



Northumberland

County Council

Cabinet

12th December 2023

Budget 2024-25 – Draft Engagement Document

Report of Cllr Richard Wearmouth, Deputy Leader of Council

Responsible Officer(s): Jan Willis, Executive Director for Resources & Transformation (S151)

1. Link to Key Priorities of the Corporate Plan

The Council's budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) are aligned to the three priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan 2023-26: Achieving Value for Money; Tackling Inequalities and Driving Economic Growth.

2. Purpose of report

This report sets out the draft Budget Engagement document for 2024-25 (Appendix 1).

3. Recommendations

3.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- Agree the Draft Budget Engagement Document as the basis for consultation with residents, business and partners on the 2024-25 Budget proposals.

4. Forward plan date and reason for urgency if applicable

The report was added to the Forward Plan on 17th November 2023.

5. Background

Engagement and consultation are an important part of planning and delivering services that meet people's needs. The Council has a statutory duty to consult on its budget proposals with businesses in Northumberland. In addition, the Council consults with residents and stakeholder groups on its budget proposals. We use this to inform the annual budget setting process.

The Council will undertake budget consultation from December 2023 to January 2024 to allow for full discussion and debate with: all political groups and their Leaders, local area councils; parish and town councils; and, with staff and the unions. This will include an on-line question and answer session with the Leader of the Council.

- 5.1 We plan to use this Budget Engagement document (draft attached at Appendix 1) to inform residents and stakeholders and help them to participate fully in Budget engagement. Alongside this, there will be a summary questionnaire for stakeholder to complete.

6. Options open to the Council and reasons for the recommendations

- 6.1 Whilst the Council has the option not to engage residents and stakeholders during the Budget setting process, this would not be considered good practice and runs counter to transparency. We therefore do not consider this a viable option.

7. Implications

Policy	Budget Engagement helps to inform the Council’s Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan
Finance and value for money	Whilst there are no financial implications arising directly from this report, engagement helps to inform the Council’s Budget which will be detailed in a separate report to Cabinet.
Legal	Whilst there are no legal implications arising directly from this report, engagement helps to inform the Council’s Budget which will be detailed in a separate report to Cabinet.
Procurement	There are no specific Procurement implications within this report.
Human resources	There are no specific HR implications within this report.
Property	There are no specific Property implications within this report.
The Equalities Act: is a full impact assessment required and attached?	There are no specific Equalities implications within this report, although this helps to inform the Council’s Budget which will be detailed in the separate report to Cabinet. No EIA is required for this report as no change of services is proposed.
Risk assessment	There are no specific risk implications within this report.
Crime and disorder	There are no specific crime implications within this report.
Customer considerations	There are no specific customer implications within this report.

Carbon reduction	There are no specific carbon reduction implications within this report.
Health and wellbeing	There are no specific health and wellbeing implications within this report.
Wards	All (All Wards);

8. Background papers

N/A

9. Links to other key reports already published

Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-28

10. Author and Contact Details

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