

Devolution update for Parish Councils - July 2016

Public consultation for the Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution Deal proposal was launched on Friday 8th July and will run to 23rd August. The questionnaire can be found at www.eastangliadevo.co.uk along with background information, links to the Deal documents and a helpful FAQ. The site offers information about the Norfolk/Suffolk deal as well as providing people with information on plans across the wider East Anglia area.

The questions have been developed with Ipsos-Mori and been scrutinised by their Polls for Publication Unit, to ensure accuracy, impartiality and credibility of results, as well as to stand up to legal, media, public, business, government or third party scrutiny. Ipsos-Mori is a member of the British Polling Council, which means they are bound by industry-wide quality procedures. Suffolk County Council passed an amendment to include a question about whether residents supported the idea of a directly elected Mayor. This has been incorporated into the set of questions.

To make sure as many people as possible are aware of Devolution plans in Norfolk and Suffolk, Norfolk County Council will be producing a leaflet that will go out to households. In Suffolk we are using a multi-media approach including social media, outdoor advertising, newspaper advertising, mainstream news items as well as engagement with staff and other stakeholders across the county. This approach will ensure that there is ongoing awareness throughout the period and beyond.

Consultation responses will be fed back 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.

Suffolk County Council will continue to take into account all views of residents and stakeholders up to the next decision point in October when all Councils will be asked to vote to continue with the Devolution process.

The highlights of the Deal which Norfolk and Suffolk Councils voted on are:

- A single pot of £25m a year of new money for the next 30 years (£750m) to support economic growth, development of local infrastructure and jobs. 40% of the 'single pot' will be revenue, which can support capital borrowing
- £100m, over five years, of new money to support the building of new homes across Norfolk and Suffolk. Recognising the housing market conditions in Norwich and Ipswich, Government will also provide the Combined Authority with an additional £30m over five years, split equally for Norwich City and Ipswich Borough, to meet its housing needs
- A guaranteed £225m transport budget for the next four years

- Control of an existing c£20m a year Adult skills funding to ensure the training offer matches the needs of local businesses and the local labour market
- Control of an existing c£2m Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE grant) to enable funding to better meet the needs of local Norfolk and Suffolk employers
- Greater control over who delivers transport services in Norfolk and Suffolk, and how they are delivered, rather than it being imposed on us by Central Government