

NEWS RELEASE

17 January 2023

Cabinet backs £600 million-plus county deal for Norfolk

Councillors have agreed to progress a £612.9m County Deal, to transfer more powers and funding from the Government to Norfolk.

Following a two hour debate at full council this morning, the council's cabinet agreed to progress the deal at a meeting this afternoon.

County Council leader Councillor Andrew Proctor, who signed the in-principle deal with the Government last month, said: "We have a generational opportunity to unlock significant long-term funding, gain greater freedom to decide how best to meet local needs and create new opportunities for the people who live and work in Norfolk.

"Moving decisions and funding previously controlled in Westminster to Norfolk, for Norfolk; to take control of our own destiny and shape our future; a catalyst for change to build on our strengths, address challenges, deliver infrastructure and grow the economy.

"For too long has Norfolk as a rural county been left behind, which is why devolution is a prize, and one worth fighting for."

A six week public consultation on the deal will be launched on 6 February. The full council will decide whether to support the change to an elected leader, in December. If approved, an election will be held in May 2024.

For further details on the County Deal, including the full text, visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkcountydeal . You can register for updates at countydeal@norfolk.gov.uk .

Background:

According to the report to cabinet, the deal would mean that, from 2024 onwards, the County Council could:

- target funding and resources to Norfolk's own priorities, with a new investment fund of £20m per year for 30 years
- unlock housing and employment sites with an injection of £12.9m capital funding in this Spending Review period and new powers to drive regeneration, housing and development priorities
- invest in the skills we know we need, with devolution of the adult education budget and input into the new Local Skills Improvement Plans
- invest in local transport planning and consolidate transport budgets to direct funding to better meet our local needs and priorities
- strengthen the local business voice to inform local decision making and strategic economic planning through the future integration of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
- have a council leader who is directly elected by the public, with the first election in May 2024
- raise our influence regionally and nationally, enabling our voice to be better heard by Government to shape future policies and funding decisions for the benefit of our County

ENDS

For political comment

For details of cabinet members, committee chairs and agendas, please see: www.norfolk.gov.uk/cabinetandchairs
Group leaders' and councillors' contact details are available at: www.norfolk.gov.uk/countycouncillors

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