

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Boundary Committee proposals for Suffolk
Date: 17 October 2008 12:18:23

From: Hockley, Philip J [REDACTED]
Posted At: 17 October 2008 10:19
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Boundary Committee proposals for Suffolk
Subject: Boundary Committee proposals for Suffolk

Des Sir/Madam

I am writing as a private individual wishing to express my support for the proposal by Forest Heath, St Edmundsbury and Waveney district councils for a "3 unitary" solution for Suffolk.

I strongly believe a single unitary for the county, or a single unitary + North Haven, would not serve the needs of local people very effectively. One of the largest criticisms I would have of the existing Suffolk County Council is that the area is too large, and with too much diversity in need, to be effective; the council has always been rather "Ipswich-centric" and very little attention has been paid to the needs of West Suffolk since that county's abolition in 1974.

I support the three councils' view that East and West Suffolk have different population demographics and look in different directions economically. I also support their view that Lowestoft should remain in Suffolk, both in terms of tradition and because it will serve as an effective centre for East Suffolk rather than be subsumed into the needs of Gt. Yarmouth and Norwich.

Yours faithfully

Phil Hockley

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: For the attention of Alison Wildig, Review Manager
Date: 13 October 2008 18:04:58

[REDACTED]

From: Jan Hughes [mailto:jannieh@btinternet.com]
Sent: 13 October 2008 17:44
To: Press
Subject: For the attention of Alison Wildig, Review Manager
Importance: High

Mrs Janet Hughes

[REDACTED]

Alison Wildig
Review Manager
The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
LONDON SW1P 2HW

13 October 2008

Dear Ms Wildig

Great Yarmouth and Waveney PCT and The Boundary changes for Norfolk and Suffolk

I feel I have to put pen to paper as I feel so strongly that the Great Yarmouth and Waveney PCT should remain as it is – why change something that is not broken. The trust is performing well and with its headquarters in Beccles the services are co-ordinated within the local community and understand the local needs. By sharing a Hospital and PCT with Great Yarmouth the complete service remains locally controlled and this means easy access for local people to have treatment without travelling to Norwich (some 25miles away) and Ipswich (some 60 miles away). Why for just once can we not build on the system as it is – local people are happy with this – why change something that is working just because someone in an office in London thinks it's a 'good idea' – they do not live in this area and know nothing of the area, its road structures or local available transport.

The proposals for the change of boundaries so that Lowestoft will be in Norfolk is a proposal which will be a local disaster – again has someone in London decided that it would be fun to play about with the borders? In Beccles our local council would be in Bury St Edmunds some 50+ miles away – and Lowestoft's would be in Norwich some 25 miles away – we have all our services in place – we recycle in Suffolk very well – Norfolk's recycling is not as organised – and that is only one service which would be lost – I hate to think of all the other services which would be shelved – or cost even more money to re-locate or re-start or re-develop. Again I feel I must stress it should be the people who live in this area who have the final say and not a desk director in London. The restructuring would cause havoc and distress to so many people – don't be have enough to worry about the economy at the moment without the changes which you propose and the cost of doing all the 're-structuring' would I presume come of the local peoples pockets.

Yours sincerely

Janet Hughes

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Ipswich
Date: 06 October 2008 09:03:56

From: Brian Hammond [REDACTED]
Posted At: 04 October 2008 14:57
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Ipswich
Subject: Ipswich

Dear Sir

I support an enlarged Ipswich

I am against the one Suffolk proposal to have only a community board [15 of 20] running Ipswich

SCC are wasting council tax payers on a very expensive chief executive and advertising that does not benefit the people of Ipswich while cutting service to people with a disability

Yours Faithfully

B K Hammond

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW:
Date: 06 October 2008 09:03:11

From: John Gregg [REDACTED]
Posted At: 03 October 2008 18:06
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation:
Subject:

Please note below my response to the Unitary Authority options for Suffolk:

A rural Suffolk Unitary would not be sustainable in terms of providing personal public services.

Providing these services would be prohibitively expensive and the opportunity attract grants and other sources of external funding would be very limited.

Limited budgets due to poorer settlements in the ABG will be placed under considerable pressure. The authority would not be able to "punch its weight" caught in the middle of much bigger and/or better placed unitaries in relation to attracting investment and ultimately recruiting and retaining staff.

