



## Budget and services consultation 2015 – 2018

### Overview

**Last year** through our Putting People First strategy, we asked for your views on our proposals to save £189 million over three years from 2014/17.

**As a result** of that consultation, we have already agreed £40m of savings for 2015/16. But our latest forecast means we have to find a further £12.9m in savings for 2015/16.

**This time** we're asking for your views on our proposals to close this budget gap. We think we can make most of the £12.9m savings by being more efficient, but some of our proposals involve changes to services.

**Our proposals** are not based on asking you to pay more council tax in 2015/16. We would, however, like to know if you think we should increase council tax in 2015/16 to help protect specific services from future cuts.

### Why we are consulting

Since 2011, the Government has cut its funding for local government by 24%. Over this time we have worked hard to make your council tax go further. Recognising tough times all round, we have not increased our share of the tax you pay for Norfolk County Council's services for four years now.

But the funding outlook for your council services still remains grim. We are planning now to cut our spending still further in 2015/16.

Read our council tax information and proposals and have your say by answering the questions below. Please then send your response to:

Freepost Plus RTCL-XSTT-JZSK, Budget and Services,  
Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich  
NR1 2DH.

However, if you want to help the council save money please use a stamp and send to this address: Norfolk budget and services 2015-18, Norfolk County Council, Room 501, County Hall, Martineau Lane, NR1 2DH

You give also give your views:

- Online at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/budgetandservices](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/budgetandservices)
- by email at [haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk)
- on Twitter using #norfolkbudget
- on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Norfolkcc](http://www.facebook.com/Norfolkcc)
- by phone on 0344 800 8020
- via your county councillor - contact details a [www.norfolk.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/councillors)

## **Who we are consulting**

We are consulting all Norfolk residents and relevant stakeholders on our budget proposals. To make sure that our consultation is representative of our community we are taking extra steps to engage with underrepresented groups, such as older people, disabled people, people with learning difficulties, carers, people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, young people, the LGBT community and those we have agreed to discuss this with.

We will also be consulting people and organisations that may be directly affected by our proposals.

## **How are we consulting**

- Through the web and in writing - You can write to us with views about the proposal in this document and send them in the post or submit them online.
- We will ensure that our consultation is accessible by making information available in different formats and holding any events in fully accessible venues.

## **When we are consulting**

We would like to hear your views on this proposal by Friday 19 December so we can consider them and use them to inform the decisions we will make on our budget.

## **Background**

Norfolk County Council is responsible for many of the public services Norfolk people need and value. Need and demand for these services, especially those that help care for and support older, vulnerable people, rises all the time - while the grant the Government gives us to help pay for them continues to shrink and will do so for the next few years.

Last year, as part of our Norfolk Putting People First strategy we consulted on and agreed a new set of priorities for Norfolk. We also consulted on proposals to save £189m over three years up until April 2017. You told us to focus hardest on cutting our own costs. We have and we are. Between April 2011 and April 2014 we have made over £140m savings, half of which came from cutting our own costs.

Although we have worked hard at bringing the spending gap down, we still need to find savings of £12.9 m for 2015/16.

Our planning assumes no increase in our share of council tax for 2015/16. We want your views on whether you think we should increase it and spend the money we raise on specific

services. We also want your views on some proposals that affect services.

## **Norfolk County Council priorities**

Norfolk County Council's priorities are based on putting people first. The first call on our funding continues to be the caring services, given the needs of older and vulnerable people in Norfolk, and our children and young people.

In addition, there are three areas which we believe need particular priority:

**Real jobs** - We will promote employment that offers security, opportunities and a good level of pay. We want real, sustainable jobs available throughout Norfolk.

**Good infrastructure** - We will make Norfolk a place where businesses can succeed and grow. We will promote improvements to our transport and technology infrastructure to make Norfolk a great place to do business.

**Excellence in education** - We will champion our children and young people's right to an excellent education, training and preparation for employment because we believe they have the talents and ability to compete with the best.

**By giving specific priority to these three critically important areas, we believe we will achieve the best overall results for Norfolk people.**

## **Council tax**

Recognising tough times all round, we have not increased our share of the tax you pay for Norfolk County Council's services for four years now.

Given our stark financial position and potential impact of further funding cuts on some services, one option Members

could consider is increasing the council tax and using the income raised to protect a specific service or department from further funding cuts.

