



Norfolk County Council

Your views on our proposal to increase council tax by 4.9% in 2018/19

Overview

Norfolk County Council plays a huge part in people's lives – ensuring children and young people have the best start in life, protecting vulnerable people, maintaining a safe road system and helping to create a thriving economy. We'll continue to spend over a billion pounds every year providing public services that you, your family and friends use every day.

Norfolk is facing some big challenges though. Our population is growing, people are generally living longer and the type of services that people need is changing. And as you know, the cost of living is going up. As things become more expensive we also have higher costs, and the amount of money we have coming in isn't keeping up. At the same time the grant that central government gives us has fallen by £189 million since 2011 and is expected to fall to zero by 2021.

To help us bridge this gap, we are proposing to increase council tax by 4.9% in 2018/19. Of this proposed increase, 1.9% is for inflation. When we developed this proposal the maximum amount we could increase council tax by was 1.99% without triggering a local referendum.

The other 3% is money ring-fenced for adult social care. In 2016 the Government gave us the opportunity to raise council tax to help pay for adult social care services – this is called the adult social care precept. Adult social care services are those that support older people, disabled people and people with mental health problems.

These services help people to stay safe in their own homes and continue to be independent. Where this is not possible adult social care can support people in residential care.

The Government has allowed us to increase the social care precept by 6% over a three year period.

Last year we increased it by 3% and this year we are proposing to do the same to help protect vulnerable people. As the money generated from this increase is ring-fenced we can only spend it on adult social care services.

If our proposal to increase council tax went ahead it would mean that a typical Band D home will see an annual increase of £61.15, that's £1.17 per week.

We've based our budget proposals for 2018/19 on the assumption that council tax will increase overall by 4.9%. If we do not increase council tax, then we would have to find a further £17.448m in savings.

On 19 December 2017 the Government announced the provisional local government finance settlement. This allowed councils to increase general council tax next year by an additional 1% without the need for a referendum. This means that Norfolk County Council could now increase council tax up to 5.99%. This would generate around an extra 3.9 million in 2018/19. A 5.99% council tax increase would see a typical Band D home see an annual increase of £74.74, that's about £1.43 per week.

Why we are consulting

We want to find out what people think about our proposal to increase council tax by 4.9% in 2018/19 and how it might affect them if it went ahead.

In addition, now that the Government has provided this as an option, we are keen to find out people's views on increasing council tax to 5.99%.

Your views will help us to decide whether we should increase council tax in 2018/19.

We are consulting through:

- Our online consultation – visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/budget to complete this consultation online.
- This paper copy of our consultation.

We are consulting from 6 November 2017 to 2 January 2018. Please note that if we receive any consultation responses after this date we cannot guarantee that we will be able to take them into account.

We will feed back the findings from our consultation to our county councillors as part of the evidence they will use to help them come to a decision about our proposals.

If you need a copy of this consultation document in a different format please email haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk, call 0344 800 8020 or Text Relay on 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Your views on our proposal and the impact it might have

1. What do you think about our proposal to increase council tax by 4.9% in 2018/19? How, if at all, do you think that the proposal might impact on you? Please write in below:

Please write in the box below:

2. The Government has now said that councils can increase general council tax next year by an additional 1% without the need for a referendum. Although this is not our proposal we could now increase council by 5.99% in 2018/19. If you have any comments about whether or not the council should increase council tax by 5.99% please write these in below:

Please write in the box below:

About you

Personal information, confidentiality and data protection

We use this information to see how representative the feedback is of Norfolk's population. We also use it to see if any particular groups of people are especially affected by our proposals.

We will process any personal information we receive from you in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. This means that Norfolk County Council will hold your personal data and only use it for the purpose for which it was collected, being this consultation. Under our record management policy we will keep this information for five years.

We will also, under normal circumstances, not pass your personal data on to anyone else. However, we may be asked under access to information laws to publish or disclose some, or all, of the information you provide in response to this consultation, including any personal information. We will only do this where such disclosure will comply with such relevant information laws which include the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

2. Are you responding as...?

Please select one answer

- An individual / member of the public
- A family
- On behalf of a voluntary or community group
- On behalf of a statutory organisation
- On behalf of a business
- A Norfolk County Councillor
- A district or borough councillor
- A town or parish councillor
- A Norfolk County Council employee

3. If you are responding on behalf of another organisation, what is the name of the organisation, group or business?

Please write your answer in the box:

4. Are you...?

Please select one answer

Male

Female

Prefer to self-describe (please specify below)

Prefer not to say

If you prefer to self-describe please specify here:

5. How old are you?

Please select one answer

Under 18 55-64

18-24 65-74

25-34 75-84

35-44 85 or older

45-54 Prefer not to say

6. Do you have any long-term illness, disability or health problem that limits your daily activities or the work you can do?

Please select one answer

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

7. How would you describe your ethnic background?

Please select one answer

White British

White Irish

White other

Mixed

Asian or Asian British

Black or Black British

Chinese

Prefer not to say

Other ethnic background - please describe below

8. What is your first language?

Please write your answer in the box:

9. What is the first part of your postcode? (e.g. NR4)

Please write your answer in the box:

How we will make our decision and report back to you

We will take a report about the findings to this consultation to our Policy and Resources committee on 29 January 2018. The report will feedback what people have told us about the potential impact of our proposal.

The feedback will also be reported at Full Council on 12 February 2018. Our county councillors will consider the consultation responses we receive very carefully. In particular, they 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. As well as this equality impact assessment, councillors will consider the impact of proposals on rural areas
- 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 options, models or ideas for making the savings.

You can fill in our online feedback form at:

www.norfolk.gov.uk/budget

You can send back a paper feedback form to:

Freepost Plus RTCL-XSTT-JZSK, Norfolk County Council, Ground floor - south wing, 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: Stakeholder and Consultation Team, Norfolk County Council, Ground floor - south wing, County Hall, Martineau Lane, NR1 2DH.

You may wish to keep a copy of your response to our consultation for your own records.

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 Customer Services on 0344 800 8020 or Text Relay on 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

December 2017
