Report from Cllr Hopfensperger Sept 2026

Local Government Re-organisation and the news we received last week with regards to the pause in the LGR for Suffolk, indeed for the whole of the council areas included in the DPP (Devolution Priority Programme). The reason for the pause is for the new secretary of state to review the proposals put forward given legal advice that has been given.

It is believed that the legal advice given was potentially with regards to the judicial review launched by numerous councils on how the secretary of state came to the decision and the governments ability to defend the JRs.

As you are aware the proposals for Suffolk were to form three new unitary councils with an average population of 360,000 and one of the criteria given to the formation of unitary authorities with regards to population size was between 500,000 to 1 million (unless there are exceptional circumstances). All of the proposals put forward for certainly Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex didn't meet the population criteria, (it therefore seems very strange that the exceptional circumstances applied for all these areas. It is also believed that the then secretary of state went against civil servants advice on proposals which in Suffolk's case was for one unitary authority.

The government have now said that they are reviewing the proposals and further information on the future of local government on Suffolk will be announced at the end of October and that local elections for 2027 for the district will go ahead on existing boundaries.

This is of course very disappointing given the time and money that has been spent developing these proposals, it now leaves both staff and our communities with further uncertainly as to the future of local government in our area.