

# Communities Committee

Item No [x]

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Strategic and Financial Planning 2016-17 to 2018-19</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>27<sup>th</sup> January 2016</b>
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	<b>Tom McCabe – Executive Director CES Anne Gibson – Executive Director Resources</b>
<b>Strategic impact</b> <p>The proposals in this report will contribute towards the County Council setting a legal budget for 2016-17 which sees its total resources of £1.4billion focused on meeting the needs of residents.</p>	

Norfolk County Council is due to agree its new budget and plan for 2016-17 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016. Policy and Resources Committee works with service committees to coordinate this process and develop a sound, whole-council budget and plan for Norfolk.

The Government's Spending Review 2015 in November has confirmed that based on current forecasts for the economy, there will be an ongoing period of austerity and fiscal consolidation in the public sector up until 2019-20. As a result the County Council continues to face significant uncertainty and financial challenge.

Recognising the scale of the financial challenge facing the Council, and in order to set a balanced budget for 2016-17, Policy and Resources Committee in June 2015 agreed a new strategy, "Re-Imagining Norfolk" which set out a direction for the Council to radically change its role and the way it delivers services. This committed the Authority to delivering the Council's vision and priorities, working effectively across the whole public sector on a local basis.

Policy and Resources Committee identified a total savings requirement of £110.593m to achieve a balanced budget for the three years 2016-17 to 2018-19. This gap amount was in addition to the 2015-16 budgeted savings of £36.721m which are being implemented; and a further £28.040m of savings for 2016-17 which were consulted on and agreed as part of the budget process in February 2015.

Work was then undertaken with Committees to identify further savings proposals to help close the gap. Some of these proposals were likely to have an impact on the public, so have undergone equality and rural assessment and public consultation.

This paper sets out the latest information on the Local Government Finance Settlement and the financial and planning context for the County Council for 2016-17. It summarises the Committee's savings proposals for 2016-17, the proposed cash limit revenue budget based on all current proposals and identified pressures, and the proposed capital programme. It also reports on the findings of rural and equality assessments. The latest findings of public consultation are appended and a

summary of consultation outcomes will be presented at the meeting.

The information in this report will enable the Committee to take a considered view of all relevant factors in order to agree a balanced budget for 2016-17 and financial plan to 2018-19, and recommend this to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016 before Full Council meets on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 to agree the final budget and plan for 2016-19.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Consider and comment on the Committee's specific budget proposals for 2016-17 to 2018-19, including the findings of public consultation in respect of:
  - The budget proposals set out in Appendix 3 and Appendix 5 (part 5); and
  - The scope for a Council Tax increase of up to 1.99%, within the Council Tax referendum limit of 2% for 2016-17, noting that in contrast to previous years, there is no Council Tax Freeze Grant being offered in respect of 2016-17, and that central government's assumption in the Spending Review is that Councils will increase Council tax by CPI every year (forecast 1.2% in 2016-17).
- 2) Consider and comment on the findings of equality and rural assessment, and in doing so, note the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3) Consider and agree any mitigating actions proposed in the equality and rural impact assessments.
- 4) Agree and recommend to Policy and Resources Committee the draft Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix 3:
  - a. including all of the savings for 2016-17 to 2018-19 as set out. **Or**
  - b. removing any savings unacceptable to the committee and replacing them with alternative savings proposals within the committee's remit. **Or**
  - c. removing any savings unacceptable to the committee and recommending a commensurate increase in Council Tax, within the referendum limits, to meet the shortfall.

For consideration by Policy and Resources Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016, to enable Policy and Resources Committee to recommend a sound, whole-

Council budget to Full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.

- 5) Agree and recommend the Capital Programmes and schemes relevant to this Committee as set out in Appendix 4 to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016, to enable Policy and Resources Committee to recommend a Capital Programme to Full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.
- 6) To recommend the IRMP to Full council for approval, subject to the Director of Community and Environmental Services amending the draft IRMP to reflect the outcomes of the Committee deliberations at this meeting and at the meeting of Policy and Resources Committee on 8 February 2016.

## 1. Background

1.1. Norfolk County Council is due to agree its new budget and plan for 2016-17 to 2018-19 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.

1.2. The County Council continues to confront significant financial challenges and uncertainty. In February 2015, the Council agreed the budget for 2015-16, and in the context of establishing a three year medium term financial strategy (MTFS), agreed planned savings of £70.596m for 2015-16 to 2017-18. This left a predicted shortfall of £42.021m in 2016-17 and £43.652m in 2017-18.

1.3. In June 2015, Policy and Resources Committee considered the predicted budget shortfall for 2016-17 and agreed that it would be prudent to seek savings proposals for a higher total, £168.594m over the three years, to allow for members to have choice about the savings to be delivered, and to mitigate against the uncertainty of further changes in funding and other pressures. This was on the assumption that there were no overspends on the current revenue budget (2015-16), and that all savings for 2016-17 already consulted on and agreed by Full Council were delivered).

1.4. Committees then began their budget planning on the basis of delivering a 25% reduction in their addressable spend budgets. Table 1 below sets out the illustrative reductions by Committee, with and without the headroom for member choice.

**Table 1 – Illustrative budget gap by Committee**

<b>With headroom for member choice</b>				
<b>Committee</b>	<b>16-17</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>18-19</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Adults	27.223	27.943	19.631	74.796
Children's (Non Schools)	11.595	11.902	8.361	31.858
Communities	8.167	8.383	5.889	22.440
EDT	8.288	8.507	5.976	22.771
P&R (inc. Finance General)	6.089	6.250	4.391	16.729
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61.361</b>	<b>62.985</b>	<b>44.248</b>	<b>168.594</b>
<b>Without headroom for member choice</b>				

<b>Committee</b>	<b>16-17</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>18-19</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Adults	18.646	19.366	11.053	49.064
Children's (Non Schools)	7.942	8.249	4.708	20.898
Communities	5.594	5.810	3.316	14.720
EDT	5.676	5.896	3.365	14.937
P&R (inc. Finance General)	4.170	4.331	2.472	10.974
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>42.028</b>	<b>43.651</b>	<b>24.914</b>	<b>110.593</b>

1.5. In October, Committees considered their individual proposals to close the identified budget gaps. Policy and Resources Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> October then reviewed the full list of savings proposals, which totalled £173.412 for the three years, and agreed the withdrawal of £50.249m of these, leaving £123.163m to be taken forward in the 2016-17 budget process. Some of these proposals were likely to have an impact on the public, and accordingly Policy and Resources Committee also agreed the arrangements for public consultation, and equality and rural impact assessments.

