

Re-imagining Norfolk Budget Consultation 2016-19

Your feedback in our consultation has made a difference to Council decisions.

We asked for your views on:

- Council tax and whether we should increase it to protect essential services.
- Our proposals to balance our budget for 2016-17 that involved changes or cuts to our services.
- Our approach to making savings in 2017-18 and 2018-19 through our Re-imagining Norfolk strategy.
- The Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service draft Integrated Risk Management Plan.

Your feedback on proposed savings

The five proposals respondents most agreed with were to:

- Keep all children's centres open and focus their work on support
- Close four part-time registration offices
- Spend less money measuring and analysing the traffic in Norfolk
- Provide a water rescue and flooding service
- Move forward on our strategic vision for Fire and Rescue

The five proposals that respondents most disagreed with were to:

- Reduce our funding for Supporting People services
- Stop all transport funded by adult social services by 2019
- Redesign fire and rescue on-call (retained) emergency resources
- Spend less on maintaining roads, maintaining bridges and gritting
- Reduce our funding for youth work.

2016/17 budget decisions

As a direct result of your feedback, councillors decided:

- To **increase** council tax by 3.99% in order to protect vital services - this is an increase of 88p per week (£45.72 per year) for a Band D property.
- **Not** to take the following proposals forward:
 - Stop all transport funded by adult social services by 2019 (However the reductions to the Adults transport budget we agreed in 2014 and 2015 are still going ahead during 2016/17 and 2017/18).
 - Reduce our funding for supporting people services
 - Reduce our funding for youth work

- Reduce grants provided by the Norfolk Arts Service.
 - Reduce the opening hours, staffing and work of the Norfolk Record Office
 - Concentrate the work of the Norfolk Museum Services at three key sites
 - Changes to fire cover provision, fire emergency response re-design and the closure of two fire stations
 - Spend less on maintaining roads, bridges and gritting – our original proposal was to save £980k from our maintenance budget between 2016/18 but councillors decided to minimise the impact of this by only taking £84k out of the budget in 2016/17
 - Change our Historic Environment Service so that we only do what we have to by law.
- To **take another look** at:
 - How much our adult social care journeys cost with our existing transport providers
 - How we spend our money on youth services.
- To **Save money** in 2016-17 by:
 - Reducing the numbers of people in residential care
 - Expanding the re-ablement service to help people get back on their feet after a fall
 - Developing non-residential community based care
 - Expanding the Integrated Community Equipment Service
 - Keeping all Children’s Centres open and re-focus their work to families that need help most
 - Reducing opening hours at Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library and introducing self-service technology here and across the wider library network
 - Closing part-time registration offices in Fakenham, Downham Market, Swaffham and Watton
 - Changing mobile library provision to care homes
 - Reducing the mobile library fleet from nine to eight vehicles
 - Using our capital budget to pay for some highways maintenance
 - Changing our fire operational support budget, including training.
- To **save money in future years** by:
 - Changing how we provide support to parents
 - Changing how we provide support to families
 - Reducing the grant we give to Healthwatch
 - Reviewing our Day Care services.

You can see a full list of budget proposals in the [papers from our Council budget meeting on 22 February](#). This includes:

- Savings for 2016/17
- Savings from earlier budget rounds
- Savings which were removed or mitigated as part of the 2016/17 budget process

Back office savings through changed ways of working and efficiencies

In total, the council has agreed around £102m in back office savings over the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 - this includes savings in the following areas:

Changed ways of working and efficiencies

Over the next three years Members have agreed savings of over £52m by reviewing how we do things, improving our processes and delivering services in a different, more cost-effective way, for example by:

- Changing how we provide support to families so that we can help them early on
- Using new technology, for example mobile devices for highway inspectors
- Encouraging more people to use our website as their first point of contact
- Reducing the running costs of our buildings
- Using fewer agency staff.

Getting better value when purchasing

We will save almost £10m by looking for better deals from our suppliers for the things that we buy, without affecting our services. We also plan to make savings by negotiating better contracts for;

- Our passenger transport contracts
- Waste disposal
- Our fleet of vehicles
- Capital projects.

Being more commercial

We plan to save over £29m by looking at ways of selling products and services to external customers and generating more income. This will include:

- Looking for other sources of funding to support our services
- Making sure we are collecting all the council tax we are owed
- Making sure we charge the right amount for our internal services e.g. ICT support
- Developing opportunities in our Registration Service to generate money
- Taking another look at our investments and loans
- Charging people a fee if they use a credit card to pay for our service.

How we organise our staff and resources

We will save over £11m by reducing staff costs across all departments and saving money on paper transactions and processes by doing more online. This will involve:

- Reducing the number of staff and removing budgets for vacant posts
- Automating our processes
- Changing some staff teams to work differently e.g. base staff in local areas.