

2020-21 Budget Consultation report

1. Background

In line with previous years, Norfolk County Council conducted an annual budget consultation. The Budget Consultation 2020/21 was open between 23 October and 10 December 2019. The consultation sought views from the public and stakeholders on the level of council tax, including the adult social care precept. We also invited comments on the council's budget approach and proposals. In particular, the consultation asked for views on:

- Our proposal to increase Norfolk County Council's share of general council tax by 1.99% in 2020/1
- Our proposal to raise the social care precept by 2% in 2020/21

This year none of our outline budget proposals needed to go out to further public consultation as none of them directly impacted on service delivery. However, if once the budget is agreed and the Council starts to implement the proposals we discover that any of the proposals do impact on delivering services, then we may need to carry out detailed consultation on those proposals in the future.

2. Methodology

An online consultation was developed which ran for seven weeks, closing on the 10 December. This was hosted on the County Council's consultation hub. Paper copies, large print copies and Easy Read copies were available to download from the online site and also available on request by email and phone.

People could choose which proposals they wanted to comment on so not all respondents answered all questions. Some people also chose to say that they did not want their comments made public.

3. Promotion

In order to ensure as many residents as possible could take part in the consultation it was promoted through the following channels:

- Press releases encouraging participation, generating coverage in KLFM and Your Local Paper.
- Social media promotion on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn
- Information on the Council's website www.norfolk.gov.uk
- Information on the staff intranet and staff newsletters
- Email to the 1,509 members of the Council's Your Voice panel
- Letter to key stakeholders, including town and parish councils
- Posters in libraries
- Feature in Your Norfolk magazine distributed to over 418,000 households in Norfolk
- Special edition Your Norfolk extra email to 4,652 residents signed up to the service

In addition to the above we wrote to 435 organisations potentially affected by proposal CES012: *Saving money by maintaining recycling credit payments to Voluntary and Community Groups at 2019-20 levels.*

A general election was announced at the end of October and the Council entered the pre-election period on Wednesday 6 November. This restricted the amount of publicity that we could undertake from this date.

4. Analysis and reporting

Every response has been read in detail and analysed to identify the range of people's opinions, any repeated or consistently expressed views, and the anticipated impact of proposals on people's lives.

Where percentages are used, totals may not necessarily add up to 100% because of rounding.

When summarising the feedback to the open questions relating to general council tax, adult social care and budget proposals in general, we have selected quotations to help illustrate key themes emerging from the consultation feedback.

We have also used direct quotations where people have commented on individual budget lines. All quotations used are verbatim. Please note that some respondents asked that we did not publish their comments.

Comments about individual services have been fed back directly to departments.

5. Respondent numbers

We received 203 responses to our consultation. Of these, 158 people or 77.8% replied as individuals.

Responding as:			
An individual / member of the public	158	77.8%	88.6%
A family	22	10.8%	
On behalf of a voluntary or community group	4	2.0%	3.5%
On behalf of a statutory organisation	3	1.5%	
On behalf of a business	0	0%	
A Norfolk County Councillor	1	0.5%	5.5%
A district or borough councillor	0	0%	
A town or parish councillor	4	2.0%	
A Norfolk County Council employee	6	3.0%	
Not Answered	5	2.5%	2.5%
Total	203	100.1%	100.1%

Of the 203 responses received, the overwhelming majority (197 or 97.0%) were online submissions to the consultation.

How we received the responses		
Online submission	197	97.0%
Email	6	3.0%
Paper	0	0%
Total	203	100%

Responses by groups, organisations and businesses

Eleven respondents told us they were responding on *behalf* of a group, organisation or business. The organisations cited were:

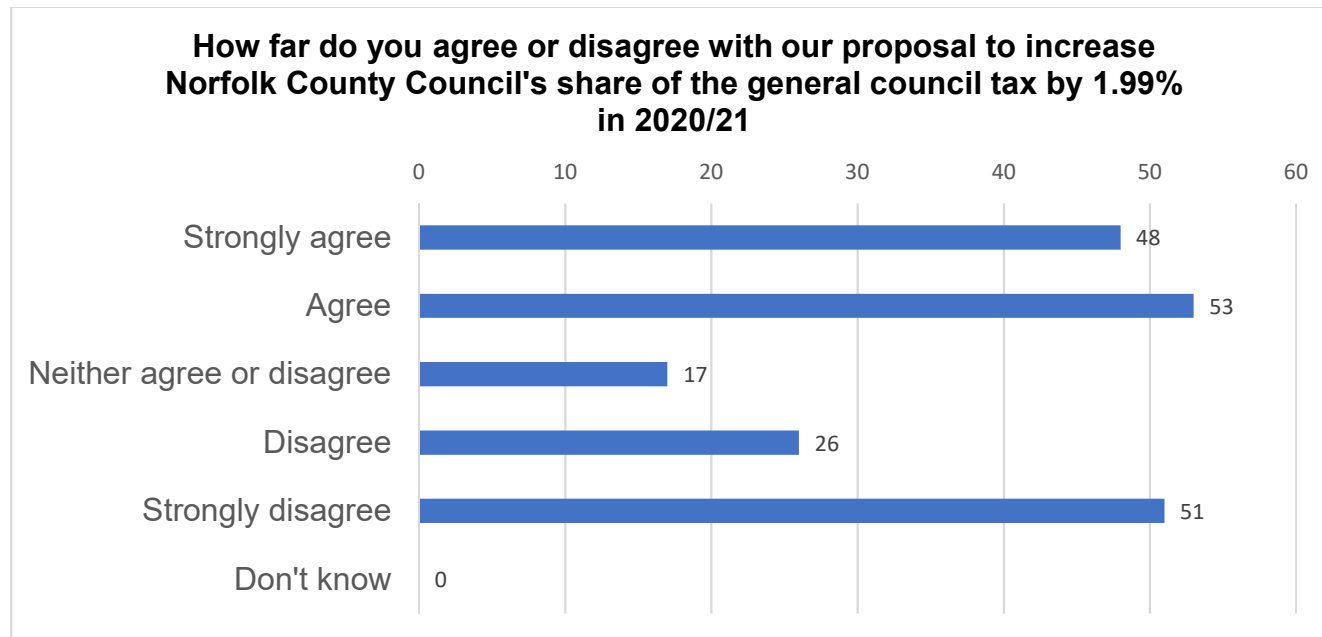
- 1st North Walsham Scout Group
- Joint response from Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council
- Equal Lives
- North Norfolk District Council
- Norwich Older People's Forum
- Norfolk VCSE Sector Leadership Group
- Poringland Parish Council
- Repps with Bastwick Parish Council
- Stow Bedon and Breckles Parish Council
- Taverham Parish Council
- Wretham Parish Council

6. Survey responses Council Tax

Q: How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to increase Norfolk County Council's share of general council tax by 1.99% in 2020/21?

We asked how far people agreed or disagreed with our proposal and 195 people responded to this question. Of these:

- 48 (24.6%) said they strongly agreed
- 53 (27.2%) said they agreed
- 17 (8.7%) said they neither agreed nor disagreed
- 26 (13.3%) said that they disagreed and
- 51(26.2%) said that they strongly disagreed



Of the eight respondents who did not answer the question above, three expressed that they either supported or did not oppose the proposed increase in their comments.

We included an open text box so that people could tell us the reason behind their answer and how, if at all, the proposal would affect them.

Of those **strongly agreeing** (48) or **agreeing** (53) with the proposal, people said that there was a cost associated with providing services and/or the cost of providing services was increasing. People felt that services needed to be maintained or protected, especially frontline services and adult social care. Some of those agreeing felt that the increase was fair and affordable. People also cited the reduction in Government funding and their feeling that there was no alternative but to increase council tax.

Of those **disagreeing** (26) or **strongly disagreeing** (51) with the proposal, people stated that earnings were not keeping up with increases in council tax or that an increase affected those on fixed incomes, such as pensioners. Others felt the proposed increase was unaffordable, that council tax keeps increasing or that the proposed increase was too large. People called for the Council to make greater efficiencies. Some questioned whether council tax was providing value for money, the need for more Government funding was raised and there were some who felt that council tax in general, or our proposal, was unfair.

