

## **County Council budget proposal**

People can have their say on the county council's proposed council tax levels and budget proposals for next year.

Norfolk County Council is consulting the public, until 1 December 2023, on a 4.99 per cent overall rise to its share of council tax, plus savings of £26.5 million.

Councillor Andrew Jamieson, the council's deputy leader and cabinet member for finance, said: "We are keen to hear people's views on our proposals to balance our budget while ensuring that vital services are protected.

"We are operating in increasingly challenging circumstances, having faced a period of reductions to funding we are now grappling with rising demand and increasing costs to deliver services."

The proposals out to consultation are:

- A general council tax rise of 2.99 per cent, plus a further two per cent of adult social care precept
- Savings proposals of £26.5 million

The £26.5 million of savings proposals make a "significant contribution" towards the council's £46.2 million savings target:

- Adult social services, £14.2 million
- Children's services, £4.8 million
- Community and environmental services, £5.5 million
- Strategy and transformation, £0.9 million
- Finance, £1.0 million

The remainder of savings proposals will be developed over the next few months once further information has been released from government. The council is waiting to hear whether more funding will be provided in the autumn statement in November, or the provisional local government finance settlement in December.

Cabinet will consider consultation findings in January 2024 and make its final recommendations to council. The full county council meeting will decide the budget and council tax level on 20 February 2024.

To take part in the consultation, see [www.norfolk.gov.uk/budget](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/budget)

## **Cabinet reviews Health and Social Care Winter Plan**

Plans to support the health and social care sector through the pressures expected this winter are being put to Norfolk County Council's Cabinet.

The Integrated Winter Plan, which covers the increased demand on health and social care from seasonal illnesses and cold weather, lays out what pressures can be expected and how the Council will be supporting services through the winter months.

The County Council will be prioritising supporting people who have been ill through their recovery, helping them return home from hospital or intermediate care, and supporting people to live independent, healthy lives.

One returning measure that has made a big impact in the past is the County Council and Community Healthcare run Hospital Discharge hubs: dedicated teams identifying the care people need to have in place to safely leave hospital and putting that care in place. Thanks to the work of these hubs, across winter 2023/24.

The plan is supported by the wide-ranging investment that Norfolk County Council is already making in adult social care, including:

- £1.2m investment in staffing the Hospital Discharge hubs
- £1.14m for additional re-abling capacity
- £800,000 for incentive payments for home care providers to support people out of intermediate care
- Uplifting care provider rates by £30m in 2023/24, which will support sustainability over winter
- Investment of £200,000 in step-down Housing with Care Flats that supported people out of community hospitals last winter

Alongside the successes the council and its partners have had in providing health and social care this year, including reducing the county's social care holding lists – those waiting for full packages of support to be assigned - by circa 1,000 since last winter, these plans will ensure everyone in Norfolk can access the care they need over the coming months.

### **New Partnership will help people recover at home**

People needing help when they leave hospital are set to benefit from a new community service, to help them recover at home.

The Norfolk and Waveney Community Support Service (NWCSS), will be led by Voluntary Norfolk, the British Red Cross and Age UK Norwich and is funded by Norfolk County Council, NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board and Suffolk County Council.

The service is aimed at helping people with everyday tasks, like shopping, walking the dog or making phone calls and supports people to live independently whilst they recover. It supports people leaving hospital and those with short-term needs in the community.

The service has evolved from six separate services into one consistent joined up service for the whole of Norfolk and Waveney. The support provided through the original services will continue but with a combined wealth of experience and skills to support the whole of Norfolk and Waveney. Funding for the service has also increased by 30%, from £471,000 to £621,000 per year.

The service is made up of a mixed pool of paid staff and volunteers. Anyone interesting in a voluntary role can contact [volunteering@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk)

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