The most we could increase council tax by, without triggering a referendum, is 1.99%. If we increased our share of the council tax by 1.99% this would mean, for example, that a family living in a Band D property would pay £22.79 more council tax in 2015/16.

Raising the council tax by 1.99% would generate £7.6m. Currently we receive a grant from the Government for freezing our council tax. If we increased council tax we would lose the grant. This means that we would be left with £2.7m to spend on services and to help balance the budget in 2015/16. From 2016/17 onwards the whole of the £7.6m would be available to use to fund services.

- 1. Do you agree or disagree that Norfolk County Council should raise its share of the council tax by up to 1.99% in 2015/16 and use that money to protect key council services in the future? Please tick one only (✓)**

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

- 2. Why do you say this? Please tell us below.**

## **Protecting services**

Here is a list of our main service areas and how much we currently spend on them:

Adult Social Care £338.5m

Environment, Transport and Development £170.9m

Cultural Services £30.7m

Organisation and resources £122.6m

Children's services £630.0m (including schools)

Fire and rescue service £29.9m

## **Information about our services**

### **Adult Social Care £338.5m**

Services include:

- Prevention - including services to help people to continue living independently in their homes and services that help people to get back on their feet after an illness or crisis
- Provision of care - includes supporting people that need additional help day to day
- Planning social care services.

### **Environment, Transport and Development £170.9m**

Services include:

- Maintaining 6,000+ miles of roads
- Disposing of household waste after it is collected by the district councils and providing 20 recycling centres

- Coordinating local journeys for vulnerable adults and school children and supporting local bus services including Park and Ride and community transport
- Working with partners to protect and improve the natural environment - Supporting the Norfolk economy by working to attract new jobs and businesses to the county
- Protecting the public through services such as Trading Standards and emergency planning.

### **Cultural Services £30.7m**

Services include:

- 47 libraries and 9 mobile libraries
- The Norfolk Museums Service - including running 10 visitor attractions
- Adult education
- Norfolk Record Office
- Strategic arts development, including funding support.

### **Organisation and resources £122.6m**

Services include:

- Customer services
- Public health, helping to improve the health of people in Norfolk and helping to protect the public from infectious diseases and environmental hazards.

### **Children's services £630.0m (including schools)**

Services include:

- Early years and childcare - including working with nurseries, more than 800 childminders, and 53 Surestart Children's Centres. Plus providing a family information service

- Schools and education
- Support for children and young people with special educational needs / disabilities and their families
- Caring for children who are unable to live with their birth parents and supporting vulnerable families so more families can stay together.

### **Fire and rescue service £29.9m**

Services include:

- Prevention, fire protection and emergency response.

**Questions continue on next page**



**3. If we were to increase council tax in 2015/16, which of these services would you like the income we generate to be spent on?** Please select your top five services by writing the numbers 1 – 5 against the services below, with 1 being your top priority:

Adult care services – for disabled people, older people and people with mental health issues	<input type="text"/>
Travel and transport	<input type="text"/>
Highways	<input type="text"/>
Environment and waste	<input type="text"/>
Supporting the Norfolk economy	<input type="text"/>
Public protection – trading standards and emergency planning	<input type="text"/>
Libraries	<input type="text"/>
Museums	<input type="text"/>
Adult education	<input type="text"/>
Norfolk Record Office	<input type="text"/>
Arts recreation and guidance services	<input type="text"/>
Customer services	<input type="text"/>
Public health – preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health	<input type="text"/>
Early years and childcare	<input type="text"/>
Schools and education	<input type="text"/>
Children’s social care – supporting vulnerable children, young people, their families and carers	<input type="text"/>
Fire and rescue – prevention and protection	<input type="text"/>

**4. Please tell us why you selected these services:** Please write in the box below.

**Efficiency savings**

Most of our savings focus on cutting our own costs and getting even more efficient. Many are about our internal processes.

Many of the savings will be achieved by using modern technology more efficiently.

**Our proposed efficiencies**

The following proposals save money by cutting our own costs and getting ever more efficient.

