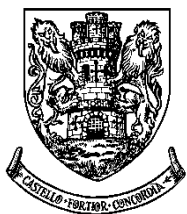


Cabinet Member Report for Finance



Northampton Borough Council

Monday 24th April 2017

Finance

The Council is currently preparing its Accounts for 2016/17. The year-end financial position reported to Cabinet during the year has shown an underspend which has primarily arisen from higher income streams in development control and parking, and also from proactive management of debt financing costs. The final outturn report is planned to be presented to Cabinet in July 2017. The Statement of Accounts is on target to be published for inspection by the public and audit by KPMG by 30th June in accordance with the statutory timetable.

The Council's work developing options and proposals to deliver its Efficiency Plan continues to progress through the Efficiency and Medium Term Financial Strategy Board. The outcome of this work will be reported to Cabinet later in 2017.

Revenues & Benefits

The Revenues and Benefits Service at Northampton are in the process of procuring new technology, aimed at increasing the speed it processes New claims and changes to benefit claims. This technology will support our decision makers to assess the level of evidence required prior to the assessment of a claim but will also flag cases where additional scrutiny will be required.

The service have just completed our annual billing process, with the successful issue of over 115,000 items of correspondence and subsequent customer contact. The impact of this peak has been minimised on the team and users of the service, through the support of the LGSS Revenues and Benefits Resilience team. This team is funded by ad hoc additional Government grants provided to support the delivery of new burdens (welfare reforms) and were on hand to support the increased contact.

The agreement that will lead to the formation of the LGSS Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee are now in draft and both officers and members from Northampton Borough Council and Milton Keynes Council will be working together in order to finalise this arrangement. Transitional projects have begun to be assessed to start to shape how this shared service will operate and these projects will commence early in the first quarter of 2017 – 18, with projects to select a single line of business system, how we work with enforcement agents, automation of processes and shaping our digital solutions among the highest priorities for the partnership.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance