



Cabinet Member Report for Finance

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 22nd January 2018

Finance

On the 20th December the Cabinet published its draft Budget 2018/19 and medium term financial plans for consultation. Full details of our draft Budget and the consultation can be found on our website using the following link:

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200110/council-budgets-and-spending/2340/budget-2018---2019>

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was published in the week before Christmas. This broadly confirmed the funding estimates made in our draft Budget. There were a few announcements in the Settlement that are likely to affect our medium term financial position, including:

- Council tax referendum limits being increased to the greater of £5 or 3% for lower tier councils.
- An expectation that a 75% business rates retention scheme will be operating from 2020/21.
- Confirmation that a fair funding review will be undertaken with an expectation that proposals will be implemented from 2020/21.

An assessment is being undertaken on the impact of the provisional settlement on our draft Budget and any amendments will be reflected in the Council's final budget which is planned to be considered by Cabinet on 21st February and at Council on 26th February.

Revenues & Benefits

The Revenues and Benefits Service continues to deliver to service standards for all service areas. A focus continues to be applied to ensure that processing times for Benefit assessments are to target and within an acceptable date range and continue to review 100% DHP applications within 14 days . The Service has delivered a robust recovery timetable of which is balanced against the increased support our customers require as result of the amended 17-18 Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The service has sustained improvements made to date with the Call Centre answer rate, with Decembers answer rate being the highest this year at 93.82%.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance