



Budget Consultation 2019/20



Each year Cumbria County Council consults with you on its budget and on a proposed Council Tax increase. This year, this consultation and our conversation with you, is more important than ever before.

As well as asking for your views on the proposed Council Tax increase, we are using this consultation as an opportunity to talk to you about the **significant financial challenges** that all councils are facing and to share that there may be some difficult decisions ahead.

This situation is a result of **growing demand** for council services, while at the same time the funding from central government continues to significantly reduce. The government's recent Autumn Budget did little to ease the financial burden on local councils.

It is in this context that the Chairman of the national organisation for the Local Government Association (LGA), Lord Porter of Spalding, CBE, has issued the following warning:

“If government fails to fund local government adequately there is a real risk to the viability of some services, and councils. With the combined increase in demand for services such as adult and children’s social care and homelessness support this means councils in England face a black hole of almost £4 billion.”



Cumbria has been resolute in its commitment to address these financial pressures and continues to be a **financially sustainable organisation**, while minimising the impact on front facing services. We have worked closely with communities and partners and we will continue to do so. We will continue to find solutions to balance the budget and protect frontline services wherever possible.

We want to work with you to create a **positive future** that is sustainable. A future where the customer is at the very heart of everything that we do and one where we have thriving, sustainable communities.

We cannot achieve this alone.

We need to work with you and have a new conversation about the future and about the **difficult choices** that we will face together.

For the last few years we have worked to our Council Plan, delivering savings that have had **minimal impact** on front facing services. This is the last year we will be able to achieve savings in this way. If there are no extra funds from government we will have no choice but to start reducing services.



Foreword

Meeting the challenge

There continues to be much uncertainty about the future structure of council funding. Without exception, all councils are facing difficult financial times, now and in the future.

Austerity has not only reduced council funding but has led to a greater demand on services.

We also have an unprecedented level of pressure on our services, especially from those who need us the most. This includes a greater need for social care services from a growing 'elderly' population and increased costs to look after the number of children now in our care.

In order to continue to deliver services we will need to focus our efforts on offering early help to those in need, promote independence and independent living, and provide a better range of preventative services by working more closely with partners and communities.



Stewart Young

CLlr Stewart Young
Leader



P Thornton

CLlr Peter Thornton
Deputy Leader



K Fairclough

Katherine Fairclough
Chief Executive

The Council Plan 2018–22

Cumbria County Council is committed to improving outcomes for the people of Cumbria. If we are to deliver on this then the council must do things differently.

Our Council Plan highlights the many challenges ahead of us, as well as the many opportunities for doing things differently. We must make the most of these new opportunities, work with local communities and residents, utilise the latest technology and maximise the talent of the council's workforce.

The plan sets out the vision, the outcomes we want to achieve for the people of Cumbria and the approaches we will use to achieve these outcomes.

Our vision

A council that works with residents, businesses, communities and other organisations to deliver the best services possible within the available resources.

By **putting customers at the heart of everything we do** we will work to ensure:

- **People are safe and healthy**
- **Places in Cumbria are well connected and thriving**
- **The economy in Cumbria is growing and benefits everyone**

We will achieve this by focusing on these core principles:

- **Supporting communities to thrive**
- **Focusing on the most vulnerable**
- **Promoting independence and managing demand**



The scale of what we do



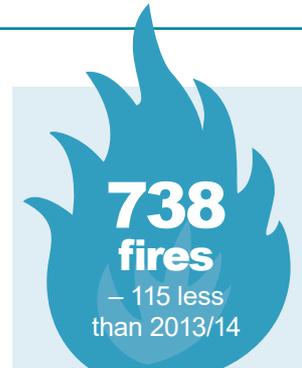
Maintains **4,900 miles** of carriageway – 4th largest in UK



