



## **Councillor Cliff Lunn**

### **Executive Member for Finance and Resources**

#### **Report to Council on 24 April 2018**

**Executive 1 March 2018**

#### **Fair Funding Consultation**

The Council's response to the Government's Fair Funding Review of Local Government Finance was submitted by the due date of 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018 and we await further announcements and consultations in due course. A copy of the response has been circulated to all councillors.

#### **Universal Credit**

Universal Credit Full Service, for new claimants only, will start at Selby jobcentre in May 2018. The impact in the district will build up slowly over the first year. The Council is taking a proactive approach to managing the impact of the change and is working hard with partners to establish a "Make Every Contact Count" principle in relation to Universal Credit. The aim will be to reduce the risk of hardship for those claiming Universal Credit and to minimise the risk of higher debt for the Council. A report detailing the proposed approach has been approved by the Executive and considered by the Policy and Review Committee.

#### **Commercial Industrial Unit Rental Policy**

Executive also considered a report which outlined the current position in respect of the four commercial property sites currently owned by the Council, the report set out a range of options for implementing rent increases arising from a recent rent review and proposals for the future management of the units. The Executive noted that as a result of rent reviews not having been carried out or implemented consistently in the past the recent review had resulted in significant increases for some tenants of the Council's industrial units. Having considered the options presented Executive have agreed to phase implementation of the increases over a five year period, with a further review to be carried out in year three, in line with the lease. A further report will be made to the Executive at that point to agree how any changes will be implemented. The decision will achieve a continued income stream for the Council whilst also supporting established businesses to continue to operate successfully. The report also set out the Council's commitment to a programme of planned maintenance on the commercial properties alongside plans to standardise lease agreements across the industrial stock, ensuring management consistency in future.

#### **Burn Airfield**

An opportunity recently arose to negotiate lease terms for one of the parcels of land at Burn airfield. It is proposed that the Council grant a farm business tenancy for a period of ten years to September 2027. This will ensure a continuing income from this property and will

also ensure that the property can be returned to the Council in line with the determination of the other leases and tenancies at Burn Airfield.

## **Portfolio Issues**

### **Closedown of Accounts**

The Council has now entered the closedown period, with the team working hard to close the accounts for the 2017/18 year. This is always a busy time of the year, and this year in particular will see the formal introduction of the new closedown deadlines. Last year the deadline for the management accounts was end of July with a full audited set of accounts signed off by the end of September - we performed a dry run to the new deadlines and achieved completion of management accounts by the end of May with a full set of audited accounts signed off by the end of July 2017.

This year these new tighter timelines are formally introduced for all Councils so we have to repeat the achievement of last year. A special Executive has been called on the 24 May to sign off the management accounts and we will be producing a full set of audited accounts by the end of July again.

The team are geared up to deliver this challenge and are working closely with the auditors to ensure the deadlines are achieved and a quality set of accounts are produced.

Cliff Lunn