

Suffolk County Council's response to government's devolution proposal for Norfolk and Suffolk

Please note, the free text "please explain your answer" elements are restricted to 1000 characters in the online survey response form. For the below, the multiple choice option in bold is suggested as the response along with explanatory text).

Consultation Questions

Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority over the proposed geography will deliver benefits to the area?

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Please explain your answer:

- Suffolk has long held devolution ambitions to secure the best possible outcomes for its residents. This proposal builds on work with previous devolution models and unlocks the benefits of devolution.
 - The range of powers and funding available in the new Devolution Framework would support local policy priorities e.g., transport infrastructure, economic development, skills, environment and health improvement.
 - The Mayor and MCCA bring enhanced profile and influence nationally for local benefit and facilitates work with local partners to deliver those benefits.
 - It offers visible and accountable leadership across Suffolk and Norfolk that that can champion local priorities, businesses and communities.
 - It offers opportunity for wider public service reform, where of local benefit.
 - The combination of devolved powers and funding, more influence and a route to access the greatest devolution on offer by government will help unlock the potential of residents, businesses and communities.
- (996 characters with spaces)

Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed governance arrangements for the Mayoral Combined County Authority?

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Please explain your answer:

The proposed governance model:

- Offers visible, clear leadership; a strong strategic voice for Suffolk and Norfolk and enables the MCCA to be locally rooted and engaged.
- Establishes robust, accountable decision making along with overview and scrutiny and audit arrangements.

- Engages relevant local stakeholders either as non-constituent or associate members or through direct engagement by the Mayor with local stakeholders and residents.
- Will develop, champion and implement a strategic vision for Suffolk and Norfolk and advocate for the Eastern region, working with established MCA and new MCCAs across the East.
- Enables work with local partners from across communities, businesses and other key sectors e.g., Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprises; education; the NHS; community safety and criminal justice.
(831 characters with spaces)

Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will support the economy of the area?

- **Strongly agree**
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Please explain your answer:

- The MCCA will enhance many key sectors that Suffolk and Norfolk share. These include: agri-food and technology; clean energy; ports and logistics; ICT and thriving visitor economies due to their strength of cultural, heritage and natural assets.
- It builds on established collaboration between Suffolk and Norfolk for economic development.
- The proposed MCCA brings additional funding, powers and national influence that will enhance the area's significant economic potential and contribute to this government's growth mission.
- Both large geographical counties, Suffolk and Norfolk need better physical and digital infrastructure to unlock economic growth and keep communities and businesses connected.
- It enhances the economic strength of the East of England. The proposed MCCA would be able to work with the new MCCA being established across Essex and existing Cambridgeshire and Peterborough MCA.
(906 characters with spaces)

Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve social outcomes in the area?

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Please explain your answer:

- The MCCA's additional powers, funding and devolved decision-making offers opportunities to improve skills, reduce barriers to access employment, tackle inequalities, deliver affordable housing and improve accessibility (physical and digital).
 - Through its membership, partners and engagement, the MCCA will be informed by local insight and data (e.g., Suffolk's and Norfolk's Offices of Data Analytics). This will enable action to be targeted to deliver the best outcomes.
 - The MCCA will be able to convene key partners to develop ways to tackle systemic inequalities and diverse needs, e.g., ways to help people be more confident to access work and tailoring skills provision to meet local needs.
 - The MCCA's economic strengths are significant. Informed by local insight, investment and action can be directed where economic growth can deliver the greatest social and environmental.
- (886 characters with spaces)

Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve local government services in the area?

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Please explain your answer:

The MCCA:

- Would be responsible for funding and investment in policy areas that complement local government ambitions, services and functions e.g., economic development, education and skills and housing.
 - Brings additional investment that can be more tailored to local need and characteristics and reduces competitive bidding to central pots. Therefore, providing more effective and efficient use of the funding.
 - Offers longer term funding and investment that enables better planned and more effective delivery.
 - Provides additional democratic representation for Suffolk and Norfolk at a regional level that will also need to be connected to local communities.
 - Supports the convening power of local councillors and councils, through its powers and funding.
- (751 characters with spaces)

Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve the local natural environment and overall national environment?

- **Strongly agree**
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Please explain your answer:

- Improving the natural environment is a priority in Suffolk and Norfolk. There already exists a Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership that leads the Local Nature Recovery Strategy across the counties. It work is informed by the joint evidence base in the Norfolk and Suffolk Natural Capital Compendium.
 - There are significant natural landscapes shared across Suffolk and Norfolk e.g., the Brecks, the Broads and their coastline.
 - The MCCA will be an advocate for the counties' natural assets helping protect and improve them. This will also support sustainable tourism, an important economic contributor to the area.
 - More broadly, work to tackle climate change is also a priority for Suffolk and Norfolk. Therefore, the MCCA's national influence can help support and augment existing local work as well as contributing to national targets.
- (853 characters with spaces)

Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will support the interests and needs of local communities and reflect local identities?

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Please explain your answer:

- Suffolk and Norfolk have rural, coastal, market towns and larger urban communities. Their needs are often overlooked at national level leading to underfunding and missed opportunities.
 - The MCCA's devolved decision making, funding and powers will better meet those needs with its local insight and community connections. This could include cultural and heritage projects that promote local identity.
 - The MCCA will champion local communities at national level, representing their characteristics, offers and needs. For example, the counties are collaborating on NSIPs across our communities.
 - The MCCA's members, particularly the constituent members, will support its understanding and connection to local communities of place and people.
 - Community engagement will be an important part of the business cases that Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils are developing for local government reorganisation, e.g., working with town and parish councils and other community organisations.
- (985 characters with spaces)