The financial plan for a North Haven unitary is incredibly fragile and simply does not stand up to any level of informed scrutiny so hopefully the due process will challenge this, the original Ipswich unitary Bid was financially untenable and there is no change with the North Haven Bid. The extreme difficulties and pressures associated with other small unitaries in the region with high needs, eg Southend, Peterborough, Thurrock, in what has been a better economic climate over the past 12 years is testament to the difficulties a North Haven Unitary would face.

I strongly believe in terms of social, economic and environmental factors and the ability of a local authority to improve the life experiences of actions, quality of life, health and wellbeing of vulnerable groups will be best served by a Suffolk Unitary including Lowestoft.

Suffolk is a rapidly changing area with tremendous potential for investment and growth in key areas of the County and equally considerable challenges with changing demographics.

To create more than one unitary would lead to considerable risks in relation the ability of some or all of the unitary authorities to meet these challenges and take full advantage of the considerable potential for Suffolk as a whole.

John Gregg

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From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Suffolk and Proud campaign
Date: 06 October 2008 09:03:06

From: Boggis, Mark [REDACTED]
Posted At: 03 October 2008 16:38
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Suffolk and Proud campaign
Subject: Suffolk and Proud campaign

Dear sir or madam,

With regard to the consultation period for people to submit their opinions of the Boundary Committee's proposals for new unitary councils in Suffolk and Norfolk, I would like to suggest the following.

I trust that the enclosed response will be eligible for the final tally of opinions that you would've received.

As a Lowestoft (and proud) resident all my life, I have to take great concern with the ridiculous Boundary Committee proposal to move our great town, which is steeped in history, into neighbouring Norfolk.

We do not wish to move Lowestoft - the most easterly point in Suffolk - into Norfolk. And likewise, we don't wish for you or other people who live miles away to make this decision and turn our town upside down.

You have no idea of what the town needs, how people live or what is vital for future prosperity! How therefore can you propose to make these wild, life-changing decisions that are out of touch with society?

I'm proud of my heritage, where I live and proud to be part of silly ole Suffolk! We want our voice to be heard - if I'd have wanted to ever live in Norfolk I would have done so....but we have nothing in common with them... and we don't want to lose our roots!

So how therefore can some bureaucrat put the fate of more than 60,000 people's lives at risk? This is not a decision to be taken lightly - given Lowestoft has been in Suffolk for centuries.

You are proposing to rip up the historybooks and chuck this great town the

drain - because that is what will happen IF Lowestoft is submerged into Norfolk.

Our ancestors lived here, my family was brought up here, and I've remained here all my life - and I want my children and their families to stay here!!!

There must be something significant that you see (or want) from shifting the sunny Lowestoft sands over the border - but this is all likely to come at the expense of the tax payer.

I can see this being a very expensive ordeal - so you must be after European monies, more grant aid and joining together two coastal towns into one for YOUR benefit....not ours!

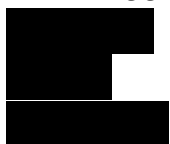
So I deplore you to not let Lowestoft's voice be lost - we don't want to be pushed out or ignored! We will lose our identity and will be worse off - so let us stay where we are!

WE ARE OK AS WE ARE IN SUFFOLK.

Many thanks for your time, and I hope you take these points into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Boggis



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From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Suffolk Boundary Review
Date: 02 October 2008 09:16:25

From: Bhavna Joshi [REDACTED]
Posted At: 01 October 2008 19:46
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Suffolk Boundary Review
Subject: Suffolk Boundary Review

Dear Sir / Madam

Please let it be noted that I am in favour of an East and a West Suffolk and a Unitary Ipswich.

Yours faithfully

Bhavna Joshi

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Farlingaye High School - Boundary review
Date: 01 October 2008 16:57:32

From: sandk.culley [REDACTED]
Posted At: 01 October 2008 15:37
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Farlingaye High School - Boundary review
Subject: Farlingaye High School - Boundary review

Dear Sirs

As parents of children attending Farlingaye High School we are very concerned that as a result of the suggested new boundaries this will place Farlingaye in the new Rural Suffolk area whereas all other schools that Farlingaye have built up a working relationship with will be in the new North Haven area. I am sure the headmistress of Farlingaye has already submitted the reasons why this would NOT be a good thing from Farlingaye's point of view. We are certainly concerned that our children would be directly affected and if the new boundaries went ahead any new links with schools in the new area would have to be established from scratch and would be much further away so that travelling would be impossible.

It is on this basis that we would urge the committee to vote AGAINST the new boundaries.

Regards.