**How we buy things**

Ref	Title	Description	15-16 £'000	16-17 £'000	17-18 £'000	Total 15-18 £'000
1a	Reducing our costs by retendering	We plan to re-tender contracts to reduce the cost of services,	1,919	0	35	1,954

	contracts and changing the way we buy things	including transport and recycling. We also plan to change the way we manage and pay for residential care beds.				
1b	Changing the way that we use our rebates and funding sources	We currently receive rebates and funding from a number of our partners and suppliers. We plan to increase our rebates and review what we do with this income to help increase the amount of money available for services.	1,150	0	0	1,150
1c	Reduce costs by finding more cost effective IT and business travel	We think we can save money by combining licences for IT, laptops, phones and printers; we will	612	795	100	1,507

	options for staff	also investigate cheaper options for car leasing and business mileage.				
1d	Reduce the cost of our buildings and make full use of our own facilities	We propose to reduce the cost of running our buildings. We will also spend less on external venues by making better use of our own facilities, such as fire stations and libraries.	1,550	1,000	3,000	5,550

### How we generate Income

Ref.	Title	Description	15-16 £'000	16-17 £'000	17-18 £'000	Total 15-18 £'000
2a	Make more money and recover more costs from the services	We will increase the income we get from services including advertising, sponsorship, ceremonies, such as	270	175	0	445

	we charge for	weddings, and issuing licences and permits.  We will look at all the services we charge for to make sure that all the service costs are covered in the fees.				
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### How we organise our staff and resources

Ref.	Title	Description	15-16 £'000	16-17 £'000	17-18 £'000	Total 15-18 £'000
3a	Review management and staff structures	We will review our organisational structures and staffing levels. We will also see if we can combine similar job roles, manage vacancies, save money on training costs and reduce the	945	-90	0	855

		amount we spend on interim and temporary staff.				
3b	Develop different ways of working to reduce the cost of delivering our shared services	By changing the way that we work and using more online tools we can reduce the volume and cost of printing and save money on staff costs. We will also be able to save money on postage and courier services.	961	245	0	1,206
3c	Redesigning the way we deliver our services to reduce our costs	We will redesign some of our Adult Social Care and Shared Services to make them simpler to use. We will work with procurement and our IT partners to	395	1,500	2,000	3,895

		make our processes simpler so we can reduce costs.				
3d	Cutting some budgets	<p>We have found we can reduce some budgets without an impact on people who use our services. These include our consultation budget and the Chairman's budget.</p> <p>We can also reduce retirement costs for teachers because we have fewer responsibilities towards the growing number of academy schools.</p>	450	-400	0	50

3e	Reduce the costs of delivering services	We have identified some services where we can reduce the cost of delivering the service, without reducing the level of service. This includes reducing the legal costs and transport costs for Looked After Children, reviewing schools grounds maintenance contracts, reducing street light running costs by introducing LED lighting and reducing the cost of equipment and conservation in the Record office.	1,032	750	0	1,782
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3f	Manage our investments in a different way	We are looking at managing our investments and funding sources in a different way to help either save or make money. This includes reviewing interest rate increase assumptions, exploring opportunities to reclaim VAT, making best use of reserves and gaining a return on our investments in 3rd party organisations.	2,704	990	1,555	5,249
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**5. If you have any comments about our list of proposed savings as a whole, please write them here:**

## Our proposals

We want to hear your views about our proposals. We want to know:

- If you agree with our proposals
- The reasons behind your view

## Our budget proposals for 2015/16

The following proposals require public consultation as they affect services that people receive.

### How we generate income

Ref.	Title	Description	15-16 £'000	16-17 £'000	17-18 £'000	Total 15-18 £'000
2b	Charging for parking at Gressen hall Farm and Workhouse	Currently visitors do not have to pay to park when they visit Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse. However many similar museums and visitor attractions in Norfolk and elsewhere in the UK do charge visitors for	5	10	0	15

		parking. This proposal is to introduce a small charge of £1 - £2 for a car to park for the whole day/visit.				
2c	One-off sale of antiquarian library stock	<p>We currently own some old and rare books that are in safe storage. We do not lend these books out to people as they are either too valuable or simply “of their time”.</p> <p>We propose to sell a selection of these books at auction.</p>	100	0	-100	0
2d	Charge people to visit the Ancient House Museum in Thetford in the winter	<p>People can currently visit the Ancient House Museum in Thetford for free between October and March.</p> <p>We propose to raise an</p>	3	0	0	3

		additional £3,000 in 2015-16 by charging people to visit during these winter months. This estimate is based on our current admission charges and visitor forecasts.				
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**How we organise our staff and resources**

Ref.	Title	Description	15-16 £'000	16-17 £'000	17-18 £'000	Total 5-18 £'000
3g	Reduce library staff	<p>We propose to reduce library staff. Both staff based in libraries, and those working on outreach projects may be affected.</p> <p>If this proposal went ahead it would not affect opening hours of libraries or mobile</p>	80	0	0	80

		libraries.  It could mean that there will be fewer staff on duty in some of our libraries, and fewer staff able to work on outreach projects.				
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### How we work with others

