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GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk



Norfolk County Council

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NEWANGLIA
Local Enterprise Partnership
for Norfolk and Suffolk



NORWICH City Council



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Via email

Xxx
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4 September 2015
Your ref:
My ref: FMc/

To whom it may concern

Re: Devolution – Letter of Intent

We invite you to consider an exciting proposal that will further transform the economy of much of East Anglia. It comes with the strong endorsement of the Councils in Norfolk together with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and our universities. It conveys our commitment to continue to work together to maximise the benefits of devolution for businesses and communities Our proposals in summary are to:

- improve productivity, drive growth and improve housing delivery
- invest in transport and improve infrastructure
- transform skills and employment
- transform the delivery of health and social care

These represent a significant commitment to achieve the local/national dividend desired through devolution and to rebalance the local economy.

Building on the Norwich & Ipswich City Deals we will develop the existing strong relationships which we have created with private and public sector partners through the New Anglia LEP and develop further Enterprise Zones focused on agri-tech, food and health and digital ICT. We will also complete our commitment to provide Superfast Broadband to 100% of our premises by 2020, We are proud of our collaboration which has led to two Round 2 City Deals; our Enterprise Zone, covering Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, has exceeded job creation targets; our Growth Hub has blazed the trail for simplified and streamlined support for businesses and our Growing Business Fund has created more than 1,000 new jobs and levered in £60m in private sector investment.

Productivity

At the heart of our collaboration would be a Productivity Commission, led by the private sector and the New Anglia LEP which will examine the root causes of the productivity gap in Suffolk and Norfolk and make positive recommendations on how we can tackle these issues head on.

Rural Issues

Our productivity commission will incorporate a 10 point rural productivity plan for boosting productivity in the two counties, in support of the national programme, to address the challenges faced by businesses and local communities in rural and isolated areas.

Financing Infrastructure Investments

A key role for the LEP in a combined authority would be to create investable investment and infrastructure opportunities in a way that levers-in private finance, perhaps from individuals, pension funds or sovereign wealth without relying exclusively on the UK Government for funding.

Strategic Connections to Neighbouring Areas

Whilst our immediate focus is Norfolk we see strengthening connections, both physical and economic, to Suffolk and further still to Cambridgeshire and our neighbouring LEP as key to unlocking the whole area's economic potential, especially in respect of strategic transport provision.

Strategic Transport

We have welcomed and supported government investment in transport infrastructure, including the A11, A47 and A14, but we are ambitious for more. We see the devolution of funding for investment in our roads infrastructure as essential to enable the further development of an integrated, modern transport system that would be the key to developing employment and housing sites across the counties. In this respect we are committed to looking outside our boundaries to areas such as Cambridgeshire and beyond to deliver benefits for the wider region. An effective transport system is the lifeblood of our rural area.

We also want greater local influence over planned improvements to the Strategic Road Network and greater local engagement and influence over the development and operation of the Greater Anglia Rail franchise. We believe this will ensure that government and private sector investments provide better value for money and are focussed strongly on making East Anglia a more attractive place to start up, locate and grow business.

Our "Norwich in 90" rail campaign has brought together private and public sector partners around a compelling business plan to support investment and growth and we have established effective delivery through the Local Transport Body and Skills Board. Not only will such infrastructure unlock business and housing investment throughout East it will also ensure the port of Felixstowe, the UK's busiest container port, continues to grow and contribute to UK economy.

Supporting Business Growth

Building on the success of our Growth Programme, we will enhance the Growth Hub which is already exceeding ambitious performance targets. This will continue to provide a single point of contact for business support. By seeking devolution of national support schemes, including UKTI, MAS and Growth Accelerator this will ensure that businesses have the support they need to help them grow, compete and win in the global marketplace.

Co-operation amongst Key Partners

All the Norfolk and Suffolk Councils have played a major role in the acknowledged success of New Anglia LEP, judged to be one of the most successful in England. This is testament to the strong and enduring collaboration and leadership from private and public sector organisations across Norfolk & Suffolk. We all want this to continue and strengthen so that together we can release the further potential that exists, particularly on growth and in tackling the productivity challenge.

Our submissions to the Comprehensive Spending Review on the wider opportunities presented by devolution represent the respective positions of the authorities. We believe that devolution presents a once in a generation opportunity for public service reform and improved collaborative working, not just on growth and productivity, but the range of opportunities highlighted above. Working with other partners to improve health economies

is critical to delivering sustainable public services and we are committed to working with our partners to make the most of the opportunity offered by devolution to do so.

Support for Key Industry Sectors

Focusing on growth, we know the East Anglian economy, already a net contributor to the Exchequer, has the potential to grow faster, with strengths in key sectors such as agri-tech, energy, ports & logistics and the digital economy. Linking Greater Cambridge and Greater Norwich with their two world-class universities and research facilities with the A11 growth corridor should further accelerate jobs and growth.

Our innovation and research pedigree is world class, with Norwich Research Park (NRP), hosting the Institute of Food Research, The Genome Analysis Centre (TGAC), The Sainsbury Laboratory and The John Innes Centre. We have the University of East Anglia (UEA) with its established record across disciplines, and the Norwich University of the Arts' international reputation.

In Suffolk, the University Campus Suffolk, opened in 2007 has grown quickly and is applying for Taught Degree Awarding Powers currently. In addition our private sector includes Adastral Park, home to BT's global research facility and other tech companies and the Hethel Engineering Centre, a hub for innovation.

Growth in the IT and Digital sector supported by Norwich University of the Arts (NUA), presents a huge opportunity for East Anglia, even more so when you factor in collaboration with Cambridgeshire and the Greater Cambridgeshire and Greater Peterborough LEP. Close to mainland Europe and the wider South East we want East Anglia to be a centre for global business, offering high value, secure and sustainable jobs to everyone who lives there.

Employment & Skills

We are already making good progress. 88% of 18-24 year olds are in work or education and the number of young Job Seekers has fallen by almost 40% in the last 12 months. However, 2,675 16-24 year olds remain on Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), 2,770 on Employment Support Allowance and the rate of youth unemployment in our most deprived towns and some rural areas is still above regional and national average. With the help of Government, we will deliver the national Youth Obligation through a local promise that all our 14-24 year olds will receive the personal support they need to make a successful transition into post-16 learning, get an apprenticeship, work experience or a job within three months of leaving education or employment. This is our Youth Pledge.

Democracy & Governance

We appreciate the need for clear and democratically accountable governance which in turn recognises and reflects the nature of the distinct economic and social geographies within a larger Combined Authority based on clusters of Districts or City Deal geography. This proposal will incorporate clear, decisive and accountable decision making at the geography that best matches effective local delivery

We will explore new forms of governance, based around a Combined Authority model, customised for Norfolk, focused on growth and productivity and our other headline proposals. Suffolk is committed to discussing arrangements with Norfolk and the New Anglia LEP as they evolve further. We will happily enter into discussion about governance arrangements which cross our county borders.

Meaningful Double Devolution

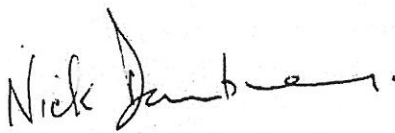
Built into a combined authority will be the importance of a meaningful double devolution approach based on district clusters or City Deal areas, especially in respect of strategic planning and housing delivery. The Greater Norwich partnership is a prime example of how this can work successfully.

This way we can build on the strengths of the New Anglia LEP Board, its active collaborations across public and private sectors, the universities and the LEP Sector Groups.

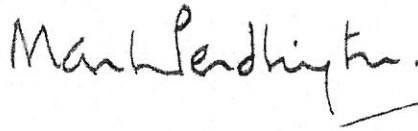
We are confident that you will see these proposals as a clear commitment to build on what we have achieved already, to strengthen the economy of East Anglia and recognise that all the councils in the New Anglia LEP area are ambitious not just to support this growth, but to exploit the wider opportunities presented by devolution for the benefit of our communities and the country.

We can move at pace and look forward to a positive response to this expression of interest. We are committed to working with you to meet the Spending Review deadline.

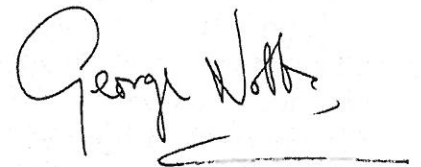
Yours sincerely



Cllr Nick Daubney
Leader - Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk and
Chair of Norfolk Leaders



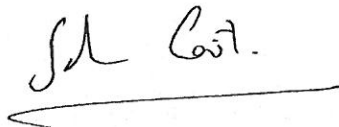
Mark Pendlington
Chair - LEP



Cllr George Nobbs
Leader - Norfolk County
Council



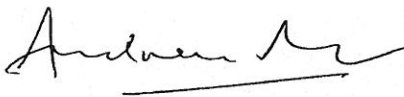
Professor David Richardson
Vice-Chancellor - UEA



Professor John Last
Vice-Chancellor - NUA



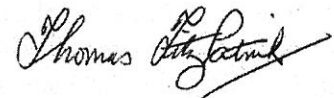
Cllr Michael Wassell
Leader - Breckland District
Council



Cllr Andrew Proctor
Leader - Broadland District
Council



Cllr Graham Plant
Leader - Gt Yarmouth Borough
Council



Cllr Tom Fitzpatrick
Leader - North Norfolk
District Council



Cllr Alan Waters
Leader - Norwich City Council



Cllr John Fuller
Leader - South Norfolk Council

The Norfolk Offer

- A prosperous Norfolk is fundamental to the UK's continued push to be a global economic leader in the 21st century. It is vital we get the support necessary to capitalise on our opportunities and create growth in high value jobs and business
- We want greater devolution for Norfolk and there is much that can be gained by partners joining forces to increase productivity. New solutions will focus on clusters of districts such as Greater Norwich.
- We are keen to explore larger scale options, based on our LEP footprint of the combined counties of Norfolk and Suffolk and we are actively engaged in working with Suffolk.
- Our ambition doesn't stop there. We will also pursue strategic links with Cambridgeshire, our historic East Anglian partners, now even more accessible, thanks to the newly dualled A11.
- This statement of intent is very much the start of a process and we want to begin discussions with Government on how we accelerate the pace of growth and prosperity in Norfolk and beyond.

Norfolk has for centuries contributed to the economic growth of the country, through innovation and technological advancement in agri-business and environmental management.

This has never been more true than today with innovation in the county at the heart of tackling the major global challenges of food production, energy security and climate change.

The county is a world centre for hi-tech research, and in specialist manufacturing. The gas and offshore wind industry, supported by world class engineering technology developing along the A11 Technology Corridor, underpins our Green Energy Coast. We have both a well-established and diversified financial sector which is internationally recognised, and new areas of growth, like the digital and creative sectors, are fuelled by our second university, the highly successful Norwich University of the Arts.

The Norfolk Offer

As Leaders, we want to build upon our current success and reap the benefits that devolution could offer our communities.

The county areas of Norfolk and Suffolk, with their centuries of common interest and culture, represent the core element of a combined authority, working with our Universities and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. The work of the LEP has been underpinned by the support of local authorities across Norfolk and Suffolk and city deals in Greater Norwich and Ipswich.

Our immediate focus is Norfolk but we see strengthening connections, both physical and economic, to Cambridgeshire and our neighbouring LEP as key to unlocking our area's economic potential.

Our Devolution Deal

Devolution - initially with Suffolk and the New Anglia LEP – will help us realise our vision for a 21st century economy. Government has recognised the potential of Norfolk, with welcome investments in key infrastructure including the A11, NDR and A47 and the Norwich Research Park. But we are ambitious for more.

With greater devolution we could deliver:

Economic Growth & Productivity

- A new Anglia LEP productivity commission with a 100 day challenge to examine the scale of the productivity gap and establish the root causes of the problem.

Coherent Planning & Housing

- A network of rural enterprise zones with innovation and improved productivity at their heart.
- A combined authority to provide a single vision to stimulate the growth, overcome blockages and provide better integration and efficiencies, with the appropriate cluster level democratic governance to ensure delivery.
- Work with Government to identify new settlements, utilising Homes and Communities Agency powers and resources to plan and deliver.
- Strengthened compulsory purchase powers to accelerate housing delivery.

The Norfolk Offer

Employment & Skills

- To work with Government on the roll-out of Universal Credit and test new approaches to providing in work progression to support raising incomes and reducing welfare dependency.

Physical Assets and Infrastructure

- A five year funding settlement for local transport schemes to fund an integrated investment package to deliver our local economic, housing and employment priorities. This will deliver better value for money and greater connectivity through integrated transport solutions.
- Direct influence over the new Greater Anglia rail franchise and accelerate much needed improvements on the Norwich to Liverpool Street (Norwich in 90) and King's Lynn to Cambridge King's Cross lines.