6,588 enrolments on 960 courses



Maintains **1,775 bridges**



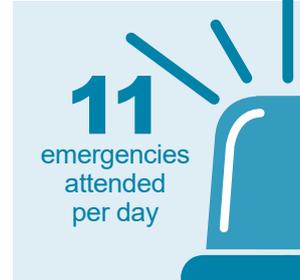
738 fires – 115 less than 2013/14



Ensure appropriate support for over **8,000 adults**



Many of our residential care homes are rated as **good or outstanding**



11 emergencies attended per day



Maintains **50,000 street lights**



Helped **7,000** people become more active



Care for over **600** looked after children



Investing **£9.5m** into improving our school buildings



Investing **£12m** in two new state-of-the-art care homes



1,490 miles
per gritting run



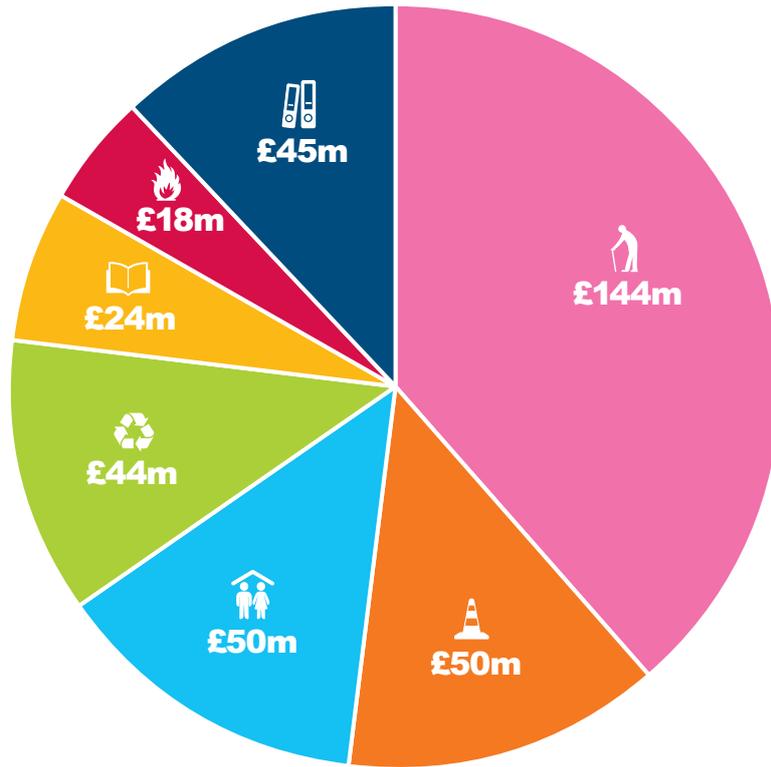
10,432
safe & well household visits conducted



82
Road Awareness Courses for 18-25 year olds

What we spend it on

(millions)

