

**Subject:** Budget proposals from Northamptonshire County Council  
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A budget special from Northamptonshire County Council.

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## Tough choices needed to save £34.3 million

We have published our draft budget and council plan. We must save £34.3 million next year on top of the £374 million we have already saved since 2010.

The proposals include the £9.6m of proposed budget savings which were announced in October and demonstrate a strong focus on delivering statutory frontline services for vulnerable children and elderly and disabled adults.

The budget proposals mean that by making significant savings in areas of non-statutory spend, the authority is able to direct an additional £48.5m into core statutory services for the most vulnerable in the community, including an extra £24.6m on adult social care and £11m on children's services.

This extra funding would allow, for example, the council to pay for an additional 200 children in care and meet the rising cost of supporting those over the age

of 85, which has increased by more than 25% in the last three years.



## How much do we have to save?

At the same time as this growth in costs, Northamptonshire has seen reducing levels of funding from central government – down another 36% this year - and a cap on increasing council tax to generate funding. The Chancellor’s Autumn Budget also failed to deliver any financial support to councils like Northamptonshire County Council facing severe pressures.

Therefore to find ways of paying for those services it is required by law to provide, the authority has reviewed all non-statutory services as part of the budget setting process as well as identifying any opportunities for maximising resources and generating income.

The new proposals include a review of the way care placements are brokered, changes to on-street parking charges and new controls on trade waste at household waste recycling centres, as well as a 4.98% increase in council tax, which includes a 3% precept for adult social care.

Meanwhile, the county council will continue to make its case for a fairer funding deal from the Government while exploring options to make the most income it can from its assets.

County council leader Cllr Heather Smith said: “It is no secret that it is becoming harder and harder to deliver a balanced budget while protecting statutory frontline services.

“Unfortunately, due to the increasing demand on services and reducing levels of government funding, we are having to take a hard look at our all discretionary services and prioritise those areas that protect the most vulnerable in society.

“We do understand that some of these proposals will have an impact on communities, and that is why we are continuing to call for an urgent review of our funding model from the Government while doing everything we can to minimise the impact on frontline services.

“We have also directly requested that the government look at again at the council tax cap. We believe given the pressures we are experiencing and our low tax rate there should be more flexibility afforded to us in terms of our tax raising powers. In our consultation so far many people have suggested they would be prepared to pay more tax to protect frontline services so it is something we have to explore.”

## Surge in demand piles on the pressure



A huge and unprecedented surge in the county’s population and associated demand on public services has added further pressure to our budget.

Northamptonshire has one of the fastest growing populations in the country. Demand for our services is growing at an unprecedented rate.

For example, over the last three years we’ve seen the number of looked after children in Northamptonshire rise from 850 to 1,050, while we have one of the most pressurised health economies in England.



## Our funding pressures

This is our biggest budget challenge yet. We have already made savings of £374 million since 2010, and still need to take out another £34.3 million this year to meet the soaring demand for services despite ongoing reductions in government funding.

Cllr Robin Brown, county council cabinet member for finance, said: “We have reviewed the way we work to ensure we are as efficient as possible and deliver the best possible value for money, and after this year it is very difficult to identify further savings without impacting significantly on frontline, statutory services.

“We’re currently anticipating that we’ll receive £22.49m in Revenue Support Grant, our main source of funding from the Government. This is 36% less than the £35.5m we received last year.

“Unless the Government takes a serious look at its funding of local public services, we will struggle to even deliver statutory services by as soon as 2019/20.”



## Have your say

We really want you to give feedback on the budget proposals for 2018-2019.

Please look through the full proposals and draft council plan on our website. We encourage you to take part in the consultation, which is open until 30th January 2018, to have your say on our proposals:

[Read the proposals and take part in the consultation](#)

[Complete the online e-survey and share your views](#)



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