk Council have endorsed the deal.

Some councils in Norfolk have decided not to go ahead with a combined authority at this stage. They are Breckland Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council and Norwich City Council.

The deal involves having an Elected Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk and a combined authority - where councils join together to make collective decisions on matters that affect the whole area.

Why we are consulting

Councils in Norfolk and Suffolk have undertaken a Governance Review to look in depth at the most effective way to deliver economic growth and public sector reform. The Governance Review concluded that a Mayoral Combined Authority would best deliver these outcomes so we have published proposals for how a new combined authority could work, called a Scheme of Governance.

We now have to ask local people, businesses and organisations what they think of the Scheme of Governance. We will send the consultation responses to the Secretary of State, who will look at these alongside the Governance Review and the draft Scheme of Governance. They will then decide whether a Mayoral Combined Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk can be set-up.

Our proposals

You can read the full Governance Review and Scheme of Governance online at www.eastangliadevo.co.uk

The devolution deal

Devolution could mean greater control locally over decisions that impact on all our lives – decisions about Norfolk and Suffolk, made in Norfolk and Suffolk.

The proposed deal could mean control of more than £750m of funding to improve Norfolk and Suffolk, enable us to create 95,000 jobs by 2026, deliver around 200,000 homes over the lifetime of the deal and provide the skills that employees and businesses want.

New powers and responsibilities could include:

- Writing a plan for deciding where new housing and development should take place across Norfolk and Suffolk, and deciding how £130m of funding is spent to support building new homes, including some affordable homes
- Coordinating the work being done to improve flood defences and protect the coastline, to make sure problems aren't just shifted from one area to another
- Creating a transport plan for Norfolk and Suffolk that helps to better coordinate road, rail and bus services
- Deciding how the budget is spent for maintaining and improving all roads in Norfolk and Suffolk
- Deciding on the best way to roll-out smart ticketing for bus and rail travel across Norfolk and Suffolk
- Reviewing post-16 education and training in Norfolk and Suffolk to make sure that it is providing young people with the skills that employers need
- Deciding how funding is spent on apprenticeships and training to make sure that our workforce has the skills that employers in Norfolk and Suffolk need
- Deciding how funding is spent on infrastructure projects, such as improving broadband or transport, to support economic growth and create jobs in Norfolk and Suffolk

- Joining up health and social care services so that they better support people, reduce pressure on Accident and Emergency and prevent avoidable hospital admissions
- Working with the Government to design a new programme to support those with a health condition or disability and the long-term unemployed back into work
- Reviewing all land and property held by the public sector and creating a list of land available for development in Norfolk and Suffolk.

A new Combined Authority

In Norfolk and Suffolk devolution would mean setting up a combined authority. This is where councils join together to make collective decisions on new responsibilities devolved from central Government that affect the whole area.

The Combined Authority would be made up of an elected member from each of the councils in Suffolk, along with a member from Norfolk County Council, Broadland District Council, South Norfolk District Council, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and a representative of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, to represent the views of businesses.

The Combined Authority Area would cover Suffolk and the Broadland, South Norfolk and King's Lynn and West Norfolk council areas.

The new Combined Authority would not replace any of these existing councils, or any of the existing town or parish councils.

The proposed agreement would also create the role of a mayor, who would be directly elected by all residents living in the Combined Authority Area.

The new Combined Authority wouldn't be just another layer of local government. It would take on new responsibilities from Whitehall, not duplicate them.

Councils would continue as they currently do, to provide services for their own areas. District/Borough/City councils would still take planning decisions on specific sites and approve Local Development Plans.

County Councils would still be the Highways Authorities with responsibility for repairs and maintenance. The Combined Authority would only be involved with strategic transport decisions.

Finance and funding

The Combined Authority would manage various budgets. This would include £750m from Government to invest in infrastructure, economic growth and jobs (£25m a year for 30 years) and a total of £130m to invest in housing (£30m would be available specifically for Norwich and Ipswich). The Combined Authority would also receive a single budget for public transport guaranteed for four years, replacing the numerous annual budgets that Government currently provides. This would provide longer term certainty on funding than is currently possible.

In addition the Mayor could talk to local businesses about increasing business rates to fund important infrastructure projects like new road or rail links. The Authority could also look at new ways of funding infrastructure from the money they receive from housebuilders.

There should not be major costs associated with the Combined Authority. At least initially it will draw on the expertise and capacity that already exists within the participating local authorities. In combined authorities the following roles are required to meet their legal obligations:

- Head of Paid Service: The Head of Paid Service is required to report to the Combined Authority on staffing resources and arrangements for proper management of these resources when appropriate.
- Monitoring Officer: The Monitoring Officer is required to report on unlawful decisions or omissions which are or which are proposed to be taken.
- Chief Finance Officer: The Chief Finance Officer is required to report where a decision is proposed that will result in unlawful expenditure or which will result in a loss or deficiency or expenditure outside the authority's available resources.

