



Norfolk County Council



Devolution Deal for Norfolk – the key points

May 2024 v3

A Devolution Deal for Norfolk

Norfolk County Council and the Government have agreed, in principle, a new Devolution Deal for Norfolk, to transfer funding and powers to this area - a process known as devolution.

Subject to reaching final agreement, it would enable us to invest in areas such as better transport, skills, job opportunities, housing and regeneration, tailored to the specific needs of local people.

We have continued to work closely with the Government on the detail and councillors will decide whether we proceed to a final deal.

You can find out more over the next few pages, including the headlines from our public consultation earlier this year.



What's the Investment Fund?



£20 million per year
for thirty years guaranteed funding



What could we use the fund for?



It could be used for capital projects like investing in broadband or market towns or other infrastructure to support growth.



It could be used for revenue projects like grants for businesses or schemes to help improve skills.



It will help unlock even more money from government, other agencies and the private sector.

What are the implications of not having it?



With changes to funding nationally, there is no guaranteed money coming to the local area.

We would face a bidding lottery, competing with other parts of the country.



How would it help local people?

It could help regenerate local areas, help grow businesses, help people get better skills, and improve infrastructure in Norfolk.

What a deal would mean:

Having a Council Leader who is directly elected by the public, enabling Norfolk's voice to be heard by the Government



Targeting funding and resources to Norfolk's own priorities



Investing in the skills we need and attracting and retaining key businesses

Unlocking housing and employment sites



Opening the door to more - further powers and funding in future

Norfolk could decide how to spend:



A £20 million investment fund,

every year for 30 years, to grow the economy and jobs



PLUS:

Funding for integrated transport



£7 million for brownfield development*

£12 million for adult education*

£5.9 million

for housing, regeneration and development*

(* up to 2024/25 and then reviewed)



How the adult education budget works at the moment:



- The adult education budget comes from the Government, to fund training for adults
- This training ranges from basic skills to technical qualifications



Current funding is

£12.3m per year



There is **no flexibility** to shape local priorities – priorities are set nationally



What would happen under a devolution deal?

Funding would be devolved to the county council from **May 2025 onwards**



There would be **flexibility** to create a local approach, to meet local needs



- Employers and stakeholders would be involved in shaping these priorities
- Training that is currently not supported could now be funded

The potential benefits:

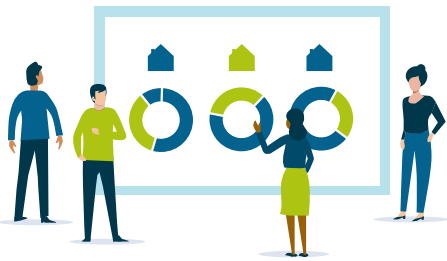


- The ability to focus on Norfolk's needs, such as training more HGV drivers and training people in retrofitting (improving buildings, to meet net zero carbon targets)
- A higher skilled workforce in Norfolk – Norfolk's skills levels are currently below the national average
- Helping to attract new employers and support the expansion of existing ones
- Enabling more adults to continue working in Norfolk, by equipping them to get more skilled jobs

What's a brownfield site?

- ✓ A site that was developed previously and is now disused
- ✓ A site that may require decontamination and clearance, before any redevelopment takes place

How do plans for housing on brownfield sites get funded at the moment?



Councils bid for support from Central Government, which is considered on a case-by-case basis

✗ The application process does not always fully reflect Norfolk's housing challenges



Central Government works to create a pipeline of schemes for future funding

○ Funding criteria can be changed to reflect Government priorities



Support can be through a grant, loan or partnership equity

What would happen under a Devolution deal?



District councils would work up a pipeline of schemes for development as they know their local area and the potential sites

Decisions on which schemes are developed would be taken in Norfolk



Once agreed, schemes would then be developed by the public sector and social housing providers

The potential benefits:

- ✓ Norfolk people would have a greater choice of high quality, affordable housing, where it is needed
- ✓ Derelict or disused sites will be brought back into productive use
- ✓ It's more sustainable to redevelop these sites, which are usually within existing communities
- ✓ Norfolk will have control over regular, guaranteed funding, to help it to plan more housing
- ✓ Redeveloping more brownfield land could reduce pressure to build on greenfield sites

Devolution Deal: The directly elected leader

The current council leader:



The directly elected leader, under the devolution deal:

How they are appointed

Elected by the public as a councillor, every four years and selected as Leader by other councillors

Elected by the public, every four years and not by councillors

Their representative role

Is a councillor - represents a local area, and the whole county in the council leadership role

Is not a councillor - has no local area, represents the whole county in the council leadership role

Decision-making

Exercises all decision-making powers personally, or can delegate them to cabinet members

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Working with a cabinet

Selects a cabinet of between two and nine councillors, including a deputy

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Council budget and policy framework

Council must agree budget and policy framework documents and they must act in accordance with these

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Can they be removed?

An Elected Member cannot be removed between elections, but the Leader of the Council can be changed by the ruling group, by a change in political control of the council or by ceasing to be a councillor

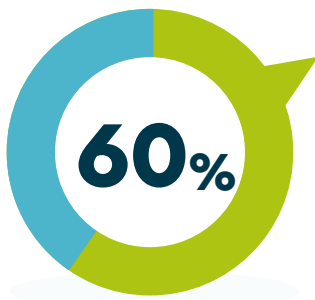
A Directly Elected Leader cannot be removed between elections, except for cases of electoral and financial fraud, or by choosing to resign from the role

A deal for Norfolk consultation - headline results from May 2023



64% agree with the proposal for Norfolk to have control of money devolved from the Government.

65% agree with the proposal to move the Adult Education Budget from Government to Norfolk County Council.



agree with the proposed change to create a stronger local business voice for Norfolk.



55% agree with plans to open up housing and employment sites in Norfolk.



agree with proposals for an integrated transport settlement.



50% agree with plans for an elected leader and cabinet system of governance. **19%** didn't express a view and **31%** disagree.



57% agree with the principles of devolution and the benefits it brings to Norfolk.

For a full copy of the findings report with analysis completed by the Consultation Institute, including key themes raised by respondents, see www.norfolk.gov.uk/devolution