People who said they **neither agree nor disagree** (17) expressed their unhappiness about Members' expenses and our adult social care charging policy. They also mentioned the level of inflation and that council tax keeps increasing. Two suggested that they might have accepted a small increase.

Table 1 Analysis of main comments by people who agree/strongly agree with the proposal to increase Norfolk County Council's share of general Council Tax by 1.99% in 2020/21

Overall theme	Issues raised	Number of times mentioned	Quotes
The cost of services	Comments relating the cost of services and the need to pay for them.	20	<p>I appreciate that care costs keep rising.</p> <p>People want better services therefore they should pay towards them. Nothing is free any more.</p> <p>Services need funding.</p> <p>Services have to paid for.</p>
Protect services for Norfolk residents	Several agreed with our proposal to increase council tax in order to protect, maintain or improve services.	18	<p>We need good public services across Norfolk.</p> <p>Happy to pay to increase services to all in the community to increase quality of the service and reduce waiting times to access support and services</p> <p>I am very concerned about the reduction in public services. This is not the whole answer but it will help.</p> <p>Council services have been cut extensively over the past few years and it is important to maintain those which are left.</p>

	Some said it was particularly important to protect Adult Social Care services / other services.	14	<p>To protect essential services especially social care.</p> <p>We have already had service cuts and we should prioritise services to make our communities happier and healthier places. Providing the extra money for needed services (as opposed to having to cut them) will hopefully lead to our increasingly-elder population being able to stay healthier (physically and mentally) and live independently for longer.</p> <p>We need to put money into adult social care and care homes for the elderly</p>
Affordability	Some respondents said that the increase was small, and/or they felt it would have little impact.	8	<p>A very small increase for most.</p> <p>Because the rise is relatively small for the benefit of funding social care needs</p> <p>I can afford it</p>
Fairness	Some felt that the increase was fair or reasonable.	7	<p>Increase in council tax seems fair and affordable and will mean council not having to find extra savings.</p> <p>It means that everyone who pays council tax are contributing equally.</p> <p>To support Children and also the less fortunate elderly a small contribution per household is perfectly reasonable.</p>

<p>Central government funding</p>	<p>Some respondents specifically acknowledged the impact of Government funding cuts / the funding deficit.</p> <p>Others talked about funding in more general terms.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>7</p>	<p>You have to put care first and the only way to do this is by increasing council tax as Government have strangled monies coming to Councils.</p> <p>Services have been cut to the bone and this is needed to address some of the funding deficit.</p> <p>Services have already been cut drastically. Unless we have a change of government, Norfolk County Council cannot expect much in the way of support from central government, so council tax will have to rise in order to pay for vital services.</p> <p>NCC is clearly underfunded, and must raise income wherever it can</p>
<p>Lack of alternatives</p>	<p>Some said that they felt that there was no alternative to increasing council tax.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>I agree that County Council functions need to be better funded and at this time raising council tax seems the only option.</p> <p>You have little option.</p>

Table 2 Analysis of main comments by people who disagree/strongly disagree with the proposal to increase Norfolk County Council's share of general Council Tax by 1.99% in 2020/21

Overall theme	Issues raised	Number of times mentioned	Quotes
Council tax in relation to incomes and inflation	Many people commented that wages were not keeping up with the increase in council tax.	20	<p>Given that most peoples' salaries have only increased 1% to 2% in recent years, this increase is too high. Those of us who earn just enough to pay full Council Tax will find this increase hard to find.</p> <p>Not sure how you expect the normal working person to keep finding more money back year, When there wages don't increase.</p> <p>My income has failed to keep pace with inflation for over a decade, and the tax is increasingly unaffordable.</p> <p>Household incomes across Norfolk are not significantly increasing and this additional household expenditure will put more pressure on families.</p>

	<p>Some people also mentioned the effect of any increase on those with a fixed income, such as a pension.</p> <p>People also commented about inflation in general / cost rises elsewhere.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>4</p>	<p>The increases in council imposed in the last couple of years has had a terrible effect on pensioners like myself, we are now struggling to find this horrendous amount of money. You seem to forget that we are on fixed pension incomes we are not at work because we are moon get employable, so how do you expect us to pay these increases?</p> <p>We are pensioners and the council tax bill is becoming difficult to keep accommodating yearly increases like this . Pensioners like us get no council tax relief as we are just over the income limit & feel it unfair that we have to face the brunt of this regardless that we are not earning.</p> <p>It's higher than inflation. People are starving, it can't go on.</p> <p>Any increases should be restricted to inflation at most - 1.5%.</p>
<p>Cost of council tax</p>	<p>Several people expressed their view that council tax was unaffordable.</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>This would make A total increase of 3.99% is more than my annual salary increase and this makes it unaffordable.</p>

	<p>People also shared their concern about the amount of council tax continuing to increase.</p>	10	<p>As a young person trying to rent and save for a home, after my rent, bills, council tax and trying to put away some money, I have very very little to live on at the end of this. This is not just a problem faced by me but many of my friends. If council tax rises this is another pressure on funds in an already unaffordable area to live for young people.</p> <p>This rise can not continue. It is not sustainable.</p> <p>Our council tax has gone up significantly in the last couple of years (around £20 per month).</p> <p>You have already increased council tax and this money should be government funded. Where do you draw the line.</p>
	<p>Some commented that the proposed rise was too large.</p>	5	<p>That is a shocking increase, you simply cannot expect people to pay such a massive hike when cost of living pay increases go up by nothing like this amount.</p>

Efficiency and waste	<p>People called on the Council to save money by being more efficient.</p> <p>Some commented on specific areas they felt were a waste of Council funding.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Because you should be able to save this amount by reducing the things you waste money on.</p> <p>There are many other ways in which the Council could be saving money, paying for services such as Room Bookings at Hethel Engineering Centre, NORSE everyday tasks that never seem to be fulfilled on time, Mobile Phone Contracts that should have been cancelled years ago that are still being paid monthly.</p> <p>Ndr was £56 million over budget, how much more money is being wasted by incompetence in the council?</p> <p>Stop wasting money on putting in cycle lanes on roads and doing unnecessary changes to the infrastructure!! You are wasting my money!!</p>
Central government funding	Some respondents referred to Government funding.	6	<p>Government needs to meet its obligations not local people being taxed twice.</p> <p>funding should come from central gov</p>

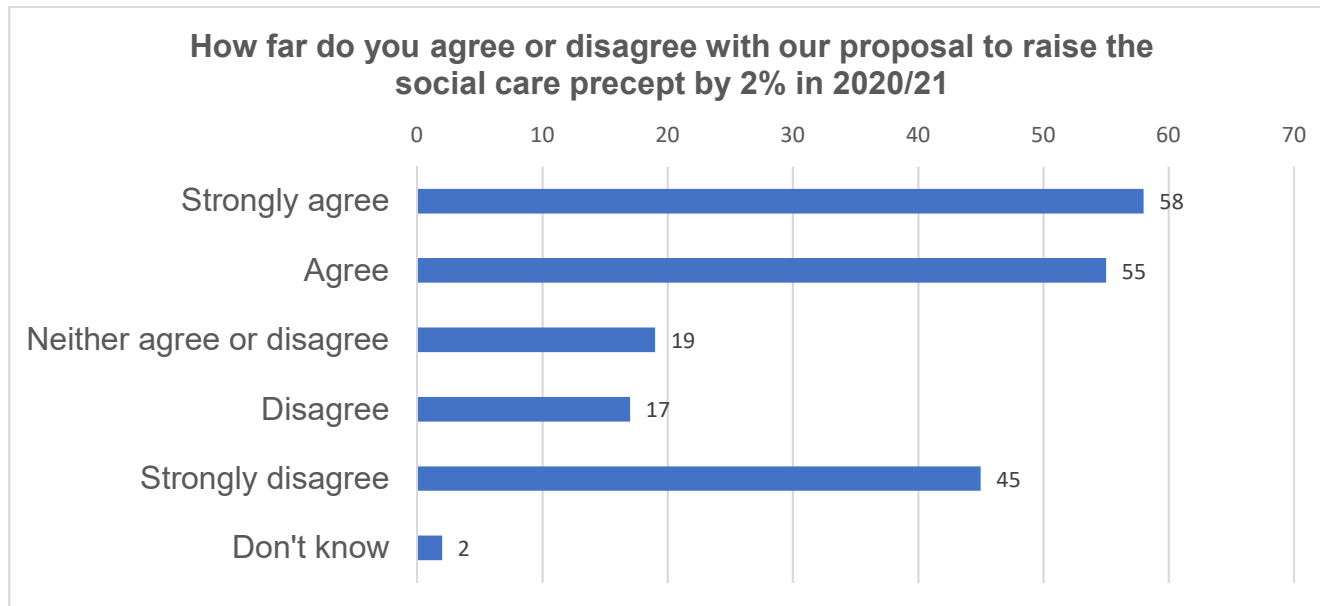
Value for money	Some people commented that whilst council tax was increasing, they felt they were receiving fewer services, or got little in return for their council tax.	6	<p>We pay more than we get</p> <p>As two pensioners who have lived in our 4 bedroom house for forty years how are we expected to pay the ever increasing council tax. Living in a small hamlet we get nothing for the tax we pay just a Refuse BIN COLLECTION, our lane is never swept, the odd police vehicle might drive through once in a couple of months,I would point out that we also have to pay a precept tax as well which keeps going up and for what? as the people who live in the Hamlet get absolutely nothing for this charge ...</p>
Unfairness	People commented that either the council tax itself or the proposed increase was unfair.	5	<p>Like many single, elderly women I am already too poor to pay income tax but pay 75% of council tax. My married colleagues have another income from their partners but effectivley pay less council tax than me. Tax the rich not the poor.</p>

7. Survey responses adult social care precept

Q: How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to raise the social care precept by 2% in 2020/21?

We asked how far people agreed or disagreed with our proposal and 196 people responded to this question. Of these:

- 58 (29.6%) said they strongly agreed
- 55 (28.1%) said they agreed
- 19 (9.7%) said they neither agreed nor disagreed
- 17 (8.7%) said that they disagreed and
- 45 (23.0%) said that they strongly disagreed
- 2 (1.0%) said they did not know



We included an open text box so that people could tell us the reason behind their answer and how, if at all, the proposal would affect them.

Of those **strongly agreeing** (58) or **agreeing** (55) with the proposal, people stated that their response was for the same reasons as they agreed with our proposals around general council tax - that they understood that services cost and felt that social care was needed. Several felt that adult social care was a priority and that frontline services should be protected. People also referred to the Government cuts to local government funding. Some mentioned increased demands for these services in Norfolk, especially given the ageing population. Some felt the increase was fair whilst others thought the increase could be even higher.

Of those **disagreeing** (17) or **strongly disagreeing** (45) with the proposal, people stated that their response was for the same reasons as they disagreed with the general part of council tax increasing, in particular that their earnings were not keeping up and the increase was unaffordable. Some expressed the view that the adult social care precept was unfair or were concerned that the Council would waste any income generated.

People who said they **neither agree nor disagree** (19) expressed their unhappiness about Members' expenses, mentioned funding adult social care centrally, Government funding in general and affordability for pensioners.

Table 1 Analysis of main comments by people who agree/strongly agree with the proposal to raise the social care precept by 2% in 2020/21			
Overall theme	Issues raised	Number of times mentioned	Quotes
The need for adult social care	The need for care, especially given Norfolk's ageing population.	12	Care Services are increasingly needed with an ageing population. Norfolk has an ageing population and higher than national average ageing population so this increase is needed.

	Increased demands.	6	<p>Social care needs are likely to continue growing as we have an aging population and it is important that funding is in place to help those who need it</p> <p>People are living longer and need help in a variety of different ways including help with everyday tasks in the home and care away from the home when suffering with dementia</p> <p>Norfolk has a large elderly population that continues to grow. Providing the extra money for needed services (as opposed to having to cut them) will hopefully lead to our elderly population being able to stay healthier (physically and mentally) and live independently for longer</p>
The cost of services	Comments relating to the cost of services and the need to pay for them.	10	<p>NCC needs this money</p> <p>Obviously we all need to contribute to funding services.</p> <p>Services have to be paid for and Care is necessary</p> <p>We need to fund the additional service somehow!</p>
Maintaining valued adult social care services in the light of Government funding cuts	Adult social care seen as a priority, often in relation to comments about Government funding cuts.	8	<p>With central government stripping the funding for this you guys need to make it a priority.</p>

	The service must be maintained / protected	7	<p>You have to put care first and the only way to do this is by increasing council tax as Government have strangled monies coming to Councils. I don't think you have a choice.</p> <p>More money is required for social care funding. This has to be a priority. This is the only way we can generate the funds at this time. I think the government needs to make social care funding a priority.</p> <p>Valuable service must not be neglected.</p> <p>The need to increase funding for vital services</p> <p>To protect essential services especially social care.</p>
Protecting vulnerable people	Some commented that it was a social or moral responsibility and/or important to protect vulnerable people.	6	<p>Because everybody has a friend or family member that need adult social care, so therefore I feel that people would be happier to pay towards adult social care via the council tax to help and support it's most vulnerable adults of norfolk.</p> <p>I believe cohesive communities with a sense of well being foster financial investment and economic health. Therefore it is in everybody's interest that social care is delivered to the vest best standard as possible in order to support those in the community who are vulnerable and to work towards health, opportunity, security and a sense of belonging.</p>

Our adult social care charging policy	Some took the opportunity to comment on charges for social care in general and our adult social care charging policy in particular.	6	<p>The system cannot be cut anymore it is bad enough that you charge people for social care as it is.</p> <p>We need to support the most vulnerable in our society. They are having cuts to a Personal budgets, respite, transport and having their benefits taken from them because NCC has implemented the MIG. These people will and are becoming isolated. Their well-being will and us being adversely affected and also the lives of their carers</p>
Fairness	Some stated that the increase was fair / acceptable.	5	<p>This is a fair increase for the financial year.</p> <p>This figure seems more acceptable.</p>
A larger increase needed	Comments that the adult social care precept could be higher.	5	<p>Agree, but think it should be higher.</p> <p>A tiny price to pay for essential social services. You could double or treble the increase and it would make little difference to most people, while offering maximum benefit to those who need it most.</p>

Table 2 Analysis of main comments by people who disagree/strongly disagree with the proposal to raise the social care precept by 2% in 2020/21

Overall theme	Issues raised	Number of times mentioned	Quotes
Adult social care precept in relation to incomes and inflation	Several people commented that wages were not keeping up with the increase in council tax.	9	<p>3.99% increase is significant on probably everyone's largest household bill. All other utility bills increase annually and wage increases do not for most cover all the increases leaving us all worse off.</p> <p>My issue is, my income has not risen for over 5 years, all my out going have. I struggle to pay my current council tax rate and just don't know how I would cope with an increase. Government cuts have hit everyone really hard over the years. Keeping passing on the short fall down the line, expecting the people at the bottom of the pile to pay for the short fall, makes life stressful, miserable and in the end question what we are here for.</p> <p>Why should contribution to Council services be greater than average pay rise each year.</p>

<p>Cost of council tax</p>	<p>Several people expressed their view that council tax was unaffordable.</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>I completely understand the need to raise more money to pay for services, as the government has cut funding. My issue is, my income has not risen for over 5 years, all my out going have. I struggle to pay my current council tax rate and just don't know how I would cope with an increase.</p> <p>Many people are already struggling and this isn't including - police, village precept etc that will probably also go up and make it even harder for households.</p>
<p>Fairness</p>	<p>Views that the adult social care precept was unfair to those who worked or who did not claim benefits.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Once again it's the people who have tried to support themselves and are not on benefits who suffer from the increases in taxes. In my case, being single, I would have to sell my house to pay for my care, while others on benefits and social housing get their care for nothing. How is this right? Some people in this country have never worked, never saved and yet get everything given to them.</p> <p>With adult social care there is an excessive burden placed on the community to provide support. The children of elderly people perhaps should be means tested: if the parent has chosen to spend rather than save for their old age, or if children are earning well it seems immoral that others are expected to meet costs.</p>

Council wastefulness	Some felt that the Council would waste any increased funds or spend it on things that they personally did not value.	5	The council will simply waste the money and not invest it appropriately. If I felt it were going to be used appropriately I would agree with this. Truth is it is just another cash cow for incompetence.
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8. Business Transformation

91 people commented on budget approach in Business Transformation. The key themes to emerge included:

- **General support for our proposals (18)** The business transformation proposals appear to be sound **with provisos (2)** it is good in theory as long as it doesn't end up costing more in the end.
- **Comments relating to manager/staff ratios and need for frontline staff (10)** Same bull that's published every year but no real saving as too many new managers employed to oversee the changes rather than investing in trained front line staff to effectively deliver services.
- **Ideas for ways that we could save money in this area (8)** You have a very large office space, which could be rented out in sections to the private sector or combined with other government agencies like Broadland Council who operate out of a tiny venue, with zero parking.
- **Suggestions that we should already be implementing these proposals (7)** These don't seem very radical. These are all things that really should be happening already.
- **Concerns that our proposals won't meet our objectives (7)** Some of the proposed efficiency savings look optimistic. It is my experience that technology does not generate savings only reduction in headcount can achieve this.
- **A call to become more efficient (6)** All administration/finance departments should be streamlined to be as efficient as possible, targets should be set, deadlines adhered to, you need turn around times for everything.