Kevin and Sharon Culley

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Norfolk and Suffolk Reviews.
Date: 01 October 2008 08:53:15

From: Alan & Helen Taylor [REDACTED]
Posted At: 30 September 2008 19:47
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Norfolk and Suffolk Reviews.
Subject: Norfolk and Suffolk Reviews.

Dear Sir.

Proposed changes to Suffolk local authority boundaries.

It seems quite unnecessary to me to change administrative boundaries at all. It always costs more than expected or planned and the anticipated "improvements" and efficiencies never materialise.

If change is to be forced upon us, where is the democratic process involved?

I would certainly not support a unitary authority for the whole of Suffolk as this would remove local accountability and real assessment and knowledge of local needs; and almost certainly resulting in higher Council Tax charges as bureaucratic empires are built.

The proposed split into East and West Suffolk with a separate body for Ipswich and Felixstowe would seem to offer a compromise that is much more realistic, if change is to be forced upon us.

Yours faithfully,

Alan Taylor.

From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Farlingaye High School
Date: 30 September 2008 11:08:50

From: Alok Ruia [REDACTED]
Posted At: 30 September 2008 10:55
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Farlingaye High School
Subject: Farlingaye High School

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am parent of children who attend the above High School.

I wish to vote **against** the proposals for the future organisation of local government in Suffolk.

Yours faithfully,

Alok Ruia

Alok Ruia

From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: FW: local government in Suffolk
Date: 29 September 2008 09:06:49

From: Alan Street [REDACTED]
Posted At: 26 September 2008 17:10
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: local government in Suffolk
Subject: local government in Suffolk

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sir / Madam

As someone who has lived in Suffolk for more than 37 years I should strongly favour a single unitary authority for what is currently the whole county of Suffolk.

Yours etc

Alan Street

From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Boundary Committee review of Suffolk
Date: 29 September 2008 09:05:32

From: [REDACTED]
Posted At: 26 September 2008 18:27
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Boundary Committee review of Suffolk
Subject: Boundary Committee review of Suffolk

I would like to respond to the Boundary Committee's proposals to implement a system of Unitary Local Government in Suffolk.

My main concern is as follows.

If the preferred option of a 'Greater' Unitary Ipswich is proceeded with there will be the potential for economic growth to Ipswich from increased business tax and council tax income. This will in effect take away from a rural Suffolk much needed funding for services and a disproportionate provision of services to the detriment of Suffolk.

I do not support the favoured option which would see the creation of two Unitary Authorities in Suffolk together with the loss of Lowestoft to Norfolk. In my view this will inevitably mean that;

Duplication of resources and expertise between the two new Authorities will mean that my council tax bill will be more than if there was just one Council and frankly its high enough at the moment! We should take every opportunity to reduce costs rather than duplicate and dilute effort, expertise and structures, and

Suffolk as an Authority will become a very second class citizen in comparison with its much larger neighbour Norfolk. Its voice will inevitably be diminished and in the annual battle with Government for money, the chances are that Suffolk will lose out due to its smaller and weaker voice.

What I really struggle to understand in your proposals is why the preferred model for Norfolk is one Unitary Council but for Suffolk it is something different. Surely we should be trying to create Local Government structures that are consistent and understood by people and not dependant on where you live!

Given this I believe that the right solution for Suffolk is the 'One Suffolk' model proposed by the existing County Council. I believe that this will be simpler to understand and cheaper.

Regards.

Fred Hanniffy



From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Council Services in Suffolk
Date: 29 September 2008 09:04:38

From: Chris Holden [REDACTED]
Posted At: 26 September 2008 20:27
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Council Services in Suffolk
Subject: Council Services in Suffolk

We write with reference with the proposals for the changes The Boundary Committee for England are considering. We are strongly in favour of having one council for the whole of Suffolk rather than two of them covering the County. We consider that one council would be the most cost effective, would be easier to communicate with if we had any issues with our Council and would be the closest, which would give us the opportunity of deciding together what is best for our town.

We are delighted to have the opportunity of expressing our opinion, and very much hope that The Boundary Committee will opt for the one Council for the whole of Suffolk.

Ruth & Chris Holden
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Suffolk Boundary Review
Date: 29 September 2008 09:02:57

From: Tony Chittock [REDACTED]
Posted At: 26 September 2008 21:16
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Suffolk Boundary Review
Subject: Suffolk Boundary Review

Dear Sirs

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on the proposed boundary changes for Suffolk.

First of all, I am in favour of Ipswich being part of the new North Haven authority. Ipswich is a large town and regional centre of the Southern part of East Anglia, and is important enough to be in control of its own affairs and those of its environs. Therefore, I am not in favour of the "One Suffolk" option proposed by Suffolk County Council.

My further comments concern the proposed transfer of Lowestoft to a new Norfolk unitary. Lowestoft is the second largest town in Suffolk, and it cannot be in any ones interest to be ruled from Norfolk. This would weaken Suffolk very considerably, particularly as far as the Suffolk Constabulary are concerned. From the comments I have heard, very few residents of Lowestoft would be in favour of a Norfolk unitary ruled from Norwich.

The best options I would like to see are: North Haven to include Ipswich, Felixstowe and Hadleigh.

West Suffolk should be a separate unitary authority based on Bury St Edmunds
East Suffolk should also be a separate authority, to include Lowestoft

I hope that my comments will be of assistance to you when you consider the options for Suffolk and Norfolk.

Thank you.

Tony Chittock, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Suffolk Boundary Review
Date: 29 September 2008 08:59:59

From: Chris Graves [REDACTED]
Posted At: 27 September 2008 15:07
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Suffolk Boundary Review
Subject: Suffolk Boundary Review

I would like to register my support for Single Unitary Suffolk.

The County has a very good record and the single authority will make savings. If split into two there are a number of services that it would be difficult if not impossible to separate in two e.g. the Bridges Section with their specialist expertise.

I am also concerned about the effect on the staff that currently work in Ipswich and would need to commute to different parts of the county.

Regards
Chris Graves

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Response to Boundary Commission's Draft Proposals
Date: 29 September 2008 09:06:45
Attachments: [Response to the Boundary Commission.doc](#)

From: Ian [REDACTED]
Posted At: 26 September 2008 17:17
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Response to Boundary Commission's Draft Proposals
Subject: Response to Boundary Commission's Draft Proposals

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached my Response to Boundary Commission's Draft Proposals for a Unitary Authority for Suffolk.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Kay

[REDACTED]

Response to the Boundary Commission's Draft Proposals for Unitary Authorities in Suffolk

I am strongly opposed to the Boundary Committee's main proposal of two unitary authorities - Ipswich/Felixstowe + the Rest of Suffolk. My main objection is that the villages of the Colneis Peninsular (such as Waldringfield, Newbourne, Brightwell, Kirton and Bucklesham) have been lumped in with Ipswich and Felixstowe for no obvious reason. Presumably the justification is that something has to join Ipswich with Felixstowe, but this is hardly a good reason for subsuming these rural villages in a town-centred authority that will inevitably have a urban bias, and is unlikely to be sympathetic to the concerns of rural communities.

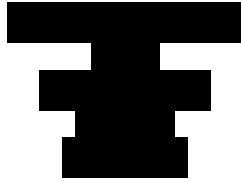
The alternative One Suffolk proposal is acceptable, as is the SCDC's proposal of 3 unitary authorities: East Suffolk, West Suffolk and Ipswich. Both of these have the merit of including Waldringfield and its neighbours in a predominantly rural authority, which would be far more appropriate, particularly as Woodbridge would be in the same authority (Waldringfield has many natural ties with Woodbridge).

If you do decide to propose the Ipswich/Felixstowe + the Rest of Suffolk option, I would only find this acceptable if the boundary were moved to include Waldringfield and its neighbouring villages in the Rest of Suffolk, for the reasons stated above.

Ian Kay

From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Proposals for Suffolk
Date: 29 September 2008 09:06:35
Attachments: [Boundary Committee_2.doc](#)

From: David Sheepshanks [REDACTED]
Posted At: 26 September 2008 18:48
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: Proposals for Suffolk
Subject: Fw:Proposals for Suffolk



26th September 2008

The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
30 Great Peter Street
LONDON
SW1P 2HW

Dear Sirs

Re: Local Government Proposals for Suffolk

I write following the visit of members of the Committee to Suffolk at which a broad range of people with varying interests across the county were able to express their support for the concept of One Suffolk.

I am sure that you will have received many expressions of support for the economic and social advantages of a united Suffolk. While recognising that your preliminary proposal was made after careful thought, having now listened to all the arguments on both sides, I just cannot be persuaded that the North Haven scheme would, in practice, turn out to be anything other than elitist and favouring that area to the detriment of the remainder of Suffolk. Furthermore, the support for North Haven does appear to be largely political and serving the self interest of those that would benefit, no doubt including business and other local area interests that would gain from such a division of Suffolk.

