

Re-imagining Norfolk

Equality and rural assessments

Process for assessing the budget proposals 2016/18

Summary

Re-imagining Norfolk sets out a direction for Norfolk County Council which will radically change our role and the way we deliver services. The strategy commits us to delivering the Council's vision and priorities for Norfolk, making it clear that the future lies in working effectively across the whole public service on a local basis.

We are considering a range of proposals for 2016/18 as part of Re-imagining Norfolk. This document sets the context for conducting equality and rural assessments on the proposals, to inform decision-making. It explains the key steps that will be taken, and the timeline for decisions.



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 0344 800 8011 (Textphone).

Introduction

1. The headline message throughout Re-imagining Norfolk is making the most of our resources by doing things differently. Re-imagining Norfolk covers a range of activities such as raising revenue, trading services where there are the right market opportunities, making greater use of technology to shift delivery channels, managing demand for our services through early help and community-based support, and continuing to improve efficiency by cutting costs, particularly in back office functions.
2. Making sure that these changes take every opportunity to enhance access and equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics and people in rural areas is critical for delivery of the Council's priority to support vulnerable people. It is also critical to ensure that any potential adverse impact on service users is understood.

Legal and policy context

3. Public authorities have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to consider the implications of proposals on people with protected characteristics. The Act states that decision-makers must have an opportunity to consider the findings of equality assessments before any final decisions are made.
4. Good practice in strategic planning also recommends that rural assessments are undertaken on proposals. The key aim, with both equality and rural assessments, is to enable elected members to consider the potential impact of decisions on different individuals and communities prior to decisions being taken. Mitigating actions can then be developed if adverse impact is identified.

About the proposals

5. We are currently consulting on 19 proposals covering adult social care, children's services, community and environmental services and resources. Full details are published on the Council's website at:
<https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/re-imaginingnorfolkbudget>
6. Some of the proposals will enhance services, make them simpler to access, or provide residents with more information about the choices they have. For example:
 - By working with service providers in district clinics, service users will have quicker and easier access to information about local and community opportunities compared to going through the Council's referral process.
 - The proposal to introduce technology in libraries to enable them to open with self-serve technology could enhance access in some rural areas.
 - The proposal to reduce the amount we spend on fire and rescue operational support could increase road safety prevention work in the county.
7. Some proposals respond to the feedback we have received from service users in the past.

8. Some of the proposals, such as those relating to ceasing transport for people who get adult social care by 2019 and reducing spending on supporting people, are likely to impact negatively on disabled and older people, their families and carers. The proposals could impact more on people in rural areas, because people in rural areas tend to have less transport and alternative service options available.

Next steps

9. We are collecting detailed evidence and conducting full equality and rural assessments to ensure that there is a clear understanding of potential risks, to enable mitigating actions to be proposed.
10. The Council's Member-led Strategic Equality Group will oversee equality assessments to provide objective challenge and scrutiny. Community Action Norfolk, which has expertise in rural issues, will provide objective external challenge around rural assessments.
11. The impact assessments will be evidence-based, using the results of public consultation with residents, service users, communities and stakeholders, and other relevant information, such as legislation and research to inform findings.
12. Service committees will consider detailed impact assessments in January 2016, to enable members to take account of the findings before making recommendations to Policy & Resources Committee.
13. Policy and Resources Committee will consider the findings of impact assessments on 8 February 2016, before making recommendations to Full Council on Re-imagining Norfolk strategy and the budget.
14. All elected members will have an opportunity to consider completed impact assessments prior to the meeting of Full Council on 22 February 2016.
15. The Council's budget consultation webpages will be regularly updated with news and developments www.norfolk.gov.uk

Remember:

For more information on the consultation and list of proposals, please go to <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/re-imaginingnorfolkbudget>

You can also give your views:

- by email at haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk
- on Twitter using #norfolkbudget
- by phone on 0344 800 8020
- via your county councillor - contact details at www.norfolk.gov.uk/councillors
- In writing 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: Budget Consultation, Norfolk County Council, Ground floor - south wing, County Hall, Martineau Lane, NR1 2DH

Accessibility

To make our consultation as accessible as possible for disabled people, we are hosting a series of events aimed at anyone who may be affected by our consultation proposals, but may find participating via our website difficult. For example, those with a physical disability, learning disability, People with Mental Health problems and sensory impairment. Please find information about these events below.

Monday 16 November - Norwich

Time: 2–4pm

Venue: The Space

Address: Roundtree Way, Norwich NR7 8SQ

Wednesday 18 November – King’s Lynn

Time: 2-4pm

Venue: King’s Lynn Professional Development Centre

Address: Kilham’s Way, King’s Lynn, Norfolk PE30 2HU

Monday 30 November – Mattishall

Time: 2-4pm

Venue: South Green Park, Mattishall

Address: 48 South Green, Mattishall, Dereham NR20 3JY

Monday 7 December – Great Yarmouth

Time: 2-4pm

Venue: King’s Centre, Great Yarmouth

Address: Queen Anne's Road, Southtown, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR31 0LE

Tuesday 8 December – Sheringham

Time: 2–4pm

Venue: Sheringham Community Centre

Address: Holway Rd, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8NP

Tuesday 5 January – King’s Lynn

Time: 2-4pm

Venue: King’s Lynn Professional Development Centre

Address: Kilham’s Way, King’s Lynn, Norfolk PE30 2HU

Thursday 7 January - Norwich

Time: 2–4pm

Venue: The Space

Address: Roundtree Way, Norwich NR7 8SQ

Each event will be fully accessible. We will do this in the following ways:

- Our presentation will be in an easy read format to help people with learning disabilities
- A palantypist will make a transcript of the presentation for people who are hard of hearing
- We will have a BSL signer for Deaf / hearing impaired people
- There will be a Hearing Loop
- We will support people to have their say

How do I book my place?

Please book your place at least a week before the event you want to attend. This is to help us manage each event and understand any needs you have to enable you to attend. It is very important that you tell us of any special requirements you may have including transport needs when contacting us – we cannot cater for your needs without this information.

- You can book a place online at:
<http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ReimaginingNorfolkEvents/>
- You can book a place by emailing us at: consultationteam@norfolk.gov.uk

When you email please tell us:

- Your full name
- Which event you want to attend
- Your telephone number so we can contact you about the event
- Any access needs you have

If you need transport to the event please also tell us your home address – or your pick-up and drop off points, if these are different from your home address. Please note, to save money, we will try and share transport, so you may be sharing with other people who are going to that event.

- You can also book a place by calling our Customer Services Centre on **0344 800 8020**

If you have any questions about these events please call our Customer Services Centre on 0344 800 8020.