



Cabinet Member Report for Finance

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 6th June 2016

Finance

The Finance team have been working closely with each of the Directorates of the Council and its partners to progress Cabinet decisions. These include advising on projects such as Greyfriars, Vulcan Works and other sites in the Enterprise Zone to deliver the economic growth and regeneration agenda across the town.

In addition the Council is in the process of closing its accounts for 2015/16 and preparing the Statement of Accounts. The outturn position for the year is planned to be reported to Cabinet in July and is expected to show the Council has been effectively using its resources against a backdrop of continued reductions in Government funding. The draft Accounts are due to be presented to Audit Committee at their meeting on 27th June and handed over to KPMG, the Council's External Auditor, by the statutory deadline of 30th June. There is then a period of 30 days for the public to inspect the Accounts. KPMG will be auditing the accounts over the summer and reporting back their findings to the Audit Committee on 5th September.

Revenues & Benefits

The Revenues and Benefits service, alongside our colleagues in the One Stop Shop and Northampton Partnership Homes are in the process of finalising a local delivery partnership agreement with the Department for work and pensions. This agreement sets out how Northampton Borough Council will support citizens who commence receiving the Governments Universal Credit in 2016. This agreement will ensure our services continue to provide assistance to those on the lowest incomes throughout the current period of national welfare reforms. Providing assistance in accessing benefits and providing personal budgeting advice are key features of this support, alongside administering Discretionary payments to those most impacted by Government reforms.

Workloads within the service remain high and the team are also in the process of undertaking work to identify error within the existing caseload. The Government are offering incentives for the identification of errors within the system, whether these be errors by the service, the Department for Work and Pensions or the benefit recipient. The service are recruiting dedicated resource to aid the successful completion of this work in 2016, which will supplement the already high standard of quality assurance performed by the team.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance