

| <b>Report of:</b>                                      | <b>To:</b> | <b>Date</b>    |
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| Councillor Alan Vincent,<br>Resources Portfolio Holder | Council    | 3 October 2019 |

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| <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 2018/19 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 30 July, also recognised that the authority's Value for Money arrangements ensure that "the council has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources" and no significant risks or concerns were identified.
- 2.2** At the meeting I understand that Paul Hewitson (a Director at Deloitte) commented that the result reflected the dedication and diligence of the Financial Services Team and they thanked staff for their co-operation and professionalism in making their first year auditing the accounts as smooth as possible. Forty percent of councils nationally failed to meet the statutory deadline (31 July) including several in Lancashire and it is a credit to the officers that Wyre met this very challenging target. 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.
- 2.3** The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan will go before Cabinet later this month and was the subject of tonight's pre-council presentation. Owing to the impact of Brexit the planned multi-year Spending Review along with other major funding reforms have been delayed and it is expected to be December before further details of the 2020/21 Local Government Financial Settlement are known.

**3. Human Resources**

- 3.1** We have started a new initiative where staff can volunteer to become Wellbeing Champions for the council. The aim is to help improve staff health and wellbeing. We are exploring three potential roles:

- Listening Ear – the council will provide training to interested staff to become a confidential listening ear to encourage staff to talk about their mental health and have the knowledge to signpost staff for professional help if required.
- Providing Relaxation Techniques – staff with expertise in areas that may help to improve colleagues' health and wellbeing with relaxation techniques e.g. yoga, indian head massage. Sessions on meditation have already been piloted using a member of staff with this skill and have proved very successful.
- Voluntary/Charity work in the community – staff who would like to give time to a charity/voluntary organisation within the borough or endorsed by the council.

**3.2** A working group has been set up to take this initiative forward. Actions include: promote the concept with staff; encourage volunteers across all sections of the council; produce guidance for managers and to develop an action plan for the Time to Change Employer Pledge. This Pledge signals a commitment to changing how we think and act about mental health in the workplace and seeks to ensure that employees who are facing these problems feel supported.

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

- 4.1** The new reception alteration works at Garstang Swimming Pool have been completed successfully and within the budget. We have received positive feedback about this work.
- 4.2** The flat roofs at the Civic Centre have been recoated to make them watertight and to extend their lifespan. Repairs and external decorating works are also being carried out to the front and side elevations at the Civic Centre.
- 4.3** Specifications and tender documents are being prepared for the replacement of boilers at Fleetwood Leisure Centre and to improve heating in changing rooms.

#### **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.