

Background Information

* 1. What is your role within the local council:

- ☐ Clerk/Chief Executive
- ☐ Councillor
- ☐ Officer (e.g. responsible finance officer/deputy clerk)
- ☐ Other (e.g. consultant, locum, local volunteer, unpaid clerk)

If the local council has a clerk who is clerk to more than one local council please indicate the total number they are clerk to:

* 2. How many staff does your local council employ:

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2 - 5
- ☐ 6 - 10
- ☐ 11 - 15
- ☐ 16 - 25
- ☐ More than 25

If the local council has only one clerk/office employee please indicate how many hours per week they are employed for:

* 3. How many councillors, including current vacancies, does your local council have:

- ☐ up to 10
- ☐ 11 to 15
- ☐ 16 to 20
- ☐ 21 and over

Please state the number of councillor vacancies the council has had over the past 12 months:

* 4. What is the population of the area served by your local council:

- ☐ up to 2,000 people
- ☐ 2,001 to 5,000 people
- ☐ 5,001 to 10,000 people
- ☐ 10,001 to 15,000 people
- ☐ 15,001 to 20,000 people
- ☐ 20,001 to 30,000 people
- ☐ over 30,000

* 5. What is the name of your local council:

6. Within which principal authority area is your local council situated:

Financial Capacity and Capabilities

7. What is the level of precept for your local council in 2017/18:

- ☐ up to £5,000
- ☐ £5,001 to £10,000
- ☐ £10,001 to £25,000
- ☐ £25,001 to £100,000
- ☐ £100,001 to £250,000
- ☐ £250,001 to £500,000
- ☐ £500,001 to £750,000
- ☐ £750,001 to £1,000,000
- ☐ over £1,000,000

What is your local council's Band D equivalent council tax for 2017/18:

8. What level of general reserve does your local council currently have:

- ☐ up to £1,000
- ☐ £1,001 to £10,000
- ☐ £10,001 to £25,000
- ☐ £25,001 to £100,000
- ☐ £100,001 to £250,000
- ☐ over £250,000

9. Which statement most accurately describes the type of assets your local council has:

- ☐ the local council has no land and/or property assets
- ☐ the local council has land and/or property assets which are used to generate a regular income
- ☐ the local council has land and/or property assets but these are not used to generate a regular income
- ☐ in addition to regularly used land/property, the local council has land/property surplus to requirements which could be sold to generate a capital receipt/income

Please list any significant cost liabilities that the local council currently has:

10. Over the past five years what has been the main change to the tax base figure, which is used to calculate the council tax for your local council:

- ☐ the tax base figure has gone up
- ☐ the tax base figure has gone down
- ☐ the tax base figure has not changed

11. What is the primary reason for this change:

- ☐ not applicable, the tax base figure has not changed
- ☐ an increase in the number or type of houses in the area
- ☐ a decrease in the number or type of houses in the area
- ☐ a direct result of the adjustment made due to the way in which council tax benefit is now funded
- ☐ other (e.g. boundary review)

Local Council Strengths

12. Between 2016/17 and 2017/18, how has the Band D equivalent council tax changed for your local council:

- ☐ decreased
- ☐ no change
- ☐ increased by up to 1.99%
- ☐ increased between 2% and 4.99%
- ☐ increased between 5% and 10%
- ☐ increased by over 10%

13. What is the primary reason for the change in the precept/local council tax:

- ☐ not applicable as there was no change
- ☐ delivering a one-off project
- ☐ increase in day to day running costs (e.g. business rates, employer national insurance/pension contributions)
- ☐ taking over an asset/service from a principal authority
- ☐ providing a new community asset/service
- ☐ additional funding needed to prepare a neighbourhood plan
- ☐ to offset against potential future impact of capping/referendum principle
- ☐ the direct impact of losing council tax support grant

Other (e.g. a decrease) please provide details:

14. Excluding the precept/local council tax, what percentage of other funding sources (e.g. regular income from assets) contributed to the total annual expenditure of the local council in 2016/17:

- ☐ up to 20%
- ☐ 21% to 40%
- ☐ 41% to 60%
- ☐ 61% to 80%
- ☐ 81% to 100%

15. Prior to budget decisions being made, which one of the following statements most accurately describes how the local council seeks support from the community in shaping what the local council does and the financial implications on the precept:

- ☐ the local council regularly engages with the public through social media and provides the public with detailed information about the services provided and implications on the precept; the council also undertakes formal consultation
- ☐ the local council publishes information in advance of the agenda being published for the meeting at which the budget decision is being made and invites the public to comment
- ☐ the local council publishes information with the agenda for the meeting at which the budget decision is being made

16. Which one statement most accurately describes how your local council fulfils its financial management responsibilities:

- ☐ the local council has set financial performance targets and has a medium term financial plan (e.g. up to 5 years planning of income/expenditure) which is used as a management tool to minimise the impact of financial pressures on the precept
- ☐ the local council has estimated income and expenditure requirements over the short term (e.g. up to 3 years) but does not set specific financial targets
- ☐ the local council prepares income and expenditure budgets on a year by year basis

17. Which one statement most accurately describes how your local council fulfils its responsibility in respect of transparency with the public:

- ☐ the local council has its own website and uses social media to engage with the public, video/sound recordings of its meetings are available on-line, alongside a wide range of council documents
- ☐ the local council has its own website, uses social media and publishes a regular newsletter
- ☐ the local council publishes information using a community website
- ☐ the local council does not publish information via a website