1.6. Table 2 below sets out a summary of the savings proposals as amended by the Policy and Resources Committee's decisions. Communities Committee identified £1.991m of new savings proposals to help enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2016-17.

**Table 2 – Summary of saving proposals by Committee**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>2016-17 Saving £m</b>	<b>2017-18 Saving £m</b>	<b>2018-19 Saving £m</b>	<b>Total Saving £m</b>
Adult Social Care	10.136	17.595	24.792	52.523
Children's Services	3.091	2.979	1.349	7.419
Communities	1.991	4.194	3.370	9.555
EDT	6.057	3.806	12.691	22.554
Policy and Resources	15.621	11.691	3.800	31.112
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>36.896</b>	<b>40.265</b>	<b>46.002</b>	<b>123.163</b>

1.7. At the Full Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October, members voted not to approve a revision to the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2015-16, which would have enabled a saving of £9.326m in 2016-17. At this stage, this saving has not been withdrawn from planning assumptions as the Council will need to approve its Minimum Revenue Provision for 2016-17 in the normal course of business as part of budget-setting in February 2016. It is therefore anticipated that this 2016-17 saving will be presented to members for consideration in the context of the full suite of budget proposals in February.

1.8. On 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer presented the Spending Review 2015 and Autumn Statement, which set the course for public sector expenditure up to the next general election. On 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015, the Government announced its Provisional Local Government

Settlement 2016-17. Taken together, these announcements will have a significant impact on the Council's budget and service planning over the next five years, and will be one of many factors that the Committee will need to take into account in determining its savings proposals and budget for 2016-17, as well as its financial plans up to 2018-19.

1.9. This paper sets out the latest information on the Local Government Finance Settlement and the financial and planning context for the County Council for 2016-17 to 2018-19. It summarises the Committee's savings proposals for 2016-17, the proposed cash limit revenue budget based on all current proposals and identified pressures, and the proposed capital programme. It also reports on the findings of rural and equality assessments, and the findings of public consultation. A summary of all consultation responses will be presented at the meeting, to enable members to take a considered view of all relevant information before agreeing a balanced budget for 2016-17 to 2018-19 to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016 before Full Council meets on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 to agree the final budget and plan for 2016-17 to 2018-19.

## **2. Provisional Local Government Settlement 2016-17, Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015**

2.1. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced his Autumn Statement alongside the Spending Review on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015, with the Provisional Local Government Settlement published 17<sup>th</sup> December. Based on these announcements, our planning assumptions have been revised to reflect a slightly worsened financial position.

2.2. The Department of Communities and Local Government announced the detailed finance settlement for local government on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015. This provided provisional details for 2016-17. The funding settlement (Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates funding) is £3.267m higher than expected in 2016-17. However there are also adjustments to specific grants which are £7.616m less than the budget planning assumptions. This means that the Council's overall position following the Provisional Settlement announcement reflects a **worsening by £4.349m** when compared to previous assumptions.

2.3. The adjusted Settlement Funding Assessment for 2015-16 is £279.113m, for 2016-17 the Settlement Funding Assessment reduced by £28.731m to £250.382m.

2.4. There were also a number of announcements in the Spending Review which will have an impact on Local Government. Further detail on both the Spending Review and the Local Government Finance Settlement is available in Appendix 1, which reproduces a briefing paper to all members and chief officers circulated via email 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015. This was also made available on Members Insight. A separate Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for Stand-alone Fire & Rescue Services was published on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December, setting out proposed reductions in core spending

power totalling 2% over the period 2016-20, which will potentially further widen funding difference between County Fire Authorities and Stand-alone authorities.

([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/488222/151218\\_Immediate\\_Bulletin\\_22.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488222/151218_Immediate_Bulletin_22.pdf))

### 3. Implications of the settlement for Communities Committee

3.1. Public Health – The Chancellor announced further reductions in the public health funding. Anticipated reductions in the public health grant, will reflect an average real terms cut of 3.9% to 2020/21.

3.2. This translates to a cash reduction of that will be levied to the baseline public health grant. The baseline allocation has been re-set at 6.2% below 2015/16, equivalent to a £2.324m reduction. In addition, the funding allocation will be further reduced: by 2.2% (£925k) in 2016/17, 2.5% in 17/18, and 2.6% in each of the two following years. We have not yet been formally notified of the value of the grant allocation for 2016/17, however we have based our planning on the information currently available to us.

### 4. The County Council Plan

4.1. The Council's priorities place the people of Norfolk at the forefront of our plans and investments and we must ensure that everything the Council does improves people's opportunities and well-being. The Council's four priorities are:

- **Real jobs** – We want real, sustainable jobs available throughout Norfolk. Pay is relatively low in Norfolk, and behind beautiful images of coastlines, windmills and beaches there are too many households relying on seasonal work and low incomes. We will promote employment that offers security, opportunities and a good level of pay.
- **Good infrastructure** – Norfolk is open for business but not everyone has got the message. We need to continue our campaign for a fair share of infrastructure investment in road, rail and superfast broadband. We need to ensure development is sustainable, reducing the risks of flooding and climate change and protecting our environmental assets.
- **Excellence in education** – Not enough of our schools give students a good education. Too many young people leave school without a set of good qualifications, and without the skills that employers are looking for. We will champion our children and young people's right to an excellent education, training and preparation for employment because we believe they have the talents and ability to compete with the best.
- **Supporting vulnerable people** – As our funding diminishes, we need to get even better at targeting those who most need our help and support.