Action on Flood Risk

- Responsibilities, and associated budgets and funding, currently exercised by Environment Agency to transfer to the Combined Authority to meet local priorities.
- Improved Health & Social Care
- Integrated commissioning to tackle the challenges facing Norfolk's health and social care offer.

Foundations for growth

The Greater Norwich area represents 50% of the GVA of Norfolk and is a focus for housing and employment growth; Great Yarmouth is an established energy centre; and there is also additional potential from growth in Kings Lynn and along the A11 corridor towards Cambridge.

Norfolk is England's primary offshore energy county, having serviced the oil and gas sector in the Southern North Sea for 50 years. This has helped its rapid growth to become a centre for new technology energy industries, especially offshore renewables. Around £20bn of investment is planned around the UK by 2020 and the Southern North Sea basin presents by far the largest portion. The East Anglia Array, situated off our **Green Energy Coast**, will ultimately comprise around 1000 turbines. This is infrastructure development on a scale seldom seen outside of the Far East. Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft are already recognised as one of the six national Centres for Offshore Renewable Engineering (CORE) and their Enterprise Zone is considered to be one of the most successful in the country, delivering jobs and growth well ahead of its original target.

The Norfolk Offer

Car maker Lotus is synonymous with Norfolk. There is now a high tech cluster of businesses in this area, building on the Lotus heritage and attracting further new high performance technology businesses to start up. This is the heart of the **A11 Technology Corridor**, where hundreds of companies with links to the automotive and motorsports sector are based. We have available space and plans to create significant numbers of new high performance engineering jobs.

Norwich Research Park (NRP), Home to Europe's largest concentration of agri-tech scientists, is turning world class science into world class jobs. It houses the Institute of Food Research, The Genome Analysis Centre (TGAC), The Sainsbury Laboratory, The John Innes Centre and the University of East Anglia (UEA). It is also a globally renowned centre for the study of climate change, due to the close association between the Tyndall Centre and the Climatic Research Unit at UEA. This is coupled with leading edge research at UEA through the Energy Materials Laboratory. The Park has superb business incubation facilities – the NRP Innovation Centre, the Bio Incubator, the new Centrum building and the unique Enterprise Centre at the UEA - Britain's greenest building. New companies benefit from the cluster effect of specialist researchers and the NRP has 52ha of development land, with the Greater Norwich City Deal set to create 7,000 jobs there by 2031.

The 200 year old **Norwich financial services cluster** –which includes the largest concentration of insurance business in the UK outside of London - and new hi-tech industries (including Norwich Tech City), are both ideally placed to benefit from the success of London and Cambridge. The emerging Centre for Advanced Knowledge Engineering campus which is being developed by Aventa Capital Partners at Downham Market in the west of the county is a case in point, with expectations of more than 4,000 new jobs in the new & rapidly growing data analytics sector.

As well as these unique facilities, Norfolk has two further attributes that can support rapid economic growth. It has an **ambitious public service** - in local government, higher education and health services - that supports innovation and takes pride in providing space for new businesses to grow. We work closely to both support fledgling business and get out of their way when they are ready to fly.

And, importantly, Norfolk also has the **room to grow**. Situated less than 100 miles from the nation's capital (albeit with a number of infrastructure projects still necessary to capitalise on this proximity), we have space for new business and new homes and we are committed to creating the business growth, jobs and housing needed to achieve that growth.

The Norfolk Offer

As part of any devolution agreement for Norfolk and Suffolk, opportunities should be seized to develop a local Rural Productivity Plan for the two counties, in support of the national programme, to address the challenges faced by businesses and local communities in rural and isolated areas. Examples of where local solutions might be developed could include problems faced by young people accessing education and training opportunities; centralisation of many public and financial services; development of successful market town programmes to compete with internet based shopping; and developing new approaches to business development in rural areas through conversion of agricultural buildings to business, rather than second or holiday home use. This would deliver more balanced and sustainable rural communities.

We recognise the need for clear and democratically accountable governance which recognises and reflects the nature of our economic social geography. This is likely to incorporate clear decisive, and accountable decision making, built into a combined authority which reflects the importance of greater Norwich and our mixed urban/rural area. A meaningful double devolution approach will provide appropriate local governance to the delivery of growth.

We can move at pace and look forward to a positive response to this expression of interest.

