



# Norfolk County Council

## Your views On A County Deal For Norfolk

### Overview

Norfolk County Council and the Government have agreed, in principle, a new County Deal, to transfer funding and powers to Norfolk – a process known as devolution. This provides a unique and exciting opportunity to unlock significant funding and for decisions currently made in Whitehall to be made in Norfolk, for Norfolk.

Under a County Deal, Norfolk would benefit from a new Government investment fund including £20m per year over the next 30 years, and an additional £12.9m during the current Spending Review period (2024-25). In addition to the investment fund, Norfolk would also get control of the Adult Education Budget (just over £10m in 2022/23) and an un-ringfenced Transport and Maintenance Budget (approximately £40m per year). There would also be a county council leader, directly elected by the public and with no additional bureaucracy or changes to councils.

This Deal represents a real opportunity to unlock Norfolk's potential, for the county take control of its own destiny and shape its own future, and to have a stronger voice nationally. If our Deal went ahead, we would have powers and finance to invest in areas such as better transport, skills, job opportunities, housing, and regeneration.

This could be just the start of further powers being devolved to Norfolk. Some examples of additional powers and responsibilities devolved in other areas of the country include greater powers over the NHS and social care and controls over the number of holiday homes in coastal areas. Therefore, it is important to hear your views about this Deal and your ideas about priorities for Norfolk.

### **Why we are consulting**

Norfolk County Council was invited to begin devolution negotiations for a County Deal in February 2022 and is one of the first few authorities in the country to start this process. So far, County Deals have been agreed, in principle, in North Yorkshire and York, Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, Cornwall and Suffolk.

This consultation is a chance for you to find out more about our County Deal and give us your feedback. For devolution to go ahead we need to hear your views.

As well as this survey, which guides you through our Deal and asks a set of questions, there is a leaflet and video which provide you with more information about our Deal.

We are consulting through:

- This online consultation, which is also available as a paper copy
- Drop in events throughout Norfolk
- Business events across the county
- Third sector events
- Our Norfolk Residents' Panel
- Local councils

We are consulting for six weeks from **6 February to 20 March 2023**. Please note that if we receive any consultation responses after **20 March**, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to take them into account.

We will feed back the findings from our consultation to our County Councillors and Government for their consideration so that a decision will be made about next steps for our County Deal.

**If you need a copy of this consultation document in a different format, email [haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk), call 0344 800 8020 or Text Relay on 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.**

The consultation should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

### **Personal information, confidentiality, and data protection**

We will use any personal information to understand how different groups of people feel about our County Deal.

We will process any personal information we receive from you in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679), the Data Protection Act 2018 and Norfolk County Council's data protection policy and guidelines. This means that Norfolk County Council will hold your personal data and only use it for the purpose for which it was collected, being this consultation. You can find a copy of our privacy statement at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/privacy>

We won't identify individuals when reporting back our findings and 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. 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 2018, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

This consultation is being independently analysed by The Consultation Institute. Selected staff members from the Consultation Institute will have access to the responses for purposes of analysis only but all information will remain with Norfolk County Council.

You can choose not to take part in the consultation, to stop responding at any time, or to ignore any personal questions that you do not want to answer.

By completing and returning this form you agree that you have read the personal information, confidentiality and data protection statement above.

### **A County Deal for Norfolk**

The Government and Norfolk County Council are proposing to work together on a devolution deal to allow Norfolk to unlock long-term funding and gain greater freedom to decide how best to meet local needs and create opportunities for the people who

live and work in the county. Put simply, this means some decisions and funding previously controlled in Westminster could, in the future, be decided by Norfolk.

Agreeing a County Deal for Norfolk will mean that, from 2024 onwards, we could:

- **Target funding and resources to Norfolk's own priorities** with a new investment fund of £20m per year for 30 years
- **Give Norfolk a stronger business voice**, by providing more direct business input into decision making and strategic economic planning.
- **Invest in the skills we know we need** with devolution of the adult education budget and input into the new Local Skills Improvement Plans.
- **Open up housing and employment sites** with an initial injection of £12.9m capital funding and new powers to drive regeneration, housing, and development priorities
- **Invest in local transport planning and consolidate transport budgets** to better direct funding to meet our local needs and priorities.
- **Have a Council Leader who is directly elected by the public**, with the first election planned for May 2024.

- **Benefit from devolution as it would enable Norfolk's voice to be heard by Government** to help shape future policies.

You can read the full deal on the Government website

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/norfolk-devolution-deal](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/norfolk-devolution-deal)

The following is a series of survey questions about a County Deal for Norfolk and information is presented before each question with links to the relevant section of the Government deal to help you make an informed response. There are consultation questions followed by some quick questions to find out more about who is responding to our survey. Thank you for giving us your views on Norfolk's future.