It is on this fundamental point that I centre my argument for One Suffolk. One of your key guiding principles, as set out in *Boundary Committee Recommendations for Suffolk – July 2008* is that any proposal must 'attract a broad cross-section of support', suggesting that this must certainly reflect the whole of Suffolk and not just one part of it.

One Suffolk offers us the opportunity to unite the county as an economic powerhouse that can compare well with our neighbours. At the same time it enables us to derive inspiration from the very important sense of local identity and ownership that will come from the innovative concept of Community Towns.

It provides us with the chance to build on the many strengths of Suffolk, in the North Haven/Ipswich area, in Lowestoft and throughout the remainder of the county, all harnessed in a collaborative force for progress.

A governing County Council of this size and diversity will attract the highest calibre of people to collectively represent our various interests, striking a balance between managing positive change and yet preserving the essential characteristics of Suffolk. This will be achieved far more effectively in an environment of 'joined up thinking' than can ever happen with two

separate councils and the duplication and protective self-interest that accompany such a structure.

My support for One Suffolk is stimulated by a passion to see our county play to its strengths; to be one of appropriate influence that can attract the requisite investment and resource to deliver high quality services for ALL its inhabitants.

I would agree that the North Haven part of the county, predominantly featuring business interests, has needs that differ from other parts of rural Suffolk where preservation may rank ahead of change. Nevertheless, it is my assertion that a co-ordinated 'big picture' approach is far more desirable than a fragmented one.

If there is one part of this Review that does appear to unite everyone, then it is that Lowestoft should remain part of Suffolk. This appears to have overwhelming support.

To conclude on my worst fears, I believe that a two tier, two-speed Suffolk could be a disaster for the unity of the county, for the identity of the county, for the morale of the county and for the economic prospects of the rural rump of the county. In addition, I cannot see how a county that will have two Educational Authorities, two Social Services, two Fire Services, two Highways Departments, two Consumer Protection Services and so on can deliver as cost effectively or consistently to its inhabitants as would be the case under one consolidated governing body.

It is my fervent hope that you will conclude that one unitary authority for the whole of Suffolk, including Lowestoft, offers the best route forward for the county to build and capitalise on its many assorted strengths.

Yours faithfully

David Sheepshanks DL

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: submission from Sue Lockett - reference Suffolk County Council
Date: 29 September 2008 09:06:30
Attachments: [Boundary Commission submission.doc](#)

From: Sue Sida Lockett [REDACTED]
Posted At: 26 September 2008 17:50
Posted To: Reviews@
Conversation: submission from Sue Lockett - reference Suffolk County Council
Subject: submission from Sue Lockett - reference Suffolk County Council

Dear Sirs,
Please find attached a note containing my views on the Boundary Commission's proposals for the future of local government in Suffolk.
Yours faithfully,
Sue Lockett

Sue Lockett

[REDACTED]

To: Boundary Commission reference Unitary Councils in Suffolk
From Sue Lockett, [REDACTED],
[REDACTED]

My family and I live and work in Suffolk and have done so for over 30 years. We are farmers and have also run 3 holiday cottages and a 40 horse livery stable. I was a Suffolk County Councillor for 22 years and Chairman of the Regional Assembly for 4 years until my retirement in July 2007.

I have read your documentation and listened to the various opinions published in the newspapers and the views of my friends, family and ex-colleagues around the County and in the Region. My conclusion is that One Suffolk is in the best interests of the people of Suffolk for the following reasons:

1. During my time on the Regional Assembly (7 years) and latterly as the Chairman it is clear to me that the breaking up of the County into two separate unitaries would significantly undermine Suffolk's ability to have its voice heard at the Regional Level. It is crucial to speak from strength when engaging with Government particularly when funds are being distributed. With the strong representations from Hertfordshire, Cambridge and Essex, Rural Suffolk, for example would be increasingly marginalised with disastrous consequences for the rural community where there are significant pockets of rural deprivation.
2. It is apparent from the current economic status that significant savings will have to be found within Local Government (on top of the £61m that have been made over the past few years in Suffolk). Splitting up major services ie: Social Care, Education, Waste and Police into two parts will only exacerbate the difficulties of continuing to deliver high quality services with an every decreasing revenue budget. This is particularly relevant to SCC Social Care services when half of Suffolk's population will be over 50 in 2011.
3. During my time at County Hall (Deputy Leader) I had the responsibility for staffing matters and I believe that it will be extremely difficult to recruit high calibre staff as they will not
over.....

be attracted to a small unitary council where the career progression will be limited and budgets for training and reskilling will also be significantly reduced.

