

Suffolk devolution consultation

We have summarised the key points of the accompanying consultation document within this survey to help you answer the following questions. However, we would encourage you to read this document in full as it contains important additional detail and context.

Q1 In what capacity are you responding to this consultation? (Please choose 1).

Note: We understand that you might be able to answer these questions from multiple perspectives, but please pick the most important to you.

- As a resident of Suffolk
- As a representative of a business
- As a member or representative of a voluntary and community sector organisation
- As a member or representative of a public sector organisation (e.g. NHS, Police)
- As an elected member (e.g. Suffolk County Councillor, District or Borough Councillor or Parish or Town Councillor)
- Other (please specify)

Q2 If you've indicated above that you represent a business or organisation, please provide the name of the business or organisation you are representing.

Q3 Is your response the formal response of your organisation?

- Yes
- No

This question is about the general idea of devolution.

Suffolk County Council provides public services that cover the whole county, such as social care for children and adults, household waste sites, fire and rescue, trading standards, highways and transport, flood prevention, environment, economic development, public health and registrars. However, in some cases, although the council may be responsible for delivering the services, the Government still makes some of the decisions about how and where funding is spent locally.

Devolution is a process whereby the Government would pass to the county council control of some funding decisions and areas of policy. This has already happened in some other areas, including Greater London, Liverpool, West Midlands and Greater Manchester.

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the general idea of devolving powers and funding from Government to Suffolk County Council?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

**These questions are specifically about the proposed devolution deal between the Government and Suffolk County Council.
More detail on the deal can be found in the consultation document.**

£480m Investment Fund

Under this deal, Suffolk County Council would get control of an investment fund worth £16 million per year over thirty years – a total of £480 million. This fund would decrease in value if inflation went up. It would be for Suffolk County Council, working with local partners, to decide how best to invest this money but, by way of example, other areas with a devolution deal have used this money to offer local business support, invest in infrastructure and help people access free bus travel.

Please indicate how important this element of the deal is for you, your business or organisation.



Q5a Control of a new £480 million investment fund over 30 years to fund local priorities.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very important | |

Please explain your answer

Q5b If the deal were to go through, how would you like Suffolk County Council to spend this £480 million investment fund? For example, elsewhere, this has included offering local business support, investing in infrastructure and helping people access free bus travel.

Adult Education Budget

Under this deal, Suffolk County Council would become responsible for commissioning adult education in Suffolk with the budget used to fund learning and training courses for adults over the age of 19. In 2025/26, this is expected to be £9.4 million. This is money that would be coming to Suffolk anyway, but under the deal, we would control how it is spent. Adult Education would change from being managed nationally to locally. We would work with local businesses and adult education providers to invest in skills training more closely aligned with local employment and community needs.

Please indicate how important this element of the deal is for you, your business or organisation.

Q6 Control over the £9.4 million a year budget and plan for adult education in Suffolk.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very important | |

Please explain your answer

Regeneration

Under this deal, Suffolk County Council would receive a £5.8 million one-off sum to get brownfield sites ready for development. There are currently more than 200 brownfield sites in Suffolk which could be appropriate for development. Working with local councils, in line with their Local Plans, we could, as an example, help to clean up derelict industrial sites currently standing empty and make them financially viable for developers. This would help create the right locations to increase affordable housing. The deal would also mean that the county council, working closely with district and borough councils and other relevant partners, would get new compulsory purchase powers to buy land to support development, regeneration and infrastructure projects that are in the public interest.

Please indicate how important this element of the deal is for you, your business or organisation.

Q7 £5.8 million of new funding to develop brownfield sites for housing and new powers to purchase land for development, regeneration or infrastructure projects.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very important | |

Please explain your answer

Transport

At the moment, Suffolk County Council receives transport funding from Government on an annual basis. Under this deal, we would begin to receive multi-year transport funding instead, which would provide greater certainty for longer-term planning. This guaranteed investment could help us to better plan road improvement schemes, reduce congestion and carbon emissions, introduce Oyster card-style smart ticketing and improve the bus offer in rural areas. We would also receive £250,000 each year for two years to support the development of Suffolk's Local Transport Plan. Finally, evidence from other devolved areas suggests that they are more successful in securing Government financial support for locally important projects. One of the reasons for this may be because devolved areas seem to have a higher profile with Government and are therefore in a stronger position to start negotiations.

Please indicate how important this element of the deal is for you, your business or organisation.