Ref.	Title	Description	15-16 £'000	16-17 £'000	17-18 £'000	Total1 5-18 £'000
4a	Reduce funding for arts	Part of our budget provides support to a number of arts organisations across the County. This includes financial support through grants, and other support in the form of advice, information and co-	150	0	0	150

		ordination of county-wide arts partnership working. We propose to make cuts to the grants programme, and reductions in the other activities of the service.				
4b	Remove subsidy we give to schools for community groups using their facilities.	We currently subsidise the community to use some school premises around the County. We propose removing this subsidy.	97	0	0	97

**Changes to the services that people will either receive or use**

Ref.	Title	Description	15-16 £'000	16-17 £'000	17-18 £'000	Total15-18 £'000
			0	0		

5a	Reduce the amount we spend on transport for people who use Adult Social Care services	We propose to save money on transport for people who use Adult Social Care services users. We will do this by making sure people are using their motability allowance, meeting people's needs locally, and making more use of community transport services and public transport.	100	900	800	1,800
	Reduce highway maintenance	We are proposing to make a permanent saving on highways maintenance of £385k.  We would continue to carry out all urgent works and any works that were needed to keep people safe.	385	0	0	385

## **A) Charging for parking at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse**

Currently visitors do not have to pay to park when they visit Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse. However, many similar museums and visitor attractions in Norfolk and elsewhere in the UK do charge visitors and other users of their car parks.

We need to balance our budget but we do not want to reduce the quality of any of our ten museums.

One way to protect the services and experience that people currently enjoy is to generate additional income.

We are, therefore, proposing to start charging for car parking at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse from 1 April 2015. We would not charge Norfolk Museums Pass holders or Friends of Gressenhall for parking. Blue Badge Holders will still be able to park for free.

Based on our current forecasts and visitor numbers, if we were to charge between £1 - £2 for a car to park for the whole day/visit, we think we could save £15,000 in 2015/6.

However, if we were to introduce parking charges we would need to pay a one-off cost of £10,000 for the car-parking 'pay and display' machines. This cost would be removed in 2016/17.

This means that the net saving is £5,000 in 2015/16 and £10,000 in 20216/17.

We want to hear what you think about this proposal and how, if at all, it might impact on you.



## **More information about this proposal to help you decide**

Our museums service runs ten museums as well as a schools service delivered to over 40,000 children a year and work with hard-to-reach groups across Norfolk.

We are proposing to charge people between £1 - £2 to park a car at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse for the whole day. We would not charge Norfolk Museums Pass holders or Friends of Gressenhall for parking. Blue Badge Holders will still be able to park for free.

We would collect this charge by using pay and display machines, or car parking attendants on special event days.

Current 2014 ticket prices to visit the museum are:

- Adult: £9.90
- Concession £8.60 (For visitors with disabilities, unwaged, over 65s or those in full time education)
- Young People (4-18): £6.50
- Family ticket (1 adult + all children) £20.00
- Family ticket (2 adults + all children) £29.00
- Free admission for Norfolk Museums Pass holders, Friends of Gressenhall, and children under 4.
- Visitors with disabilities may bring one companion in free.
- Discounts for groups.
- We currently also offer free admission to the Museum Shop and Mardlers' Rest Café on all non-event days.

Many other museums and visitor attractions across Norfolk and the rest of the UK charge for car-parking.

There is currently a bus from Dereham to Gressenhall that stops within a five minute walk of the museum. Cyclists and walkers are also very welcome as part of our commitment to Green Tourism.

6. **Do you agree with this proposal?** Please tick one only (✓)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

7. **Why do you say this?** Please tell us below.

8. **Do you currently use this service?** Please tick one only (✓)

Yes

No

Don't know

## **B) One-off sale of antiquarian library stock**

We need to balance our budget, whilst at the same time protecting the services we provide at our 47 libraries and nine mobile libraries across Norfolk.

One way to protect the services and experience that people currently enjoy is to generate additional income.

We currently own some old and rare books that are in safe storage. We do not lend these books out to people as they are either too valuable or simply "of their time". The books are not about Norfolk or by Norfolk authors and do not relate to

Norfolk's local history or culture so they are not of value to the service nor to the Norfolk Record Office. As the books are only of specialist interest it is unlikely that we would ever display them. They may however be of interest to collectors of old and unusual editions.

