

Your budget questions answered

Question: Why do I pay council tax?

Answer: Council tax helps pay for lots of different services that benefit you and your community. About two thirds of our budget is spent supporting people – that's older people, disabled and vulnerable people as well as babies, children and families.

The rest is spent on things like cleaning and lighting streets; emptying bins; mending roads; looking after parks, open spaces, cemeteries and crematorium; dealing with planning applications; attracting investment; providing sport, leisure and cultural activities; supporting businesses and running our organisation.

Your council tax bill also includes payments to Humberside Police, Humberside Fire and Rescue and, in some areas, the parish council.

Question: Why do we have to pay more council tax when services are being cut?

Answer: Council tax is only one of our main funding sources. The other two are grants from central government and business rates. Although your council tax has gone up, we've lost a lot of funding from central government.

In 2013 the main grant from central government was just over £52-million but it has fallen to less than £18-million this year. A loss of about £34-million.

Council tax now makes up just under half of our funding and we need to rely more on business rates, but these can vary. There's uncertainty about how much we'll receive in future and we don't always receive as much as we expect.

Question: You've got plenty of cash in reserve, can't you spend some of it?

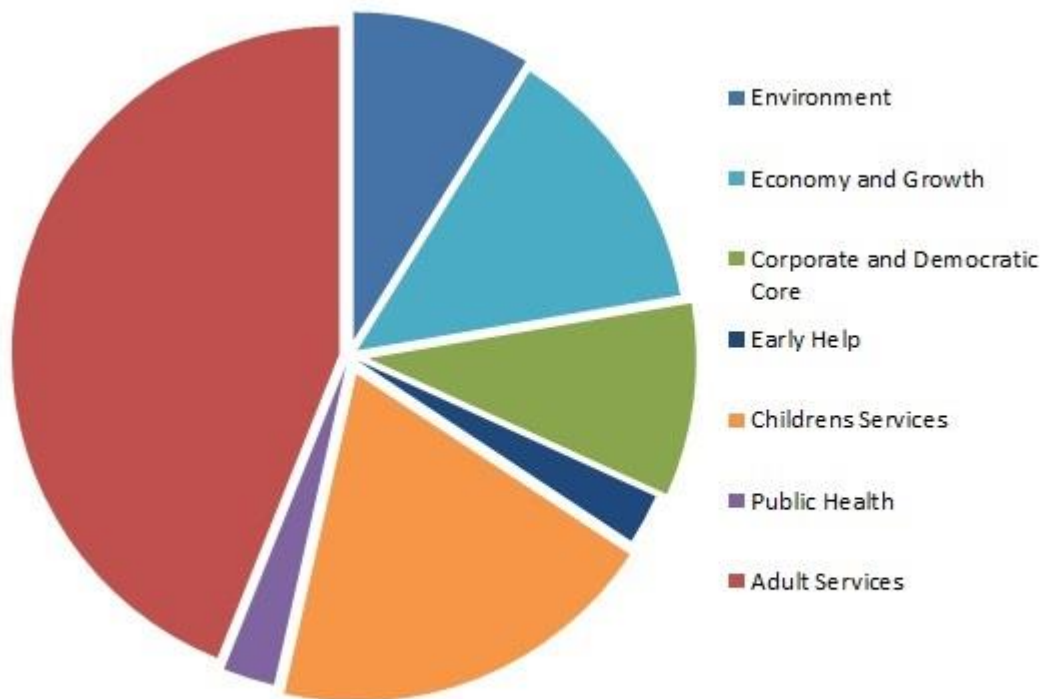
Answer: We need to keep a general reserve to cover emergencies and unplanned costs alongside earmarked reserves for specific purposes. We've used some of our reserves to help give us time to bring about some of the changes needed as our budget reduced, but these can only be used once – once they've gone, they've gone.

Question: How can you afford to build a new town centre cinema when you're cutting other services?

Answer: We're not building a new cinema, it's a private development that will generate additional business rates for the area.

Question: Where does the money go?

Answer: Our budget is divided into seven main pots. These are:



ADULT SERVICES - £46,614,900 (This includes Adult Social Care, Home Options and Housing Related Support)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES - £20,434,900 (This includes Safeguarding, Through Care and Disability, Special Educational Needs and Specialist Services, Vulnerable Children's Services and Access Services, includes school admissions, transport, behaviour and attendance, School Improvement Services.)

ECONOMY AND GROWTH - £14,314,100 (This includes Highways, transport, street lighting and car parks, Planning, Tourism and visitor offer, Economy and regeneration, and Flooding).

SUPPORTING OUR ORGANISATION - £10,075,200. This includes shared services (legal, finance, human resources, IT, procurement and print), Assets and Facilities Management (the council's own buildings, and assets which generate income), Democratic services, Scrutiny and Elections, Corporate and business services (centralised support services) and Customer services.

ENVIRONMENT - £9,364,300 (Waste and recycling, Enforcement and Safer Communities, Cemeteries and Crematorium, Neighbourhood and countryside services, and Street and grounds cleaning).

PUBLIC HEALTH - £2,702,500 (This includes Prevention and Wellbeing Services, Drug and Alcohol Recovery, Sexual Health, Child Health, Culture, Leisure, Heritage and Libraries.)

EARLY HELP - £ 2,631,500 (This includes Integrated Youth Services, Children's Health, Family Hubs and Community Learning and child protection.)

Question: You say you have no money, so how can you announce you're investing millions in Cleethorpes or the town centre?

Answer: We successfully bid for millions-of-pounds from central government and other organisations to pay for specific projects. It can be anything from improving road safety to helping build new homes, but it has to be spent on that project. If it wasn't being spent here in North East Lincolnshire, it would be spent somewhere else.

Questions: How can I have my say about the budget proposals?

Answer: Go online and give your views at www.nelincs.gov.uk/letstalk. You can also pick up a paper copy of the survey at the four Lincs Inspire libraries or the Municipal Offices in Grimsby.