

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder	Council	18 January 2018	8(b)

**Executive Report: Resources Portfolio Holder**

**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1** To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Resources Portfolio, as set out below.

**2. Finance**

- 2.1** An updated forecast showing our projected spending levels and the recommended council tax for 2018/19 will be presented at the Cabinet meeting on the 14 February. I can confirm that, as in previous years, Budget Briefings will be arranged for the benefit of members.
- 2.2** The Council was notified of a provisional core grant settlement of £3.7m for 2018/19 as part of the draft local government finance settlement announced 19 December. This represents a loss in grant of £351,000 or 8.6% from that received in 2017/18. The reduction is £7,000 more than that assumed in the most recent Medium Term Financial Plan. Indicative figures for the subsequent year were also announced following the Council's acceptance of the four-year funding settlement to 2019/20.
- 2.3** Members will also be aware that the Localism Act allows local residents to veto excessive council tax rises. The Secretary of State (Sajid Javid MP) has confirmed that the core referendum threshold will increase to 3% (which represents an increase of £5.63 in Wyre) on a council tax Band D equivalent property in 2018/19 with the approval of the local electorate being required for any council tax increase above this value.
- 2.4** The response to the consultation on New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding was also announced with the Secretary of State deciding not to make any changes to the scheme to ensure "continuity and certainty" for local authorities. We also received confirmation of a new award in 2018/19 of £343,878 for four years which was not in the most recent Medium Term Financial Plan. Again, the report to Cabinet in February will provide further detail around the implications of all the recent announcements on the council's financial forecast.

### **3. Human Resources**

**3.1** We have commissioned SOCITM, the Membership body for IT professionals and Digital Leaders in Local Government, to carry out an independent review of our IT service. Their role will be to review IT current practices and provide advice and assurances in the following areas:

- To understand whether the Council's infrastructure is suitable to meet its needs following the recent investment;
- To examine the business systems and corporate applications and advise on the relevance and risks associated with "on the premise solutions" versus a "Cloud" based offer;
- To examine the Council IT budget including the devolved elements to understand whether the current approach supports the IT strategy and the Council's aspirations;
- Review the IT governance arrangements and whether these are effective and robust;
- Accessing the Council's future IT plans and their robustness.

**3.2** The review commenced in November 2017 and will conclude mid-January with a presentation to CMT highlighting the recommendations for consideration.

### **4. Procurement**

**4.1** A new Washroom Services contract has recently been completed working with YPO using their framework. The successful supplier is our existing supplier PHS. The contract is not high value at £5,589 per annum but will deliver a saving of £4,920 over a three year period.

**4.2** We have procured a Committee Minute System which will reduce admin time for officers in the collation of agendas and reports and will facilitate paperless meetings in the future.

**4.3** Following a period of research with other councils on the various systems available on the market, a tender exercise was conducted using the Chest. Our evaluation was based on 80/20 quality / price. Modern Mindset was the selected supplier as they demonstrated a better level of understanding of our requirements and provided more evidence of their capability to deliver these to the level required by Wyre.

### **5. Comments and questions**

**5.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.