### 5. The latest financial planning position

- 5.1. The National Audit Office estimates that central funding for Local Authorities has reduced by 37% in real terms in the period 2010-11 to 2015-16. For the period covered by the Spending Review, 2016-17 to 2019-20, Local Government funding from Central Government is expected to decrease by a further 56% in real terms compared to 2015-16 levels. This reduction is expected to be offset in part by increased Business Rates and Council Tax. As a result the Government expects overall local government spending to rise by £0.2bn in cash terms (from £40.3bn in 2015-16 to £40.5bn in 2019-20), representing a total real terms decrease of 6.7% over the period, based on current inflation forecasts.
- 5.2. The Government confirmed in the Spending Review that Revenue Support Grant (RSG) will be phased out entirely by 2019-20. The Spending Review also set out plans to allow Councils with social care responsibilities greater discretion to raise a “social care precept” of 2% on Council Tax, over and above the existing Council Tax referendum limit, to be used to fund pressures in Adult Social Care. It is understood that this discretion will exist for each year of the Spending Review period. To inform member decision making, this year’s budget consultation sought feedback from the public about their appetite for such a Council Tax increase, and the findings from this are set out in section 9 of this report.
- 5.3. Over the period to 2015-16, Norfolk County Council’s share of cuts has seen the authority lose £123.791m in Government funding while the actual cost pressures on many of the Council’s services have continued to go up. For example, last year alone, extra demands on children’s services and adult’s social care services arising from circumstances outside of the Council’s control – such as changes in Norfolk’s population profile – cost another £18.252m. Continuing spending reductions of this scale and size require the Council to fundamentally reassess its business and operations in consultation with others.
- 5.4. The Spending Review has confirmed that the period of shrinking government finance and cuts to local government funding is set to continue. The Government has achieved around half the spending reductions it plans as part of its ongoing “fiscal consolidation”.
- 5.5. The Council has responded to this challenge through the development of “Re-Imagining Norfolk” which sets out a direction for the Council to radically change its role and the way it delivers services. This commits the Authority to delivering the Council’s vision and priorities, working effectively across the whole public sector on a local basis, and will ensure that the Council’s budget of £1.4bn is spent to the best effect for Norfolk people. Work on Re-imagining Norfolk will continue in 2016-17, taking into account the resources available to the Council, central government policy and local circumstances.
- 5.6. Members will consider the Council’s Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy at Full Council 22 February, in order to agree the MRP policy for 2016-17. It is anticipated that proposed changes to the MRP policy will enable an

underspend to be achieved on the Council's 2015-16 provision in the order of £10m. It is proposed that this underspend be used to manage the key risks in the 2016-17 children's and adults social care budgets.

## 6. Budget proposals for Communities Committee

6.1. Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service – further information about the specific proposals for the Fire and Rescue Service are set out in appendix 5.

6.2. Service re-design for the museums service was originally proposed. This would see the museums service focus on the three main sites (Norwich Castle, Gressenhall and Time and Tide) with only a basic level of service at the remaining seven sites. The principle of this change was included as a specific question in the public consultation to enable views to be understood. Since that time it has become clear the level of work needed to successfully implement this proposal means that it will not be possible to deliver any savings for 2016/17; a £50k saving was proposed for 2016/17. Officers have identified an equivalent level of saving that can be delivered through additional income generation for the museums service, meaning the total saving of £100k can be delivered by the Museums Service for 2016/17. Further work on a potential re-design for the museums service will continue to be developed, taking into account the outcomes of the public consultation and feedback from stakeholders. The list of budget proposals set out in Appendix 3 reflects this change.

6.3. Summary of the budget proposals for this committee, full details are shown in appendix 3.

Communities Categorized Savings	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2016/19
	£m	£m	£m	£m
1a - Organisational Change - Staffing	-0.211	-0.100	-0.100	-0.411
1b - Organisational Change - Systems	-0.515	0.655	0.000	0.140
1c - Capital	-0.227	0.000	0.000	-0.227
1d - Terms and Conditions	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
2a - Procurement	0.000	0.000	-1.357	-1.357
2b - Shared Services	-0.200	0.000	0.000	-0.200
3a - Income and Rates of Return	-0.155	0.000	-0.080	-0.235
4a - Reducing Standards	-1.062	-1.444	-1.733	-4.239
4b - Ceasing Service	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
4c - Assumptions under Risk Review	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>-2.370</b>	<b>-0.889</b>	<b>-3.270</b>	<b>-6.529</b>
Removal of 2015-16 Savings and One-off items (shown elsewhere on Budget change forecasts for 2016-19)	0.000	0.100	0.000	0.100
	<b>-2.370</b>	<b>-0.789</b>	<b>-3.363</b>	<b>-6.429</b>



- 6.4. As highlighted elsewhere on this agenda, the Director of public health has now had an opportunity to review the public health priorities in the light of the funding reductions announced in the Chancellors statement. In the budget proposals presented in October 2015 a level of public health savings was requested to allow the use of the public health grant in cross-cutting subsidy of public health work undertaken in other Council Directorates. A nominal sum was set for 2015/16 of £1.2m. For 2015/16 £750k has been identified to cross fund activity mainly related to drug and alcohol work in Children's and Adults care services. Despite a considerable number of meetings and conversations very few further cross-cutting collaborations have been identified by other directorates, although we will continue to look for new opportunities.
- 6.5. A total cross-cutting subsidy for 2016/17 of £2.480m was proposed. These funds are now partially subsumed by the reductions in the ring fenced grant. Taking into account these funding reductions and recognising the absence of clear proposals it is proposed that the cross-cutting subsidy is reduced to £1.555m for 2016-17 and £0.75m from 2017-18 onwards.
- 6.6. Since initial savings proposals for 2016-17 to 2018-19 were reported from Service Committees to Policy and Resources Committee on 26 October 2015, a number of changes to savings proposals have been made. This includes the removal of savings prior to consultation by Policy and Resources Committee (supplementary agenda item), and savings proposed for removal as part of the full package of budget proposals for 2016-17 to 2018-19, following further review of the deliverability of proposals by Chief Officers and based on initial consultation feedback.
- 6.7. The table below sets out details of the movements from the savings initially proposed by this Committee to Policy and Resources Committee, when compared to the final list of savings proposed in Appendix 3 to this report.

