

Councils, December 2025

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Devolution and Norfolk and Suffolk County Combined Authority – on 4th December, the Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government, Steve Reed announced that mayoral elections in Suffolk and Norfolk should be postponed until May 2028. He has provided the following statement implying that unitary structures (and elections) should be completed **before** the mayoral authority is established: *The Government is .. minded to hold the inaugural mayoral elections for Sussex and Brighton, Hampshire and the Solent, Norfolk and Suffolk, and Greater Essex in May 2028, with areas completing the local government reorganisation process before Mayors take office. This is because devolution is strongest when it is built on strong foundations, therefore moving forward we will ensure strong unitary structures are in place before areas take on mayoral devolution.*

The Minister's statement can be found on [Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#) I am sure more information will emerge in the coming days.

Information about devolution and local government re-organisation can be found at Suffolk County Council's web site: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution>

Government Consultation - This statutory consultation seeks views on several sets of proposals that the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) has received following the Secretary of State's invitations to councils in Norfolk and Suffolk to set out how unitary structures would work best for their areas. Both Norfolk and Suffolk County Council are proposing a single unitary (each) as both believe that this would provide the most effective and consistent governance structure as well as a strong balance to any over-reach by the overseeing mayoral authority, something which multiple unitaries would be less qualified to do. It closes on 11th January 2026. Details can be found at: [Local government reorganisation in Norfolk and Suffolk - GOV.UK](#)

Bird Flu - Sadly, there have been outbreaks at several commercial poultry facilities in West Suffolk and in Norfolk. DEFRA's Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) has imposed restrictions on the premises. More information on the locations of outbreaks can be found at: [APHA Interactive Avian Influenza Disease Map](#) SCC Trading Standards is managing enforcement of controls.

Consultation for a Proposed New Reservoir, Thrandeston – Essex & Suffolk Water are proposing to construct a new drinking water storage reservoir and other water supply facilities in the area of Thrandeston and/ or Eye. A second reservoir is planned near Sipton. A preliminary survey is being undertaken with closing date of 17th December (additional week provided by the applicant). Refer to <https://suffolkwaternetnetwork.co.uk/>

EcoPower Suffolk –is consulting on plans for a large (approx. 3,000 acre/ 600 ha) solar farm with Battery Electric Storage (BESS) and grid connection near Yaxley. See [EcoPower Suffolk - Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage](#) This is part of a non-statutory consultation process; SCC's response to this consultation includes concerns over 'mission creep' – the potential for future amendments to expand the project later on as is happening with Sunnica in West Suffolk.

National Grid Pylon Scheme - The application for the Development Consent Order (DCO) has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) by National Grid and accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State – [Planning Inspectorate's website](#). Suffolk County Council is objecting to the proposals, its Relevant Representations maintain its long-held, opposition to the scheme. The deadline for registering to comment has now passed.

Please get in touch with me if you have questions or comments: Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07714-597980 Twitter: @jesstfleming