Q8 Multi-year transport funding, rather than on an annual basis.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very important | |

Please explain your answer

Local decision-making

At the moment, Suffolk county councillors elect the leader of the council. Under this deal, the council's governance structure would change. As well as electing their local councillor, once every four years, Suffolk residents would also get to vote on who should become the leader of the council. The directly elected leader would remain part of the council and subject to the same accountability and scrutiny as the leader is now. The Government has a clear preference for directly elected council leaders, and evidence from other areas suggests that people in similar roles have a higher profile and greater influence with the Government.

It is possible that a leader is elected from a different political party than the majority of councillors on the council, or from no political party at all. As now, the directly elected leader would be free to choose any elected members to serve in their cabinet, whether from the majority party, a minority party, or no party. The directly elected leader would need to work with the other elected councillors to agree budgets and policies.

Please indicate how important this element of the deal is for you, your business or organisation.

Q9 The ability for residents to directly elect the Leader for Suffolk County Council in addition to their local County Councillor.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very important | |

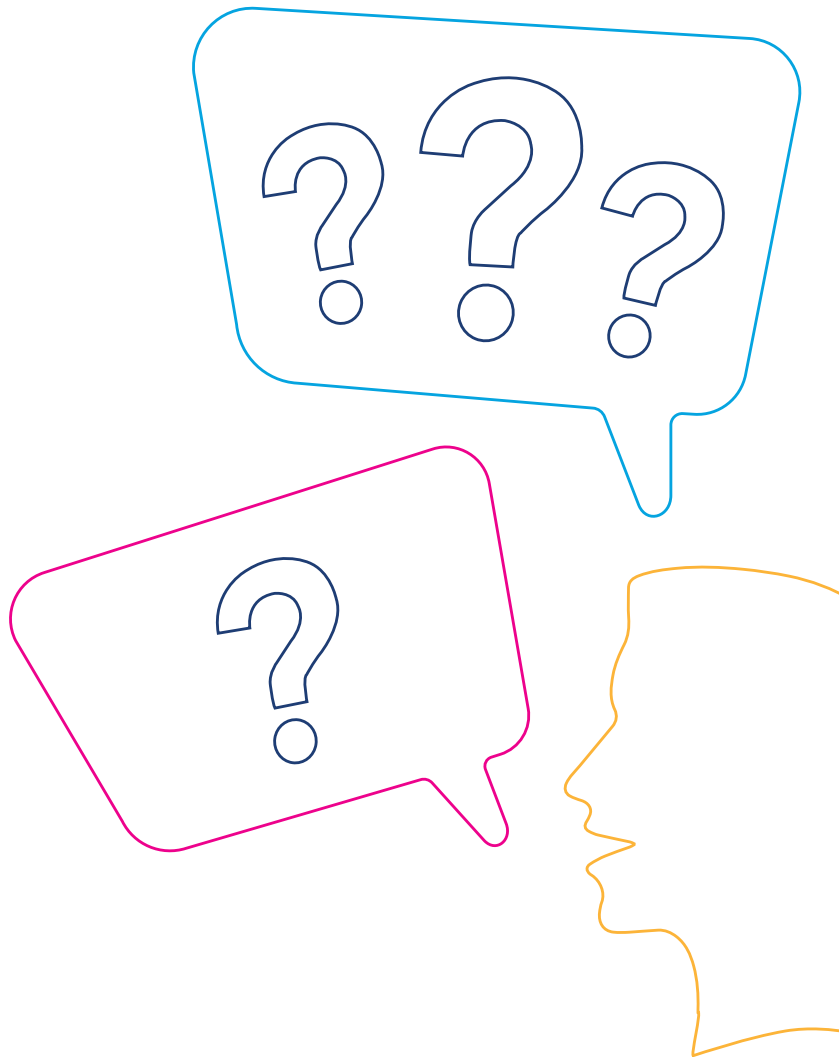
Please explain your answer

Q10 Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree that Suffolk County Council should accept the proposed deal, including the change to a directly elected leader, which is a requirement of the deal?

- Very important Not at all important
 Somewhat important Don't know
 Not very important

Please explain your answer

Q11 Do you have any other comments or anything else we should consider about the proposed deal? This includes any positive or negative impacts on you.



Please note that this section is optional and you don't have to complete these questions if you don't want to.

If you choose not to answer these questions, please tick the 'Prefer Not to Disclose' option so that we are aware of your choice.

By providing this information it allows us to see which groups of people are responding to our consultations and which groups are underrepresented. We can then make extra efforts to reach underrepresented groups so that we can consider the views of all groups who may be affected by our plans. It also helps us ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equitably in everything we do. Without your information, we can't always spot trends and issues which enable us to make appropriate changes or improvements.

