

Snettisham Parish Council

NCC

Budget Consultation

By email

Dear Sir,

Given the timing of the request to comment on the budget proposals, Council had been unable to consider this in a formal meeting. Our standing orders allow me to draft a response based on previous Council decisions and statements, which is then circulated. This I have done, and so please accept this as Council's formal response.

We do not in general comment on the level of precept etc. of other local organisations, believing this to be their prerogative, for which they are democratically accountable.

Regarding adult care payment, Council believes that this should relate to the amount that people can afford. The detail of how this is calculated is an administrative matter, but should be fair and proportionate.

With children's service, need should be the principal determinant, and the prevention of future problems, even if, in the short term, this may cost more. Regarding shared use of buildings, this seems an eminently sensible way of achieving economy and maintaining front line services.

As a rural parish, the state of the roads (and indeed all infrastructure) is vital to our local economy. We would resist savings which are false economies – i.e. storing up problems for the future. We are aware that there are cuts in non-statutory functions (grass-cutting etc.) but these are ones that we end up having to cover to keep our residents content, so the savings are not actual



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ones for residents, merely becoming additional items for us – this is frustrating. As to gritting, while our roads may be “minor” in terms of classification, they are relatively more important to us, and we would resist cuts here because of their safety and economic considerations.

With regard to recycling centres, again we understand that in statutory terms, you do not have to provide certain services. This is not easily understood by residents, and we know from our own experience that the excuse “we don’t have to” does not always convince. A saving of £180,000 overall may not be worth the headache politically, and administratively might be a nightmare.

Bus services are important to our residents, and one comment we do hear refers to the duplication of services. We would have no objection to any system which maintained real services at the level they currently operate. Again this is an administrative issue.

We are also conscious that the population of this area is increasing rapidly, so would note that NCC’s income from the area must consequently be rising. We do consider that we are often the poor relation, being so distant from Norwich, and would observe that NCC should bear this in mind in allocating spending between areas.

Finally, as I have commented, we are taking up some of the financial strain, where we legally can, and would expect that NCC take full account of what parishes do, and try to assist them as much as possible.

With kind regards

Simon Bower
Parish Clerk
11/12/17

