



Cabinet Member Report for Finance

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 6th November 2017

Finance

In recent years the Council has set a balanced budget and also contributed to reserves. However, Council will be aware of the financial challenges that face local government over the medium term, and this council is no different with a projected annual funding gap of £5m by 2021. To ensure the Council manages this financial challenge cabinet members and senior officers have been developing options over recent months to ensure the continued financial viability of the Council. The cabinet meeting in October agreed a set of principles which the Cabinet will use in proposing a draft Budget 2018/19. The draft budget will be considered by Cabinet in December, prior to a period of consultation before the Budget is approved in February 2018.

The Council has been working jointly with all other councils in the county to submit a bid to Government to be a pilot for 100% Business Rates Retention for 2018/19. The Government has stated this will be a competitive process and our bid will be competing against others from across the country. If our bid is successful it would mean additional resources for Northampton and an opportunity to work with Government to shape how 100% Business Rates Retention could work in the future.

Revenues and Benefits

The Revenues and Benefits service has continued implementing and analysing the new target operating model, First Point Resolution (FPR) in Northampton. FPR for Council Tax has ensured the service has met its call answer rate and collection rate over the last 2 months. In addition, it has also ensured that the outstanding workloads are significantly lower than when compared to 2016. This level of performance is being sustained throughout October as well.

The service is also continuing to ensure all other KPIs are met and has commenced an outbound call trial to improve the Business Rates collection figure.

**Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance**