

Suffolk County Council meeting Thursday 13 March 2025, vote taken on Motion 1.

Motion 1 – Proposed by Councillor Richard Rout and seconded by Councillor Matthew Hicks.

Motion Text: 'Suffolk County Council is committed to securing the maximum benefits of devolution and local government reorganisation for Suffolk's residents, businesses and communities.

The council believes that a single county unitary for Suffolk would deliver the best outcomes for Suffolk's residents and best meet the criteria set by the Minister, by offering:

- Simplicity for residents
- Clearer accountability
- Better use of funding
- Better alignment of services
- More effective decision-making
- The greatest financial savings, efficiencies and economies of scale
- Stronger leadership
- More opportunities for local communities to engage and have a voice

The council believes that Suffolk has a strong and coherent identity and takes huge pride in our county town of Ipswich, all our market towns, villages and rural communities. We believe that this sense of place and identity should be integral to a single unitary council and that our proposal should be rooted in local democracy, accessibility and accountability.

The council registers its concern that breaking up key social care services across multiple unitary authorities would worsen outcomes for those most in need, increase the cost of care and destabilise the market. Whilst bringing other key services, such as homelessness and housing, alongside social care functions, this has the opportunity to improve the lives of Suffolk's residents.

The council is of the clear view that only a single unitary council would deliver the savings, economies of scale, reduction in bureaucracy and improved outcomes that local taxpayers deserve and registers its concern that multiple unitary councils for Suffolk will increase, not decrease, the pressure on public finances.

Finally, the council emphasises the government's preference that new unitary authorities represent a minimum of 500,000 people and that existing district boundaries should not be split.

Therefore, this Council agrees that a single county unitary is the preferred proposal as it develops its interim plan, and subsequent full business plan, for submission to government.'

The vote result reported in Council of 41 votes in favour was incorrect, following the meeting it has been confirmed there were only 40 votes in favour. The results against and the abstentions were reported correctly.

Total results	
For	40
Against	15
Abstain	1

Conservative Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Edward Back	For		
Peter Beer	For		
Bobby Bennett	For		
Stuart Bird	For		
Elaine Bryce			
Stephen Burroughes			
Nadia Cenci	For		
Jenny Ceresa			
Chris Chambers	For		
Judy Cloke	For		
Andy Drummond			
Robert Everitt	For		
Philip Faircloth-Mutton	For		
James Finch	For		
Jessica Fleming	For		
Mick Fraser	For		
David Goldsmith	For		
Georgia Hall			
Liz Harsant	For		
Ryan Harvey			
T-J Haworth-Culf			
Matthew Hicks	For		
Rachel Hood	For		
Beccy Hopfensperger	For		
Michael Ladd	For		
Stuart Lawson	For		
Henry Lloyd	For		
Joe Mason	For		
Debbie McCallum	For		
Patti Mulcahy	For		
Sam Murray		Against	
David Nettleton			
Alexander Nicoll	For		
Colin Noble	For		
Kay Oakes	For		
James Reeder	For		
Andrew Reid	For		

Debbie Richards	For		
David Roach	For		
Keith Robinson	For		
Richard Rout	For		
Richard Smith MVO	For		
Karen Soons	For		
Heike Sowa	For		
Joanna Spicer	For		
Lance Stanbury	For		
Jamie Starling			
Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro			
Paul West			
Steve Wiles	For		
Nathan Wilson			Abstain

Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Seamus Bennett		Against	
Jessie Carter			
Annette Dunning		Against	
Simon Harley			
Richard Kemp			
Ruth Leach		Against	
Ash Lever		Against	
Robert Lindsay		Against	
Inga Lockington		Against	
Victor Lukaniuk			
Andy Mellen			
Penny Otton		Against	
Keith Scarff		Against	
Andrew Stringer		Against	
Caroline Topping			
Keith Welham		Against	

Labour Group

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Rob Bridgeman		Against	
Peter Byatt		Against	
Elizabeth Farrow		Against	
Sandy Martin		Against	
Lucy Smith			

Ungrouped Independent Councillor

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Peter Thompson	For		

Ungrouped Reform UK Councillor

Councillor's Name	For	Against	Abstain
Christopher Hudson	For		