<b>2016-17</b>	<b>Communities</b>
	<b>£m</b>
New 2016-17 savings proposals reported from Service Committee to P&R (26 October 2015)	-1.991
Existing 2016-17 savings from 2015-16 and earlier budget rounds	-2.024
Remove Communities savings from 2015-16 and earlier budget rounds (CMM007 and Public Health) following Chief Officer review	1.175
Remove Public Health saving delivering 2015-16 savings (CMM038) following Chief Officer review	0.720
Transfer 15-16 savings between EDT / Communities Committees (CMM007)	-0.250
<b>Total 2016-17 savings as per Appendix 3</b>	<b>-2.370</b>

<b>2017-18</b>	
New 2017-18 savings proposals reported from Service Committee to P&R (26 October 2015)	-4.380
2017-18 savings proposals developed 2016-17 removed by P&R prior to consultation via Supplementary Agenda	0.186
Existing 2017-18 savings from 2015-16 and earlier budget rounds	0.100
Remove Public Health savings from 2016-17 proposals (CMM037) following Chief Officer review	2.500
Remove Communities savings from 2015-16 and earlier budget rounds (Public Health) following Chief Officer review	0.805
<b>Total 2017-18 Savings</b>	<b>-0.789</b>
Less one-off savings adjustments now shown elsewhere in Appendix 4	-0.100
<b>Total 2017-18 savings as per Appendix 4</b>	<b>-0.889</b>
<b>2018-19</b>	
New 2018-19 savings proposals reported from Service Committee to P&R (26 October 2015)	-8.367
2018-19 savings proposals developed 2016-17 removed by P&R prior to consultation via Supplementary Agenda	4.997
Remove Public Health savings from 2016-17 proposals (CMM037) following Chief Officer review	0.100
<b>Total 2018-19 savings as per Appendix 4</b>	<b>-3.270</b>
<b>Total Savings 2016-17 to 2018-19</b>	<b>-6.529</b>

- 6.8. A number of the proposals have staffing implications. Where this is the case, the relevant staff consultation process is either underway or planned to ensure that we can be ready to deliver savings for 2016/17, if agreed by Members. The potential staffing implications for retained and whole-time firefighters are set out in Appendix 5 (see the table at part 5). The other proposals (including the operational support proposal for Fire and Rescue) represent a reduction of around 60 FTEs. The Community and Environmental Services Department is also consulting staff on some changes to its senior management structure that would see a reduction of senior posts in the Department (a reduction of 28% of in scope posts below Assistant Director level).
- 6.9. These proposals were developed within the context of some well understood factors that affect the way Communities services are planned:

- Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service – Norfolk is currently one of the lowest cost fire and rescue authorities in England at £30.43 per head of population (English average £38.58). The decline in fire calls plateaued and non-fire calls are increasing, particularly in respect of weather events
- Norfolk Community Learning Services – Delivering the objectives as set out in the Strategic plan to meet the improvement plan for Ofsted.
- The reducing number of library visits– this is a national trend

## 7. Revenue Budget

- 7.1. The tables in Appendix 3 set out the Committee's proposed cash limited budget for 2016-17, and the financial plans for 2017-18 and 2018-19. These are based on the cost pressures and budget savings reported to this Committee in October which have been updated to reflect any changes to assumptions identified. Cost neutral adjustments for each committee will be reflected within the Policy and Resources Revenue Budget 2016-17 to 2018-19 paper which will be presented on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016.
- 7.2. It should be noted that the Revenue Budget proposals set out in Appendix 3 form a suite of proposals which will enable the County Council to set a balanced Budget for 2016-17. Any recommendation to amend or remove budget proposals will require the Committee to identify offsetting saving proposals or reductions in expenditure.
- 7.3. The Executive Director of Finance is required to comment on the robustness of budget proposals, and the estimates upon which the budget is based, as part of the annual budget-setting process.

## 8. Capital Budget

- 8.1. The Council's draft proposed capital programme can be summarised as follows:

<b>Service</b>	<b>2016-17 £m</b>	<b>2017-18 £m</b>	<b>2018-19+ £m</b>	<b>Total £m</b>
Children's Services	90.268	46.981	0.000	<b>137.249</b>
Adult Social Care	8.603	2.000	0.000	<b>10.603</b>
CES Highways	115.836	72.375	4.400	<b>192.611</b>
CES Other	15.848	1.272	0.000	<b>17.120</b>
Resources	14.710	7.350	5.000	<b>27.060</b>
Finance and Property	13.497	5.634	0.995	<b>20.126</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>258.761</b>	<b>135.612</b>	<b>10.395</b>	<b>404.768</b>

(note: the table above is subject to small rounding differences)

- 8.2. The programme is still in development, and the final proposed programme will be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 8 February 2016.

- 8.3. A more detailed summary of the programme, including an analysis of existing and new schemes is shown as Appendix [4]. The proposed new schemes relevant to this committee are:
- 8.4. Customer Service Strategy Phase 2: c£0.970m  
The Customer Service strategy phase 2 bid is an invest to save proposal for a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which will both enhance the experience of Council customers, improve the efficiency in the ways customer contacts are managed, and also promote channel shift throughout the authority. The CRM forms part of the wider Customer Service Strategy scheme, agreed by Full Council in April 2015, will contribute to savings targets throughout the authority. The project will be funded from prudential borrowing and capital receipts.
- Libraries Open+ rollout: £0.920m  
The Libraries Open+ rollout is an invest to save project. The “Open+” package has been piloted in a small number of Norfolk Libraries, and means that opening hours are not dependant on the presence of staff. The system automatically controls and monitors building access, self-service kiosks, public access computers, lighting, alarms, public announcements and patron safety, and gives much wider flexibility in the use of community assets. The project will contribute to delivery of Libraries 2016-17 savings plan and will be funded from prudential borrowing/capital receipts.

