

WIDER REASONS FOR PROPOSING OPTION B

Organisationally

- Natural incremental extension of working together approach (2011 shared Chief Executive, 2011 onwards shared Senior Leadership Team extending to all services, 2013 Joint Strategic Plan, 2015 Refreshed Joint Strategic Plan, 2017 adoption of Leader/Cabinet model, 2017 move to single Headquarters, 2018/19 Joint Local Plan, 2019 Electoral equality);
- Previous informal comments from electorate to the effect of ‘why haven’t you merged’ and specific (historical 2011) mandate from Mid Suffolk electorate;
- Staff capacity – equivalent savings of approximately £400k per annum;
- Additional efficiency and financial savings of approximately £600k per annum generated from acting as a single Council – with one Cabinet, Constitution, MTFs, Budget, Business Plan, Performance report etc;
- Long term financial stability and resilience from combining the strengths of the respective General Funds, Housing Revenue Accounts and Reserves.

For Communities

- Opportunity to create a new council with stronger ‘localism’ and engagement arrangement;
- Equalisation and ‘protection’ from either future dramatic Council Tax increases or service cuts through delivery of greater Value for Money, especially in Babergh;
- Greater alignment of Councillors at District and County to reflect community identities rather than being defined by artificial local government boundaries;
- Ability for Mid Suffolk area to benefit from becoming a more financially resilient landlord, able to develop more council and affordable housing.

More broadly

- Able to act in even more co-ordinated way for shared challenges including infrastructure (especially A140, A14 and railway) and the wider economy;
- Providing a more mixed / balanced economic focus overall to build on and complement the strengths of both areas;
- Better placed (as a larger district by population nationally) to take a leading role in the Suffolk, regionally e.g. with NALEP, and nationally e.g. with DCN; especially on rural issues;
- Better placed to be able to respond to Double Devolution – with the scale and capacity to directly deliver some current county services and functions locally ourselves, consequentially improving local services for our residents.