This has been a problem for other unitaries in the Region ie: Southend and Thurrock. Small may be beautiful in some settings but not in Local Government where the constant battle for appropriate funding requires strong leadership and robust negotiations in terms of attracting inward investment and procurement.

4. A single unitary council for Suffolk would need to build on the network of town councils and large parish councils across the county and devolve decision making and funding to enable local communities to have input into local decision making. Certainly when I retired this option was being discussed and should be taken forward.

5. I am at a loss to understand how the Boundary Commission came to the conclusion that Norfolk County should be a Unitary Council + Lowestoft but believes that Suffolk should be split two ways without Lowestoft. Indeed the reasons you give for a Norfolk Unitary are equally as sound for a Suffolk unitary. Your paper makes no attempt to justify the recommendation for Norfolk as compared with the bizarre decision for Suffolk which will condemn Suffolk residents (particularly in the rural areas) to being under-represented to Government and the Region in terms of input into strategic decision making and funding allocations. You need to ask yourselves - who will be listening to a Suffolk Rural Unitary bid when considered against the needs of the urban populations in the six counties. In addition I can see no hope for two Suffolk unitaries trying to compete with our other regional partners in accessing European funds.

Overall I believe that a single Suffolk Unitary , with the caveats in (4) above, is the only way forward to ensure that the voices of Suffolk residents are heard at the European, National, Regional and locally level of government.

Sue Lockett

26th September 2008

From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Local Government Review
Date: 28 September 2008 01:32:11
Attachments: [letter to Boundary Committee 27 Sep 08.doc](#)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am attaching for your convenience an electronic copy of a letter sent to you today.

Regards, John Fisher.



27th September 2008

Review Manager (Norfolk/Suffolk Review),
The Boundary Committee for England,
Trevelyan House,
Great Peter Street,
London, SW19 2HW

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to give my views on the proposed reorganisation of Local Government in Suffolk.

When I first heard about these ideas I was inclined to favour giving autonomy to East Suffolk, West Suffolk and Ipswich. This may be because I grew up in an East Suffolk which seemed to work well at the time, and West Suffolk has always appeared quite remote.

However, it soon became apparent that any division of the services currently provided across the whole of Suffolk isn't such a good idea. Taking the Library Service as an example, we would presumably need two or three computers keeping track of two or three sets of books, with new inter-library loan arrangements both among themselves and with all the other libraries in the country. Similar situations with all the other services must surely mean that a divided Suffolk would cost more to run.

Boundary problems will always exist and people learn to cope with them. None the less, there doesn't appear to be any advantage to balance the additional problems which would come from creating new borders. Also inter-agency working with voluntary organisations such as the Suffolk Wildlife Trust will be more difficult if their areas are no longer contiguous with those of the Local Authority.

There does seem to be some merit in the idea of merging Suffolk County Council (including Lowestoft) with the six District Councils in Suffolk. This would enable things like the payroll departments to be combined, and could bring some small savings. It could also remove anomalies such as the fact that, although the market town of Halesworth lies in Waveney District, four of its seven neighbouring parishes are in Suffolk Coastal District and have some of their services based over 20 miles away in Woodbridge. Such a merger would leave two issues to deal with.

The first is what to do with Ipswich, given that it currently only has two tiers of local government while the rest of Suffolk has three. Presumably an Ipswich Town Council would be needed to look after such things as parks, and we would then need to decide how the functions of the present Borough Council should be divided between the new Town Council and the new County Council.

The second issue is the allegation that a single large authority would be too remote. In practice all larger Councils divide into working areas for some functions. For example, Suffolk Coastal District Council has separate North and South Area Development Control Committees consisting of Councillors from each Area looking at planning applications for that Area. No doubt similar arrangements would continue, and there is no reason why local committees should have to meet in a central location. I would however be opposed to the idea of imposing, and giving a budget to, un-elected area committees. Far better would be to encourage Town & Parish Councils form voluntary associations with their neighbours to liase jointly with the new authority. This would be helped if the Wards for the new Council were chosen to make some geographic sense instead of giving quite such high priority to their having equal numbers of electors.

Yours faithfully,

John Fisher.