



Hampshire County Council (HCC) have an open consultation for Hampshire resident on their budget plans for 2021/22 and 22/23. These involve making cuts of £40million each year. This comes on top of many years of cuts. The cumulative effects of these cuts is that by 2023 HCC will be spending £640 million less on services EVERY YEAR!

You can complete a questionnaire online giving your views. You must do this by 18th July.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/balancing-the-budget>

Councils by law must balance their budgets. That's now impossible to do without making cuts to services because Central Government (the Tories) have been cutting the money they give to our local authorities.

In short HCC are putting forward a plan to balance the books:

- Lobby the government so they can make charges for things they are not legally allowed to at the moment
- Increase charges for things and introduce new charges for things like dial-a-ride
- Increase council tax
- Cut services which will effect the old, disabled and young people the most
- Cutting school crossing patrols and closing HWRC (Tips)

The say they can't use their capital reserves to help balance the books because what's available isn't enough and could only support the council for 14 days.

As your new Labour Hampshire County Councillor team, we will do what we can to raise concerns about these plans, but there are only three of us so we need you to add your voices to ours to become a roar against unfairness and austerity.

In the online consultation form you will be asked about making choices, pitting one cut against another. We would ask you to complain about that when you get to the last question asking for your views and to suggest that they should be pushing government to restore their funding not cutting essential services.

On the consultation page there is a full document you can download and read. As you would expect there are plenty of fine words and not much detail, so we have given a summary below of what we think the main proposals are saying and what we think the risks are.

1. HCC want to lobby the government to legislation changes so they can charge for:

- use of local Household Waste and Recycling Centres (£1 per visit);
- issuing an Older Person's Bus Pass (which lasts for five years) (£10);

- recovering 25% of the per journey fare for concessionary travel. (The County Council would continue to pay 75% of the fare and would place a cap on the daily charge per person);
- Home to School Transport (means-testing could apply).

2. Using reserves to plug the funding gap no longer feasible option because:

- 83% of the councils' reserves are already accounted for projects like new schools and school maintenance some of it is also money held for other organisations like the LEP/schools.
- The remaining 17% is only enough to run the council for about 14 days.

3. Increasing charges

Raise existing charges or introduce new charges to help cover the costs of running local services. This approach was used over the last few years for some services – for example, introducing parking charges at countryside sites, and room hire fees at local libraries. Other charge increases or new charges could include higher charges for parking in our public parks/leisure areas, parking charges for village/small town high streets, charging people premium rates to use community transport like dial a ride and not allowing OAP/Disabled bus passes to be used on it so they would have to pay to use.

4. Council tax increases.

HCC has third lowest council tax in the UK despite being one of the richest areas. This means we are £36m per year worse off EVERY YEAR than if we had previously increased charges as an “average” on the league table.

This decision is political dogma, not sound financial management.

Every 1% rise = £7 million extra funding.

5. CUTS to services

Key themes include reducing or stopping some services, using IT/technology to replace services, greater use of volunteers, charities and friends and families. More use of Direct Payment type systems.

Theme	Example
Cut through charging. Risk – centres will close no access to leisure for children and reduced income families. Elderly and disabled isolation. Road safety for children	Carparking at parks etc Making outdoor leisure parks/centres profit centres No free community transport (dial a ride) premium charges and no bus pass use on services. Charge for blue badges and bus passes Possible charges/contributions for respite care? Cross charging other organisations like NHS. Making School crossing patrols a full cost recovery item. Schools will have to pay or won't get one.
Greater reliance on volunteers and charities Risk - fragility of service, higher risk of abuse cases. More libraries closed and turned into community libraries.	Use Volunteers friend and families to run libraries, county parks museums, providing personal care support to disabled children and adults and elderly People to be referred to finding other sources of funding from charities etc to reduce burden on council paying for things.
Accessing services remotely and using IT	Closing local/satellite centres providing substance addiction and mental health support and running