Any additional staff or resources needed depend on the functions that are devolved to the Combined Authority.

It is too early to say how many staff the Combined Authority would employ but it is likely that it would be staff transferring from, or still working within, existing authorities, rather than additional appointments.

There would not be a new Combined Authority headquarters building as we are committed to using our existing buildings.

The Elected Mayor and decision making

The Government has been clear that places need an elected mayor to access the funding and powers. Registered voters in the Combined Authority Area would vote for the Mayor in an election in 2017.

The directly elected Mayor cannot make decisions alone and would require the support of a certain number of members of the Combined Authority to progress their proposals.

Some decisions, such as asking the Government for new powers and how much the authority would cost to run would require a majority of the members of the Combined Authority to agree. That majority must include the directly elected Mayor.

Existing Mayors in Norfolk and Suffolk would not be affected by the directly elected Mayor.

Accountability

Locally, the Mayor will be held to account by voters, with elections every four years. There would be an overview and scrutiny committee, made of up representatives from each of the councils involved. These would be entirely separate from the members of the combined authority. This committee would have the power to ask the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Members to come along to their meeting to answer questions. They could also review any decisions that the Combined Authority made.

There would also be an Audit Committee that would keep an eye on the Combined Authority's finances. There will be five yearly 'gateway assessments' by Government (HM Treasury) to look at the impact of investments on the economy.

Who we are consulting

We are consulting all Norfolk and Suffolk residents and relevant stakeholders on the draft Scheme of Governance.

How we are consulting

This is an open consultation that anyone in Norfolk and Suffolk can respond to. You can give us your views:

- Online at www.eastangliadevo.co.uk
- Email: HaveYourSay@norfolk.gov.uk
- On this paper consultation document – returning it to Freepost Plus RTCL-XSTT-JZSK, Norfolk County Council, Ground floor - South Wing, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2DH. **You do not need to use a stamp.**

However, if you want to help the council save money please use a stamp and send to this address: East Anglia Devolution, Norfolk County Council, Ground floor - South Wing, County Hall, Martineau Lane, NR1 2DH

Please note: in order to keep costs down, Norfolk and Suffolk County Council are working together to coordinate this consultation and are using our existing contact addresses and telephone numbers.

We also want to reach out to residents in order to make sure our feedback is representative of residents across Norfolk and Suffolk. To do this we will be carrying out a telephone survey which will enable us to reach those who may not respond to a formal consultation.

Business is a key part of devolution so we are also taking extra steps to gather views from local businesses by conducting some telephone interviews.

Finally, the councils and partners will also make representations to the Secretary of State reflecting any responses they receive directly from stakeholders.

When we are consulting

Our consultation opens in the week commencing 4 July and will run until 23 August.

How we will feed back to you

We will publish our consultation report on our website at www.eastangliadevo.co.uk

How the final decision will be made

We will feed back the consultation responses to the Secretary of State at the start of September 2016. The Secretary of State will look at these alongside the Governance Review, the draft Governance Scheme and any other views that have been sent to them to see if the proposed devolution proposals will improve services for the participating areas in Norfolk and Suffolk. If the Secretary of State thinks that their tests have been met they would talk with the councils involved and then make an order, if Parliament approves, to set up a new Norfolk and Suffolk Mayoral Combined Authority.

How our proposals will affect people in practice

Devolution in Norfolk and Suffolk will have implications for how we deliver services in the future. As such it is important for us to make sure we understand what this means for people in practice – particularly people with ‘protected characteristics’, such as disabled or older people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people and younger people. The process we use to work this out is called an equality impact assessment.

We have carried out an initial assessment of the proposals, which has identified a range of equality issues to be considered as part of Devolution. When public consultation is complete we will develop the assessment further, to ensure that it addresses any issues raised by residents or which have been identified through further evidence gathering.

Where you can go for more information

You can find out more about devolution at www.eastangliadevo.co.uk.

Consultation feedback form

1. Awareness of devolution

1. Which district council area do you live in / are you based? Please select one only:

Suffolk - Babergh District Council

Suffolk - Forest Heath District Council

Suffolk - Ipswich Borough Council

Suffolk - Mid Suffolk District Council

Suffolk - St Edmundsbury Borough Council

Suffolk - Suffolk Coastal District Council

Suffolk - Waveney District Council

All across Suffolk

Norfolk - Breckland Council

Norfolk - Broadland District Council

Norfolk - Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Norfolk - Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Norfolk - North Norfolk District Council

Norfolk - Norwich City Council

Norfolk - South Norfolk Council

All across Norfolk

Firstly, we would like to ask you some questions about devolution, which means transferring powers over budgets and services from central government in Westminster to local councils. This could include the transfer of powers to new groups of councils, called 'combined authorities'.