We propose to sell a selection of these books at auction. Although we have not yet had them valued by specialist auctioneers we estimate that selling some, with appropriate advice, could raise £100,000 in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

### **More information about this proposal to help you decide**

As part of our routine management of our library stock, we often sell books that we no longer need, for example, when we have more copies than we can use.

We own some old and rare books that we have not sold in this way. This is because we would need to sell these through a specialist so that we can get the best possible price for them.

We propose to draw up a list of the old and rare books that are in storage and have these valued by a specialist auction house.

Senior library staff and a small group of councillors who sit on our Communities Committee would then work together to review the advice of the auction house and decide which of the books on the list would be sold by auction. It is usual for items to be publicly listed in sales catalogues.

**9. Do you agree with this proposal?** Please tick one only (✓)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

**10. Why do you say this?** Please tell us below.

**11. Do you currently use this service?** Please tick one only (✓)

Yes

No

Don't know

### **C) Charge people to visit the Ancient House Museum in Thetford in the winter**

We need to balance our budget but we do not want to reduce the quality or range of services offered at any of our ten museums, which include free visits for Norfolk schoolchildren and other targeted groups from our local communities.

One way to protect the services and experience that visitors and our local communities currently enjoy is to generate additional income.

People can currently visit the Ancient House Museum in Thetford for free between October and March. The Museum previously charged for admission during this period but stopped charging in 2006 to help the museum grow its visitor numbers.

We propose to raise an additional £3,000 in 2015-16 by charging people to visit during these winter months. This estimate is based on our current admission charges and visitor forecasts.

If this proposal goes ahead we would start charging people in October 2015.

Norfolk schools and other key groups including our Teenage History Club will still be able to visit for free. We will also continue to open Ancient House Museum free of charge during the year as part of national events including Museums at Night and Heritage Open Days.

### **More information about this proposal to help you decide**

Here are our current charges for visiting the Ancient House Museum between April and September. People do not have to pay from October to March.

If our proposal goes ahead these charges would apply all year round.

- Adult: £3.95
- Concession: £3.40 (Visitors with disabilities, unwaged, over 65s or in full-time education)
- Child (4-16): £2.30
- Family Ticket (1 Adult + all your children): £6.50
- Family Ticket (2 Adults + all your children): £10.00
- Pop in for a £1: One hour tickets available every day 1 hour before closing time.

- Free admission: Museum Pass holders, Friends of Ancient House Museum, Children's University members and under 4s, Norfolk schoolchildren.

Those visitors who can currently visit for free will continue to enjoy free access over the winter period and we will still offer free entry days, for example as part of the national Museums at Night event and Heritage Open Days.

We will consult with the Friends of Ancient House Museum and local councillors through the Area Museums Committee.

**12. Do you agree with this proposal?** Please tick one only (✓)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

**13. Why do you say this?** Please tell us below.

**14. Do you currently use this service?** Please tick one only (✓)

Yes

No

Don't know

## **D) Reduce library staff**

We need to balance our budget, whilst at the same time minimising the impact of any savings on people who use Norfolk's 47 libraries and nine mobile libraries.

We need to make further savings of £80k in 2015/16, and we propose to do this through reducing library staff. Both staff based in libraries and those working on outreach projects may be affected.

If this proposal went ahead it would not affect opening hours of libraries or mobile libraries.

It could mean that there will be fewer staff on duty in some of our libraries, and fewer staff able to work on outreach projects.

### **More information about this proposal to help you decide**

Library staff offer a wide range of advice and support to library users. They help people choose books, find information, learn internet skills, join reading groups and other activities, locate research materials in the library or through interlibrary loans, train volunteers, and create a safe and welcoming environment.

As part of our Putting People First strategy, we consulted on proposals to change the way we staff libraries. Some libraries now share managers and we have reduced the number of staff on duty. This enabled us to keep all our libraries open.

The savings we are proposing for 2015/16 are smaller than last year. We will make these savings by re-organising staff and reducing staffing on projects.

If our proposal goes ahead, most library users will not be affected. There may be less opportunity for the library service to work with people who need encouragement to use libraries, including some young people

However we will look at the impact carefully, and use the staff that we still have to try to minimise the impact on those who particularly need support and help to use the library. Our aim is to have the staff with the right skills in the right place to help people whenever possible.