Risk – not always appropriate will reduce take up and impact outcomes, could result in life threatening low level of service for some who need care.	online replacement – will result in poor service/returning to dependency. Assisted technology to replace hands on care – worst case examples include Alexa for medication reminders and calling for help etc instead of personal domiciliary care. Or even online social services visits
Cut to grants Risk - services cease. Rise in mental health, teenage pregnancies and possible even suicide/or offending. See also cuts to Public Health consultation.	Cutting ALL grants for mental health in homelessness settings with expectation that local Borough councils will pick up cost. Cutting health visitors, school nursing and sexual health clinics, including sexual mental health support.
Staffing changes and redundancies Risk -impact on services and safety of vulnerable children	Increased flexible working. Redundancies of HCC escorts for school to home transport that accompany disabled/vulnerable children. Taxi firms to supply.
Direct payments and outsourcing Risk- service users will not be given sufficient to cover the actual cost, or have the capacity to take on employer role.	Direct payments to be introduced for respite for carers plus more outsourcing of services so HCC doesn't have to provide them. There may be a shortfall of service availability and service users given Direct Payments are forced to become commissioners and employers with associated employment costs.
General cuts and reductions Loss of service and independent living. Increased fly tipping	Some Young adults may be moved from residential to assisted living with greater reliance on volunteers to help. Some elderly will be placed in residential reducing home service costs. Tips (HWRC to close may need to travel up to 20 miles for one. Some will have reduced operating hours or days.

Changing/cutting services – the bigger picture

Home school transport (£2.5m cut) more sharing even for different schools Renegotiating the contracts with fewer taxi operators or single one. Get rid of HCC escorts and make taxi services provide them within the contract cost.

Child placements - £2.7m cut - Keeping children with carers/parents and providing them with education support on parenting. Getting more children to return to families. Does this return them to the place of danger? Recruit more foster carers as cheaper than residential

Breaks for carers of disabled children – 600K cut -Use more volunteers and outsourcing, deliver respite services in the homes? Direct payments - give parents/carers the money and they can source their own respite and also take on burden of being an employer – money is never enough to cover

Younger Adults -£8.7m cuts – (18-65yo) with disabilities mental health etc. reduce paid for support by using IT, volunteers and charities. Move people from residential into supported living. Reduce challenging behaviour strategies. More volunteers to provide personal care. Move older adults into residential age related care.

Admin/HQ functions for adult social care - £1.1 cuts STOP all grants funded by adult social care to volunteer/community services, reduce funding for non statutory services. In real terms that include

mental health support for homeless delivered in shelters etc – Boroughs or NHS expected to pick up the tab

HCC Care – direct care service - £2.3 m cut – home based residential nursing specialist dementia care – will charge NHS for any temp bed use (used for post or pre hospital assessments) More care being given in the home, people may be moved about a bit more in long term needs

Older Adults – £6.9m cuts. More use of IT, domiciliary care and “direct payments” More outsourcing and signposting to voluntary and community services. Reducing costs by getting family and friends and “assistive technology” People not assessed as financially eligible will get less support.

Public Health - £4.4 Million of cuts. This includes sexual health, substance misuse, school nursing, domestic abuse health visitors mental health services. Closing centres leading to difficulty accessing services, more online consultations, more volunteers, stopping services altogether.

School crossing patrols - £1.1 million – stop funding them Full cost recovery only – charging schools/local councils/PTA.

Waste Recycling Centre – Tips - £1.7m cuts – Close some and reduce hours in others or only open on certain days. Residents to split bagged waste to improve recycling. No black bin bags of rubbish! May have to travel up to 20miles for a tip

Transport reductions – £1.5 cuts – this covers Dial a ride, Call and Go, Free bus pass scheme for disabled and OAP. No OAP bus pass allowed in taxi share or dial a ride etc. Reduce to nation minimum. Charge more for using services like dial a ride. Premium chargeable application process for blue badges and Bus passes.

Please act now -

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The attached extract from HCC Budget consultation document shows historic cuts and their cumulative effect.

How savings have been managed to-date

Since 2008, the County Council has been changing the way it works to respond to continuing pressures on local government funding. In total, this has resulted in savings of over £560 million being removed from the budget in the last 13 years. The County Council predicts it will need to find a further £80 million in the next two years, bringing the cumulative recurring amount to £640 million.

Per annum savings achieved via cost reduction exercises

