

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr. Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder	Council	12 April 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 Members should now have received their council tax bills for the 2018/19 financial year reflecting this Council's decision to increase its element of the bill by just £5.63 on a Band D equivalent property to £193.94 or just under 53p per day.
- 2.2 Whilst the total Band D council tax (excluding parish precepts) is now £1,733.77, I wish to remind members that the Wyre element is only 11% of the charge with the costs of Lancashire County Council (75%), the Police and Crime Commissioner (10%) and the Fire Authority (4%) all contributing to the final bill that drops through our residents' letterboxes.
- 2.3 With our most recent financial projections in the Medium Term Financial Plan indicating a gap between expenditure and income of £2m in 2021/22, despite the progress made so far, there is still a great deal of work to be done between now and then to identify further efficiency savings. The Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service in conjunction with cross-directorate working groups have delivered and continue to develop a variety of projects to ensure our continuing financial sustainability.

3. Human Resources

- 3.1 I mentioned in my last update that we had invited SOCITM (The Society for IT practitioners in the public sector) to carry out a review of the IT service. This review has now been completed and the findings and recommendations were reported to Corporate Management Team in January. An action plan has been developed to address the recommendations which are now being progressed and includes:-
- appointment of an interim ICT service desk manager to transform the way the service runs;
 - the rebranding of the IT help desk to an ICT service desk;

- exploring options for a new ICT service management tool that will facilitate a self-serve culture amongst staff and members;
- restructuring of the service to ensure we have the right capacity and skills to respond to future challenges and effectively deliver our digital transformation plan.

4. Procurement

4.1 We currently spend in excess of £16,000 a year on publishing public notices in local newspapers which is a statutory requirement. We have now secured an agreement with Johnstone Press (publishers of the Blackpool Gazette, Fleetwood Weekly and the Garstang Courier) for the public notices which should deliver better value for money for the council and provide for the better design and layout of our public notices. The initial changes should deliver a 21% price reduction. Our officers will be monitoring this over a three month trial period to ensure the price reduction and layout changes are maintained.

5. Urgent decision

5.1 On the 15 March a decision was taken to appoint an engineering consultant. Due to the nature of the work to be undertaken and the need to appoint the consultant without delay this decision was taken as an urgent decision and not subject to the call-in procedure.

6. Asset Management

6.1 The digital hub help centre at Fleetwood Market was officially launched on 9 February. Working in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau the help centre provides help and support to our residents to enable them to develop basic digital skills and provides access to council services. We are also progressing improvements to the lighting within the market and will soon be going out to tender for the internal decoration of all the market halls.

7. Comments and questions

7.1 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.