We also received feedback on the following individual proposals:

Proposal	Number of times mentioned	Themes / quotes
<p>BTP001 - Continuing our smarter working programme, which achieves efficiencies by changing the way we work.</p>	4	<p>Good news, would be interesting to see detail on what the councils initiatives would be - BTP001 for example has different savings in each of the next three years but zero benefit once we reach 23-24?</p> <p>Yes a great idea but only gives results when people are working effectively and productively.</p> <p>We hope your review of your traded services to make sure they are run on a fair commercial basis will carefully consider any cost implications for other local authorities and any knock-on impact these may have on the important services provided to the residents of our county.</p>
<p>BTP002 - Rationalising and making the most of our own properties to reduce external venue hire costs.</p>	5	<p>Seems to offer a clear opportunity for saving. Presumably the differences between the figures for the first 3 years listed reflect growing awareness of more efficient/cost saving practices. Why is it taken so long to implement?</p> <p>Properties that can be sold off should be if empty. renting properties for a peppercorn rents are not the way forward.</p> <p>Finally, we enthusiastically support your proposals to make the most use of your properties throughout the county and the opportunity to work with you on developing local service strategies to provide an integrated service offer to residents through increased locality working.</p>

		<p>... the savings proposed under reference BTP002 - Rationalising and making use of our own properties to reduce external venue hire costs are pretty modest and could be larger if shared use was to be made of other “public” estate assets such as District Council offices, increased sharing of space such as libraries with Towns and Parish Councils and there was more joined up thinking around public health and primary care commissioning and service delivery.</p> <p>I am surprised at the costs associated with the used of external venue hire, considering the vast property portfolio available to NCC and i would strongly recommend that this part of the proposal is speeded up as quickly as possible and maybe quicker than the time frame you are proposing.</p>
<p>BTP003.1 - Increasing council tax and business rates income by preventing and detecting fraud.</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Prevention and detection of fraud are - in my eyes - extremely important. Prior to retirement, I was the Senior Fraud Officer in a Private Bank, so I know how important it is not to lose money to fraud. The best people should be in place to assist with the fight against fraud. Further, errors and mistakes are also important areas where money can be lost, so staff training must be of the highest order at all times.</p> <p>It would be useful if you were able to compare per capita spend with that in other authorities. For BTP003.1, how have you arrived at the figure of £1M and does it only apply in 2 financial years? Why?</p> <p>While we agree on the merits of increasing council tax and business rates collection, we need to be assured about the effectiveness and delivery of the fraud hub approach and believe that both the County’s and the Districts’ ambitions need to be considered when deciding how to tackle this issue. We welcome the opportunity to continue to work jointly on this with you.</p> <p>... would ask how the County Council proposes realising these savings / efficiencies given that the responsibility for collecting Council Tax and Business Rates, including detection and prevention of fraud rests with district and borough councils where there are varying levels of collection rates across the County.</p>

<p>BTP003.2 - Digitising print, post, scan and record storage leading to a reduction in direct costs.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>An Electronic Document Management System was procured a number of years ago at a cost in excess of this amount and wasn't ever used in anger. Presumably you will now use the previously procured system?</p>
<p>BTP003.3 - Making the most of technology to make every day business transactions more efficient.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>If technology can be better used then there is every reason to expect this happen in the next Tax year rather than delaying.</p> <p>It would be useful if you were able to compare per capita spend with that in other authorities. For BTP003.1, how have you arrived at the figure of £1M and does it only apply in 2 financial years? Why? The same question arises with BTP003.3. In that case it is a single year's saving. You also do not seem to mention how much it will cost in new systems, staff training etc. Is the saving net (i.e. does it include costs)?</p> <p>This is welcome in principle but is it feasible given that figital reach in Norfolk still leaves a lot to be desired.</p>
<p>BTP004 - Receiving discounts from suppliers by offering them early payments.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>To keep changing suppliers costs money....perhaps terms should be agreed and costs agreed for a longer term to give security to the providers and maintain quality by quality control measures and fines when quality is not adhered to.</p> <p>Suppliers should be paid promptly anyway, not be expected to give a discount to persuade you to do what you should have done in the first place</p>
<p>BTP005 - Reviewing all of Norfolk County Council's traded services to make sure they are run on a fair commercial basis.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>To keep changing suppliers costs money....perhaps terms should be agreed and costs agreed for a longer term to give security to the providers and maintain quality by quality control measures and fines when quality is not adhered to.</p>

9. Adult Social Services

107 people commented on our budget approach in Adult Social Services. The key themes to emerge included:

- **General support for our proposals (16)** A sensible approach to prevent more costly interventions later and improve quality of life **with provisos (5)** The reablement program is a good idea in theory, but there are many who have terminal issues such as dementia or MND that can not be reabled, therefore a project to help those should also be in place
- **Comments relating to our adult social care charging policy (12)** You are saving money by charging the most vulnerable residents of Norfolk, you are not supporting them to stay at home, as you are taking a large proportion of their benefits. How can this be justified. You are cutting support for the disabled, cutting their money, therefore leaving them isolated and with no money. This is not supporting it's taking it away. Adult social care is in crisis and your only making it worse for the working age disabled.
- **The need to work closer / differently with the NHS (9)** The partnership between the NHS and social care is poor with little direction and social services are blamed for delayed transfers of care, often without supporting evidence.
- **Calls to invest in adult social care (8)** You do not need to be saving from adult social care you need to be putting more funding in to it !
- **Calls for more / better trained care staff (8)** You need more social workers yet there aren't enough. This takes time and training and at least 3-4 years of it to work...
- **Concerns that our proposals won't meet our objectives (7)** People who are actually eligible for a service are quite unable to be independent and require support. If they were able they wouldn't need a service. NCC are clouding over cracks with the talk of transformation.
- **Calls not to make savings in this area (7)** I do not believe there should be any reduction in funding to Adult Social Services.
- **Comments about promoting independence (6)** I agree that people should be at home where possible but only if good care and support is provided. This should be delivered by the council and not outsourced to the lowest bidder who only cares about profit margins

- **Ideas for how we could make savings / improvements in this area (6)** I wonder if the Council has looked into the feasibility of building modern almshouses (with a enlightened and very user friendly, contemporary vision, obviously). I believe the concept of appropriate housing for independent living, built around a courtyard and located close to the busy centre of communities would offer the elderly a more sociable and inclusive way of life, preventing the isolation and anxiety that can have such a debilitating affect on health and well being. It would also, perhaps, prove a money-saving initiative as any need for preventative care might be more efficiently notified with some level of nursing support offered to the almshouse community as a whole.
- **A call to become more efficient (5)** Providng joined up service delivery with county, districts and NHS etc as a complete customer journey would make the whole process more efficient and reduce numbers of people involved. Making data flow between partners and requests automated etc to speed up service delivery, remove all bottlenecks in providnig services and focus on the customer needs not the organisational ones.

We also received feedback on the following individual proposals:

Proposal	Number of times mentioned	Themes / quotes
<p>ASS001 - Expanding home based reablement, which saves money in the long term by preventing unnecessary hospital admissions and supporting more people to swiftly return home from hospital.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Home Care cannot possibly be as cost effective as "residential" care in many cases. One Home Carer/Nurse cannot PROPERLY nor EFFICIENTLY look after the same number of patients in rural areas, in particular because of travelling distances as One Carer/Nurse can in "residential" care. THIS IS COMMON SENSE!!! The money would be better spent on re-introducing Community Hospitals where patients, including those having had operations, would be treated properly, efficiently and attended to more often. District Nurses should be "attached" to these Community Hospitals as well as G. P. Surgeries and Social Services.</p> <p>I'm not sure I'm understanding the way the figures are set out but if you are saying that you will spend £5m per year less on home-based reablement, that sounds exactly the opposite of what is needed. Or are you saying you will spend more, but that the result will be a £5m saving elsewhere?</p> <p>ASS001 and ASS003 will put additional pressure on the carers and families of patient. If this is not handled carefully carers themselves may end up needing more support.</p> <p>In adult social care, we value the work we are doing with you on successful programmes such as District Direct and welcome the budget proposals to reduce the need for residential care by expanding home based and accommodation based reablement and working better across health and social care teams to help prevent falls. We believe the best way to achieve this goal is by investing in communities, with an emphasis on partnerships, capacity building and increasing the availability of community help, rather than relying on the voluntary sector alone.</p>

		<p>... has concerns about the savings proposed under references ASS001, ASS002 and ASS003 in that it perceives that demand for all of these services in Norfolk is high and will remain so given the ageing demographic which is much older than the national average and should therefore be recognised by Government.</p> <p>ASS001, ASS002, ASS003 - While we welcome the expansions of these services.</p>
<p>ASS002 - Expanding accommodation based reablement, which saves money by enabling people with higher needs to quickly return to their home from hospital without needing residential care.</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Home Care cannot possibly be as cost effective as "residential" care in many cases. One Home Carer/Nurse cannot PROPERLY nor EFFICIENTLY look after the same number of patients in rural areas, in particular because of travelling distances as One Carer/Nurse can in "residential" care. THIS IS COMMON SENSE!!! The money would be better spent on re-introducing Community Hospitals where patients, including those having had operations, would be treated properly, efficiently and attended to more often. District Nurses should be "attached" to these Community Hospitals as well as G. P. Surgeries and Social Services.</p> <p>In adult social care, we value the work we are doing with you on successful programmes such as District Direct and welcome the budget proposals to reduce the need for residential care by expanding home based and accommodation based reablement and working better across health and social care teams to help prevent falls. We believe the best way to achieve this goal is by investing in communities, with an emphasis on partnerships, capacity building and increasing the availability of community help, rather than relying on the voluntary sector alone.</p> <p>... concerns about the savings proposed under references ASS001, ASS002 and ASS003 in that it perceives that demand for all of these services in Norfolk is high and will remain so given the ageing demographic which is much older than the national average and should therefore be recognised by Government.</p> <p>ASS001, ASS002, ASS003 - While we welcome the expansions of these services.</p>

<p>ASS003 - Extending home based support for people with higher level needs or dementia so that they can remain in their home especially after an illness or hospital stay, which saves money on residential care.</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Home Care cannot possibly be as cost effective as "residential" care in many cases. One Home Carer/Nurse cannot PROPERLY nor EFFICIENTLY look after the same number of patients in rural areas, in particular because of travelling distances as One Carer/Nurse can in "residential" care. THIS IS COMMON SENSE!!! The money would be better spent on re-introducing Community Hospitals where patients, including those having had operations, would be treated properly, efficiently and attended to more often. District Nurses should be "attached" to these Community Hospitals as well as G. P. Surgeries and Social Services.</p> <p>ASS001 and ASS003 will put additional pressure on the carers and families of patient. If this is not handled carefully carers themselves may end up needing more support.</p> <p>... concerns about the savings proposed under references ASS001, ASS002 and ASS003 in that it perceives that demand for all of these services in Norfolk is high and will remain so given the ageing demographic which is much older than the national average and should therefore be recognised by Government.</p> <p>ASS001, ASS002, ASS003 - While we welcome the expansions of these services.</p>
<p>ASS004 - Working better across health and social care teams to help prevent falls, which in turn helps prevent hospital admissions and saves money on residential care.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>This seems a very sensible way forward as it is confusing for members of the Public to have 2 separate Falls Services, one in Health and one in Adult Social Care, so would be helpful to move towards a more integrated approach.</p> <p>In adult social care, we value the work we are doing with you on successful programmes such as District Direct and welcome the budget proposals to reduce the need for residential care by expanding home based and accommodation based reablement and working better across health and social care teams to help prevent falls. We believe the best way to achieve this goal is by investing in communities, with an emphasis on partnerships, capacity building and increasing the availability of community help, rather than relying on the voluntary sector alone.</p>

<p>ASS005 - Supporting disabled people to access grants that are available for access to education and support to attend university.</p>	2	<p>I think this would be a very helpful investment as part of helping people to be as independent as possible and to help into universities and possibly also increasing chances of employment.</p> <p>ASS005, ASS006 - We would like more detail on these elements before commenting.</p>
<p>ASS006 - Increasing opportunities for personalisation and direct payments, which will help both increase choice of services and value for money, through more efficient commissioning.</p>	2	<p>ASS006 is flawed. Outsourcing increases rather than decreases the overall cost of service delivery as it adds further steps in the chain. Rather than outsource services, cheaper and better delivery is achieved by providing services in house. Oversight and management costs are reduced releasing more to be spent on the service delivery itself. This is true in all cases, save where there is a genuine cost arbitrage (eg moving work to a lower cost environment, which isn't possible when the work needs to be undertaken in situ) or genuine scope for economies of scale (which by and large only applies to manufacturing or niche specialist services).</p> <p>ASS005, ASS006 - We would like more detail on these elements before commenting.</p>
<p>ASS007 - Reviewing how we commission residential care services to save money by making sure we have the right services in the right place.</p>	1	<p>There is not enough explanation here. The residential care home sector is already stretched and there have been several closures in recent years. Squeezing them further could mean that self-funders have to pay more.</p>
<p>ASS008 - Developing consistent contracts and prices for nursing care by working more closely with health services.</p>	0	

ASS009 - Debt management (one-off) - reclaiming money owed by other organisations.	1	How are there savings of £0.5m in 2020/21 as the one off debt recovery and then costs of £0.5m in 2021/22 which result in a net saving of 0. Surely this can't be correct? Unless the cost of the recovery equals the debt, then really is there any point!
ASS010 - Reducing the money we spend on supporting providers to develop a market of affordable, quality, social care.	0	
ASS011 - Reviewing staffing levels in back office and support services.	2	Staffing level reduction against a rising demand is a nonsense. Will this just put more pressure on social services if things don't go smoothly in the background? Will these people who lose their jobs in this role be reskilled and put into new positions?
ASS012 - Funding of the Norfolk Swift Response Service by Health.	4	This seems a very sensible way forward as it is confusing for members of the Public to have 2 separate Falls Services, one in Health and one in Adult Social Care, so would be helpful to move towards a more integrated approach. ASS012 is not appropriate. Given the significant numbers of vulnerable people on the unmet needs register, swifts is the only support they have. Reduce the level of support swifts can provide and you will massively increase the burden on families, the healthcare system and your front line social service workers. You will also be exposing already vulnerable and unsupported people to increased risk of harm. There is not enough explanation as to where the savings come from. Swifts is a vital service for people looking after frail elderly people. Changing the service could place additional pressure on other parts of the health and care system.

		<p>... concerns over the proposed withdrawal or reduction in funding to the Norfolk Swift Response Service - reference ASS012, which it is concerned will result in costs being “shunted” elsewhere in the system - either within the County Council, District Councils, health and voluntary sectors.</p>
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10. Children's services

83 people commented on our budget approach in Children's Services. The key themes to emerge included:

- **General support given for the proposals (11)** this seems a logical approach **but with provisos (7)** As long as it done case by case, but more important is dealing with the cases you have now and making those children / young people are better served and looked after.
- **Unhappiness over recent changes to childrens centres (9)** You closed the way this was already being done!! Places like watton don't have a sure start centre or can get to one on public transport... this has created more issues, needing more money... so we are now covering issue you created through our money!
- **Calls not to make savings in this area (8)** Children's services have been cut enough in the past.
- **Ideas for how we could make savings / improvements in this area (6)** Please review whether substantial savings could be made by the voluntary sector providing the Early Help offer in Norfolk. Please externally commission any new services for children. Please review the quality of your commissioning teams and the amount of funding that is invested in commissioning teams.
- **Calls to invest in children's services (6)** We cannot sustain any more savings within Children's Services. Services are already underinvested in. Short Breaks, SEND and Social Worker Support all need investment. Putting aside the SEND Transformation Strategy Funding, more smarter funding is needed.
- **Concerns that our proposals won't meet our objectives (5)** Again We find it hard to comment due to the lack of detail in the proposals however being as the children's services have been improving of the last few years but still need to improve further we would question the rational of adding the pressure of cuts at this point.
- **Calls to help families as early as possible (5)** Investing in services working to prevent family breakdown has to be a priority, not least because it saves costs in the longer term.

We also received feedback on the following individual proposals:

Proposal	Number of times mentioned	Themes / quotes
<p>CHS001 - Prevention, early intervention and effective social care – Investing in an enhanced operating model which supports families to stay together and ensures fewer children need to come into care.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>It is so sad regarding children's services....parents should be responsible and education begin in school with prospective parents. I have no answer for any of the above other than CHS001 to try at the earliest opportunity to educate and support.</p> <p>Better contraceptive support and educational support to discourage having children when families already have too many social problems.</p> <p>Early help is not early intervention, invest in more early intervention in particular with young people. Norfolk need a youth service, professional youth workers are trained to deal with poor mental health, ASB, NEATs. This is real early intervention</p> <p>We also welcome your proposed investment in prevention, early intervention and effective social care in children's services. As part of this strategy, we would welcome the support of Norfolk County Council's Children's Services in redesigning our successful Early Help Hubs to move them to the next stage of their development.</p> <p>... concerned that the savings proposed across proposals CHS001, CHS002 and CHS003, even allowing for the additional costs proposed by reference he CHS004 will result in a stalling if not reversal of the positive progress made in recent years in reducing the number of families in crisis and children entering the care system.</p>

<p>CHS002 - Alternatives to care – Investing in a range of new services which offer alternatives to care using enhanced therapeutic and care alternatives, combined with a focus on support networks from extended families keeping families safely together where possible and averting family crises.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>This sounds a very helpful way forward as part of also aiming to improve outcomes for young people as they move into adulthood.</p> <p>... concerned that the savings proposed across proposals CHS001, CHS002 and CHS003, even allowing for the additional costs proposed by reference he CHS004 will result in a stalling if not reversal of the positive progress made in recent years in reducing the number of families in crisis and children entering the care system.</p>
<p>CHS003 - Transforming the care market and creating the capacity that we need – Creating and commissioning new care models for children in care – achieving better outcomes and lower costs.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>For CHS003 (and some of the others, how will you measure "achieving better outcomes". Is there a nationally recognised audit or will you make this up as you go along?</p> <p>... concerned that the savings proposed across proposals CHS001, CHS002 and CHS003, even allowing for the additional costs proposed by reference he CHS004 will result in a stalling if not reversal of the positive progress made in recent years in reducing the number of families in crisis and children entering the care system.</p>

<p>CHS004 - Our Children's Services transformation programme is continuing to develop and so we can make more savings this year. We have therefore replaced our previous saving CHL049 with the three new savings above (CHS001, CHS002 and CHS003), which are clearer about the specific areas we are making savings in.</p>	<p>0</p>	
<p>CHS005 - Since we set last year's budget, our joint work across the children and young people's mental health system has developed into a comprehensive redesign of the system as a whole. This change of direction means it no longer makes sense to deliver saving CHL047 that just focused on one part of the system.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>More money needs to be allocate dto mentl health as this is a huge issue in Norfolk. ... welcomes the additional funds proposed to support the improved provision of Children's and Young Peoples Mental Health Services.</p>

11. Community and Environmental Services

91 people commented on our budget approach in Community and Environmental Services. The key themes to emerge included:

- **Comments related to perceived increase in / problems with flytipping (13) and or charges for recycling (7)** I think that the council should rethink the charges for council tips. There is such a problem with fly tipping these days. Stiffer penalties would go some way to stopping this, as would fewer charges at council tips for individuals.
- **General support for our proposals (6)** This approach appears to be sound **but with provisos (2)** As long as the people in your community get the help they need then any saving would be good to help others.
- **Concerns that our proposals won't meet our objectives (6)** So many of these 'savings' have the potential to cost more in the long term. As just one example, the increase in fly-tipping, with all its associated costs, is an almost inevitable consequence of charging for waste disposal. No one wants inefficiencies but every action has a consequence and politicians at all levels do not always seem very good at understanding what those might be.
- **Ideas for how we could make savings / improvements in this area (5)** Using the facilities in museums and the libraries more often for running courses and holding meetings.
- **Suggestions that we should already be implementing these proposals (5)** These should be done now. Common sense again.

We also received feedback on the following individual proposals:

Proposal	Number of times mentioned	Themes / quotes
<p>CES001 - Additional efficiencies in staffing and operations to progress the Adult Learning service towards its goal of being cost neutral.</p>	5	<p>Why isn't this already cost neutral?</p> <p>"Additional efficiencies" - NCC has been saying this sort of thing across areas for years and years and still you use the same rhetoric. I could go on. Why have NCC not instigated such common sense options long before now?</p> <p>The idea that Adult Learning should be cost neutral (CES001) is an outstandingly stupid concept. What this means, in effect, is a reduction in the provision. Look at the demographics and ask people what sorts of courses they want to have. For those with a vocational aspect, look for sponsorship from local businesses. Engage with NUA and UEA in partnership. You could also apply for EU grants - but unfortunately Norfolk voted for Brexit.</p> <p>This could affect Adult Learning's contribution to reducing loneliness and isolation.</p> <p>Adult learning should be invested in to help adults into jobs not cut.</p>
<p>CES002 - Achieving economies of scale in our Customer Service Centre by expanding the services that we deliver.</p>	1	<p>... many of these savings are relatively small, but might not be realised or create demand / costs in other parts of the local authority system, such that a wider discussion across the local authority sector is required.</p>

<p>CES003 - Reviewing processes and operating model to drive further efficiencies within Customer Services.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>"Reviewing processes and operating model to drive further efficiencies" NCC has been saying this sort of thing across areas for years and years and still you use the same rhetoric. I could go on. Why have NCC not instigated such common sense options long before now?</p>
<p>CES004 - Reducing the costs of our recycling centre contracts.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>If this means that either users of local recycling centres will face increased charges or that discouragements to people to use these centre will result in more fly-tipping this may be a stealth tax as the victims will be subsidising the "savings".</p> <p>To keep our beautiful countryside there should be NO CHARGES at Recycling Centres, and NO CUTBACKS. Expecting Country Persons to clear up behind Rogue Dumpers who leave waste littering the Countryside as well as Roadsides is very unfair and often costly. Those clear ups done by the Council is very expensive to the Council.</p> <p>Not a lot of scope for savings here Cutting back on recycling centres has already lead to more fly tipping and greater cost to the police and land owner.</p> <p>Why are both recycling centres in Breckland shut at the same time, surely it would be more cost effective to have them open on different days so the same staff can operate both over the week?</p> <p>In respect of CES004/005, I believe that many residents are not over happy that Recycling Centres are unable more recently to accept fewer items, which might lead to an increase in fly-tipping. We try to recycle as much as we can, but it can be irritating to get to a Recycling Centre with items only to be told that they cannot be recycled or have to be added to landfill. Perhaps there needs to be an increase to budget to ensure that recycling and waste are effectively and better disposed of.</p> <p>CES004 and CES005 could result in a further increase in fly-tipping</p>

