

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IN SUFFOLK

Residents' Summary



MARCH 2025

Suffolk

Part of Suffolk's enormous appeal is its variety. Sea views, rolling fields, big skies, quiet villages, market towns and busy urban areas. Although different from each other, every inch of Suffolk is an important part of our great and historic county.

We're proud of Ipswich, our county town. But we're also proud of the many other places, large and small, that make Suffolk the wonderful place it is.

In Suffolk we have world-renowned food and drink, thriving tourism, historic treasures, a national park and protected landscapes, an internationally renowned horse-racing industry, clean energy production, logistics, science, technology and connections to London.

Suffolk really does demonstrate the idea that 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'.

Suffolk has many unique characteristics, but also a strength and pride in its single, binding, identity. Suffolk Day, the Suffolk Show, the University of Suffolk, Suffolk-wide local media, the Suffolk Trinity. There's even a Suffolk way of saying things that lives on through the ages.

There is a spirit or force that's hard to describe that connects and unites our great and special county.

Local Government reorganisation in Suffolk

The Government is changing the way councils in Suffolk are set up – known as Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

There are currently six councils (the county, district and borough councils) all responsible for different services and different areas. These have been in place for over 50 years and the Government wants to simplify the system, save money and make services more financially-sustainable.

In response, Suffolk County Council is proposing to replace all six councils with one new council, delivering all services, local and county-wide.

We are very clear, this will mean the end of the county council, along with Suffolk's district and borough councils, and in their place the creation of a one new council with a new structure, councillors and services.

Better use of public money

Independent analysis by accounting firm PwC shows that a single new council for Suffolk would mean:



£26m
annual savings
after 5 years



£104m
savings in
first 5 years



£19m
one off
set up costs

Why this is better for Suffolk

- **Simpler for residents** – one council would make it easier to understand and contact local government
- **Clearer accountability** – there would be less confusion over who is responsible for what
- **Better use of funding** – a more financially sustainable, county-wide approach to budgeting
- **Safer services** - less risk of breaking up critical services like social care and better alignment with other agencies like health and the police
- **Better alignment of services** – since everything is under one roof, services can be more easily coordinated, creating opportunities to improve services for residents
- **More efficient decision-making** – with just one council, decisions can be made more quickly
- **Connected to and empowering residents** - providing both the most straightforward and accountable democracy with enhanced neighbourhood and community engagement
- **Stronger leadership** – a single, visible and accountable body providing a clear strategic voice for Suffolk.

The money could be used for services like:



fixing and cleaning roads



waste collection and disposal



housing



social care



planning



leisure centres



school places and travel



parks and open spaces

More than one council would cost more

There's been talk of creating two or even three councils for Suffolk, including a Greater Ipswich. If this happened, it would mean expanding Ipswich's current boundaries to include areas like Felixstowe, Woodbridge and possibly even Needham Market – as well as the villages in between. But having multiple councils would actually cost money, not save it, and the costs will take years to get back.

A key part of this calculation is the cost of breaking up critical public services such as social care. A national report has shown that the financial cost of breaking up services into three councils would be over £150 million, not to mention the risk to vulnerable people caused by the upheaval.

	1 council	2 councils	3 councils
break up costs over 5 years	£0	£92m	£155m
annual savings after 5 years	£26m	£9m	-£3m
savings in first 5 years	£104m	£12m	-£52m
one off set up costs	£19m	£26m	£32m

Your role

We want residents, town and parish councils, businesses and community and voluntary organisations to help shape what a new single council for Suffolk would look like. Change can be daunting but it also presents huge opportunities to make things better for everyone.

Over the next six months, we will be out in the community running engagement sessions and asking how you'd like a new council to be formed and run.

From how you prefer to access council services to where and how planning decisions are taken and how many councillors you'd like to see on a new council, we will be seeking your views.

We want our vision for a new Suffolk council to reflect our unique and diverse county. Your role in that is essential.

Interim plan

Suffolk County Council is currently analysing all the information and has written it up into an interim plan for the Government to consider. Our interim plan is available on www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution

We will send our final proposals to the Government on 26 September 2025.

If we're going to create a truly sustainable and effective council structure for Suffolk, then one council is not just the only workable option, it's also the best one.