

County Councillor's November Report – Judy Oliver

1. New Travel hub

Revised plans have just been released showing an updated design for the bus shelter, with additional green spaces and seating. NCC is working with Sheringham Town Council and a number of local organisations to deliver the project in line with the feedback that was received in the public consultation.

Colin Seal (who created the mural on the current shelter) will be working with school children in the area to produce new artwork for the new shelter.

The new design includes more space for planting and bio diversity and Sheringham in Bloom will oversee the planting and maintenance of all green spaces, while the Sheringham Museum will develop an interactive timeline of the town's history that will be etched into the paving.

The funding comes from the bus service improvement grant so it can only be used for improvements to bus infrastructure. scheme will also include:

- Real time passenger information
- Additional seating
- Area for storing or repairing bikes
- Water refill station
- Wayfinding information for visitors

A start date for the work is expected to be announced shortly. Further information on the project is available at www.norfolk.gov.uk/sheringhamtravelhub.

2. Devolution

The Council is meeting on 16 October to vote on devolution proposals. Under the Government's 'devolution priority programme', Norfolk and Suffolk have been offered the transfer of powers and funding from Whitehall, to enable decisions on jobs, skills, transport and housing to be taken in Norfolk and Suffolk

If Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council agree to proceed, the new powers and funding would be overseen by a mayor, elected by voters in May 2026, to lead a new combined authority. The combined authority would be made up of the mayor, plus councillors from Norfolk and Suffolk.

Suffolk County Council's cabinet is due to take its decision on 2 October, followed by NCC's on 16 October. NCC Cabinet will then decide whether to proceed, at 3pm on the same day. Devolution can only proceed with the support of both councils.

Under the proposals, the mayor and the combined authority would take responsibility for a range of functions and funding, including:

- Local transport
- Skills and jobs

- Housing development
- Economic growth and regeneration
- Environment and climate change
- From 2027 - taking on police and crime commissioner and fire and rescue authority functions

3. Local Government Reorganisation

NCC have submitted their business case to Government and propose replacing Norfolk's county council and seven district councils with one unitary council. The business case states that Norfolk would thereby save £39.8 million per year, removing duplication and joining up services that are currently divided between councils, eg adult social services and housing. There would be neighbourhood area committees setting priorities, closer working with town and parish councils and voluntary groups and services would be delivered through 'integrated neighbourhood teams'

South Norfolk District Council has proposed two councils and the remaining six district councils proposed three councils.

The Government is due to consult the public on different council options this autumn, before making a final decision, expected in spring next year.

4. Quitting Smoking

Around 99,000 people smoke in Norfolk, and smoking kills an estimated 1,240 people in Norfolk each year, making it the biggest cause of preventable illness and death. NCC is supporting 'Stoptober', a national campaign running throughout October to help people to stop smoking entirely.

Smokers across the county are being urged to try stopping smoking and there is a range of services from Smokefree Norfolk, Allen Carr's Easyway, and GPs and pharmacies. These can include access to free vapes, nicotine replacement therapy, specialist one to one or group support. Residents can also sign up to the Ready to Change 30 Day Challenge to help them quit smoking .

Further information is on the [smoking support webpage](#)