		... that many of these savings are relatively small, but might not be realised or create demand / costs in other parts of the local authority system, such that a wider discussion across the local authority sector is required.
CES005 - Adjusting our budget for recycling centres in line with predicted waste volumes.	5	<p>If this means that either users of local recycling centres will face increased charges or that discouragements to people to use these centre will result in more fly-tipping this may be a stealth tax as the victims will be subsidising the "savings".</p> <p>To keep our beautiful countryside there should be NO CHARGES at Recycling Centres, and NO CUTBACKS. Expecting Country Persons to clear up behind Rogue Dumpers who leave waste littering the Countryside as well as Roadsides is very unfair and often costly. Those clear ups done by the Council is very expensive to the Council.</p> <p>Why are both recycling centres in Breckland shut at the same time, surely it would be more cost effective to have them open on different days so the same staff can operate both over the week?</p> <p>In respect of CES004/005, I believe that many residents are not over happy that Recycling Centres are unable more recently to accept fewer items, which might lead to an increase in fly-tipping. We try to recycle as much as we can, but it can be irritating to get to a Recycling Centre with items only to be told that they cannot be recycled or have to be added to landfill. Perhaps there needs to be an increase to budget to ensure that recycling and waste are effectively and better disposed of.</p> <p>CES004 and CES005 could result in a further increase in fly-tipping.</p>
CES006 - Saving money by renegotiating our highways contracts.	1	<p>Only comment i can make is Have you seen the roads and pathways in Norfolk? if you can call some of them roads! A better deal is to make sure when the highways do a job they do it correctly, THET ALL and NOR ALL thats a laughable mistake and makes a mockery out of the County Council.</p>

<p>CES007 - Saving money by purchasing fire service equipment, rather than leasing it.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Our Fire & Rescue Service is a valuable service and needs to be appropriately funded. There is a difficult balance between leasing and owning, if you own equipment will need maintenance and servicing, will there be provision for the ongoing costs associated or as in some leases these costs are included.. so will there be any real saving?</p> <p>Don't forget to include maintenance, training & replacement costs.</p> <p>I doubt that buying fire service equipment will create a saving as the Council will now also have the cost of maintenance and replacement.</p>
<p>CES008 - Reviewing posts in our Culture and Heritage service to ensure that we have the right number of staff with the right mix of skills.</p>	<p>0</p>	
<p>CES009 - Saving money in our post room by reducing staff and the costs of our contracts.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>the post service is appalling at the best of times - it would be good to see a more detailed proposal relating to how it will affect efficiency of service if staffing numbers are cut</p>
<p>CES010 - Reviewing staffing and vacancies in Trading Standards to ensure that we have the right number of staff with the right mix of skills.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Trading Standards does a lot of work on rouge traders and ensures food is safe, so no reduction.</p>

<p>CES011 - Reviewing vacancies in Waste Services to ensure that we have the right number of staff with the right mix of skills.</p>	0	
<p>CES012 - Saving money by maintaining recycling credit payments to Voluntary and Community Groups at 2019-20 levels.</p>	8	<p>Support this reduction.</p> <p>We would support the below amount of what is paid for recycling products. Any increase is amazing, staying the same would also be satisfactory. Many thanks for contacting us.</p> <p>The reduction in Recycling Credits is understandable but I question whether the savings outweigh the good that money can do in local communities.</p> <p>Instead of maintaining levels of recycling credits to 2019-20 levels, why not reduce the amount paid per tonne to, say, £50? this non-statutory incentive payment will still be a bonus to non-profit organisations but will save the council further thousands (hundreds of?) in payments whilst still giving these organisations an incentive to retain their collection points.</p> <p>I don't believe that you should hold the Recycling Credit rate at £60.36 per tonne, but should make an inflationary increase to £62.17 per tonne in 2020/21. I don't think that withholding £5,000 to save from your budget by penalising tiny, often volunteer supported, non-profit organisations and Parish councils is a very fair way to go. Many people support these recycling facilities because of the beneficiaries of the credits. They do sort out, very specifically, the items for the recycling facilities. These items will simply increase the unsorted recycled refuse if people are discouraged in any way from recycling in this manner.</p> <p>... many of these savings are relatively small, but might not be realised or create demand / costs in other parts of the local authority system, such that a wider discussion across the local authority sector is required.</p>

		<p>*My Council was disappointed and surprised to receive your email about considering a reduction in Recycling Credits in 2020/2021. For Parish Councils, this could as a result make them need to increase their precepts to cover the shortfall. This would mean that the cost to the tax-payer, who eventually pays, would be shifted from county council to parish council line on their Council Tax bills. Non-profit making organisations would be adversely hit at a time when the need for them is at its greatest because of the reduction in funding from both central and local government. Bottle banks greatly help meet targets for recycling. Seeing them is a valuable reminder of the need to recycle. That this proposal would only create an estimated saving to the County Council of £5,000 was a surprise. The time an effort put in to carrying out this consultation will probably cost NCC close to that amount. Add to that the time and effort spent by the some 400 bodies considering the matter and responding, and there is a net cost, not a saving at all! So, my Council asks that you continue to reward bodies who host recycling facilities, which was, we feel, the government's intention when introducing the legislation.</p> <p>(* Please note: This response was provided by two different parish councils)</p>
CES013 - Saving money on treating street sweeping arisings by re-procuring our contract.	0	
CES014 - Adjusting budget for recycling credits in line with predicted recycling volumes.	1	We agree that using predicted waste volumes to adjust the budgets for recycling centres is important to avoid wasting money and build a more data-driven service that can adapt to future demands. We would like to work with you on this in order to minimise any negative impacts on waste-collection authorities and on our natural environment for example by potentially leading to increases in fly-tipping.

<p>CES015 - Saving money by maintaining recycling credit rates to District Councils for some materials at 2019-20 levels.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Regarding the proposals to save money by maintaining recycling credit rates to District Councils for some materials, we are concerned that this may lead to unintended financial consequences for waste collection authorities such as ourselves and would urge you to reconsider this approach. While we fully appreciate that difficult decisions need to be made due to the massive funding pressures that local government is currently facing, we believe that by working together we may be able to find more creative solutions to such problems.</p> <p>... many of these savings are relatively small, but might not be realised or create demand / costs in other parts of the local authority system, such that a wider discussion across the local authority sector is required.</p>
<p>CES016 - Matching the contribution made by Districts to the Waste Partnership communications budget.</p>	<p>0</p>	
<p>CES017 - Reviewing the operation of Museum catering facilities to make them more commercial.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Agree with all your proposals on this but feel the museum catering could be so much better in its offering, prices and event catering options - good luck!</p> <p>All catering in NCC outlets (Museums, Offices, etc.) need to be provided in house but run on a commercial basis.</p>
<p>CES018 - Saving money and increasing income by reviewing Culture and Heritage service room hire arrangements to make more cost-effective use of space.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>All NCC facilities (including C&HS) that can be used by external users should be run on a commercial basis and generate income when not required by the department or another NCC department.</p>

<p>CES019 - Reducing the learning and development budget, to reflect the increase in apprenticeships, e-learning and other on-the-job training.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>£21.2 million is spent on community information and learning. I would like to see a full set of accounts to see where all this money is spent.</p> <p>More training is required to improve service delivery, not less, using Apprenticeships as cheap workers is not the answer, these people need to be supported and managed to effectively be trained in house which has a resource cost. I would add more funding to this to support those people who have to support apprentices with additional training in mentoring and how the apprenticeships should work.</p>
<p>CES020 - Income generation across various Community and Environmental Services budgets.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Income generation increases of £209k in a single year...impressive. but nothing in the next 3 years?</p>

12. Public Health

57 people commented on our budget approach in Public Health. The key themes to emerge included:

- **The need to work closer / differently with the NHS (4)** The current 10 year plan from the NHS highlights living healthy to avoid illness in later life. Are the proposals for public health aligned with this plan?
- **General support for our proposals (3)** The proposals here involve very small savings and appear to be based upon changes in demand for or efficiencies being realised in the provision of preventative services, the detail of which is supported **but with provisos (1)**
- **Ideas for how we could make savings / improvements in this area (3)** Why not base public health at the libraries. Or at museums and you have spaces. Rent out your buildings to agencies like Age UK charities to provide integrated hub services with other agencies.
- **Public health should be the responsibility of the individual (3)** All health adjustments should be that families should be taught how to protect and look after themselves rather than expect others to do it and more should be done to enhance the well-being of all.

We also received feedback on the following individual proposals:

Proposal	Number of times mentioned	Themes / quotes
PHE001 - Reviewing staffing and vacancies in public health to reduce budget in line with predicted spend.	2	Why has it taken so long to realise this needs to be looked into? Public health is an essential part of the STP system and any proposed cuts should be considered in that context. In particular PHE001 should be considered in the needs of the whole system and PHE003 in the context of system targets rather than predicted spend.

<p>PHE002 - Adjusting the budget for our Healthy Lifestyles and Stop Smoking services in line with predicted take-up of services.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Why has it taken so long to realise this needs to be looked into? better education and management in schools would help</p>
<p>PHE003 - Review the sexual health services we commission and work better with providers to make services more efficient and reduce budget in line with predicted spend.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Why has it taken so long to realise this needs to be looked into? There is already a paucity of provision in this area with only Oak Street/?CASH clinic providing sexual helath services in Norwich. Please don't cut it back. Public health is an essential part of the STP system and any proposed cuts should be considered in that context. In particular PHE001 should be considered in the needs of the whole system and PHE003 in the context of system targets rather than predicted spend. Support to sexual health services and education around contraception is important. The current sexual health services are not working. When this service was run by NCC it was much better.</p>
<p>PHE004 - Use of reserves.</p>	<p>0</p>	

13. Other services

58 people commented on our budget approach in other services. The key themes to emerge included:

- **General support for our proposals (7)** These proposals are well thought out and just need to be implemented well by NCC but with provisos (1)
- **Calls to cut the number of staff and / or their pay (5)** Reduce the salaries of the top 25% of council employees. Cut the number of managers.
- **Reduce members' expenses (5)** The increases in Councillors' allowances at the same time as continued cuts to vital services is not justifiable and is insulting to the people of Norfolk. Councillors from the ruling party should be ashamed of taking these funds away from front line services
- **Ideas for how we could make savings / improvements in this area (5)** You should make staff multi skilled, so they can move across departments, when one area is less busy they can help out in another. Staff need to be efficient, many councils staff are complacent, Each department needs set targets each week.

We also received feedback on the following individual proposals:

Proposal	Number of times mentioned	Themes / quotes
<p>SGD001 - Reviewing staffing and vacancies across Strategy and Governance to make savings by continuing to hold vacancies and seeking more opportunities to bring in project funding for staff, particularly in Strategic Services and Intelligence and Analytics.</p>	3	<p>Stop out sourcing to companies like Capita who are NOT county based and therefore don't understand the needs of the county.</p> <p>Holding vacancies often a false economy. If the job needs doing, the post needs filling. If it doesn't need doing, you don't need the post. The only argument for a post being held vacant is if the work to be covered is time restricted - but if the delivery is not needed at that particular time, then the post is not needed then and is not really 'vacant'. Holding posts vacant almost always leads to inefficiency - notably no effective hand-over from one post holder to another and added stress for others in the team leading to inefficient delivery in itself and to extra time being taken off for illness etc. Also massive adverse impacts on morale - felt most by those most committed to the work they do. Delaying filling posts is almost always evidence of poor management from above...</p> <p>Reviewing staff in Local Authorities normally means the staff at ground roots level rather than the Management who are naturally inclined to look after their own roles. Do it the other way round this time.</p>
<p>SGD002 - Reducing our spending on supplies and services by 5%.</p>	0	
<p>SGD003 - Reducing our spending on ICT.</p>	4	<p>NCC need to move away from ICT Shared Services and instead go out to market for more competitive pricing.</p>

		<p>it would be good to see a more detailed proposal around this as a lot of time and money has been put into ICT over the past few years with lots of issues coming out of poor contractual choices.</p> <p>Is it possible that by reducing spending on ICT you expose your computer systems to external vulnerabilities which are then costlier to recover</p>
FCS001 - Making a one-off saving from our organisational change and redundancy budgets.	1	Again a one of saving for year 2020/21 but with a cost the same as the saving in year 2021/22 and then nothing for the two years after that.
FCS002 - Recognising additional income forecast from our business rates pilot.	1	Again a one of saving for year 2020/21 but with a cost the same as the saving in year 2021/22 and then nothing for the two years after that.

Other information

Other information relevant to the consultation

Organisations responding expressed the following views not captured elsewhere in this summary:

Organisations expressed appreciation of the financial uncertainties that the Council was working under and expressed their desire to work in partnership together and develop creative approaches to supporting our communities. There were calls to lobby central Government for fairer funding for Norfolk which recognises its rurality, urban deprivation and the large and growing ageing population. Our general focus on prevention was welcomed and the Council was invited to join in with the District Council Network's call for a 3% prevention precept for district councils.

Some organisations called for more information about proposals, in particular, a request for the modelling of demand that may be transferred onto other parts of the system. The need for robust equality impact assessments that considered rurality and those on low incomes was emphasised.

Voluntary and Community sector organisations expressed concerns relating to the cost pressures on public sector contracts resulting in organisations no longer being financially viable. There were also concerns raised that the Council was bringing more services in-house which took investment out of the voluntary and community sector.

Overall there were five specific requests from the voluntary and community sector:

- To embed the Social Value Act criteria in all commissioning evaluation processes – carrying at least a 20% weight
- A set of evaluation tools to be identified, developed, published and recognised by both sectors, and used across organisations consistently to provide comparable results, which are then made available
- A forward plan to be maintained, highlighting key planning, service commissioning/development and strategic engagement opportunities
- Any provider may request an open book review if they believe they are subsidising a contract
- Any budget proposal that affects an external organisation is subject to an impact assessment done in consultation with that organisation.

EQIA –

- **We received one comment relating to the impact of our proposals on carers, who are predominantly women:** Helping people stay at home is good up to a point but very much relies on unpaid or poorly paid carers, primarily women. Please make sure that all your policies/budgets changes are reviewed for their impact on women
- **We received one comment relating to rural impacts:** We are penalised for living in the country with no services.
- **We received comments relating to our approach to EqIA:** As with previous budget consultations we would emphasise the need for a robust equality impact assessment process that is acted upon. This process must continue beyond the high level proposal stage and evaluate the knock-on impact of budget decisions on services, communities and people. Whilst not legally protected characteristics we would request that all impact assessment processes also consider rurality and of those on low incomes.

Legal challenge - There were no comments concerning potential or proposed legal challenges to any of the proposals.

Consultation – We received 15 comments relating to the consultation which included:

- **Comments about lack of detail in general:** We would like to emphasise that for various proposals a lack of detail, particularly on how and where savings will be made, has made it difficult to fully comment on the potential impacts and outcomes of NCC's outlined budget savings.
- **Concerns a decision had already been made:** But I know you are going to do it anyway, so why bother asking us?
- **Requests for specific detail:** As with the other budget proposals, it is difficult to see if the cuts/savings are realistic as you only report tbs reduction not the size of the budget line at the start.
- **Issues with understanding:** I do not understand how the Adult Social Care precept would increase from £96.05 to £123.21 between years in the example given if it is only supposed to be a 2% increase.
- **Welcoming the opportunity to have a say on the budget:** Thank you for giving us the opportunity to help shape your budget for the year 2020-21.
- **Comments relating to transparency:** I have no idea what any of this means. I suspect that is your intent.

Responses by gender (158 individuals)

Gender		
Male	69	43.7%
Female	73	46.2%
Prefer to self-describe	2	1.3%
Prefer not to say	13	8.2%
Not answered	1	0.6%
Total	158	100%

Responses by age (158 individuals)

Age		
Under 18	0	0%
18-24	7	4.4%
25-34	8	5.1%
35-44	15	9.5%
45-54	31	19.6%
55-64	37	23.4%
65-74	41	25.9%
75-84	7	4.4%
85 or older	0	0%
Prefer not to say	8	6.3%
Not answered	2	1.3%
Total	158	99.9%

Responses by long-term illness, disability or limiting health problem (individuals)

Long-term illness, disability or limiting health problem		
Yes	21	13.3%
No	115	72.8%
Prefer not to say	18	11.4%
Not answered	5	2.5%
Total	158	100%

Responses by ethnic group (individuals)

Ethnic group		
White British	135	85.4%
White Irish	0	0%
White other	2	1.3%
Mixed / multiple ethnic group	1	0.6%
Asian or Asian British	0	0%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	0	0%
Other ethnic group	1	0.6%
Prefer not to say	13	9.5%
Not answered	3	2.5%
Total	158	99.9%

December 2019