## **Target funding and resources to Norfolk's own priorities**

Norfolk County Council will use and control the new Norfolk Investment Fund of £20m per year for 30 years. As with all devolution deals, Norfolk will need to demonstrate to the Government that money is being invested in the right way and creating a positive impact for our region. The Government will review and check every five years to ensure that residents and businesses in Norfolk can see what is being achieved.

Other funding elements in the deal relate to Government's current Spending Review period (which runs to the financial year 2024/2025). The next Spending Review will take place in Autumn 2024, to come into effect in 2025/26.

We continue to engage district authorities and other partners, such as business, education, and the voluntary sector on the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund through a group of representatives that would be the Norfolk Investment Framework steering group. Representatives include portfolio holders for each district authority and Town Deal Board Chairs.



Other areas with devolution deals have seen significant funding in subsequent spending rounds directly channelled to them, for example Tees Valley, who secured a further £900m of Government investment in the 5 years since their original deal.

We have compared the 30-year £600m Norfolk Investment Fund, which is the key element of our proposed County Deal, with the amount provided by the Government in other deals. Our analysis shows that the Norfolk Investment Fund is worth £21.83 per head per year; this is in line with the existing devolution deals, which have an average of £20.64 per head per year. You can find full details of the proposed funding in the Finance and Investment section of the Norfolk Devolution Deal.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/norfolk-devolution-deal/norfolk-devolution-deal#finance-and-investment>

**1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Norfolk to have control of money devolved from the Government?**

Please choose one answer only, from the list below:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

**Why do you say that?**

Please write in the box below:

## **How to give Norfolk a stronger business voice**

The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is a non-statutory body which works with businesses, education, and local authority partners to drive growth and enterprise across both Norfolk and Suffolk. The LEP secures public and private investment to deliver initiatives to improve infrastructure, skills, and business support.

Under our proposed a County Deal for Norfolk, and in line with Government's objective to have more local accountability, LEP functions will be brought into Norfolk County Council (NCC) to create a local business voice. Benefits of bringing functions into NCC include:

- Dedicated Business Board for Norfolk alone (currently the Business Board serves both Suffolk and Norfolk)
- Economic programmes that are specific to Norfolk
- Co-ordination between businesses and the skills they need, as training will be commissioned from within the same organisation.

This is an exciting opportunity for Norfolk to have a stronger business voice and be instrumental in shaping our economic growth, plus create and secure jobs for future generations. Norfolk County Council will be supported by the Government to take on all the important functions and roles set out in Section 10 of the guidance on LEP integration published in March 2022. More information on the Government’s approach can be read in the LEP Integration section of the Norfolk Devolution Deal.<sup>2</sup> Along with the guidance published in March 2022.<sup>3</sup>

**2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed change to create a stronger local business voice for Norfolk**

Please choose one answer only, from the list below:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/norfolk-devolution-deal/norfolk-devolution-deal#:~:text=does%20not%20hold.-,LEP%20integration,-35.%20The%20Levelling>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-enterprise-partnerships-integration-guidance>

## Why do you say that?

Please write in the box below:

## **Invest in the skills we know we need**

Under a Deal for Norfolk, we will have both the money to spend on adult education and the opportunity to decide locally what it is spent on. We will have the opportunity to contribute to Local Skills Improvement Plans, developed by the Chamber of Commerce, enabling us to invest in the skills we and businesses know we need for the future.

This devolution deal gives us powers to help local people and businesses in Norfolk get the skills and support to reach their ambitions. Funding will be set aside for skills required when entering employment through apprenticeships, training courses or further learning leading to qualifications.

Boosting adult skills could add significant value to our region, and our County Deal includes fully devolving the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to Norfolk County Council from academic year 2025/26. You can find full details of Adult Education plans in the Adult Education section of the Norfolk Devolution Deal.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/norfolk-devolution-deal/norfolk-devolution-deal#:~:text=market%20and%20skills-,Adult%20education,-41.%20Norfolk%20faces>

**3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the Adult Education Budget from Government to Norfolk County Council?**

Please choose one answer only, from the list below:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

**Why do you say that?**

Please write in the box below:

## **Open-up housing and employment sites**

One of the top priorities for Norfolk is to increase the availability of decent affordable housing for local people and enable them to continue to live in their communities.

Our County Deal proposes almost £7m in 2024/25 for the building of new homes on brownfield land - sites which have been previously developed.

This is a good opportunity to help residents and their children who are passionate about living in Norfolk by building new homes and driving regeneration. This will involve:

- Working with District Councils and other relevant partners to identify local priorities and using newly given Homes England Compulsory purchase powers to acquire land for development, regeneration, and infrastructure projects in the public interest, which will help to bring about improvements to social, economic and environmental wellbeing.