All responses to these questions are anonymous; responses are added together and no individuals are identified. Any information provided is covered by GDPR Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018 and will be treated as strictly confidential.

Q12 If you choose not to answer any of these questions, please tick the 'Prefer not to disclose' option so that we are aware of your choice.

Prefer not to disclose

Q13 How did you hear about this consultation?

- Facebook
- Twitter (X)
- Local Press - Printed Newspaper
- Local Press - Online
- Word of mouth
- Radio
- TV
- Other (please specify):

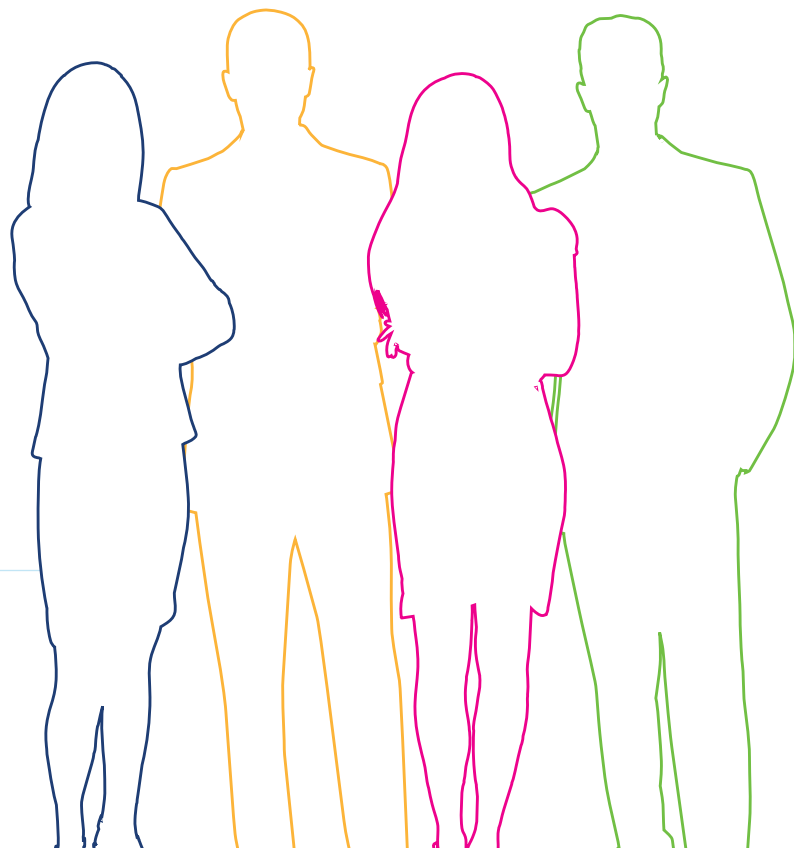
Q14 Which age group do you fit into?

- Under 16
- 16 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75+
- Prefer not to say

Q15 The provision for disability within Equalities legislation defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term (i.e. has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months) and has an adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability according to the terms given in the Equality legislation?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say



Q16 To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

- Asian or Asian British: Indian
- Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Any other Asian background
– please specify in the box below.
- Black or Black British: Caribbean
- Black or Black British: African
- Any other Black background
– please specify in the box below.
- Chinese
- Mixed: White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed: White and Black African
- Mixed: White and Asian
- Any other Mixed background
– please specify in the box below.
- White: English
- White: Irish
- White: Scottish
- White: Welsh
- White: British
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Other White background
– please specify in the box below
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

Q17 Are you:

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe (please specify):

Public bodies in the United Kingdom have a duty to ensure their decisions and services do not discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic, such as age, gender or race. If you are unsure about protected characteristics, you can find out more about them at <https://shorturl.at/lSyX5>

We want to understand if and how the proposed plans will affect people with protected characteristics. We want to know whether you can identify any potentially beneficial or detrimental impacts of the proposed plans on you in relation to your protected characteristics.

Q18 In your view, does the proposed deal have the potential to be beneficial or detrimental to you?

- The proposed deal will be beneficial to me, with regards to my protected characteristic(s)
- The proposed deal will be detrimental to me, with regards to my protected characteristic(s)
- No impact
- Not applicable (no protected characteristics)
- Unsure

Please add any comments you'd like to share to explain why you think this

How to contact Suffolk County Council

Phone: **0345 603 1842**.

Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:30pm (excluding Bank Holidays).

0345 numbers are charged at the same rate as standard landline numbers that start with 01 or 02. If your phone tariff offers inclusive calls to landlines, calls to 0345 numbers will also be included on the same basis.

Email: **devolution@suffolk.gov.uk**

Post: Consultation Team, Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX