

Have your say on Norfolk savings proposals

Norfolk County Council is seeking views on a number of savings proposals within the council's Community and Environmental Services department.

These proposals are part of £41.5m of savings that Norfolk County Council needs to make to balance its budget for 2024/25. The Council faces difficult decisions to deliver on its ambitions for the people of Norfolk against a difficult economic climate and more than a decade of reduced funding.

These proposals fall within the councils' Community and Environmental Services department, which includes Norfolk Highways, Libraries, Museums, Waste Management and the Norfolk Record Office.

The three proposals being launched today are:

- **Street lighting:** To switch off some streetlights across Norfolk in areas where it is considered safe and appropriate to do so.
- **Norfolk Record Office (NRO):** To introduce pre-booking of visits and change opening hours.
- **Recycling centres:** To reduce opening hours at some recycling centres to deliver a more consistent approach, in line with neighbouring authorities.

Between them these proposals could save approximately £457,000 a year.

The council is consulting the public on these proposals from today, 15 February, to midnight on 22 March 2024. The consultation survey is available on the council's Citizen Space platform at: www.norfolk.gov.uk/savingsproposals

Cllr Andrew Jamieson, Norfolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Finance, said: "We are keen to hear people's views on these proposals: we're working hard to ensure that the vital services the council provides are protected, but that does mean hard decisions need to be made.

"We've been operating through a period of reductions to funding, compounded by rising demand and increasing costs to deliver services. We believe these proposals can help make the savings we need with minimum impact on our residents, but we want to hear your thoughts on whether these changes are right for Norfolk."

Proposals on streetlighting involve switching off 2% of streetlights across the county to save money and reduce carbon emissions. Norfolk County Council has identified 34 locations where the council plans to switch off some street lights. This represents 1.35% of the Council's target of 2%. Further locations will be identified at a later date.

Approximately 1,000 of the 54,000 street lights that the county council manages across the county would be switched off under these plans. It is expected that this could save up to £200,000 per year and cut carbon emissions annually by 76 tonnes, providing an environmental benefit and significantly contributing towards the council's Climate Strategy.

The proposal for introducing pre-booking and changing the opening hours of the Norfolk Record Office would extend the current limited Friday service to a Thursday with the same 10am to 4pm opening hours and maintains a full service on Tuesday and Wednesday from 9.30am until 5pm.

However, compressing the NRO's full searchroom service to two days runs the risk of excessive levels of demand in the searchroom. Therefore, the NRO is proposing to introduce a booking system on those days. People who turn up without booking will still be admitted, providing there is sufficient capacity, but cannot be

guaranteed a place. People will be able to book an appointment via email, over the phone or in person at the NRO. These changes could save a total of £57,000 in 2024/25.

Finally, proposals to reduce the opening hours at some recycling centres in Norfolk would see 13 recycling centres close on a Wednesday, in line with the centres in neighbouring Suffolk. The additional six recycling centres in Norfolk operate part time and are already closed on Wednesdays. This proposal could save around £200,000 a year.

The results of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet in June 2024.

People can share their views in a number of ways:

- Online at www.norfolk.gov.uk/savingsproposals
- By email at haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk
- By post, writing to:
SAVING PROPOSALS CONSULTATION 2024/25
Freepost Plus RTCL-XSTT-JZSK
Norfolk County Council, Ground floor - south wing
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich NR1 2DH..

The consultations close at midnight on 22 March 2024.



Norfolk County Council