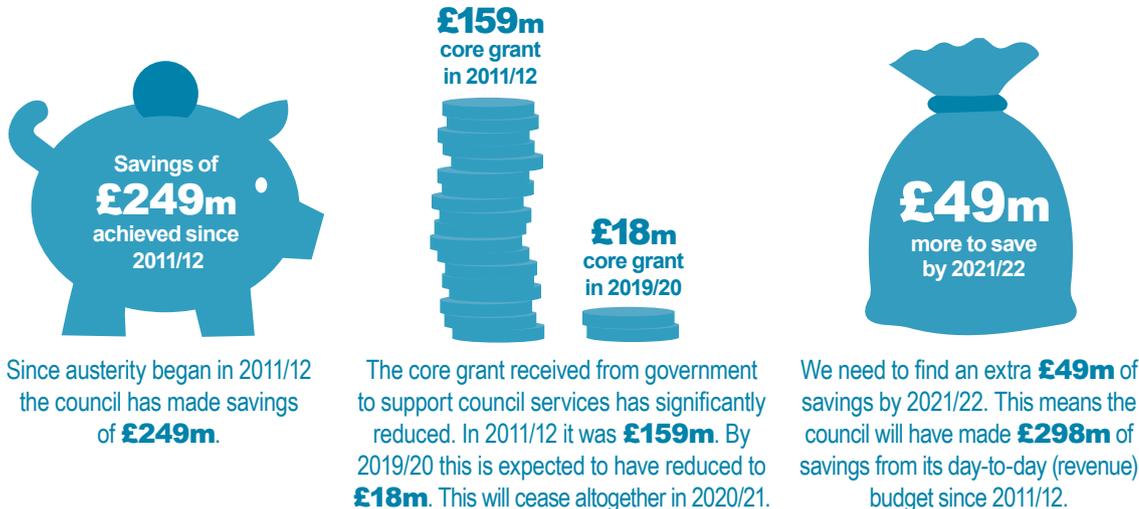


- 
Adult social care
 Residential care
 Supported living
 Reablement
 Assistive technology
 Extra care housing
- 
Maintaining the roads
- 
Younger people in social care
 Child protection
 Fostering
 Adoption
- 
Waste disposal
- 
Supporting children in education
- 
Fire
- 
Other services
 Public Health
 Libraries
 Archives

Balancing the budget

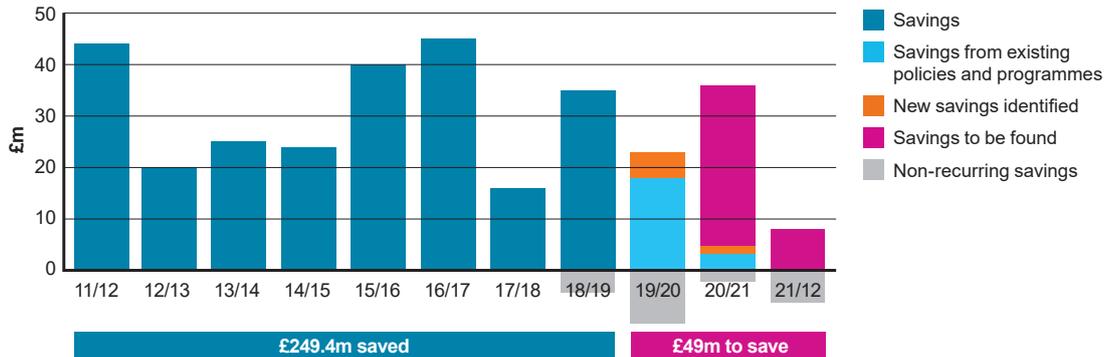
To achieve our ambitions we need to transform Cumbria County Council and ensure that we focus on the right things.

By law we must set a **balanced budget** every year and ensure we have enough money to deliver services to the people of Cumbria. This can only be achieved by the council being **financially sustainable**, which is increasingly challenging in the current funding climate.



● **Cumbria County Council must find budget savings of £23 million in 2019/20.**

Savings since 2011/12:



To date, the council has **delivered significant savings** with limited impact on frontline services – through staff reductions, being more efficient, implementing new contracts for services, astute financial management and seeking new commercial opportunities. These are all examples of the new ways of working we described in the Council Plan (2018–2022). We will continue to put the people of Cumbria first, but the ongoing pressure created by reductions in funding, increased demand and rising costs means this approach is no longer enough.

This will mean difficult choices about service delivery and what we can afford within the available resources. Making these choices will be our **hardest challenge yet**. We need an open conversation with the people of Cumbria about how to approach this challenge.

We find ourselves in a situation where we must look at which **essential services** we can afford to provide and which services could be provided by communities in the future.

We hope that by **working together** we can secure a different type of future for these non-essential services. If an alternative future cannot be secured then many of these services may need to stop.

Our ask to government

Cumbria is already lobbying government for adequate funds for its residents and has joined other councils to call for a fairer funding formula for county councils across the country.

Cumbria needs the government to better understand the pressure we are under, especially in the short term, and support us and other councils with adequate resources for the upcoming financial year, ahead of this year's spending review announcement. Councils also need **better longer term financial planning** from government to allow us to plan and deliver services in the most efficient way.

To date we have been successful in **securing extra one off grants** to help fund roads and infrastructure but we still need to secure significant additional funds for the most vulnerable and better long-term financial planning from government.

We need to look at **rebalancing our budget** and this may mean that as we go forward we can only provide essential services to those in need.

Cumbria is not alone in considering this. All councils are facing these challenges and are having to make these **difficult decisions**.



