



# Norfolk County Council

## Your views on our proposal to increase council tax by 2.99% in 2019/20

### 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.

The number of people who need our services particularly those becoming more vulnerable is growing year on year. At the same time things have become more expensive so we have higher costs, and the amount of money we have coming in isn't keeping up. Since 2011/12 the funding that central government gives us has fallen by £204 million since 2011/12 and is expected to fall to zero by 2020/21.

As part of the Government's efforts to balance the national books, all public services, including Norfolk County Council, are required to make savings.

Against this backdrop, we have developed a robust financial strategy to address our current challenges which is guided by the following principles:

- Offering our help early to prevent and reduce demand for specialist services
- Joining up our work so that similar activities and services are easily accessible, done well and done once

- Being business like and making best use of digital technology to ensure value for money
- Using evidence and data to target our work where it can make the most difference.

Since 2011/12 we have saved the best part of £364 million, including £246 million of efficiency savings. We are proposing to save £79 million, including new saving proposals for 2019/22, over the next three years and are identifying ways of bridging a remaining gap of £45.98 million.

## **Why we are consulting**

We want to find out what people think about our proposal to increase council tax by 2.99% in 2019/20 and how it might affect them if it went ahead.

Your views will help us to decide whether we should increase council tax in 2019/20.

We are also interested to hear your views on whether the council should consider any future opportunities to increase council tax.

We are consulting through:

- This online consultation.
- A paper copy of our consultation.

We are consulting from 5 November 2018 to 23 December 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](mailto: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.**

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

We will use any personal information to understand how different groups of people feel about our proposal on council tax.

We will process any personal information we receive from you in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679), the Data Protection Act 2018 and Norfolk County Council's data protection policy and guidelines. 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. You can find a copy of our privacy statement at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/privacy>

We won't identify individuals when reporting back our findings and 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. 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 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

You can choose not to take part in the consultation, to stop responding at any time, or to ignore any personal questions that you do not want to answer.

## **Background**

Council tax helps pay for local services and applies to all domestic properties whether owned or rented. How much you pay depends on the valuation band of your property. The responsibility to pay council tax usually lies with the occupier.

Each organisation that provides services in your area sets their own proportion of the council tax bill you receive. These are:

- Norfolk County Council
- your district council
- your parish council (if you have one)
- Norfolk Police

Norfolk County Council's share of the council tax is currently made up of two parts – general council tax and the adult social care precept.

## **General council tax**

The main element of council tax is to help fund the costs of all the services provided by the County Council and is not linked to specific services. The maximum amount that government currently says that we can increase this 'general' council tax by without having to hold a local referendum is 3%. It is possible that in the future the government could allow councils greater freedom to increase this general council tax by more than 3%.

## **Adults 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.

In 2018/19 our gross budget for adult social services is £410m (approximately 40% of our total gross non-schools revenue budget).

In 2015 the government gave councils like Norfolk the opportunity to raise council tax by up to an extra 2% a year for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 to help pay for adult social care services – this is called the adult social care precept.

In 2016 the government announced that for the three years from 2017/18 to 2019/20, councils would be allowed to increase the adult social care precept by up to 3% a year, but no more than 6% in total over that period.

Norfolk County Council took the decision to increase the adult social care precept by 3% in 2017/18 and 3% in 2018/19. This means that in 2019/20 the adult social care precept will not be increased.

The money we raise from the adult social care precept is ringfenced which means that we can only spend it on adult social care services. This means that, although we are not increasing the adult social care precept for 2019/20, there will still be a specific amount of council tax that we collect that we can only spend on adult social care.

As part of the process of setting our budget we have to report to government and confirm that we are using the money we receive from this precept for adult social care services.

## **Our proposal**

To help us bridge our budget gap, we are proposing to increase general council tax by 2.99% in 2019/20.

In 2018/19 our council tax charge for a Band D home was £1,322.73 and £96.05 of this was the adult social care precept.

If our proposal went ahead we would increase council tax by 2.99%. This would mean:

- In 2019/20 our council tax charge for a Band D home would be £1,362.24 and £96.05 of this would be the adult social care precept.
- A typical Band D home would see an annual increase of £39.51 for the year, that's 76p per week.

We've based our budget proposals for 2019/20 on the assumption that council tax will increase overall by 2.99%. If we do not increase council tax, then we would have to find a further £11.673m in savings.

## Have your say

**1. How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to increase Norfolk County Council's share of the Council Tax by 2.99% in 2019/20? Please tick (✓) one answer only:**

<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree or disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**2. Why do you say that? Please write in the box below:**

**3. It is possible that in the future the government could allow councils greater freedom to increase council tax by more than 3% without the need for a referendum. How far do you agree or disagree that Norfolk County Council should consider this? Please tick (✓) one answer only:**

<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree or disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**4. Why do you say that? Please write in the box below:**

## About you

**5. Are you responding as...?** Please tick (✓) one answer only:

- 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

**6. 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:



**7. Are you...?** Please tick (✓) one answer only:

Male

Female

Prefer to self-describe (please specify below)

Prefer not to say

If you prefer to self-describe please specify here:

**8. How old are you?** Please tick (✓) one answer only:

Under 18  55-64

18-24  65-74

25-34  75-84

35-44  85 or older

45-54  Prefer not to say

**9. 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 answer only:

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

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

White British

White Irish

White other

Mixed / multiple ethnic group

Asian or Asian British

Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

Prefer not to say

Other ethnic background - please describe below

**11. What is your first language?**

Please write your answer in the box:

**12. 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 28 January 2019. The report will feed back what people have told us about the potential impact of our proposal. The feedback will also be reported at Full Council on 11 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.

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

**You can fill in our online feedback form at:**

[www.norfolk.gov.uk/budget](http://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 email us at [HaveYourSay@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:HaveYourSay@norfolk.gov.uk) or contact Customer Services on 0344 800 8020 or Text Relay on 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

**November 2018**

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