## **9. Summary of the public consultation process**

- 9.1. The findings of the consultation are presented to inform budget decisions and the Equality Impact Assessments summarised in the next section. They report both on people’s opinions about, and the potential impacts of, budget proposals and ideas.
- 9.2. This section provides a high level summary of the very detailed Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Findings reports on the Council’s Budget Consultation web page here: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/budgetconsultation](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/budgetconsultation). The documents on this web site give more details about the nature and context of people’s responses, details of any groups and organisations that responded, and any quotations or ideas submitted by respondents. Committee Members should review these documents alongside this report.
- 9.3. As of 7 January 2016, the Council received responses from 2,011 people, who provided a total of 9,740 individual answers or comments. This compares to 1,655 individual respondents to the Budget and Services consultation in 2014, and 3,284 individual respondents to the Putting People First consultation in 2013.
- 9.4. Many of the responses to the proposals relating to this committee reflect and build upon the themes raised in previous budget consultations. A wide range

of views have been expressed and an equally wide range of issues highlighted.

In terms of the financial imperative and the need to make cuts to services, there was:

- Recognition that the Council has to make difficult decisions, in light of the budgetary pressures that it faces
- Acceptance that some services have a higher priority than others, when measured in terms of the impact upon people's health and safety. At the same time, an acknowledgement that services that promote culture, the arts and heritage have an intrinsic value that should not be underestimated.

A number of consistent messages emerged about the type, description and implementation of proposals:

- That services that promote culture, the arts and heritage have been disproportionately affected by a series of budget cuts
- There is an intrinsic cultural value in the arts and that arts and arts events help to stimulate the local economy and generate income as well as promoting individual and community wellbeing
- Concerns that many of the proposals will make services unsustainable and that apparently minor cuts in the short term will lead to service closures in the long term
- A need to maintain council services in market towns
- The cumulative impact of budget proposals was highlighted, including the impact of the proposed reduction in services in rural areas
- That the smaller savings (around £10,000) will not be achievable or that they will be made at great cost to others
- Some of the proposals were described as being too vague, poorly worded or not having enough detail for people to make an informed decision.

In many cases, people agreed to a proposal as a whole (as prompted to by the Yes/No/Don't know format of the consultation document) whilst either disagreeing with an element of the proposal or providing a proviso or caveat. The proviso most often cited was that services would continue to be provided in the long term, despite the proposed budget cuts.

Specific to the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service and the Integrated Risk Management Plan, a number of consistent messages emerged about the type, description and implementation of proposals:

- Concerns were voiced that the proposals could have a negative impact upon the safety of fire fighters and members of the public
- Emphasis was placed on the need to protect and promote prevention work

- Concerns were raised about the cumulative impact of some of the proposals, particularly the proposed removal of second fire engines and the closure of Fire Stations in rural areas and the west of the county
- The proposals were perceived to be difficult and disruptive to implement and would result in minimal savings
- The proposals and their potential impact were perceived to be too complicated comment upon in an informed way.

### **The consultation, analysis and reporting process**

9.5. The Reimagining Norfolk public consultation ran from the 30 October 2015 to the 14 January 2016.

- The consultation web site can be found at <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/re-imaginingnorfolkbudget>
- People were able to respond online, by email, on Twitter and Facebook, by telephone and in writing
- Every response has been read in detail and analysed to identify the range of people's opinions, any repeated or consistently expressed views, and the anticipated impact of proposals on people's lives
- Accessible events were either organised or attended by Council officers to make sure that people from all backgrounds and communities could discuss and comment on budget proposals
- Where particular groups of service users were likely to be affected by a proposal, the Council contacted them directly – for example people that would be affected by changes to transport arrangements in Adult Social Services

9.6. The date of the close of the consultation period on the 14 January, and the requirements for publishing Committee reports, means that this report summarises responses submitted to the Council up to and including the 7 January 2016.

9.7. Changes to the findings in the light of additional responses received between the 7 and 14 January will be provided by officers as part of a verbal update at the Committee meeting. In addition a short presentation will be made to report the full findings, along with the outcome and recommendations of the Equality Impact Assessment.

9.8. The remainder of this section summarises the key elements of these, looking firstly at the specific proposals relating to this committee, then any more general ideas that were consulted upon, and finally findings relating to questions about Council Tax.

### **Responses to Communities Committee proposals**

There are five specific budget proposals being considered by this Committee that relate to services other than Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, as follows.

9.9. **Proposal 11 - Reduce grants provided by the Norfolk Arts Service (£0.010M)**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 325 people responded to this proposal. Of those, 171 people (52.8%) agreed with the proposal and 116 people (35.8%) disagreed. 37 people (11.4%), neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

13 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site. No petitions were received.

- Of those who agreed with the proposal, most stated that the services are non-essential when compared to other services, like adult social care, provided by the Council or that alternative funding sources could be sought or charging considered that would enable them to become self-supporting. However, it was noted that this is a difficult decision and the value of the arts was recognised.
- Of those who disagreed with the proposal, the main objections were: that there is an intrinsic cultural value in the arts; that the service is essential; that the arts and arts events help to stimulate the local economy and generate income; and that the arts play a critical role in individual and community wellbeing.

Queries were raised as to whether it was worth proceeding with the proposal as the saving is so small. Also, that the small scale of the financial saving to the Council is far outweighed by the potential impact on communities and businesses.

Concerns were raised that arts services have faced disproportionate levels of cuts, to date.

9.10. **Proposal 12 - Install technology to enable libraries to open with self-service machines, reduce the staffed opening times for the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library and reduce how much we spend on new stock for our libraries (£0.981M).**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 348 people responded to this proposal. Of those, 176 people (51.5%) disagreed with the proposal and 134 people (39.2%) agreed.

A total of 32 people (9.4%), stated that the proposal was confusing and could have expressed as a number of separate and distinct questions.

16 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site.

There were two petitions:

- A petition has been started on the web site [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) (a platform that enables people to start petitions) titled “Norfolk County Council: no cuts to library service”. As of 7 January 2016, this petition contained 1,589 signatures.
- One petition was received containing 371 signatures. The petition wording is: “we say NO to North Walsham library cuts”. This referred specifically to North Walsham library and opposition to any cuts to the services provided there.
- Of those who disagreed with this proposal, the majority stated that staff are essential to the running of the service. Also, that there is a broader “community asset” role that library staff play, particularly in providing human contact for some socially isolated people, older people and people on lower incomes. Others stated their disagreement with the proposal to reduce spending on library stock, suggesting that reductions in stock will lead to a fall in use of libraries and ultimately closure. Some emphasised the need to have staff present to assist library users with the self-service technology.
- Of those who agreed with this proposal, the majority said that technology is a viable alternative to employing staff and something that will help save money. In many cases, the agreement with the proposal was on the proviso that libraries stay open.

Specific concerns were raised about the safety and security of automated or unstaffed libraries, in particular the risk of an increase in anti-social behaviour and theft of stock.

**9.11. Proposal 13 - Reduce the public mobile library fleet from nine to eight vehicles, reduce the frequency of some visits, stop the Saturday routes and change how we deliver books to residents of care homes (£0.108M)**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 338 people responded to this proposal. Of those, 190 people (56.7%) agreed with the proposal and 102 (30.4%) disagreed with the proposal. 43 people (12.8%), neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

15 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site. No petitions were received.

- Of those who agreed with this proposal, two thirds did so with no qualification. Some stated their support subject to the service remaining in place in the future, albeit reduced in size and scope. Others expressed their concerns about the proposed changes to book deliveries and collections to care homes and the impact that this would have on older people.
- Of those who disagreed with this proposal, some concerns were raised about the small savings proposed having a big and disproportionate



impact upon older and/or immobile people who would otherwise not be able to access library services. The part of the proposal about stopping the service for care homes was specifically singled out. There was also the suggestion that the proposal to reduce adult care transport would further increase the need for mobile library services, not reduce it. The service was also described as being essential, a priority and a lifeline for many people.

**9.12. Proposal 14 - Reduce the opening hours, staffing and work of the Norfolk Record Office (£0.148M)**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 335 people responded to this proposal. Of those, 171 (51.2%) agreed with the proposal and 116 people (34.7%) disagreed. 47 people (14.1%), neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

14 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site. No petitions were received.

- Of those who agreed with this proposal, over half did not give a reason for their support. Those who did, emphasised that the service is not essential when compared to other services provided by the Council. Others agreed with the proposal as a whole but objected to individual aspects of it, such as reductions in the scale of conservation work. Some agreed on the proviso that the service remained in place in the long term, despite the proposed short term cuts.
- Of those who disagreed with this proposal, about half highlighted the intrinsic value of preserving cultural heritage. Others described it as a key or essential service that needs to be protected as it preserves records for future generations. Some made specific comments protecting the conservation element of the service and others highlighted the impact of reduced staffing upon customer service, education and research.

Specific concerns were raised about whether the proposals would contravene the criteria set out by the Heritage Lottery Fund, when they agreed to fund the building of the Archive Centre.

**9.13. Proposal 15 - Close four part-time registration offices at Downham Market, Fakenham, Watton and Swaffham and look for ways to provide services in other public buildings at no cost (£0.025M)**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 325 people responded to this proposal. Of these, 224 (69.6%) agreed with the proposal and 56 People (17.4%) disagreed. 42 people (13.0%), neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

14 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of

their responses are available on the consultation web site. No petitions were received.

- Of those that agreed with this proposal, over half did not give a reason. Of those that did provide a reason, the majority stated that shared accommodation would keep the services local, maintaining council services in the area and also offer up other opportunities for an enhanced service. Others said that travelling to an office or venue is acceptable. Some agreed on the proviso that the service remains in place and was not cut altogether in the future. Also, that any alternative venues are discrete and suitable for bereaved people.
- Of those that disagreed with this proposal, most did not give a reason. Of those that did, concerns were raised that such a small saving will not be achievable once all of the costs associated with implementing it have been taken into account. Also, that travel to the proposed sites may be a significant issue for older people who have recently been bereaved.

9.14. **Museums - One idea we've had for saving money between 2017-19 is to change how the Norfolk Museums Services operates, by creating three main museums (at Norwich Castle, Gressenhall and Time and Tide) and reclassifying the other seven museums as community sites. These community sites would have regular opening hours, but offer a more basic service.**

This was not a formal proposal with budgetary savings set against it but a broad idea about how the museum service could change in the longer term to help save money.

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 152 people responded to this idea. A number of themes emerged from the responses:

- There is not enough information to comment on. In particular, what the basic service would be and what the 7 community sites mentioned in the idea were
- Queries about the rationale that was used for selecting the three main museum sites and why some key museums, such as King's Lynn and Thetford, had not been included
- Concerns were raised about reductions in the level of service provided at the community sites, the impact on the local community, education and outreach work
- The long term sustainability of the community sites was also questioned and concerns raised that the downgrading of museums to providing an apparently lesser service could lead to their closure.

The majority of responses did not clearly come down in favour or against our ideas for the future.

A number of ideas were suggested:

- Trialing the community site model with one museum before rolling out

- Increasing opportunities to raise income, such as: charging more for entry; corporate sponsorship; and using the venues for weddings and other social events
- Greater integration of museums with schools.

8 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site. No petitions were received.

### **Fire and Rescue (Integrated Risk Management Plan)**

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the National Framework 2012 require Norfolk County Council (NCC), as the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Authority, to prepare and publish an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The Integrated Risk Management Plan is a complete review of fire and rescue provision in Norfolk. In it the most significant risks to people and buildings in our county are analysed and the plan sets out how we intend to respond to those risks, within the budget and the resources we are given. The following proposals are in the 2016-2020 IRMP.

