

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>To:</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Item No.</b>
Cllr. Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader	Council	6 September 2018	7(b)

<b>Executive Report: Resources Portfolio Holder</b>
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## **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** I am pleased to report that the authority's 2017/18 Statement of Accounts received an unqualified audit opinion. The External Auditors Report to those charged with governance, which was considered by the Audit Committee on 24 July, also recognised that the authority's Value for Money arrangements ensure that the authority had proper arrangements to ensure it took "properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people".

- 2.2** At the meeting I understand that Amanda Latham (a Director at KPMG) commented that the result reflected the level of detail, robustness and quality of the working papers which is a testament to the professionalism of the team and to be commended. Ms Latham said that few authorities in their experience had been able to meet the new statutory deadlines without making errors and Wyre were one of a small number to achieve this. She went on to thank the Financial Services Team for their co-operation throughout the audit and their teamwork approach to what is an intensive three to four weeks. I would like to extend my thanks to all the staff who were involved in the production of the Accounts and to the Audit Committee for overseeing what is a very complex and important document.

## **3. Contact Centre**

- 3.1** The roll-out of the Universal Credit Full Service (UC) commenced in Wyre on 28 July 2018 when Preston postcode addresses were included in the scheme. Going forward, with few exceptions, working-age residents living in rented PR postcode addresses in Wyre and wanting to claim financial assistance to help pay their rent will no longer be able to apply for Housing Benefit (HB), but instead they will have to apply for UC. In addition, those

tenants who are already in receipt of HB will be required to instead claim UC if they have a change in their circumstances that prompts the closure of their current HB claim. UC will be rolled-out to FY postcode addresses from 6 December 2018. In anticipation of this, the DWP have arranged a meeting at Blackpool Winter Gardens on 13 September 2018 for Fylde Coast private landlords. Pension-age HB claimants are unaffected by the roll-out of UC.

#### **4. Asset Management**

**4.1** The previous tenants have vacated the Bungalow, the detached building at the side of the Civic Centre, so this building is now being actively marketed to try and find a suitable new tenant.

**4.2** Work is due to commence in September on the Civic Centre to relocate the ICT team from the ground floor to the vacant space on the first floor above the doctor's surgery. This move will free up accommodation near to the CCTV control room and discussions are well underway to facilitate the Police and Early Action Team to utilise this space.

#### **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.