2. Before today, how much, if anything, would you say you knew about devolution within England? Please select one only:

A great deal

A fair amount

Just a little

Heard of, but know nothing about

Never heard of

Don't know

2. The principle of devolution

3.

3. Devolution is when certain decision-making powers, as well as funding, are transferred down from Central Government to a local area. In this instance the area is Norfolk and Suffolk. It means that decisions are taken close to where they have an effect.

To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose the principle of devolution? Please select one only:

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither support nor oppose

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

Don't know

3. New powers and responsibilities

In Norfolk and Suffolk the proposed devolution agreement includes the creation of a combined authority.

This would consist of representatives from all of the councils in Suffolk and some of the councils in Norfolk - at this stage, Norfolk County Council, Broadland District Council, South Norfolk District Council, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and the Local Enterprise Partnership, which represents the views of local businesses.

The Combined Authority Area would cover Suffolk and the Broadland, South Norfolk, and King's Lynn and West Norfolk council areas.

The new Combined Authority would not replace any councils, including town or parish councils.

The proposed agreement would also create the role of a mayor, who would be directly elected by residents in the Combined Authority Area.

4. For each of the following, do you think decisions are better made nationally by the government in Westminster, or locally by the proposed Mayor and Combined Authority as described above? Please select one answer on each row:

	Decisions are better made nationally	Decisions are better made locally	Don't know
Working with local councils to develop a new strategy for housing and development in line with existing local plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deciding how £130m of new funding is spent to support the building of new homes, including affordable housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creating a transport plan for Norfolk and Suffolk that helps to better coordinate road, rail and bus services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deciding how the budget is spent for maintaining roads in Norfolk and Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deciding on the best way to roll out smart ticketing for bus and rail travel across Norfolk and Suffolk. (Smart ticketing involves paying for travel electronically using microchips, either through contactless payments or schemes like the Oyster Card in London.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reviewing further education in Norfolk and Suffolk to help provide young people aged 16 and over with the skills that local employers need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deciding how funding is spent on apprenticeships and training in Norfolk and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Decisions are better made nationally	Decisions are better made locally	Don't know
Suffolk to produce a workforce with the skills that local employers need			
Deciding how funding is spent on adult education and skills training in Norfolk and Suffolk for people aged 19 and over to help produce a workforce with the skills that local employers need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deciding how funding is spent on infrastructure projects, such as improving broadband or transport services, to support economic growth and create jobs in Norfolk and Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joining up health and social care services so that they better support people and reduce the pressure on existing services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a new programme to support those with a health condition or disability and the long-term unemployed back into work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reviewing all land and property held by the public sector and creating a list of land and property available for development in Norfolk and Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinating the work being done to improve flood defences and protect the coastline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To summarise, the proposed devolution deal includes £750m from Government to invest in infrastructure, economic growth and jobs (£25m a year for 30 years, reviewed every five years) and a total of £130m to invest in housing. The Combined Authority would also receive a single budget for public transport guaranteed for four years, replacing the numerous annual budgets that Government currently provides.

4. Directly elected Mayor

The Government has said that a mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk would need to be elected for any new local decision-making powers and/or funding as part of this devolution agreement to be transferred from the Government to the Mayor and/or Combined Authority. The Mayor would work with existing elected councillors from each of the participating district, borough and county councils and a business representative appointed by the Local Enterprise Partnership.

5. To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose the election of a mayor in order to access the decision making powers and funding in the proposed devolution deal?
Please select one only:

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither support nor oppose

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

Don't know

6. Why do you say that? Please write in below:

5. A new Combined Authority with an elected Mayor

In Norfolk and Suffolk the Combined Authority would be made up of the directly-elected Mayor, a councillor from each of the participating district, borough and county councils and an appointed business representative.

The new Combined Authority wouldn't just be another layer of local government. It would take on new responsibilities from Whitehall, not duplicate them. Councils would continue as they currently do, to provide services for their own areas.

District/Borough/City councils would still take planning decisions on specific sites and approve Local Development Plans. County councils would still be the highways authorities with responsibility for repairs and maintenance. The Combined Authority would only be involved with strategic transport decisions.