18. Which one statement most accurately describes how your local council supports training and development:

- ☐ the local council has a performance management framework and funds training and development for staff and councillors, some training (e.g. planning) is mandatory for councillors
- ☐ the local council carries out staff appraisals and has a budget for training and development
- ☐ the local council has a budget for staff and councillors to attend sector specific events
- ☐ staff and councillors attend sector specific events in their own time and expense

19. Does your local council have Local Council Award Scheme status:

- ☐ yes, the local council has foundation award status
- ☐ yes, the local council has quality award status
- ☐ yes, the local council has gold award status
- ☐ no, the local council is, however, in the process of applying for award status
- ☐ no, the local council is not considering award status

20. Using descriptors from NALC's DEVO+ toolkit (www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/devolution-1/2328-devo-plus-toolkit-december-2016) which one best describes your local council's primary strength within the community:

- ☐ Culture Creator - creating the spirit of a local community through activities and opportunities for people to come together and participate
- ☐ Place Shaper - through community and neighbourhood planning
- ☐ Service Deliverer - taking the lead on delivering services at a local level
- ☐ Democratic and Accountable - local advocacy and representation
- ☐ Builder of Community Resilience - facilitator and enabler in building local capacity and capabilities

Business Rates and Other Sources of Funding

21. Over the past 5 years what sources of funding, excluding the precept and local council tax support grant, has the local council received:

- ☐ new homes bonus
- ☐ transparency fund
- ☐ business improvement district/local economic partnership funding
- ☐ community infrastructure levy
- ☐ s106 funding
- ☐ principal authority grant/funding
- ☐ other (e.g. lottery, bursary, locality grant)

22. If your local council was to receive 5% of the business rates collected in your area, on an annual basis, what impact would this have on the ability of your local council to build capacity and capabilities:

- ☐ high impact - there are a lot of large businesses and retailers in the area
- ☐ medium impact - there are small and medium size businesses, as well as retailers, in the area
- ☐ low impact - there are only a few small businesses in the area
- ☐ no impact - there are few, if any, businesses in the area

23. If a percentage of the locally collected business rates/other funding streams were available to the local council, what is the single most important issue for your community that you would prioritise the funding for:

- ☐ affordable housing
- ☐ community transport
- ☐ economic development
- ☐ health and well-being
- ☐ highways maintenance
- ☐ mental health and social care
- ☐ older people
- ☐ tourism
- ☐ town centre regeneration
- ☐ village improvements
- ☐ young people and/or children's services
- ☐ Other (please specify)

24. What single benefit would mandatory rate relief on public facilities such as toilets, community centres and cemeteries have on the local council:

- ☐ the local council has no facilities that would benefit from mandatory rate relief
- ☐ mandatory rate relief would give the local council confidence to take on devolved facilities
- ☐ mandatory rate relief would enable the local council to reduce the precept
- ☐ mandatory rate relief would enable the local council to provide free access to facilities
- ☐ mandatory rate relief would enable the local council to reduce the fees charged to use facilities

Onward Devolution

25. Is your local council within a devolution deal/combined authority area:

- ☐ yes, the local council is within a devolved deal/combined authority area which has an elected executive mayor
- ☐ yes, the local council is within a devolved deal area but does not have an elected executive mayor system of governance
- ☐ no, the local council is not within a devolved deal/combined authority area
- ☐ no, the local council is, however, aware of devolution discussions in the area

26. Within the context of a devolution bid/deal, whichone statement most accurately describes the involvement your local council has had:

- ☐ not applicable, to the best of my knowledge the local council is not within a devolution bid/deal area
- ☐ the local council asked to be involved and was directly engaged in the process
- ☐ the local council was not formally invited to be involved in the process
- ☐ the local council was consulted and responded on the proposals
- ☐ the local council was not consulted on the proposals
- ☐ Other (please specify)

27. For each service area please choose one of the four options which most accurately describes how your local council is currently taking the lead on behalf of the local community:

	Influence (e.g. influencing the way in which the service is delivered locally)	Participate (e.g. funding/jointly participating in delivering the service)	Deliver (e.g. directly delivering the service in your local area)	Not Applicable (e.g. the local council has no involvement in this type of service provision)
children and young people	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
community transport	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
economic development (including tourism)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
health and well-being (including mental health and social care)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
highways maintenance	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
housing	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
older people	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
planning	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
town centre/village improvements	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

If you answered not applicable, please indicate which of those service areas the local council would most like to take the lead on in the future:

28. Based on NALC's DEVO+ toolkit recommendations (www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/devolution-1/2328-devo-plus-toolkit-december-2016) please select three legislative changes or action which would make the most difference in building capacity and capabilities at a local level:

- ☐ supporting the creation of new local councils
- ☐ more joint working between the tiers of government (local and central)
- ☐ review the provisions within the Localism Act 2011
- ☐ giving local councils the power to adopt new governance models (e.g. leader/cabinet or elected mayor)
- ☐ passing on council tax support funding to local councils/bridging the tax base gap
- ☐ not extending the referenda principle to local councils and not capping precept increases
- ☐ reform of the business rates system
- ☐ stronger measures to provide local councils with a share of funding (e.g. Community Infrastructure Levy, New Homes Bonus, underground exploration funding)