Dear

As you may be aware, Norfolk has been given the opportunity to take up a Level Three County Deal by the Government. A County Deal, or devolution, would give Norfolk much greater control over our own destiny:

* It will provide **local control over how economic policy is implemented** and the flexibility to prioritise what is right for the county and its business community.
* It will deliver **£600m of funding over 30 years - £20 million** per year, with priorities decided with local businesses.
* It will facilitate **long term funding** without the need for costly and resource intensive bidding to Government - an area when Norfolk typically does not perform very strongly. In addition, it does not preclude Norfolk’s local authorities from accessing other additional funding opportunities
* It would **open the door to more powers** and funding as Devolution Deals evolve, as Greater Manchester and the West Midlands have proved. This is likely to benefit local businesses further in the future.

The devolution deal provides additional funding and powers which will support local economic growth, and contribute to a healthy economic environment for businesses to operate within:

* Having **control of adult education** enables us to focus on providing the skills we know that Norfolk needs, in order to attract highly skilled, well-paid jobs – such as those arising from the net zero carbon agenda.
* Supporting the consolidation of a **transport budget** and Local Transport Plan to invest in local transport planning to better meet our local needs and priorities.
* Delivering a **Brownfield fund** c.£7m funding to deliver 455-583 new homes.

If the County Deal is not signed, **Norfolk risks falling further behind**. We can’t afford to miss out, when neighbours such as Cambridgeshire and potentially Suffolk are embracing devolution.

To gain a County Deal, Norfolk must agree to a **directly elected leader. The next step in the Norfolk’s County Deal journey is a vote by the Norfolk County Councillors in early December – their approval is not a foregone conclusion and we are calling on the Norfolk business community to take action now in support of a County Deal.**

Norfolk Chambers, together with the Institute of Directors and the Federation of Small Businesses, are asking business leaders who are supportive of the County Deal, to urgently contact their local county councillor and stress to them the importance of voting in favour of the Deal.

For ease of reference, we have provided below some wording for you to add to your letterhead and email to your county councillor. All that we ask, is that you copy us in, so we know we have your support.

Norfolk Chambers: Nova.fairbank@norfolkchambers.co.uk

FSB: candy.richards@fsb.org.uk

IOD: chair.norfolk@iod.com

To find out who is your local councillor, please follow [this link](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/councillors-meetings-decisions-and-elections/councillors).

Wording for letter to your local councillor:

*Dear Cllr. X*

*We are writing to urge you to support the County Deal for Norfolk. As a business in your ward, we believe the benefits of the County Deal will improve the local economic landscape and will help businesses to thrive. We are asking you to back a County Deal because:*

* *It’s an opportunity that Norfolk can’t afford to miss. It gives us the funding and powers required to boost our economy and get the skills, development, and infrastructure that we need. It is a real game changer for our economy and our county.*
* *A £20 million per year investment fund, with priorities decided with business, could be a massive benefit. With the use of match funding by local authorities and/or stakeholders, that could have the potential to amount to £60 million per year.*
* *Having control of adult education enables us to focus on providing the skills we know that Norfolk needs, in order to attract highly skilled, well paid jobs – such as those arising from the net zero carbon agenda.*
* *Agreeing this deal opens the door to more. As Greater Manchester and the West Midlands have proved, more powers and funding follow an initial decision to embrace devolution.*
* *A leader, elected by the people of Norfolk, will give us real clout with the Government and inward investors, as we have seen with parts of the country that have mayors.*
* *We need to start this journey now, or risk falling further behind. If we’re already on the journey, devolution is likely to continue, regardless of which party forms the next Government. But if we haven’t started, other areas could get ahead of us.*
* *The Investment Fund is ringfenced for the purpose of economic growth and will provide Norfolk’s businesses with a secure and substantial source of investment.*
* *Long term funding is available without the need for costly and resource intensive bidding to Government, an area when Norfolk typically does not perform very strongly. In addition, it does not preclude Norfolk’s local authorities from accessing other funds that are currently available or will become available.*
* *In the instance that the County Deal is not agreed, the funding landscape for businesses is uncertain. There are a number of EU business support programmes now coming to an end and the closure of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Fund in March 2025, there is no guaranteed finance for Norfolk business support. Without sources of external financial support, Norfolk’s businesses will be unable to reach their full potential.*
* *Funding can be used to draw additional investment through matched funding which will further enhance the support available for businesses. For example, the Greater Manchester combined authority has leveraged approximately £1.1bn in private sector funds. The Norfolk Investment Fund can also be used to leverage in tens of millions of pounds of other funding streams from sources such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Sport England or the National Infrastructure Bank. For example, a relatively modest amount of local funding levered in £10m of National Lottery funding for the Winter Gardens in Great Yarmouth.*

*We trust we can rely on your support for the Norfolk County Deal.*

*Yours sincerely etc.*

Thank you in advance for your show of support for a Norfolk County Deal. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Regards

Nova Fairbank Saul Humphrey Candy Richards

Chief Executive Chair Development Manager

Norfolk Chambers Institute of Directors Federation of Small Business