

Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution

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Introduction

- Suffolk is part of the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP).
- Suffolk's current two-tier system (1 County Council, 5 District/Borough Councils).
- Proposal to transition to a new single unitary authority:
 - One new council replacing all existing ones.
 - End of Suffolk County Council and District/Borough Councils.
 - New structure, councillors, and integrated services.

Why This Change is Better for Suffolk

Simpler for residents – one council would make it easier to understand and contact local government

Clearer accountability – there would be less confusion over who is responsible for what

Better use of funding – a more financially sustainable, county-wide approach to budgeting

Safer services - less risk of breaking up critical services like social care and better alignment with other agencies like health and the police

Better alignment of services – since everything is under one roof, services can be more easily coordinated, creating opportunities to improve services for residents

More efficient decision-making – with just one council, decisions can be made more quickly

Connected to and empowering residents - providing both the most straightforward and accountable democracy with enhanced neighbourhood and community engagement

Stronger leadership – a single, visible and accountable body providing a clear strategic voice for Suffolk.

Alternative Proposals and Their Costs

- Proposals for two or three councils for Suffolk (including a Greater Ipswich)
- Higher costs and risks, including £150M for breaking up services
- Delayed savings and disruption to care services

	1 Council	2 Councils	3 Councils
Break up costs over 5 years	£0	£92m	£155m
Annual Savings after 5 years	£26m	£9m	-£3m
Savings in first 5 years	£104m	£12m	-£52m
One off set up costs	£19m	£26m	£32m

Your Role in Shaping the New Council

- Suffolk County Council will be running engagement sessions – asking how you'd like a new council to be formed and run.
- Your input on areas such as service access, planning, councillor numbers will be essential.
- We want to reflect Suffolk's diversity in the new council structure.
- More info at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution

Local Government Reorganisation Next Steps



Approval: Cabinet approved the interim plan in March 2025



Submission: Plan submitted to ministers for consideration on 21st March 2025



Next Steps: Development of a full business case by 26th September 2025



Engagement: Ongoing engagement with residents, businesses, and local organisations

Devolution – Overview of MCCA

MCCA = Mayoral Combined County Authority

- The Devolution White Paper was published Dec 2024.
- As Suffolk is part of the **Devolution Priority Programme**, devolution runs alongside local government reorganisation but the two are different.
- **Geography:** Mayoral devolution in areas with a population of 1.5m+. Hence new combined authority between Norfolk and Suffolk.
- MCCA to be set up for May 2026 elections

Devolution – Potential Areas of Focus for Mayor

1. Transport and local infrastructure
2. Skills and employment support
3. Housing and strategic planning
4. Economic development and regeneration
5. Environment and climate change.
6. Health, wellbeing and public service reform
7. Public safety (PCC/Fire)