

2025/26 Budget

NCC has agreed its budget for 2025/26. It will require a 4.99% increase in Council Tax. The increase is due to an increasing demand for Adult Social Care and Children's Services, particularly those with Special educational Needs.

Social Workers had a very busy Christmas and New Year having received 441 calls between Dec 24th and Jan 1st.

112 were for Adult Social Care emergencies and 329 for Children's Social Care emergencies.

Devolution

NCC responded to an invitation from Jim McMahon MP, Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution, to apply to be part of the Devolution Prioritisation Programme. The application had to include a request to postpone County Council elections.

The proposal was considered and agreed at an Extraordinary Council Meeting and a Cabinet Meeting, both of which were held on January 9th because the application had to be in by January 10th.

We were told the Government would write to all local councils, Districts and County, by the end of January explaining the next steps but at the time of writing this report, Feb 1st, we had not yet received a reply.

Norwich Western Link

NCC has withdrawn the planning application for the Norwich Western Link. The Link is still a priority for the County Council which has written to the Dept of Transport Minister hoping to find a solution. Natural England has always opposed this 3.9 mile road because there are some Barbastelle Bats in the area.

Digifest

Every year Norfolk libraries hold a Digifest for children and young people up to the age of 16. Last year they won an Award for Family Learning.

This years Digifest which includes learning coding skills with robots, creating with 3D pens, stop motion animation, and a virtual reality workshop for 12 – 16 years olds in Norwich, will run from 1 – 28th February. Events are free but places must be booked, www.norfolk.gov.uk/digifest

Tech Skills for Life

NCC's Digital Services Team's Tech Skills for Life project won the Digital Inclusion category at the Smarter Working Live Awards, which was hosted by the Government Property Agency in partnership with Gov.News. The Award celebrates outstanding examples of innovation, creativity and dedication to smarter working across the public sector.

Tech Skills for Life is a partnership with the NHS and a range of voluntary and community organisations to ensure people can use technology and access the essential on line services if they want to. The project was piloted in West Norfolk and is

about to be rolled out further to Nth Norfolk and Gt Yarmouth. Other districts will be included in the future.

Margaret

Cllr. Margaret Dewsbury

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Norfolk County Council: Hingham Division
South Norfolk Council: Easton Ward

My pronouns are she/her

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