**15. Do you agree with this proposal?** Please tick one only (✓)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

**16. Why do you say this?** Please tell us below.

**17. Do you currently use this service?** Please tick one only (✓)

Yes

No

Don't know

## **E) Reduce funding for Arts**

We need to balance our budget whilst providing support to the arts sector in Norfolk. Part of our budget provides support to a



number of arts organisations across the County. This includes financial support through grants, and other support in the form of advice, information and co-ordination of county-wide arts partnership working.

Last year we reduced our arts grants budget by £92,250.

However, we now need to make further savings, reducing our arts budget by a further £150,000. This will be through a combination of further cuts to the grants programme, and reductions in the other activities of the service.

We will write to all local arts organisations that may be affected to understand what impact this proposed reduction might have and consider options for how best to minimise it.

### **More information about this proposal to help you decide**

Arts organisations provide countywide cultural activities that are accessible to residents and visitors alike, and which help to raise the profile of Norfolk as a leading cultural destination to visit and invest in. In 2012 almost 3.4 million tourists and visitors came to Norfolk and in 2013/14 organisations funded by our arts grant budget of £250,480 ran 3,820 events which engaged a total audience of 683,752 people, or around three-quarters of the county population. This helped to raise the profile of Norfolk and Norwich locally, nationally and internationally.

The Arts make a significant contribution to the local economy. In 2013/14 awards to 19 organisations from our arts grant budget helped to bring in an extra £5,710,382 of external funding which contributed to overall income of just over £22 million. Additional support from the Council's Arts Project Fund of £20,000 helped 73 small organisations secure match funding of £339,283 from Arts Council England and alternative funders.

The Arts make an important contribution of the health and wellbeing and quality of life of people in Norfolk. Arts grant budget funded organisations provided 418 jobs in 2013/14 and many of the groups work with groups of vulnerable or disadvantaged people, for example:

- The Garage in Norwich focuses the majority of its activity on vulnerable and hard to reach young people, including Looked After Children and minority groups.
- Creative Arts East is leading a three-year Arts and Wellbeing partnership programme, which focuses on older people with dementia or at risk of developing dementia and young people, including care leavers and those in transition from Children's Services to Adult Social Care.

If we reduce the arts budget this could mean:

- Residents and visitors could have fewer opportunities to participate in arts events.
- Some arts organisations may find it difficult to get further funding from national funding bodies (e.g. Arts Council England). This is because less money will be available for match funding. Some key sources of arts funding will only give grants if there is support from the local council.
- Some larger organisations may not be able to continue their outreach work with other groups.
- Norfolk will not be able to compete as successfully for arts funding against other parts of the country.
- We will encourage people to share their views through the Norfolk Arts Forum Facebook page at <https://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/Norfolk-Arts-Forum/155340724480330>

**18. Do you agree with this proposal?** Please tick one only (✓)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

**19. Why do you say this?** Please tell us below.

### **F) Remove subsidy we give to schools for community organisations using their facilities**

Schools in Norfolk are responsible for their own premises and they are able to rent them out for community groups to use outside of schools hours.

We currently subsidise schools who keep their rates at a low threshold for community groups. Our subsidy ensures that the schools costs are fully covered.

However, many schools charge groups above the threshold and so do not qualify for our subsidy.

We propose to stop this subsidy. This would save £97k in 2015/16.

If our proposal went ahead it could mean that some schools may increase the rate that they charge community groups to use their school.

### **More information about this proposal to help you decide**

So far this year 67 schools have registered with us and taken advantage of the subsidy. Of these, 20 are high schools and colleges and 47 are infant, junior and primary schools. That works out at roughly 40% of secondary schools in Norfolk and 14% of primary schools.

We pay this subsidy directly to schools to help enable voluntary and community groups to use school facilities.

For a school to receive a subsidy it cannot charge above a set threshold. Here are some examples of the threshold rate. All rates include the cost of one caretaker:

- 1 hour's football pitch hire - £15.28
- 1 hour's hall hire - £18.40
- 1 hour's classroom hire - £8.56

Any groups running activities specifically for young people or older people can then benefit from a 15% discount on those rates, and the County Council reimburses the school to cover loss of income from the discount.

If this proposal goes ahead, schools will no longer be able to claim the subsidy and will need to decide whether they pass the increased cost onto the groups hiring their facilities. This is in line with broader changes to school funding, where money is delegated to schools who can then decide how it is spent. This could mean that some schools decide to increase the rate that they charge community groups to use their school. However,

schools can increase the rates they charge under the current system.

**20. Do you agree with this proposal?** Please tick one only (✓)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

**21. Why do you say this?** Please tell us below.

**22. Are you part of a community group that currently rents rooms from a school?** Please tick one only (✓)

Yes

No

Don't know

### **G) Reduce the amount we spend on transport for people who use Adult Social Care services**

We currently spend over £7 million each year on providing transport for people who receive social care and social care funding.

Last year we asked peoples' views on a proposal to save £2.1m on transport in 2014-17. The council agreed this proposal, which meant that we changed the way we allocated personal budget funding for people so that they got less money for transport.

However, given our financial pressures, we now need to save more money from our transport budget. We are proposing to save an extra:

- £100,000 in 2015/2016
- £900,000 in 2016/2017 and
- £800,000 in 2017/18

We propose to save this money by making sure that where people have a Motability vehicle or mobility allowance for their transport they are using these. We will also try harder to meet people's needs locally so that we don't have to pay for them to travel long distances to get their service. We also propose to make more use of community transport services and public transport, where these are available and we think people can use them.

### **More information about this proposal to help you decide**

This proposal is likely to affect all those people who receive a transport service from Adult Social Care and those who use their personal budget to pay for transport. It will affect older people, people with a learning disability and disabled people who use our services, and it will also affect transport providers who currently have a contract with us.

We do not currently collect data on the number of people using their personal budgets to access transport services. We do however know that Transport Plus, the business that arranges transport for many social care service users, supports around 3,000 people and arranges around 568,000 individual journeys

each year. This figure doesn't include all people who use their personal budget to arrange transport – some people will make their own arrangements – but this gives an idea of how many people may be affected.

## **What would happen**

If our proposal goes ahead we would look more closely at transport costs when we assess what social services people need. This means that:

- We will make sure people are using their Motability vehicle or mobility for their transport.
- We would ask people to use public transport or community transport where we assess that they are able to do this.
- We would ask people to use the service that is closest to them if this will meet their needs, for example, their local day centre. If they don't want to use the local service as they prefer to use a service that is further away, we would not pay for them to travel there.
- If we could not find a service that meets people's needs in their local area we would not automatically pay for them to travel a long way to get the service elsewhere. Instead we would work with the person who needs the service and their carer/s to come up with a more creative solution that involves less travel. For example a group of people in a town could pool their Personal Budgets and pay for a personal assistant to help them access local services rather than travel to a day centre in another town.
- If we cannot meet people's care needs through the options listed above, we would pay for people's transport through their personal budget.

If this proposal goes ahead we would start using the new policy from 1 April 2015. We would assess all new service users under the new criteria. We would re-assess existing service users, who use their personal budget to buy transport or who

have their transport paid for by the department, at their annual review.

We will send a letter to all people who are receiving Direct Payments and those people who are receiving a transport service through Travel and Transport as of 28 October 2014 to ask their views.

We will inform partners, including Clinical Commissioning Groups, user groups and providers about the proposal.

We will also consult through partnership forums and user groups – these include professionals, local people, carers and service users.

**23. Do you agree with this proposal?** Please tick one only  
(✓)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

**24. Why do you say this?** Please tell us below.



**25. Do you currently use this service?** Please tick one only

(✓)

Yes

No

Don't know

## **H) Reduce highway maintenance**

In 2013/14 our budget for highway maintenance was £24.128m.

Last year we asked peoples' views on a proposal to make a one-off saving of £1m on highway maintenance. The council agreed this proposal which meant that our budget for highway maintenance for 2014/15 was £23.128m.

However, we now need to save more money from our highway maintenance budget. We are therefore proposing to make a permanent saving on highway maintenance of £385k.

If this proposal goes ahead, the total amount we would spend in 2015/16 would be £23.743m.

If our proposal went ahead it would mean that during 2015/16 we would have to reduce the amount of highway maintenance work we do across Norfolk.

**We would continue to carry out all urgent work and any work that is needed to keep people safe.** However, our proposal could mean:

- It may take longer for some road markings to be re-painted
- It may take longer for some damaged verges to be repaired
- We may postpone some bridge maintenance work

- We may inspect traffic signals less often – although we would still meet national standards
- We may only repair safety barriers where they have been damaged and postpone our routine maintenance work.

### **More information about this proposal to help you decide**

We have a legal duty to maintain the highway, making it safe for road users and dealing with small repairs to prevent larger defects occurring. We meet this duty through a wide range of activities including pothole repairs, road patching, drain cleaning, grass cutting, sign cleaning, winter maintenance, bridge and culvert repairs and emergency response to incidents on the highway.

We prioritise highway maintenance work by looking at the strategic importance of the road and how severe the problem is. This process is set out in Norfolk's Transport Asset Management Plan.

We propose to make a permanent cut of £385,000 from highways funding from 2015/16.

Here is some more information about what the proposals could mean:

- **Road markings** - we have an intervention programme for re-painting road markings. We tackle these in order of priority, for example, stop line replacements would take priority over markings that define the edge of a carriage way. It may take longer for some non-urgent road markings to be re-painted.
- **Verge damage repair** – some non-urgent repairs may need to wait longer than those that we consider urgent because they represent a danger.

- **Bridge maintenance** – we would continue to complete any urgent works. However, we may postpone some non-urgent bridge works.
- **Traffic signals** – new traffic signals are more reliable and require less regular inspections. This will mean we will inspect some equipment less frequently. We would carry on making urgent repairs to faulty lights.
- **Safety barriers** – we would carry on repairing damaged safety barriers but postpone our routine maintenance work.
- **Grit bins** – we would maintain grit at the same level as in 2014-15. We will continue to inform communities about the best way to use grit during periods of snow and ice as there is currently a tendency for people to use too much.

26. **Do you agree with this proposal?** Please tick one only (✓)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

27. **Why do you say this?** Please tell us below.

## About you

**28. How are you responding?** Please tick one only (✓)

- As a member of the public
- On behalf of a voluntary or community group
- On behalf of a statutory organisation
- On behalf of a business
- On behalf of a school, college or university
- As a Norfolk county councillor
- As a district or borough councillor
- As a town or parish councillor

**29. If you are responding on behalf of a group, organisation or business, what is the name of the organisation you represent?** Please write in here:

**30. Are you?** Please tick one only (✓)

- Male
- Female

**31. How old are you?** Please tick one only (✓)

- 0 - 15
- 16 - 29
- 30 - 44
- 45 - 64

65 - 84

85 +

**32. Do you have any long-term illness, disability or health problem that limits your daily activities or the work you can do? Please tick one only (✓)**

Yes

No

**33. Are you an informal (unpaid) carer for someone who has a long-term illness or health problem? Please tick one only (✓)**

Yes

No

**34. How would you describe your ethnic background? Please tick one only (✓)**

White British

White Irish

White other

Mixed

Asian or Asian British

Black or Black British

Chinese

Other ethnic background - please describe

## **Personal information, confidentiality and data protection**

We will process your personal information in line with the Data Protection Act. This means that we will only use it for the purpose of this consultation. We will also, under normal circumstances, not pass this information on to anyone else.

However, we may be asked under access to information laws to publish or disclose information you provide in response to this consultation, including personal information.

These laws include the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice that we have to comply with that deals with confidentiality. If you want the information that you give us to be treated as confidential, please tell us your reasons why. If we are asked to disclose your information we will take the reasons you have requested confidentiality into account. However, we cannot give an assurance that we can keep your information confidential in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system is not enough, in itself, to be regarded as binding.

## **How we will make our decision and report back to you**

We will feed your views and the information you provide into the political process to help inform any decisions that we take. In making their decision about a proposal Councillors will take into account:

- The impact of any proposal on individuals, groups or communities and in particular on people identified as having 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics are: age; disability;

gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

- The views of people and stakeholders consulted
- The evidence of need and what is proven to work effectively and well
- The financial and legal positions and any constraints at the time
- Any potential alternative models or ideas for making the savings.

In January 2015 each service committee will look at the consultation findings and agree the proposals they want to take forward. Our Policy and Resources Committee will then look at all the proposals as a whole and then recommend a budget for Full Council. You will be able to read these in the minutes from the meeting.

Full Council will meet on 16 February 2015 to debate the proposed budget and then vote on and agree the budget for 2015/16. We will publish our final budget on our website at: [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Receiving your comments**

We are sorry but, given the scale of the responses anticipated and our timescale, we are unable to respond to individual questions or comments. However, we assure you that our county councillors will consider all the consultation responses we receive very carefully before making their final recommendations.

**Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.**



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us on: 0344 800 8020  
Email: [haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk) and we will do our best to help

**October 2014**