

Suffolk County Council meeting Thursday 8 October 2026, vote taken on Motion 1.

Motion 1 – Proposed by Councillor Philip Faircloth-Mutton and seconded by Councillor Tristan Gale.

Motion Text:

This Council notes that between 2018 and June 2026, 205,000 migrants arrived in the UK by small boat. Additionally, 781 migrants arrived on 23 September 2026, the highest number for a single day in 2026.

The Home Office has plans to convert RAF Barnham into a site to ‘accommodate people seeking asylum’. According to the Home Office fact sheet, the site would be used for a minimum of 10 years. It has been widely reported that the number of immigrants to be housed there would be a maximum of 1,250 at any one time. The plan has caused deep and widespread concern in Barnham, surrounding communities and the rest of Suffolk. In July, West Suffolk Council unanimously agreed that the site was not suitable to house asylum seekers.

At a meeting with Norfolk County Council leadership on 5 August 2026, Home Office officials revealed new details:

- Those to be accommodated at the site would have arrived in the UK illegally on boats.
- They would be exclusively men, the majority of whom would be single young men.
- There is no maximum cap to the numbers to be accommodated at the site.

The plans, as they stand, present a long-term impact to the social wellbeing of Barnham residents and the rest of the county of Suffolk should other sites be considered in the future.

The Administration, therefore, takes the extraordinary decision, to explore the holding of an advisory referendum on the matter. This would allow residents to consider whether local authorities and communities in the county of Suffolk should have a greater role in decisions regarding the accommodation for asylum seekers, where those decisions affect local wellbeing, public housing and community cohesion.

This Council resolves to: Explore the holding of a referendum on Thursday 6 May 2027 on the issue of housing asylum seekers in the county of Suffolk.

Total results	
For	39
Against	13
Abstain	13

Conservative Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Bobby Bennett			Abstain
Elaine Bryce			Abstain
Matthew Hicks			Abstain
Beccy Hopfensperger			Abstain
Darius Laws			Abstain
Joe Mason			Abstain
Debbie McCallum			Abstain
Harry Richardson			Abstain
Richard Rout			Abstain

Green Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Peter Aiano		Against	
Matt Bentley		Against	
Simon Dowling		Against	
Annette Dunning			
Ash Lever		Against	
Robert Lindsay		Against	
Sally Mittuch		Against	
Stephen Molyneux		Against	
James Patchett		Against	
Dylan Roques		Against	
Laura Smith		Against	
Andrew Stringer		Against	
Keith Welham		Against	

Labour Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Adele Cook			Abstain
Martin Cook			Abstain
Colin Kreidewolf			Abstain

Liberal Democrats Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Ruth Leach			
Inga Lockington		Against	

Reform Uk Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Simon Alders	For		
Stuart Allen	For		
Vicky Armstrong	For		
Paul Bains	For		
Mark Barber	For		

Robin Baxter-Ayling	For		
Morgan Brobyn	For		
Andrew Burton	For		
Louis Busuttil	For		
Tim Buttle	For		
Chris Cox	For		
Asa Downing	For		
Philip Faircloth-Mutton	For		
Tristan Gale	For		
Tony Gould	For		
Michael Hadwen	For		
David Hill	For		
Christopher Hudson	For		
David Hurlbut	For		
Alistair Jeffreys	For		
Tim Kent	For		
Trevor Lailey			
Paul Littman	For		
Tony Love	For		
John Matthews	For		
Patti Mulcahy			
June Mummery	For		
Luke O'Brien	For		
Ryan Procter	For		
Jonathan Ramsay	For		
Richard Read	For		
Paul Reeder	For		
Martin Robinson	For		
Chris Smith	For		
Paul Sutton	For		
Rachael Tecklenberg	For		
Rupert Tonkin-Galvin	For		
Kerrie Turner	For		
Don Waldron	For		
Adrian Whittle	For		

Ungrouped Independent Councillors

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Julia Ewart			Abstain
John Nunn	For		