

Norfolk and Suffolk scheme of delegation consultation arrangements

Legislation requires devolution deal areas to publish a scheme of governance setting out plans for the scope of the combined authority, the arrangements for local representation, and decision making. The public must be consulted on these arrangements, and the Secretary of State will then take the outcome of consultation into account before further legislation can be taken forward.

The draft scheme will be the subject of a statutory consultation exercise which will commence no later than 4 July 2016. The results of the consultation exercise will be reported back to council and the Secretary of State.

Key elements of the consultation will be based on an online consultation that is accessible and open to all so the requirement to formally consult with residents on the proposed governance scheme is met. Evidence from other areas suggests that on-line alone will not reach the number of people we would like to reach, and those who do will be self-selecting and unrepresentative of the population as a whole.

Therefore, in order to fully consult residents and ensure we get more representative views there will be:

A booster telephone survey to ensure that we get representative consultation feedback that enables us to compare public opinion at district level and ensure that our elected members can base their decision on robust data. This will mean 5,320 individual telephone interviews across the two deal areas to give a robust sample (380 per district).

The telephone survey will also include 250 interviews with businesses across both counties.

During the consultation period each authority is also likely to receive direct representations from stakeholders in writing and email. Each participating authority will collect the responses they receive directly.

Upon completion of the consultation, we will submit an overall report with executive summary to the Secretary of State as a joint submission from all councils in Norfolk and Suffolk. Each participating authority will submit copies of all stakeholder representations they receive by hard copy or email along with their own representations.

The process requires the consultation to take place over the summer months. The maximum time we can have the consultation open is seven weeks. Whilst this is fewer weeks than standard consultations, it is balanced by the extensive telephone interviews which ensure the robustness of the exercise. The consultation will open on July 4th and run until August 19th. The submission of responses to the Secretary of State will be on September 9th.