There are four specific budget proposals being considered by this Committee that relate to the IRMP.

### **Petitions**

The following petitions were submitted as part of the response to the consultation on the IRMP and budget consultation:

- A petition has been started on the web site [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) (a platform that enables people to start petitions) titled "Stop Norfolk Fire Station Closures". As of 7 January 2016, this had 1,331 signatures.
- A petition has been started on the web site [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) (a platform that enables people to start petitions) titled "Stop the cuts within Norfolk Fire And Rescue Service. Petition Norfolk County Council to remove all cuts against the Fire Service". As of 7 January 2016, this had 545 signatures.

In addition, 1,350 postcards have been received, as part of the Fire Brigades Union campaign 'Cuts costs lives'. These highlight a number of key issues, including: that the IRMP consultation document is not user friendly and difficult to understand; that proposed cuts should not go ahead; that all non-statutory services should be stopped; and council tax increases be explored to maintain fire cover in Norfolk.

It is anticipated that further petitions will be received in the final 7 days of the consultation.

### **9.15. Fire and Rescue strategic vision**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 379 people responded to the Fire and Rescue Strategic Vision. Of those, 237 people (62.0%) agreed with the vision and 81

people (21.2%) disagreed. 64 people (16.8%), were neither for nor against the strategic vision, stating that it was difficult to understand what it meant.

12 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site.

- Of those who agreed with the vision, over half did not give a reason. Those that did highlighted the importance of prevention and the need to protect the service from budget cuts. There was a split of opinion as to whether the Fire and Rescue service should focus on its core business (considered by respondents to be responding to fires and road traffic accidents) or whether it should expand its capabilities to meet a broad range of risks and eventualities.
- Of those who expressed some disagreement, most raised concerns over safety and the need to protect the service from budget cuts. Others suggested that, in light of the proposed budget cuts, the vision could not be achieved.

Of those people who were not sure if they agreed or disagreed with the proposal, queries were raised as to what the strategic vision meant and whether it was necessary.

**9.16. Proposal 7 (IRMP 1a) - Reduce the amount we spend on fire and rescue operational support – the services that help firefighters in carrying out their emergency response duties (£0.525M)**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 392 people responded to this proposal. Of those and 203 (52.2%) disagreed with the proposal and 140 (36.0%) agreed with the proposal. 46 people (11.8%), neither agreed nor disagreed.

12 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site.

- Of those who disagreed with the proposal, there was most concern about the impact on the safety of firefighters and members of the public. In particular, concerns were raised about the risks associated with the proposed reduction in training budgets and the ability of firefighters in the future to safely deal with incidents. More generally, the negative impact of the proposals on the long term capability of the service was highlighted. The important role that operational support staff have to play in keeping firefighters working effectively and safely when responding to incidents was also emphasised.
- Of those who agreed with this proposal, over half did not give a rationale. Those that did highlighted the savings that could be made by reducing management posts and costs in order to protect the front line firefighters. Others emphasised that firefighters could take on more when not responding to emergencies.

There were two criticisms of the proposal. Firstly, that it was difficult to understand the long term impact of the proposed reductions in operational support on the effectiveness and efficiency of the service. Secondly, that it was difficult to see how this proposal fitted with the intentions and aspirations outlined in the 'Strategic Vision'.

**9.17. Proposal 8 (IRMP 1b) - Move full-time firefighters from King's Lynn and Gorleston to Thetford, Dereham and other market towns. Introducing a 12 hours shift pattern for all full-time firefighters**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 386 people responded to this proposal. Of those 172 people (44.6%) disagreed with the proposal and 140 people (36.3%) agreed. A total of 74 people (19.2%) were unsure of the impact of the proposal and so neither agreed nor disagreed.

10 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site.

- Of those who disagreed with the proposal, there was most concern about public and firefighter safety and the perception that firefighters were most needed in the larger urban areas, rather than market towns. In particular, concerns were raised about the proposed loss of fulltime firefighter cover in King's Lynn and Gorleston. Concerns were also raised about firefighter safety and the impact of 12 hour shifts upon their ability to do their job effectively.
- Of those who agreed with the proposal, two thirds did not give a reason for their support. Of those who provided a reason, some did so with provisos: that the terms and conditions of firefighters were protected; and that it could be demonstrated that the changes would result in a better use of resources and enhanced service. Others suggested that a review of the work patterns of firefighters was overdue and that locating resources where they are most needed would lead to a better service.

There was a general perception that moving firefighters around the county would not solve the problem of reduced resources. Also, that it was questionable whether it was worth adopting such radical changes to the fire service when they only resulted in relatively small savings.

**9.18. Proposal 9 (IRMP 2a) - Redesign of Fire and Rescue on-call (retained) emergency response resources, including closing two fire stations (£0.64M)**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 551 people responded to this proposal. Of those 115 people (21.1%) agreed with the proposal and 365 people (66.8%) disagreed with it. 66 people (12.1%) were unsure of the impact of the proposal and so neither agreed nor disagreed.

17 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site.

- Of those who disagreed with the proposal, about two thirds stated that they did not want to see any fire stations close. The majority of these, 157, specifically named Heacham Fire Station as one to keep open. 11 people specifically named West Walton Fire Station as one to keep open and 6 people named Outwell Fire Station.
- Concerns were also raised about safety and whether the necessary resources would be in place to provide adequate emergency cover. Also, a possible increase (lengthening) in the response time was identified as was the heightened risk associated with an ageing and growing population in many parts of the county where the proposals would be implemented.
- The proposed replacement of second fire engines in Fire Stations with 4x4s was highlighted by some respondents but from differing perspectives. Some stated that this would have a negative impact upon the ability of the service to respond to major emergencies or a number of emergencies at the same time, as the 4x4 had reduced capability. Others stated that second fire engines of any kind were not necessary and so further savings could be made by their removal.
- Of those who agreed with the proposal, two thirds did not give a reason for their support. Of those that did give a reason, support was on the proviso: that the changes would not have a negative impact on safety and/or emergency response times; and would lead to better, more efficient use of resources and equipment. A small minority supported the closure of two of the Fire Stations on the basis that emergency cover could be provided by neighbouring Fire Stations.

