

**Northampton Borough Council**

# **Budget proposals 2015**

## **Consultation results**

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# 1 Executive summary

In December 2014 the Council launched a consultation which looked at the budget proposals for 2015/16. Comments were invited over a 6 week period, ending on 31 January 2015.

For the fourth year running, the budget consultation focused on whether council tax should be frozen for a further year. People were invited to comment on the budget options for savings, investments and growth.

This report summarises the results of the consultation on the Council budget proposals.

## Key results

- Over **2** out of **3** respondents agree with proposals to freeze council tax
- Around **3** out of **5** respondents would be willing to pay more to help protect/improve services

## 2 Introduction

- 2.1 On 17 December 2014 Cabinet approved for consultation their draft budget proposals for 2015/16, indicative budgets for 2016/17 to 2019/20 for the General Fund Revenue Budgets, the Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme, as well as a proposed Council Tax freeze and Treasury Management Strategy.
- 2.2 Views covering all these areas were invited from 18 December 2014 until 31 January 2015. The aim of this consultation was to find out people's views on the draft budget proposals presented and to propose alternative suggestions.
- 2.3 Completed questionnaires were accepted up to 31 January 2015.
- 2.4 The consultation period will formally close on the date the budget is approved in February 2015.
- 2.5 This consultation followed the principles set out in the Council's Consultation Toolkit and industry standard guidance on best practice in consultation.
- 2.6 This report contains the results of the draft budget 2015/16 consultation. They will be used by the Council as part of the process for informing priorities for the Council's Corporate Plan and for setting a balanced budget (including a capital programme).

## 3 Methodology

- 3.1 Residents, businesses, and other stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on the proposals for the draft budget during the consultation period and support was made available to maximise involvement and understanding of the proposals.
- 3.2 People were able to engage in a range of ways:
  - **On-line survey** asking people if they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to freeze council tax; if they would be prepared to pay more council tax if it helped the Council protect or improve services, and inviting feedback on the proposals including thoughts on alternative proposals;

- **Social media**; (e.g. [twitter](#) (6835 followers), [Facebook](#))
  - **Paper questionnaires** available upon request;
  - **Website information** on consultation proposals and questionnaire available to download and complete on-line
  - **E-mail** address, **freepost** address and **consultation phone** line set up to receive feedback;
  - **Staff** via intranet, trade unions and as general public;
  - Invitation for **Residents Panel** to participate;
  - Invitation to **key stakeholders**, including the business community via the Chamber of Commerce, their network and the Federation of Small Businesses;
  - **Town Centre Businesses** via Town Centre News;
  - Invitation to tenant groups;
  - Engagement with the **voluntary and community sector** via their various networks ;
  - Information at the **OSS and Guildhall**, also at the Central Library;
  - **Open public meeting** held at the Guildhall on [21 January 2015](#);
  - Council's budget proposals debated at **the Council's Community Forums** (Youth Forum, Women's Forum, Diverse Community Forum, LGB People's Forum, Pensioners and Disabled People's Forums) during January 2015;
  - **Engagement** with our key stakeholder and partners ;
  - Meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny** Committee 26 January 2015;
  - **Audit Committee** Meeting 12 January 2015
- 3.3 The consultation was advertised through the media including mail shots and press releases to raise awareness. Social media, including Facebook and Twitter, were used during the consultation period.
- 3.4 Interim consultation reports were available to maximise awareness and action in relation to issues and concerns arising during the consultation.

## 4 Consultation questions

Q1. We recognise the increased pressure being placed onto household budgets by everyday expenditure and bills. We are therefore proposing to freeze council tax for a further year to demonstrate our commitment to you. Do you agree or disagree with this approach? Answers (88)

Q2. Would you be prepared to pay more council tax if it helped the Council protect or improve services? For example, a 1% council tax rise would give the Council an extra £150k to spend on services. Answers (86)

Q3. **Feedback of draft budget proposals** - Comments, including concerns about how specific proposals may impact on individuals or any sector of the community and, if appropriate, how we can minimise any such impact. Comments (31)

Q4. **Alternative proposals**, including anything else we could do to achieve savings and/or any other comments in respect of budget options for 2015/16 and beyond? Comments (22)

Full details are available in **Appendix 1**

Consultation demographic information is available in **Appendix 2**

## 5 Findings

- 5.1 Around **2000** residents visited our dedicated budget information web pages for information
- 5.2 **90** completed online surveys were received as at 31 January 2015 (compared with **129** in 2014, **120** in 2013, **272** in 2012 and **149** in 2011). Responses contained **91** free form comments which include concerns about potential impacts on the community and alternative proposals for efficiencies. Full consultation results are available in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.3 It should be noted that additional activity relating to the budget was undertaken in addition to this exercise during the period of consultation including local press, public meetings, forums, etc. and that the views expressed during such events are not included in this document. (For **Audit Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee** and **Community Forums**, please view minutes of meetings held during the consultation period available at [modern.gov](http://modern.gov))
- 5.4 In addition to the above, separate **tenant consultation** regarding **Rent Increase 2015/16** was carried out. For details see **Appendix 3**

## 6 How feedback will be used

- 6.1 Where comments relate to service specific issues that relate to the usual business of the organisation, these will be forwarded to the relevant service area.
- 6.2 Where issues raised are not our responsibility, such as street lighting, the state of the roads or about social work, the comments received will be forwarded to the relevant organisation as appropriate.
- 6.3 In relation to the budget, the Cabinet will consider all responses alongside the need to set a balanced budget. Any changes arising from the consultation will be detailed in the Council Wide General Fund Revenue Budget Report.
- 6.4 Findings have also been used to inform priorities for the Council's Corporate Plan 2012-15 (update 2015).

## 7 Equalities

- 7.1 The Cabinet will consider the results of this consultation and of all relevant impact assessments which were developed to make an informed decision regarding the Council's budget.
- 7.2 Equality and Diversity were considered as part of the budget build process and an equality impact assessment or screening was completed, as appropriate.
- 7.3 Where issues have been identified and the option is approved, the detailed equality impact assessment will be used to inform the implementation of the budget option.
- 7.4 An Equality Impact Assessment for this budget consultation process is available at **Appendix 4**.

# Appendices

- 1 Full consultation results**
- 2 Demographics**
- 3 Rent Increase**
- 4 Consultation Equality Impact Assessment**

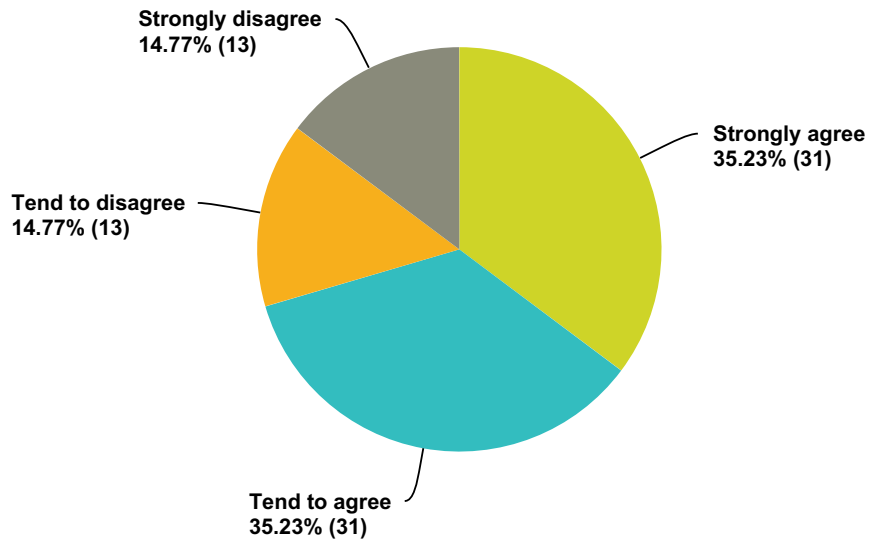
Appendix 1

# NBC Budget 2015/16 Consultation Full Results

February 2015

**Q1 We recognise the increased pressure being placed onto household budgets by everyday expenditure and bills. We are therefore proposing to freeze council tax for a further year to demonstrate our commitment to you. Click here for Council Tax Consultation Background Do you agree or disagree with this approach?**

Answered: 88 Skipped: 2

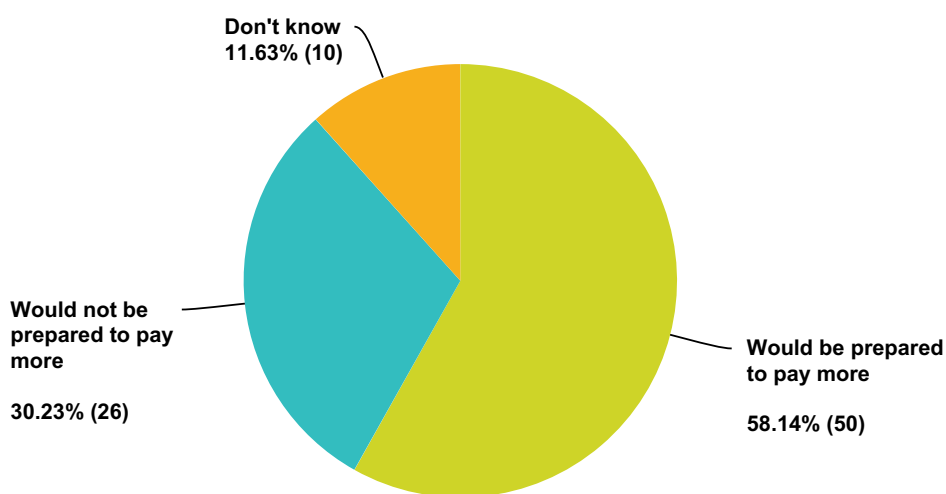


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly agree (1)	35.23%	31
Tend to agree (2)	35.23%	31
Tend to disagree (3)	14.77%	13
Strongly disagree (4)	14.77%	13
<b>Total</b>		<b>88</b>

Basic Statistics				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	4.00	2.00	2.09	1.04

**Q2 Would you be prepared to pay more council tax if it helped the Council protect or improve services? For example, a 1% council tax rise would give the Council an extra £150k to spend on services.**

Answered: 86 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses	
Would be prepared to pay more (1)	58.14%	50
Would not be prepared to pay more (2)	30.23%	26
Don't know (3)	11.63%	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>86</b>

Basic Statistics				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	3.00	1.00	1.53	0.69

#	Please use this space for comments that will help us understand your response	Date
1	I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW BEFOREHAND TYPES OF SERVICES COUNCIL PLANS TO SPEND 150K ON	1/31/2015 5:55 AM
2	The council should be looking for alternative ways of gaining funding rather than expecting the council tax payer to fund the majority of services. Renting office space out, supplying services etc to generate income should be the way to go.	1/30/2015 3:11 AM
3	It would depend on what it would be spent on. Clear consultation should take place first and the details given should not be open to misinterpretation	1/29/2015 8:56 PM
4	Local Authority is not a household - use the powers granted to provide services as required, or resign and allow others who can and will.	1/28/2015 4:57 AM
5	I believe that with the responsibility for transport planning, development, maintenance and policing being split between NBC, NCC, SNC, Northamptonshire Police and MGWSP in the areas that I live and work, transport services will not improve, whatever rates are paid to these bodies.	1/28/2015 3:26 AM



## Draft Northampton Borough Council Budget 2015/16 Consultation

		Appendix 1
6	The public need to understand that you don't get anything for nothing. If as a resident you continue to use the services that the council provides then money is required to pay for them. It may seem like a fabulous gesture to help the working people of the borough ....but in the long run it does nothing but put pressure on service delivery and a reduction in the services they need. Get a grip and be brave enough to increase the council tax so the people of Northampton can rely on a quality service delivered by quality employees	1/23/2015 8:27 AM
7	constantly freezing tax has a cumulative effect which is exponential. it is very short sighted and done for political gain, not what is best for northampton.	1/19/2015 12:18 PM
8	while I would pay more to improve services, I do object to it being used for frivolous schemes dreamt up by politicians. I further object to the fact there is a surplus on the collection, yet support for the most vulnerable in our town is being reduced....	1/19/2015 12:01 PM
9	I would like to know beforehand types of services council plans to spend 150K on.	1/18/2015 3:47 AM
10	Continual cutting of services will only assist a small section of the community.	1/17/2015 4:06 PM
11	If the money is spent on the services that will help the residents that need it more, then yes, I would happily pay more but if it's wasted on pedestrianisation then no, especially considering that the paving in the cultural quarter may not be as long lasting as the previous paving that had lasted a very long time. If it's spent on helping the needy, supporting food banks and small businesses and on not having empty shops which could otherwise be used by community groups then I would happily pay.	1/16/2015 5:22 AM
12	Cut agency staff and employ people who care about Northampton - increase rents to generate more income, freeze councillors allowances, stop councillors sitting on County and Borough.	1/8/2015 2:30 AM
13	Our town needs to encourage commerce and visitors so needs to look inviting. Usually cuts mean services so we should pay to keep our town clean and tidy.	12/31/2014 4:43 AM
14	Our town needs to be looked after to encourage commerce and visitors. Usually cuts mean services being culled. So we need to pay for this to keep our town looking it's best.	12/31/2014 4:34 AM
15	To protect funding for voluntary sector funding such as counselling, poverty reduction.	12/30/2014 9:03 AM
16	A small increase does not cost much. What is critical is to ensure that critical services are delivered.	12/30/2014 2:21 AM
17	150K does not seem to be much extra to make much difference to current budget. I would prefer to see more evidence that current budget is used effectively before being asked to contribute more.	12/27/2014 1:42 AM
18	150k does not seem much extra to the overall Council budget. I would prefer to see that the current budget was spent effectively before contributing more.	12/27/2014 1:39 AM
19	150K does not seem enough additional funding to make much difference to overall Council budget I would like more information on how the Council avoids wasting it's current budget before paying more in to the general	12/27/2014 1:36 AM
20	There is still savings to be realised within the budget until such time a freeze should be implemented	12/23/2014 2:25 PM
21	The cash cost for services is relatively small and is affordable. The services are essential for quality of life.	12/23/2014 10:25 AM
22	With the constant reduction in services, I do not see raising the council tax as value for money.	12/23/2014 6:16 AM
23	Considering all of the excellent events that the council has supplied to the residents of Northampton over the last year for free, I consider a small increase in council tax acceptable, providing the money raised was investing in it's staff and events	12/23/2014 5:10 AM
24	It all depends on what would be funded with the additional amount	12/21/2014 11:43 PM
25	I'm not paying council tax.	12/20/2014 11:48 AM
26	Think the council has major problems with housing and other priorities so should be working to resolve these problems	12/20/2014 3:05 AM

## Draft Northampton Borough Council Budget 2015/16 Consultation

Appendix 1

27	<p>If council tax stays the same, how about listing services which have been cut and now being picked up by local charities (or charities where funding has been cut due to lack of finances) and giving people the option to support these directly. It may also increase some volunteering. I don't buy the local paper so don't know whether this has been done but it would be interesting and helpful to see a comprehensive list of local charities and social enterprises which have received funding from tax payers, either via the Europe, County, Borough or Parish, how that funding has changed recently and how that has affected the work they do. I am aware faith communities in town are doing more, which is great but often they don't know what others are doing and so duplicate effort where they could potentially work together more. In the meantime, people outside those communities can be completely unaware of what is already being done. Recently I met a successful tradesman who wanted to help homeless people. He was completely unaware of the Hope Centre . . . We all need to do more to raise the profile of work being done and invite others in to partner with us.</p>	12/19/2014 11:42 PM
28	<p>Would pay a bit more if any of it improved the lot of the elderly. As it is, they are ignored!</p>	12/19/2014 8:12 AM
29	<p>depend on priority which council will set out</p>	12/19/2014 2:13 AM
30	<p>The services we receive now is so disgusting that maybe more money in the coffers would help to get our services back up to a reasonable and acceptable standard.</p>	12/18/2014 12:03 PM
31	<p>Cut in Council tax would be welcome, paying over £200 per month just to get my bins emptied (badly).</p>	12/18/2014 9:08 AM
32	<p>Suggest services like translators and printing everything in numerous languages are severely cut, these services are rarely provided in the rest of Europe .</p>	12/18/2014 7:59 AM
33	<p>The main item of spending appears to be to put more money into reserves. Services should come first and council tax should increase for this reason.</p>	12/18/2014 7:28 AM
34	<p>Yes, but I think consultation on how/where this money should be spent should also take place.</p>	12/18/2014 6:04 AM
35	<p>I'm not convinced the council are making sure they are getting value for money out of the employees or outsourced services especially at road works repairs &amp; maintenance, So often see too many people employed to do simple work and spend longer time than normal just standing talking or watching....not efficient supervision to focus on the job .</p>	12/18/2014 5:27 AM
36	<p>NBC has accrued 'cultural' money and we seek for our civic leaders to invest in initiatives created by the people of Northampton, not just initiatives created by the authorities. Northampton will be twice as big which will not make it a better place to live for us, the people who live in Northampton We need theatre, music, art, restaurants etc and it will be US, the people of Northampton, that improves the cultural profile of the town, not our authorities. We require funding to support NORTHAMPTON MUSIC 365. The profile of our town is poor and yet we have marketing departments at NBC, NCC, NEP. UoN which could combine to give an accurate reflection of ' an historic town in the heart of England surrounded by ancient park lands and stately homes, one hour from London ' thank you for this opportunity to comment. see next email.</p>	12/18/2014 1:23 AM
37	<p>As someone who has been unemployed for several years with a large mortgage I am struggling to pay my present bills let alone any increase.</p>	12/18/2014 1:21 AM
38	<p>Reportedly, both wages and employment has gone up in the past year. This suggests that households are likely to have greater disposable income. The council tax freeze in recent years has resulted in a steady deterioration in council services across all departments, including advice and access to services. This is largely due to poorly planned and poorly managed outsourcing. A very modest rise of 1% would enable at least some of these issues to be addressed, and where outsourcing has clearly failed to bring about better and more cost-effective delivery of services, for these to be brought back in house.</p>	12/18/2014 1:05 AM

**Q3 A challenging programme of internal cost-cutting measures is proposed to tackle the shortfall and prevent the budget gap growing even further in 2015/16. At the same time, to promote growth, there will be a focus on investment in the borough. A list of the draft budget proposals and background information can be found at on our website. These proposals, if/when agreed, will help the Council balance its budget for 2015/16. This is your opportunity to comment on the Council's draft budget options before they are submitted to the Cabinet for their consideration. Full Council will in turn consider the Cabinet's recommendation for approval on 23 February 2015. Your comments on our options**

**Key proposals:** Internal cost savings  
 Review of information and advice services  
 Reduction in JPU contribution  
 Living wage implementation  
 Extension to 'pay on exit' car parking scheme  
 Further Northampton Alive investment  
 Further Northampton Enterprise Zone investment

**Please tell us which option you wish to comment on and include any concerns you may have about how our specific proposals may impact on yourself or any sector of the community and if appropriate, tell us how we can minimise any such impact.**

Answered: 31 Skipped: 59

#	Responses	Date
1	INTERNAL COST SAVINGS I agree REVIEW OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICES Unsure. What is reduction in monetary value? and what information and services are NBC referring to REDUCTION IN JPU CONTRIBUTION I agree. But unsure work of JPU to date LIVING WAGE IMPLEMENTATION I agree EXTENSION TO PAY ON EXIT CAR PARKING SCHEME I agree. For me it encourages people to travel into town instead of travelling to Milton Keynes. FURTHER NORTHAMPTON ALIVE INVESTMENT Unsure. Some of the 45 projects are now complete. What are these projects and what is the return. FURTHER NORTHAMPTON ENTERPRISE ZONE INVESTMENT Unsure. what is technical advice. How does this investment benefit families that are struggling financially. Also bid to bring high-quality jobs to the town and boost prosperity, can council ensure local people secure high-quality local jobs	1/31/2015 6:13 AM
2	this is an appalling way to conduct a consultation! this feels more like a tick box exercise! if you want meaningful consultation, you should do so!	1/30/2015 3:15 AM

# Draft Northampton Borough Council Budget 2015/16 Consultation

Appendix 1

3	Review of information and advice services very unclear from the reading material; need to know precisely what will be affected, what does council fund regarding advice services etc. People tend to say yes to things like this and only realise (for example) that an important advice service that appears not to be council funded has been affected	1/29/2015 8:59 PM
4	We would express concern about the proposed reduction in funding for internal advice services if this in respect of social welfare law advice such as debt and benefits advice unless there is an increase in the amount of funding available provided for external independent advice providers (currently Community Law Service and Central and East Northamptonshire CAB.) It is not clear from the proposals as to whether there will be additional investment in external advice provision. There is no evidence that the internal and external services are seeing the same clients. If the advice needs currently met by the internal services are to be continued to be met then the independent sector would need more resources to cope with the demand particularly in light of increased demand as a result of the Social Welfare Reform changes and the forthcoming introduction of Universal Credit. We would be supportive of the proposal to support independent advice in preference to non independent in-house services but are concerned that a 'desk-top' review has formed the basis of opinions with regard to advice services delivering services which involve 'wasteful duplication' without providing specific evidence in respect of this and explaining this concept further. It is important that the Council gains a better understanding of services being provided by the independent advice sector and the importance of the current grant funding which supports core costs and provides a stable basis for advice sector agencies to lever in additional funding from other sources to support residents in the Town. As such any commissioning of advice services needs to also support core costs in addition to any direct services delivery to avoid a negative impact on advice provision for the local communities.	1/29/2015 9:56 AM
5	Pay on Exit car parking This is a good idea, meaning I can leave town earlier or later without risk of over- or under-paying. To make it even more effective, please ensure that more pay machines take credit cards. St John's still doesn't. I sometimes visit town on business, and it's far easier and more efficient to use my corporate credit card to pay for parking than using my own money and keeping the receipt to claim it back. Other regional towns' car park pay machines take credit cards e.g. Nottingham, Leicester, Kettering and MK station, so you should offer it too. Cash is a faff, and keeping receipts to claim expenses back is very old-fashioned.	1/29/2015 6:43 AM
6	I think it all looks pretty logical	1/28/2015 12:43 PM
7	Internal cost savings??? If you have no staff you can't deliver...moral amongst NBC workers is at rock bottom and that means you don't get that commitment and extra value that money can't buy....I understand that its chaos now...so what will it be like if more "efficiency savings" are implemented? Congratulations on implementing the living wage. How about looking at ways of generating income instead of always slash and burn? I have lived here for 27 years and seen Northampton town centre die on its feet, the market was destroyed virtually overnight, its full of cheap tatty shops, cafes, and other takeaways, bars and clubs. Bad decisions have made it an awful place to be. Stupid bits of art and fountains....people need employment, a clean environment and services delivered in an efficient manner....	1/23/2015 8:40 AM
8	all the specifics are vague, and don't come close to accounting for the entire budget. not very transparent.....	1/19/2015 12:24 PM
9	if you are so strapped for cash, and times are so hard, how can you place 1.8million into earmarked reserve? reserved for what exactly? a golden parachute perhaps.... how can a sum of money this large not have been predicted last year? sack your accountant please....	1/19/2015 12:08 PM
10	Internal cost savings - I agree Review of information and advice services - council have not detailed savings in a monetary value Reduction in JPU contribution - don't understand Living wage implementation - I agree Extension to pay on exit car parking scheme - I agree. Cllr Danielle Stone said in your minutes what is the return. For me it encourages people to travel into town instead of travelling to Milton Keynes Further Northampton Alive investment - Not sure. Some of the 45 projects are now complete. What are these projects and what is the return Further Northampton Enterprise Zone investment - Unsure - what is technical advice. How does this investment benefit families that are struggling financially. Also bid to bring high-quality jobs to the town and boost prosperity, can council ensure local people secure high-quality local jobs	1/18/2015 3:52 AM
11	Further Northampton Enterprise Zone investment - while the idea of investing in the waterside zone is great, I think we need to invest in the town centre itself. It has an abundance of empty or cheap shops, more small businesses could be encouraged to set up shops which could be shared with other small businesses.. Once the town centre doesn't look so cheap then other investment can be done to surrounding areas and more investors and developers will want to come in. Extension to pay on exit - it's great that the multi storey car parks allow for free parking for up to 2 hours and free parking at the weekend, it's a shame that just after the 2 hour mark the fee is £2.40, which is quite a leap from £0.00 for up to 2hours then £2.40 for 2hrs 15 mins. Can there not be a lower price e.g. £1.20 or even £1.50. The extension is a good idea as it enables us to park nearer to the shops so we don't have to carry heavy items so far. Living wage implementation - support that	1/16/2015 5:33 A

## Draft Northampton Borough Council Budget 2015/16 Consultation

Appendix 1

12	Cannot argue with Living Wage for the lowest paid. Happy with car parking proposed changes Not sure I understand the implications of the review of advice services. Surely, if savings were possible these would have been made? If feels that the largest area relates to internal costs and again, there is not a lot of detail other than a savings target. How will you introduce the deductions? piece meal or by identifying synergies and making strategic changes to the ways you currently work	1/6/2015 7:29 AM
13	In general ,the areas that have poverty that is so visible needs to be an area that requires a long-term strategy , that is possible more important than Northampton Alive project as this and similar are not really helping those with real hardship, not on a living wage and trapped in a system / situation they require long-term support to get of and learn skills on how to have stability. with -out the correct building blocks the rest will be immaterial to many in the Borough of Northampton	1/5/2015 5:08 AM
14	You can not keep reducing manpower and still deliver a service to the vulnerable i.e. the elderly, those with disabilities. Also it is about time a good level of street litter collection is provided, no matter where you walk the footpaths, hedgerows and roads are covered in litter. Nothing appears to be done in reducing the litter, and when was the last time someone was prosecuted for dropping litter? Also the hedgerows are not maintained on a regular basis leading to footpaths with overgrown hedges restricting the available space to walk on. And although it is not your responsibility but please do something about blocked drains on roads all over the town which leads to flooding whenever it rains for a decent time.	1/2/2015 1:30 AM
15	NO .....Pay on exit car parking.....Save £100,000 immediately by leaving the payment system as it is. Continue the free parking after six and on Sundays plus extra free parking at Christmas and other Trade/Social events.	12/31/2014 4:57 AM
16	Review of info & advice services Many of the grant supported services are for specific groups & one size does not fit all. By reducing funding these groups may struggle to continue or waiting times for help may lengthen. Many poorer residents do not have access to information & advice as everything is online & they may not possess a computer or the skills to access it. Living wage = agree this should be implemented Pay on exit - good idea. Need more car parking now St Johns' has been built on & there are so many reserved spaces in the multi story St Johns'. Enterprise Zone investment should be less as private business should finance their development, not NBC	12/30/2014 9:13 AM
17	Would like more information on your internal savings. If these are possible, why have you not done that earlier?	12/30/2014 2:22 AM
18	I think increasing cost of definitive map applications a poor way of increasing the budget as it just slows down very necessary work. reducing the number of staff to support the work of the definitive map team and the rights of way teams is also a poor use of current funding at a time when both teams are already stretched. I would like to see the budgets for this work ring fenced and if anything increased in future.	12/27/2014 1:48 AM
19	The council needs to make the future prosperity of the town the highest priority. Without this we will wither and die. It must protect this expenditure and if possible increase it. NBC used to be a laughing stock but has recently really picked up its game. It is to the credit of the members and chief executive that this turnaround has happened. Any cuts shouldn't compromise the new competence.	12/23/2014 10:32 AM
20	I fail to see or understand how investing money in car parks to pay on exit will encourage anyone else to travel to Northampton when there is plenty of capacity within the existing pay on exit car parks every single day of the week. At Christmas weekends, the car parks are free anyway so it makes no difference, I think the money should be reallocated to projects that would benefit the town more.	12/23/2014 5:13 AM
21	Internal cost savings- dont you think it is about time you stopped salami slicing your budget? Please please carry out a review and configure your services in line with your statutory duties. You cannot afford to do otherwise. It does nor stop you, however, to have a town wide plan to map need and provision between all sectors.	12/21/2014 11:48 PM
22	Internal cost savings.	12/20/2014 12:34 PM
23	The living wage is good and should be extended to outsourced services and information and advice services should be improved so the council is seen to be doing something to alleviate the crushing burdens being inflicted on the poor people of Northampton by the government,	12/20/2014 3:12 AM
24	I really don't have sufficient background knowledge to comment intelligently on these proposals. As presented here they all seem sensible but I don't know how many of these will affect those who have to implement them, the level of redundancies, the specific costs, savings and returns of alternatives etc	12/19/2014 11:55 PM

## Draft Northampton Borough Council Budget 2015/16 Consultation

		Appendix 1
25	Do less subcontracting of vital services. No wonder that care homes, elderly services and assisted housing are such a mess. Subcontractors understandably are there to make a profit for themselves. Please sort out carparking....goodness knows how we are expected to get to the Royal and Derngate after all of the parking has been decimated. Surface car parks gone, with building of student flats, new hotel and loss of Angel Street parking. St Johns upper stories are for residents. You don't have to be disabled (just old) to not be able to easily manage multi-storey stairs in the dark or to not want to trek from distant parks.	12/19/2014 8:47 AM
26	I think the car park and jpu proposals are good ones	12/18/2014 8:02 AM
27	Internal cost savings - I have inside knowledge and know that there are many more managerial po	12/18/2014 6:04 AM
28	All valid but also effective and efficient use of public transport still needs review....and ongoing improvements	12/18/2014 5:32 AM
29	Living Wage: I think it important that this plan is rolled-forward to all the Council's contractors and sub-contractors (as a Contractual Requirement), in addition to it's own employees. The alternative is an even greater poverty-imposition on the locality as employees are transferred from the Council's employment to contractors. It would also help to create an 'even playing field' for your purchasing officers to evaluate contractual offers.	12/18/2014 4:10 AM
30	Internal Cost Saving - Whatever the cuts in the management budget it is obscene that the CE (or Town Clerk!) is still paid more than the Prime Minister AND at the last elections was given an extra £17000 to act as Returning Officer. Information and Advice - Cut out translation services. Pay on exit - I have always argued that people should only have to pay for what they use, I strongly support this measure which will also help local business by not forcing people to rush back to their cars because they might get a ticket. Living Wage - Definitely and "local jobs for local people"	12/18/2014 1:32 AM
31	please invest also in : NORTHAMPTON MUSIC 365	12/18/2014 1:24 AM

**Q4 Alternative proposals Is there anything else that you think we could do to achieve savings and/or any other comments you would like to make in respect of the budget options for 2015/16 and beyond?**

Answered: 22 Skipped: 68

#	Responses	Date
1	COUNCIL PLANS TO INVEST IN NORTHAMPTON ALIVE AND ENTERPRISE ZONE. ARE THESE THE NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE WHO ARE STRUGGLING. PERSONALLY NOT CONVINCED. THE RETURN MAY HAPPEN BUT THAT NOT NOW AND PEOPLE ARE STRUGGLING NOW E.G. FOOD BANKS	1/31/2015 6:13 AM
2	Reduce the cllrs allowance Remove the cllrs empowerment fund Sale the registration number plate of the mayor's car Do away with a mayoralty car - this will save on providing a driver, the on costs of running a car and of course provide a small income. Stop refreshments etc prior to cllrs meetings!	1/30/2015 3:15 AM
3	Carry on with the redevelopment of the town. Having lived all over the country in my life I can see that Northampton is finally catching up with some of the better towns I know. Northampton folk are generally passive, easily satisfied and have low expectations, so they need to be led on this issue because they'll never demand it themselves. Don't lose heart. It's looking good, and I'm now proud to come into town on a Saturday instead of going to MK.	1/29/2015 6:43 AM
4	Reduce pension costs, reduce contributions from the council to the statutory minimum Introducing statutory minimum for sick pay and maternity leave rather than enhanced packages for employees Reduce holidays to statutory minimum	1/28/2015 12:43 PM
5	Merge with another local authority.... reduce the number of councillors freeze councillors allowances invest in the morale of the staff so they want to deliver 110% rather than struggle to be motivated. You get more for your money that way	1/23/2015 8:40 AM
6	to alleviate match day parking issues, the claret car park should be open for free every match day. this would force the clubs to do the same instead of a charge equivalent of a full days parking in the centre....	1/19/2015 12:24 PM
7	stop cutting staff wages. these people are your biggest asset and deliver the services.	1/19/2015 12:08 PM
8	Would be nice to see complete budget and not just key proposals Council plans to invest in Northampton Alive and Enterprise Zone. Are these the needs of local people who are struggling. Personally not convince. The return may happen but that's not now and people are struggling now e.g. Food Banks	1/18/2015 3:52 AM
9	repair wok to roads e.g town centre pedestrianisation shouldn't take place at weekends as am sure the workers are getting paid extra for Saturdays and Sunday (if applicable).	1/16/2015 5:33 AM
10	Increase revenue ie rents and council tax. Decrease expenditure on agency staff and consultants. Freeze councillor allowances	1/8/2015 2:32 AM
11	The ROI - if this plan was well though through and an acceptance the money will need to be spent to attract retailers to Northampton and create jobs and wealth to the wider economy then again the foundations need to be strong. There needs to attractiveness to shopping in Northampton, look at towns like Leamington Spa that have the Shopping Centre, Street Café Culture and reputable Retail shops. So far we have a non appealing tow centre, with nothing other than bars, uneven paths . Yet if you look beyond what is in your face daily! There is some beautiful architecture, Space for an Ice Ring, Dance Hall, and a Market Square that could Host events for families and raise the profile of Northampton. Have policing visible to you feel safe from theft, reduce the Drinking Culture and incentivise non Alcohol or Low Nights. Northampton has no appeal Hence MK and surrounding areas taking trade.	1/5/2015 5:08 AM
12	If you are looking to save money on staff, why have traffic wardens on duty after six and on Sundays? Trust Northampton residents and visitors to be sensible.	12/31/2014 4:57 AM

## Draft Northampton Borough Council Budget 2015/16 Consultation

Appendix 1

13	More obvious advertising of local events held across the County to bring people in to the towns and villages will help increase the footfall and so increase income Reducing the tourist information sites across the County seems to be a retrograde step at a time when it is important to promote local events to encourage local residents to attend.	12/27/2014 1:48 AM
14	Main concern is that small voluntary/ community groups are not adversely affected in the budget cuts	12/26/2014 1:55 AM
15	Cease providing entertainment. Let the industry take care of that. Focus on what you must do and do that well	12/21/2014 11:48 PM
16	Older people live in absolute dread of being infirm or needing access to services to help them cope with day to day living. We all know that everything can not be free but there should be assistance for the elderly (or their family members) to obtain help at an affordable price so as to let the older generation remain in their home. Am afraid that Northampton completely abandons its older people....except perhaps those who have been dependant on council support from an earlier age. Those who suddenly find they cannot do what they once did in their working life, are ignored.	12/19/2014 8:47 AM
17	The Govt have made all the cuts must too fast and we are not happy.	12/18/2014 12:05 PM
18	Internal cost savings not gone far enough. Senior managers are earning £85, 000 average. Way too much! Cut final salary pension schemes - this is not sustainable in the longer term. Get rid of Enterprise/Amey. They are crap and making a huge profit!	12/18/2014 9:11 AM
19	Please carry out a review of the essential services you need to deliver. Not essential, don't do it	12/18/2014 5:39 AM
20	review employee efficiency as ongoing project including management and supervision. Private sector mentality is needed,if you don't do it right and cost effectively you lose the business rather than my job is always safe no matter how I perform attitude.	12/18/2014 5:32 AM
21	Reduce the number of Traffic Wardens - who nowadays appear to need to patrol in pairs , presumably for their own safety and transfer roadside transgression-management to PCSO's and other police with authorisation for 'on the spot' fines. Some Wardens still needed for car-parks etc where specific duties need close observation.	12/18/2014 4:10 AM
22	In the Parished areas, you could try outsourcing the management of parks, recreation grounds, selected open spaces, allotments etc to the Parish Councils. Not all Parishes would take this offer up, or might only want to do so in part. However, if the Borough divested itself of those assets that are not nett income earners, savings could be made. In order to achieve this, the Parish Councils must be granted freehold interest in the land, subject to conditions protecting the status of the land as public open space, village green, statutory allotment etc. Also, any existing outsourced arrangements for maintenance etc MUST be terminate upon transfer, thus enabling the Parish to either do the maintenance themselves, or outsource to a service provider of their choice. In the event that a Parish Council fails, or is wound up, then all its assets & liabilities revert to the principal authority, so there is no nett loss of capital asset. Prestige parks like the Racecourse, Delapre, Abington etc would be exempt from this proposal.	12/18/2014 1:17 AM



## Appendix 2

### Demographics

Gender			
Options	Response %	Response Count	
Male	47.17%	25	
Female	<b>52.83%</b>	<b>28</b>	
Age			
Options	Response %	Response Count	
Under 16	0%	0	
16-24	1.89%	1	
25-34	18.87%	10	
35-44	16.98%	9	
45-54	18.87%	10	
55-64	<b>24.53%</b>	<b>13</b>	
65-74	18.87%	10	
75 or above	0%	0	
Ethnicity			
Main categories	Response %	Response Count	
White	73.08%	38	
Asian/Asian British	1.92%	1	
Mixed	3.85%	2	
Black/Black British	9.62%	5	
Prefer not to say	11.54%	6	
About Respondents			
Options	Yes	No	Response Count
I live in Northampton	92.16% (47)	7.84% (4)	51
I work in Northampton	65.91% (29)	34.09% (15)	44
I study in Northampton	9.38% (3)	90.63% (29)	32
I have a business in Northampton	19.35% (6)	80.65% (25)	31
I am employed by Northampton Borough Council	3.33% (1)	96.67% (29)	30
I am responding on behalf of an organisation/group	9.38% (3)	90.63% (29)	32

Organisations include: Community Law Service (Northampton and County); Graphside Ltd. and Richardsons

## Appendix 3

### Rent Increase 2015/16 - Tenant Consultation

Consultation with tenants about the proposed rent increase for 2015/16 has been undertaken through presentations to both the Rent and Welfare Reform Service Improvement Panel (SIP) and the Tenant Panel.

The Rents and Welfare Reform Service Improvement Panel is a panel made up of twelve tenants. The group meet monthly together with service managers to develop and improve service delivery specifically in the areas of rent income and welfare reform.

The Tenant Panel was set up in 2012 when the Council started the housing options review. Consisting sixty tenant volunteers, the Panel has been at the heart of the development of Northampton Partnership Homes. It will continue to work in partnership with the Council and NPH to further develop the housing service. Both panels are open to all tenants.

Each presentation covered the following:

- Why rents are reviewed each year
- How rents are set
- Government guidance on rent setting
- The end of rent restructuring and the changes to government guidance for 2015/16
- The proposed rent increase for 2015/16

The presentation to the Rents SIP was undertaken on the 14 November 2014. Nine of the twelve panel members were in attendance. The Panel raised no concerns about the proposed increase. Some panel members commented that they felt the increase to be fair and reasonable.

The presentation to the Tenant Panel was undertaken on the 2 December 2014. Thirty panel members were present. Again the Panel raised no concerns about the proposed increase. Those questions and concerns that were raised focused on matters surrounding Welfare Reform, levels of support available for tenants experiencing financial difficulty and the application of benefit sanctions by the DWP.

## **Appendix 4 -Equality and Community Impact Assessment**

### **Draft Budget 2015/16 Consultation**

#### **What are we looking to achieve in this activity?**

The Council is mindful of its Public Sector Equality Duty and wants to ensure that it has due regard to its equality duties in its decision making process.

#### **How will the decision be made?**

Cabinet will consider the results of the consultation and of all relevant impact assessments to help it make an informed decision regarding the Council's budget and priorities. The Council will set its Budget for the 2015/2016 financial year in February 2015.

#### **What information exists already to assist with making the judgments above? Has any consultation been undertaken on this or any other related issue? Are any reports or relevant documents available internally or from partners or other sources?**

Impact assessments are carried out for individual options as they are developed where appropriate. They will be reviewed as the consultation evolves using the feedback received.

#### **Who is/ will be the main beneficiaries/people affected by this activity?**

Everybody living, working, studying or otherwise engaged with the town or its people may be potentially affected by our budget plans. This includes businesses, employees of the Council as well as, partners and contractors. Some efficiency savings will impact on staff and could lead to redundancies and changes in service provision; the level of service received by the public will be protected wherever possible. Where this is appropriate, consultation will be undertaken in accordance with council policy and all those affected will be able to have a say in this process.

#### **Does the activity have the potential to cause adverse impact or to discriminate against different groups in the community or to make a positive contribution to equalities?**

The testing challenges caused by the general economic environment continue to have a significant impact on our communities as a whole and also on our budget, creating added pressure and increase demand for our services.

With limited resources, service provision will need to be reviewed and this may affect the services we provide, the people who deliver them, and those who receive them. It is critical when making decisions that may affect people that their views are sought and considered so that we can understand what matters to them, what they consider priority and what areas are in need of improvement, and how the choices made may impact on their lives.

#### **Impact**

Proposals that will lead to efficiency savings and/or potential changes in service provision have been screened for impact against the protected characteristics' groups. Where proposals involve staff changes and rationalisation, appropriate consultation in line with council policy will be followed and outcomes monitored for any disproportionate and adverse impacts on individual groups. Any savings with impact on services will have the issues and risks raised through their individual assessments and evaluations taken into account in the implementation and monitoring of the options.

Issues and concerns identified during this consultation will be used to develop mitigation where possible and will be used to inform priorities for the Council.