Setting the 2019/20 Council Tax

The first step is to consult with you on this year's proposed Council Tax increase.

We appreciate that some residents may be facing financial challenges and uncertainty about the future. However we have a **legal requirement** to set a balanced budget and therefore we have carefully considered this year's proposed Council Tax increase.

For the last four years, Cumbria County Council has worked hard to keep any **increase to a minimum**. We have increased general Council Tax by just 1.99%. The limit set by government, above which a referendum would be required, is 2.99%.

Every 1% increase in Council Tax generates approximately £2m of income to the council. This additional money has helped protect vital services. On top of this, the government has introduced the ability to apply an **Adult Social Care Precept**, to help fund the increasing cost pressures that councils experience in relation to the provision of Adult Social Care. The precept will be delivered over a three year period, totalling a 6% increase in resources. Next year is the final year of this precept. We intend to increase this by 2% – consistent with the last two years.

This year we are seeking your views on:

- A 1.99% increase in Council Tax from 2018/19 (below current cost of inflation).
- Continue with the government's additional 2% Adult Social Care precept.
- This makes a total increase in Council Tax of **3.99% for 2019/20**.



The table below shows what a 3.99% increase would look like for each council tax band.

	Estimated annual increase		Estimated annual increase
Band A (up to £40,000)	£35.43	Band E (£88,001–£120,000)	£64.96
Band B (£40,001–£52,000)	£41.34	Band F (£120,001–£160,000)	£76.77
Band C (£52,001–£68,000)	£47.25	Band G (£160,001–£320,000)	£88.58
Band D (£68,001–£88,000)	£53.15	Band H (£320,001 and over)	£106.30

From 1 April 2020, the framework for the funding of local government will change. Government is due to implement a **spending review** in 2019 and launch consultations relating to the amount of business rates generated locally that will be retained, in addition to Council Tax, to fund local services and adult social care services.

This adds **uncertainty to budget planning** and therefore, in planning for years beyond 2020, the council may need to consider increasing general Council Tax levels to the referendum threshold, currently set at 2.99%. This will be consulted on.



Have your say

In this document we have set out the financial challenge we face. We have shared with you how we intend to balance our 2019/20 budget and are seeking your views on Council Tax increases.

The deadline for responses to this consultation is **5pm, Monday 7th January 2019**. Anything received after this date will not be able to be included as part of the consultation.

All individual responses will be anonymised. Responses on behalf of an organisation will have their comments attributed to them in the final report.

How to respond

You can share your views online at **cumbria.gov.uk/budgetconsultation** or via the response form on the following pages. Cut along the dashed line to detach the pages, enclose in an envelope and send to:

**Freepost
CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL**

You can also email your views to **budgetconsultation@cumbria.gov.uk**





What do you think?

So now you know where your money goes, how it is spent and how much it can cost to care for those who need us most, it is time to have your say.

Should we:

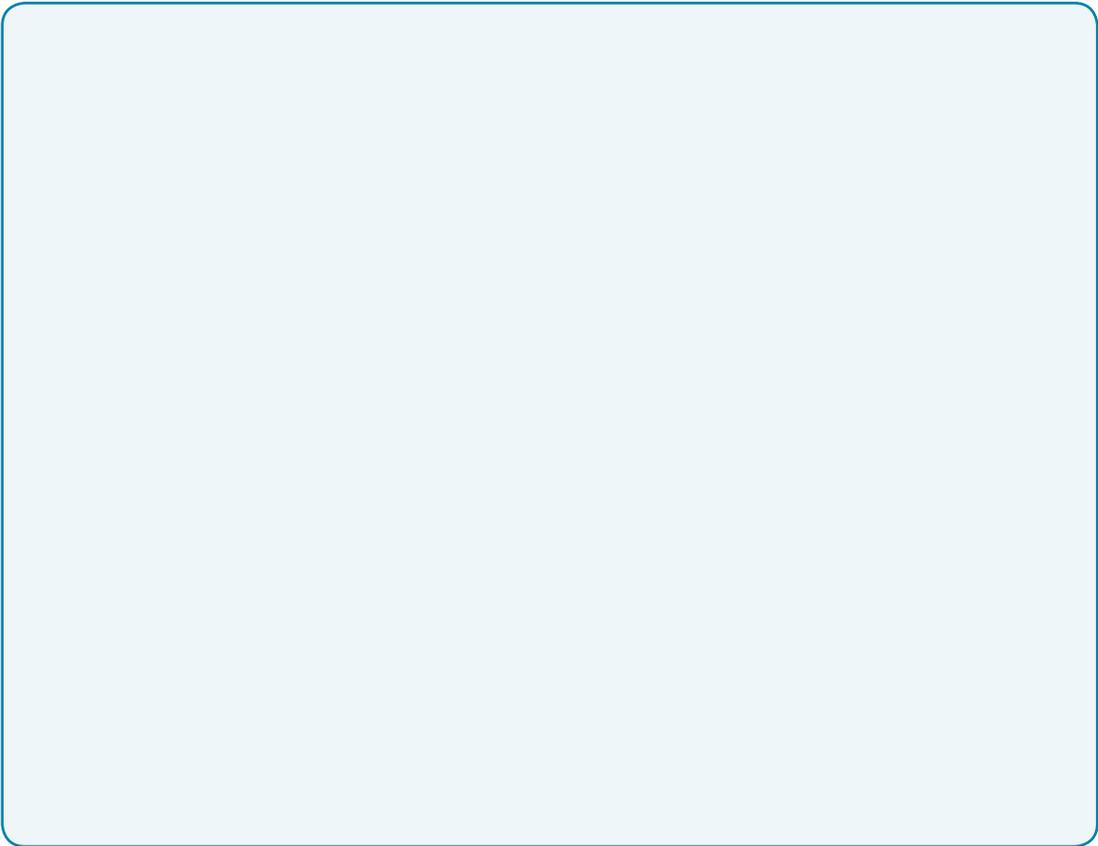
- a) Increase Council Tax by 1.99% to avoid having to make even more savings on top of the £22.730 million that we currently need to find? This together with the government's 2% increase to help fund Adult Social Care will take the total increase to 3.99%.
 - b) Not increase Council Tax by 1.99% – which would mean an additional £4m of savings would need to be identified across council services.
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Note

A 3.99% increase on Band D Property is £53.15 per year (£1.02 per week). The Council Tax payable per Band D property was £1,332.13 in 2018/19, this would increase to £1,385.28 in 2019/20 if proposals for a 3.99% overall increase are agreed. For every 1% increase this generates around £2million to be spent on council services.



Do you have any comments about the proposed approach to meeting the challenges ahead and building a financially sustainable future?



Equalities questionnaire

By answering the questions below you will help us understand how different groups of people from different areas feel about the budget proposals. All responses will be anonymised.

Are you responding to this consultation (please tick one box only):

Organisational responses will be attributed.

- As a member of the public
 As a member of county council staff
 On behalf of an organisation
 Other (please specify below)

What is your postcode?

Are you?

- Male
 Female
 Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself disabled?

- Yes
 No

What age are you?

- Under 16
 16–24
 25–34
 35–44
 45–54
 55–64
 65–74
 75+

Which district do you live in?

- Allerdale
 Barrow
 Carlisle
 Copeland
 Eden
 South Lakeland

How would you describe your current employment status?

- Full-time employed
 Part-time employed
 Self-employed
 Retired
 Student
 Homemaker
 Currently not working

Where did you hear about the budget consultation?

Translation services

If you require this document in another format (e.g. CD, audio cassette, Braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone 01228 606060.

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে **01228 606060** নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

如果您希望通过母语了解此信息，
请致电 **01228 606060**

**Jeigu norėtumėte gauti šią informaciją savo kalba,
skambinkite telefonu 01228 606060**

**W celu uzyskania informacji w Państwa języku proszę
zatelefonować pod numer 01228 606060**

**Se quiser aceder a esta informação na sua língua,
telefone para o 01228 606060**

**Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde görmek istiyorsanız lütfen
01228 606060 numaralı telefonu arayınız**



**We would like to thank you
for taking time to have your say
on this year's consultation.**

