

Suffolk County Council news release

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Proposal to create one new council for Suffolk reaches latest milestone

Work will continue on proposals to scrap Suffolk's six councils and replace them with a new, single, fit for purpose, authority delivering all public services - after the Government encouraged further work on the plan.

The proposal, which independent analysis by accounting firm PwC shows would save over £104 million in just five years and £26 million a year thereafter, has been reviewed by the Government. The money saved could be reinvested in vital public services. Ministers have urged the proposal to be developed further ahead of the final plan being signed off in September 2025.

Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for devolution, local government reform and NSIPS, said:

"The Government is encouraging all councils in Suffolk to continue to develop proposals for reorganisation. It's clear from their interim feedback that our single unitary council for Suffolk proposal best meets the criteria, and any alternatives will have to work hard to justify the risks of breaking up critical services like social care, creating new council boundaries and smaller population sizes.

"This is all quite apart from the significant extra cost of having more than one council. All the evidence shows that one council for Suffolk is the only viable option to deliver significant savings that can be reinvested into frontline services. In the first five years, early independent figures suggest a single council will save £104 million, while breaking Suffolk into three, as the districts and borough suggest, will cost taxpayers an additional £52 million. To be clear - their proposal would cost more than the current 50-year-old system!

"The savings from creating a single unitary council can be reinvested into frontline public services that benefit residents and ensure their council tax is as low as possible. The funding could be reinvested in services like pothole repairs, waste collection and disposal, housing, social care, planning, parks and leisure, supporting town centres, school placements and travel and street cleaning.

"But this isn't just about money, it's about people too. A single council will absolutely be able to reflect and serve the whole of Suffolk, rural and urban, and our plans will clearly show how local priorities and residents' voices can and will be central to decision

making.

“If we’re going to create a truly sustainable and effective council structure for Suffolk, then one new council is not just the only viable option, but also the best one.”

More than one council would cost more

Creating two or even three councils for Suffolk, including a Greater Ipswich, has also been proposed by the five district and borough councils in Suffolk. If three were created, 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. The national report by PwC 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

Figures from PwC