7. To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose participating councils becoming part of a Combined Authority along with other councils in Norfolk and Suffolk, which is chaired by a directly elected mayor? Please select one only:

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither support nor oppose

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

Don't know

8. Why do you say that? Please write in below:

6. Decision making

9. There are proposals for how the Combined Authority and directly elected Mayor would take decisions. Here are a number of statements outlining how it is proposed this will be done. To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with each aspect of how decisions would be made? Please select one answer on each row:

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Each member of the Combined Authority, including the Mayor, has a vote.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The directly elected Mayor cannot make decisions alone and will require the support of a certain number of members of the Combined Authority to progress their proposals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some decisions, such as the Combined Authority asking the Government for new powers and how much the authority would cost to run, would require a majority of members to agree. That majority must include the directly elected Mayor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. If there is anything else you want to tell us about decision making, please write in below:

7. Accountability

11. Plans will be put in place for how the new Combined Authority will be held to account.

Here are a number of statements outlining how it is proposed this will be done.

How important, if at all, is each of these in holding the Combined Authority to account? Please select one answer on each row:

	Essential	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know
An independent scrutiny committee that has the power to ask the Mayor and other members of the Combined Authority to attend a meeting to answer questions. This would be made up of councillors from participating councils who are not members of the Combined Authority itself.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
This scrutiny committee having the power to review any of the decisions made by the Combined Authority.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
An audit committee which would monitor the Combined Authority's finances.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Residents living in the Combined Authority Area being able to directly elect the Mayor.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
A Government assessment every five years.	<input type="checkbox"/>					

12. Other than the ways we have just outlined that are already included in the proposed devolution agreement, are there any other ways in which you think the Combined Authority should be held to account? Please write in below:

8. Priorities for the proposed Combined Authority

13. The Combined Authority would manage a single pot of money to spend in Norfolk and Suffolk. Here is a list of some of the different areas in which this money could be spent.

Given there would be a limit to the amount of money available, please tell us how important each of these are on scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not important at all, and 10 is very important. Please select one answer in each row:

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Investment in physical infrastructure, such as transport or broadband	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Investment in job creation for local people	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Investment in housing and affordable homes in particular	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Investment in public transport to run services which better meet the needs of local people	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Investment in supporting local businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Improving employment opportunities for those with a health condition or disability and the long-term unemployed.	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Investment in flood defences and coastal protection	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Ensuring young people are either earning or learning	<input type="checkbox"/>										

9. Other comments about devolution

14. The proposals included in the devolution agreement are intended to improve local services in Norfolk and Suffolk. Is there anything else you would like to add to what we have discussed? Please write in below:

10. About you

Personal information, confidentiality and data protection

We will process any personal information we receive from you in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. This means that Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils will hold your personal data and only use it for the purpose for which it was collected, being this consultation. We use this information to see how representative the feedback is of Norfolk and Suffolk's population. We also use it to see if any particular groups of people are especially affected by devolution.

Under our record management policy we will keep this information for five years. We will also, under normal circumstances, not pass your personal data on to anyone else. However, we may be asked under access to information laws to publish or disclose some, or all, of the information you provide in response to this consultation, including any personal information. We will only do this where such disclosure will comply with such relevant information laws which include the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

15. Are you responding to this consultation as ...? Please select one only:

An individual

A couple / family

A business, organisation or group

16. If a business, organisation or group, please write in which one below:

17. How many members / employees does your business / organisation / group represent? Please write in below:

18. Are you male or female? Please select one only:

Male

Female

Transgender

Prefer not to
say

19. What is your age? Please select one only:

Under
18

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65-74

75-84

85+

Prefer not to
say

20. Do you consider yourself to be disabled? Please select one only:

Yes, limited a lot

Yes, limited a
little

No

Prefer not to say

21. What is your ethnic group? Please select one only:

White

English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish /
British

Irish

Gypsy or Irish traveller

Eastern European

Any other White background

Mixed / multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background

Asian/Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Kashmiri

Any other Asian background

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

African

Caribbean

Any other Black/African/Caribbean background

Other ethnic group

Arab

Other ethnic group

Prefer not to say

22. Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present? Please select one only:

Employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per week)

Employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)

Self-employed full or part-time

- On a government supported training programme (e.g. Modern Apprenticeship/Training for Work)
- Full-time education at school, college or university
- Unemployed and available for work
- Permanently sick/disabled
- Wholly retired from work
- Looking after the home
- Doing something else (please specify)

23. In which of these ways does your household occupy your current accommodation?
Please select one only:

- Owned outright
- Buying on mortgage
- Rent from council
- Rent from Housing Association/Trust
- Rent from private landlord
- Other

24. What is your postcode? Please write in below:

Please send your completed consultation form to:

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