



Cabinet Member Report for Finance

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 10th July 2017

Finance

The Finance team have been focussed on producing the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2016/17. The draft Accounts were published by the statutory deadline of 30th June, at which time 6 weeks of public inspection commenced. The draft Accounts were presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 3rd July, with the external audit by KPMG commencing on 10th July.

The end of year position for 2016/17 was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 21st June and continues to show the Council is in a positive financial position. The provisional General Fund outturn position as an underspend of over £1m which is proposed to be added to reserves to provide the Council with resources to deploy in ensuring its financial sustainability over the medium term.

The impact of the recent Queen's Speech on the Council's financial position is currently being assessed. Potentially the most significant change is the omission of a Local Government Finance Bill in the Queen's Speech which is likely to mean the previous Government's intentions to implement 100% Business rates Retention are expected to be delayed from the previously envisaged start date of April 2019. The Council will continue to monitor the position and reflect assumptions in its medium term financial plans.

Revenues & Benefits

The Service has had a very positive start to the new financial and performance year. Our Revenues and Benefits call centre continues to deliver on the benefits of the improvement plan that has been in place and continues to increase our response rate to our customers. The service remains focused on achieving continuous improvements and has already made great progress against the operational improvement plans for 2017/18.

The service is continuing to review any impacts of the 2017/18 CTRS scheme to ensure there is the right balance between recovery and customer support.

Further to this the service has finished a county wide review of Single Person discount claims. The purpose of these reviews are to reduce the risk of fraud within the system and increase the collectable revenue within the tax base. The two year review has successfully raised an additional £1 million of collectable revenue across 6 of the 7 districts and borough councils in Northamptonshire, including Northampton.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance