



in partnership
eastsoffolk.gov.uk

Creating a new 'super district' council for east Suffolk

Learn more about the proposals: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/new-single-council

Then have your say: merger@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Why change?

Working in partnership has helped the councils to save over £16m since 2010. However, further savings cannot be made unless the partnership progresses further. A new, merged, council would be better placed to address the shared challenges that both councils face.

With a new, stronger council, we would be better able to:

Address the need for investment in growth and infrastructure projects

Tackle increasing housing demand and costs

Capitalise on growing employment opportunities and wages

Withstand significant reductions in Central Government funding for councils

Take advantage of the devolution of greater local powers from Central Government

Encourage further alignment and integration across the public sector

Play a greater role in improving education & skills and make better use of technology

Address the effects of further welfare reform

Shared outlook

The councils already have a joint 'East Suffolk Business Plan' that sets out our vision for the future of the area and a new council would be a natural development reflecting important, shared similarities and challenges.

They cover the entire Suffolk coastline, and have a shared transport infrastructure including the A12, ports, market towns, beach resorts and similar areas of outstanding natural beauty. The area also boasts an 'Energy Coast' combining expanding off-shore wind sector and nuclear power.

This economy also shares the same economic difficulties, with under-achievement educationally, a skills & wages gap, the impact of welfare reform, poor transport & communications infrastructure, lack of commercial land supply, coastal erosion & flooding risks and a lack of 'affordable' housing.

What could the new council achieve?

The new council would be the largest district council in England, by population. It would be more able to represent local people with a stronger voice across Suffolk. It would have greater influence at a regional level and would be able to run more services, particularly from Suffolk County Council, to ensure they are tailored to meet the needs of our local communities.

What if we DON'T change?

If a new council is not created, there are a number of potential consequences:

- Detrimental impact on service provision - cuts to or removal of services*
- Reductions in current levels of service performance and / or customer satisfaction*
- Greater pressure on council tax levels*
- Reductions in capacity of some service areas and associated redundancies*
- Inadequate capacity to meet the challenges facing the Councils, leading to poor services*
- Insufficient capacity to maintain the 'in partnership' approach and working*
- Reduced staff morale, public and Councillor dissatisfaction*

Public engagement

Following a telephone survey of 1,000 residents in east Suffolk, a detailed engagement campaign is underway until December 2016. Residents are being asked to submit their views, which will be considered by all councillors along with the feedback received during the telephone polling.

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Results from the initial survey included:

- 61%** of residents say they have heard about the proposals.
- 57%** of adults say they are favourable towards the proposal, only **22%** say they are unfavourable.
- 96%** of adults say it is important that the new Council maintains the delivery of important services.

Having received further information, local residents are significantly more likely to say they are favourable towards the proposal than when initially asked (**72% v 57%**).

Residents are most concerned about the efficiency and how the Council is run (**16%**).

When asked to select their top three priorities for local government generally, they are:

- Providing support for the vulnerable (**57%**)
- Keeping Council tax rates as low as possible (**45%**)
- Efficient and consistent delivery of services (**42%**)

Next steps:

Councils' decision will be in January 2017.

Secretary of State's decision will be in September 2017.