

Devolution Priority Programme Consultation
English Devolution and Institutions Team
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please reply to:

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13 April 2025

Dear MHCLG,

Establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk

Question 1: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority over the proposed geography will deliver benefits to the area?*

Strongly agree

Please explain your answer.

We believe that a Mayoral Combined County Authority with the transport powers proposed could improve the provision of rail services within Norfolk and Suffolk and deliver integrated transport to a much higher degree than currently exists.

Question 2: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed governance arrangements for the Mayoral Combined County Authority?*

Neither agree nor disagree

Please explain your answer.

As an independent voluntary organisation we aim to collaborate on a multi-agency, cross-sector and all-party basis with whatever governance arrangements may be in place. We are particularly interested in the Mayor's statutory role in governing, managing, planning, and developing the rail network.

Question 3: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will support the economy of the area?*

Agree

Please explain your answer.

Improved rail services and better integration of rail and bus will allow greater access to job opportunities and be beneficial to economic development in general.

Question 4: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve social outcomes in the area?*

Agree

Please explain your answer.

Better rail provision and integration of rail and bus will improve travel options for a greater number of people and we believe that will have a beneficial effect on social outcomes. Locally based ticketing systems or travelcards integrated across different forms of transport can help make public transport more accessible and affordable.

Question 5: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve local government services in the area?*

Neither agree nor disagree

Please explain your answer.

We cannot comment on services in general other than to restate that improvement in public transport will have positive impacts on economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Question 6: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve the local natural environment and overall national environment?*

Agree

Please explain your answer.

We believe there is scope for modal shift from road to rail which will be beneficial to the local natural environment and which can have a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions nationally.

Question 7: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will support the interests and needs of local communities and reflect local identities?*

Neither agree nor disagree

Please explain your answer.

This will in our view be heavily dependent on the personal leadership qualities of the Mayor.

About You

1. *Please tell us how you found out about this consultation?*

GOV.UK website

2. *What best describes your response?*

I am responding on behalf of, or as a representative of, a business or organisation

9. *What best describes your organisation?*

Voluntary and community sector or charity

Railfuture is Britain's leading and longest-established, independent national voluntary organisation campaigning exclusively for a better railway across a bigger network for passenger and freight users, to support economic (housing and productivity) growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities. We seek to influence decision makers at local, regional and national levels to implement pro-rail policies in development and transport planning.

10. *What is the first part of the postcode where your business or organisation is based?*

NR2 (Chair: Railfuture East Anglia branch)

Yours faithfully,

Ian Couzens
Chair
Railfuture East Anglia