



Thursday 25 November

Dear Parish Councillors

Budget Consultation for 2022/23

Norfolk County Council is committed to making Norfolk a county where businesses, organisations and communities continue to thrive together. Over the past 20 months COVID-19 has presented us all with new and unprecedented challenges, and Norfolk County Council has taken a leading role in the ongoing local response, working in partnership with national government and local partners to meet community needs. Whilst the country moves into a process of recovery, challenges arising from COVID-19 continue, and responding to this effectively and helping individuals, communities, and businesses to recover is critical.

Normally, Norfolk County Council would publish budget proposals to be considered by its cabinet and scrutiny committee in October, before going out to public consultation. However, because of the uncertainties this year over local government funding, support for adult social care and other pressures the council felt it prudent to wait till the Chancellor provided a clearer picture before publishing the budget proposals.

At the core of the budget proposals is our **Better Together, For Norfolk** strategy. This builds on our previous plan and sharpens our focus for the next four years to support recovery and renewal. It outlines our ambitions for our county, its people, communities, and businesses and provides the platform to drive a whole-system approach, underpinned by a corporate delivery plan.

Despite the challenges facing us all throughout 2020 and 2021, we have continued to provide the services which give children and young people the best start in life, support vulnerable and older people, maintain and develop our highways and transport network, provide library, waste disposal and fire services and work in partnership to grow the economy.

We are delivering all these services in a financial climate of risk and uncertainty, from both service user and provider perspectives. Some of the main challenges we faced before COVID-19 are still present or have been exacerbated, including population changes, social, economic and health inequalities, rising demand for services and support, workforce challenges in key sectors such as the care market, government policy changes, funding reductions and the impact of continued financial constraints. The Council must now plan for the multiple impacts of rising budget pressures, uncertainty over Government funding, and the financial challenges associated with the recovery following COVID-19.

As we work to rebuild and revitalise the County many of the additional costs, lost income and undeliverable savings in the current year will have a significant impact on our 2022-23 finances. It remains critical to develop balanced, sustainable budget proposals which will enable the Council to continue to deliver the essential services which are relied on by all Norfolk's people, businesses, and visitors.

We now want to hear your views on our council tax and budget approach to help our elected councillors make the right, even if tough, decisions in agreeing a balanced budget for 2022-2023.

I wanted to alert you to the webpage where we published our budget consultation on Thursday 25 November. You can find out more at www.norfolk.gov.uk/budget and have your say using our online feedback form. Using our online feedback ensures we have a clear record of your response and that your views are accurately recorded.

We appreciate that some residents may not have online access and people who are unable to respond online can send us their views in writing to:

Freepost Plus RTCL-XSTT-JZSK Norfolk County Council, Ground floor -
South Wing, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2DH.

Residents can request our budget consultation document in other formats, including paper form, by calling 0344 800 8020 or emailing haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk. We will make all materials as accessible as possible.

Our consultation closes at midnight on Thursday 30 December 2021. 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.

I hope this update is helpful to you in giving your organisation the time to plan how to make your views known and to schedule any agenda items or special meetings that you may need to put in place.

If you have any questions about the process for consultation, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Christine Mawson, Stakeholder and Consultation Manager, email: christine.mawson@norfolk.gov.uk or telephone 01603 224485.

Yours sincerely



Tom McCabe
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