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The report considered by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at the meeting held on 9 September 2026 can be found here: Agenda for Finance, Audit and Risk Committee on Wednesday, 9th September, 2026, 7.30 pm | North Herts Council

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

(1) That Cabinet note this report.

(2) That Cabinet approves the changes to the 2026/27 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, an £826k decrease in net expenditure.

(3) That Cabinet notes the changes to the 2027/28 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a total £387k increase in net expenditure. These will be incorporated in the draft revenue budget for 2027/28.

(4) That Cabinet approve the debt write-off as detailed in paragraph 8.19.3.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) Members are able to monitor, make adjustments within the overall budgetary framework and request appropriate action of Services who do not meet the budget targets set as part of the Corporate Business Planning process.

(2) To comply with the financial regulations in relation to debt write-offs.

Audio recording – 58 minutes 02 seconds

The Director – Resources presented the report entitled 'First Quarter Revenue Budget Monitoring 2026/27' and advised that:

- This report was in draft form, and an updated version would be presented to Cabinet.
- Recommendation 2.2 in the report should state an £826K decrease in net expenditure to match the figure in Table 3 of the report, rather than a £662K decrease.
- The highlighted figures for Garden Waste Collection Service Subscriptions detailed in Table 4 were correct, and the Garden Waste Collection Service performance figures in Table 5 were detailed as 29,612 in Q1 2026/27 compared with 27,467 in Q1 2025/26.
- A change relating to lease adjustments and their classification as an asset was detailed in paragraph 7.3 of the report, but this could be subject to change for the Cabinet report.
- Overall, the revenue contribution for the capitalisation of the lease would be off-set by future revenue savings, with the 2026/27 saving shown in Table 3.
- A 3.3% staff pay award increase had been accepted by the union and would be paid to staff this month.

- There were some carry forwards proposed in the report and there there would be a review of all carry-forwards to address the comments on the year-end report.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Paul Ward
- Independent Member John Cannon

In response to questions, the Director – Resources advised that:

- Bigger contracts such as the waste contract had several mechanisms that would need to be explored throughout the year to assess the impact against the budget for this year and previous projections for future years.
- Inflation assumptions would be reviewed as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy update in November.
- The approach of how the Council conducted equality analysis on savings and investment proposals had been in place for a while. However, the sentiment that a proposal could be adopted by Council without considering the equality implications was noted, and it would be considered how this could be done going forward.

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis proposed the recommendations with an amendment to recommendation 2.2 to be an £826K decrease in net expenditure rather than a £662K decrease, and this was seconded by Councillor Brown and, following a vote, it was:

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