- Ability to establish Development Corporations (with the consent of the local planning authority) which are statutory bodies created to support the regeneration of a defined area and can draw on a wide range of powers to acquire, develop, hold, and dispose of land and property, and develop infrastructure.

Though the Deal is between the Government and Norfolk County Council, implementation of the Deal can only be achieved through working with District Councils, and other partners. You can find full details of the Housing and Land proposal Housing and Land section of the Norfolk Devolution Deal.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/norfolk-devolution-deal/norfolk-devolution-deal#:~:text=contracted%20employment%20programmes,-Housing%20and%20land,-54.%20Norfolk%20County>

**4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with plans to open-up housing and employment sites in Norfolk?**

Please choose one answer only, from the list below:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

**Why do you say that?**

Please write in the box below:

## **Invest in local transport planning and consolidate transport budgets to better direct funding to meet our local needs and priorities**

Norfolk is the fifth largest county (by area) in the country, and it is essential to create an effective transport system that creates certainty for the future while protecting the beauty of our region. Extra funding could start in 2024/25 as the Government will work with Norfolk to agree an integrated multi-year transport settlement at the next Spending Review.

Presently, we receive funding for specific transport initiatives, each with its own terms and conditions set by the Government. In the future and under an integrated approach all those funds will come as one whole pot giving us the flexibility to make decisions in Norfolk about our own transport plans like helping to shape and improve local rail services, deliver high quality bus services along with decarbonising local bus services and improving the road network serving Norfolk. Further funding could be available to help with our ambitious carbon reduction targets.

You can find full details of proposed transport plans in the Transport section of the Norfolk Devolution Deal.<sup>6</sup>

**5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with proposals for an integrated transport settlement?**

Please choose one answer only, from the list below:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

**Why do you say that?**

Please write in the box below:

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/norfolk-devolution-deal/norfolk-devolution-deal#:~:text=functions%20and%20powers.-,Transport%20plans,-66.%20in%20line>

## **Have a Council Leader who is directly elected by the public, with the first election planned for May 2024**

Our Deal requires Norfolk County Council to change the way its leader is appointed. Put simply, instead of being appointed by other County Councillors, every eligible person in Norfolk would get the opportunity to vote for a Leader. The position of a directly elected Leader would replace the existing position of the Leader of the Council with the first election planned for May 2024.

A directly elected leader would be supported day to day by the County Council's Cabinet and existing officers and systems.

Norfolk County Council also wishes to create a Norfolk Leadership Board, consisting of representatives from local government, health, the police, business, education, and the voluntary sector, to further support the directly elected Leader with shaping the priorities for Norfolk and developing strategy for further devolution deals.

A County Deal for Norfolk is not about local government re-organisation, every council remains a sovereign organisation and will not lose any powers or statutory duties. The directly elected leader would not change this, nor would they have the power to do so in the future.

The County Deal text gives details of the proposed Governance model in the Governance section of the Norfolk Devolution Deal.<sup>7</sup>

**6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with plans for an elected leader and cabinet system of governance?**

Please choose one answer only, from the list below:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree or disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

**Why do you say that?**

Please write in the box below:

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/norfolk-devolution-deal/norfolk-devolution-deal#:~:text=a%20devolution%20deal.-,Governance,-16.%20Strong%20local>

## **Benefitting from devolution and enabling Norfolk's voice to be heard by Government to help shape future policies**

County Deals are part of the Government's levelling up agenda designed "to spread opportunity equally across the UK", bespoke to the needs of the individual places, bringing decisions closer to people and places. The Government is clear that County Deals are not about local government re-organisation and the County Council is committed to working closely with key partners such as district councils, businesses plus other bodies, to make the most of any new powers and funding that come into Norfolk because of a Deal.

Norfolk would benefit by being part of a group of areas with devolution deals and directly elected Leaders or Mayors giving the County better direct access to Government ministers with the ability to lobby on important matters for our area.

The proposed Deal will require a directly elected leader. The most significant element of the deal, the Investment Fund worth £20 million per year over 30 years, as well as other funding and powers, would not be available without a directly elected leader. Details of the devolution framework are available on p.140 of the Levelling Up White Paper.<sup>8</sup>

**7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the principals of devolution and the benefits it brings to Norfolk?**

Please choose one answer only, from the list below:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

**Why do you say that?**

Please write in the box below:

<sup>8</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1052706/Levelling\\_Up\\_WP\\_HRES.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1052706/Levelling_Up_WP_HRES.pdf)



## About you

To make sure we are learning from a wide range of people – we'd like to ask some questions about you. These are optional questions (so you may choose not to give this information), but this information is helpful to understand who is responding to our consultations.