Queries and concerns were raised about the cumulative impact of the proposed changes to the Fire and Rescue Service, particularly in the west and east of the county.

**9.19. Proposal 10 (IRMP 2b) - Redesign of Fire and Rescue full-time (wholetime) emergency response resources (£0.64M)**

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 383 people responded to this proposal. Of those, 211 people (55.5%) disagreed with the proposal and 95 people (25.0%) agreed. 74 people (19.5%), neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

10 respondents told us that they were responding on behalf of a business, organisation or group. The full list of the organisations and a summary of their responses are available on the consultation web site.

- Of those who disagreed with the proposal, over half did not say why. For those that did, there were a number of concerns, including: firefighter and

public safety and a perceived increased risk of loss of life as a result of the proposed changes; the level of disruption caused to the service; and job losses. Also, it was suggested that the proposed changes were too complex and would cause a great deal of disruption to services for little gain.

- Of those who agreed with this proposal, two thirds did not give a reason for their support. Of those who did, a small number agreed with the proposal, on the proviso that the changes would not have a negative impact on safety and/or emergency response times. Others suggested that the proposal would improve efficiency.

A small number of people suggested that the proposal was too complex and difficult to understand.

A number of responses highlighted specific issues relating to the proposed change of use of the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team. Most expressed concerns about USAR's ability to take on the firefighter role and questioned what would happen if national funding for this service stopped. Concern was expressed about moving USAR to Earlham as this Fire Station would be left without emergency response cover if the team were called away to attend a USAR incident.

#### 9.20. **Fire and Rescue provide a water rescue and flooding service**

This was not a formal proposal with budgetary savings set against it but a question as to whether people felt that there was a role for the Fire and Rescue Service to play in the provision of a water rescue and flooding service. There were three possible answers to the question (Agree/Disagree/Don't Know), with no free-text option.

As of 7 January 2016, a total of 387 people responded to this proposal. Of those 247 (63.8%) agreed with it and 99 (25.6%) disagreed with it. 41 people (10.6%), neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

### **Responses to questions about Council Tax**

#### 9.21. The consultation asked people to describe their views on what the Council should do about its share of Council Tax.

At the 7 January 2016, 394 people had responded to questions about Council Tax; a comparable response rate to consultations in previous years.

Up until 26 November 2015, 193 people had responded to the question "should Norfolk County Council raise its share of the council tax by up to 1.99% in 2016/17 in order to protect essential services and reduce the level of cuts?" Of these, 149 people (77.2%) supported an increase, 36 people (18.7%) disagreed with an increase and 8 people (4.1%) didn't know.

As a result of the Government's Spending Review the consultation question was changed from the 26 November to reflect the Council Tax options that were now available to the Council. There have been 201 responses to the revised options.

The results for post-Spending Review question are as follows:

Description	% Respondents
Increase by up to 1.99% to protect essential services	15.4%
Increase our share by 2% to protect adult social care services	13.9%
Increase our share by 3.99% to protect adult social care and other essential services	56.2%
No increase	13.9%
Don't know	0.5%

Against both questions there is support amongst a significant majority of respondents to an increase in Council Tax.

- 9.22. Respondents were also asked to prioritise the services that should be protected if the Council did increase Council Tax. 501 people responded to this questions. Because the question asked people to rank services in an order of 1-7, and people inevitably put things in different orders, the results are necessarily complicated. This report has tried to simplify the results by presenting both the percentage of respondents stating each service as their top priority, and a 'weighted score' that accounts for the relative ranking of each service. These are presented and explained in the results table below. Against either approach the overall ranking is the same, with Children's Services stated as the highest overall priority, closely followed by Adult Social Care.

Service	Priority rank							% stating service as top priority	Weighted priority score*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Children's Services	128	107	48	18	13	11	11	25.5%	1922
Adult Social Care	126	87	60	23	18	10	12	25.1%	1882
Fire and Rescue	105	57	78	42	29	17	4	21.0%	1760
Roads, transport, waste, environment & planning	56	49	62	95	46	21	6	11.2%	1562
Libraries	34	38	51	60	77	48	29	6.8%	1317
Museums, records and the arts	28	20	39	36	63	117	31	5.6%	1109
Other	24	4	2	3	5	4	70	4.8%	307



\* Overall weighted priority score calculated by assigning every number 1 priority a score of 7, every number 2 priority a score of 6, and so on, and then summing the total score for each service.

## **10. Impact assessment – findings and suggested mitigation**

See Appendix 2.

## **11. Implications and risks for budget planning for 2016-17**

- 11.1. Norfolk Fire and Rescue service – the savings proposed by the NFRS are set in the context of the risks as set out in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). It is currently proposed that the responsibilities for Fire Service will be transferred from DCLG to the home office, which may further impact on Government funding in the future.
- 11.2. Cultural services – Over recent years the service has been highly successful in attracting external funding, one of the major contributors is grant funding from the Arts Council. Concern has been raised in a number of areas around the level of funding reductions from the County Council that could see an impact on the level of funding the Arts Council is prepared to continue to support.

## **12. Evidence**

- 12.1. The proposals in this report are informed by the Council's constitution, local government legislation, best practice recommendations for financial and strategic planning, and feedback from residents and stakeholders via the Re-imagining Norfolk public consultation launched in October 2015.

## **13. Financial Implications**

- 13.1. The financial implications of the 2016-17 budget proposals are detailed throughout this paper.

## **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this report or want to see copies of any assessments, e.g. equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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## **List of Appendices**

<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>Local Government Settlement 2016-17 Briefing Note</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>Summary of findings of Public Consultation &amp; Summary of Rural and Equalities Impact Assessments</b>
<b>Appendix 3</b>	<b>Revenue Budget Proposals</b>
<b>Appendix 4</b>	<b>Capital Budget Proposals</b>
<b>Appendix 5</b>	<b>Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service proposals</b>