

PAUL CLOVER/MARGARET MAYBURY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT FOR LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 6TH MARCH 2025.

Devolution Extraordinary Council Meeting

As you may have heard Suffolk and Norfolk are one of six areas to be accepted on to the Devolution Priority programme and therefore have to submit initial proposals for their Devolution Programme by 21st March. The new mayor will take office in May 2026. From day one the decision making powers will be governed by existing legislation as Royal Assent will be required to bring in new legislation. The Mayor's office will require a 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and CEO. He/She can also appoint a political advisor and/or Tsars (e.g. Police/Crime). The Mayor's Office will have four constituent Councillors representing the interests of the various Districts to work with. However, the Mayor will have the power of veto in any decision making when consulting with these four Councillors. This Combined Authority can also work with a maximum of four other non-constituent members. The Office will receive funding for 30 years.

An Extraordinary Council meeting for Babergh District Councillors has now been arranged for the 7th April to discuss all points arising including the transition to a unitary authority. The Government has accepted the application to postpone the County Council elections that were due to be held in May. The Government's public consultation on Devolution and the election of a Regional Mayor will close on Sunday 13th April.

Unitary Authority

District and County Council operations will merge into one service. It is not known how many unitary districts Suffolk will comprise. Babergh DC are consulting professional opinion on the best options and following debate these will be presented to Whitehall however there will be a consultation process with the public and the Parish Councils to gauge their views on how the new Authority may best serve their interests. This Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is scheduled to go live in 2028, meaning District Council elections would not occur as scheduled in 2027 and existing Councillors would act in a 'shadow' role pending the arrival of Unitary Councillors. The creation of new Unitary Districts would lead to the formation of new boundary Districts.

New Business Recycling Regulations

From 31st March, all businesses with more than 10 full time employees will be required to separate their recyclable waste from their general waste including food waste. For businesses under 10 full time employees the regulations will take effect from 31st March 2027. The Council is also looking to offer a business food waste collection service in 2025.