**8. Are you responding as...?** Please tick (✓) one answer only:

- An individual / member of the public
- On behalf of a voluntary or community group
- On behalf of a statutory organisation
- On behalf of a business
- A Norfolk County Councillor
- A district or borough councillor
- A town or parish councillor
- A Norfolk County Council employee

**9. If you are responding on behalf of another organisation, what is the name of the organisation, group, or business?** Please write your answer in the box below:

**How did you hear about this consultation?** Please tick (✓)  
one answer only:

Local media (e.g. newspaper, radio)

From a social media post (e.g Facebook)

From a friend

From a group I belong to

From my place of work or education

The Norfolk Residents' Panel

District Council web page

Norfolk County Council web page

My Parish Council

From an email I received

**10. Are you...?** Please tick (✓) one answer only:

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Prefer to self-describe (please specify below)

If you prefer to self-describe please specify in the box below:

**11. How old are you?** Please tick (✓) one answer only:

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 
- 85 or older
- Prefer not to say

**12. Do you have any long-term illness, disability health problem that limits your daily activities or the work you can do?** Please tick (✓) one answer only:

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**13. If yes which of the following best describes your condition or disability? Please tick (✓) all answers that apply**

Blind or partially sighted

D/deaf or hard of hearing

Limiting health condition e.g. heart disease, asthma, strokes, osteoarthritis,

Rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia and myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) etc.

Learning Disabilities

Neurodiversity e.g. autistic spectrum disorders, dyslexia, dyspraxia

Mental health conditions – e.g. depression, schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorders, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder

Physical disability e.g. limb disorder, amputee, wheelchair user, cerebral palsy, motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy

Prefer not to say

Other, please write in the box below:

**14. How would you describe your ethnic background?** Please tick (✓) one answer only:

**Asian or Asian British**

Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Any other Asian background, please describe in the box below:

**Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African**

Black British

Caribbean

African

Any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background, please describe in the box below:

**Mixed or multiple ethnic groups**

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other mixed or multiple ground, please describe in the box below:

**White**

English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British Irish

Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Roma

Other White background, please describe in the box

below:

**Another ethnic group**

Arab

Any other ethnic group please describe in the box below:

Prefer not to say

**15. Which area do you live in?** Please tick (✓) one answer

- Breckland
- Broadland
- Great Yarmouth
- King's Lynn and West Norfolk
- North Norfolk
- Norwich
- South Norfolk

**16. Do you have caring responsibilities?** Please tick (✓) one answer

- No
- Yes – for children with additional needs
- Yes – for older family members
- Yes, other. Please write here:



**17. Which of the following best describes you?**

Please tick (✓) one answer only:

- Employed (full time)
- Employed (part time)
- Self employed
- Unemployed
- Student
- Looking after the family home
- Long term sick
- Retired

**18. What is your first language?**

- English

Other, please write in the box below:

## **What happens next**

All the following steps need to be completed to enable a Deal to proceed:

The County Council's Cabinet will meet in the summer to consider the results of this public consultation, decide whether to proceed and, if so, submit the consultation results to the Government

All County Councillors will be asked in the December 2023 Full Council Meeting whether they support the move to an elected leader and cabinet system of governance

In spring 2024, Parliament will decide whether to approve the 'statutory instrument' required to let the Deal proceed.

If the deal is not agreed, nothing changes. This means that Norfolk would not receive the investment outlined in the deal, nor the powers and governance that accompany it. Given that a proposed deal has undergone significant negotiation with Government, if it is rejected, we would expect that, if there was a desire to seek devolution in the future, other areas would be prioritised above Norfolk.

How we will make our decision and report back to you

We will take a report about the findings of this consultation to the County Council's Cabinet in June.

Our County Councillors will consider the consultation responses we receive very carefully. In particular, they will consider:

The impact of any proposal on individuals, groups of communities and on people identified as having 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. As well as this equality impact assessment, councillors will consider the impact of proposals on rural areas.

- The views of people, partners and other stakeholders consulted.
- The evidence of need and what is proven to work effectively and well.
- The financial and legal positions and any constraints at the time.
- Any potential alternative options, models, or ideas for making savings.

**You can send back a paper feedback form to:**

Freepost Plus RTCL-XSTT-JZSK, Norfolk County Council,  
Ground floor – south wing, County Hall, Martineau Lane,  
Norwich NR1 2DH.

However, if you want to help the council save money, please use a stamp, and send to this address: Stakeholder and Consultation Team, Norfolk County Council, Ground floor – south wing, County Hall, Martineau Lane, NR1 2DH.

You may wish to keep a copy of your response to our consultation for your own records.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please email us at [haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk) or contact Customer Services on 0344 800 8020 or Text Relay on 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.