

## **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The Council has a good record of effective financial management and currently has a healthy financial position. Our latest report from our external auditors identifies that:

"The Council has managed its finances carefully through 2015/16 in order to produce a positive year end outturn."

"As part of its financial planning, the Council has looked to find innovative solutions to the financial issues faced. An example of this is the project to fit solar panels to council houses. In addition, the Council has sought to identify and put in place a range of partnerships across the local area to foster closer working relationships for the benefit of the community. These partnerships include strategic partnerships for example with Lancashire County Council, Liverpool City Region and community partnerships for example Active West Lancashire set up to improve healthy lifestyles and Ageing Well Partnership set up to try and provide greater co-ordination of services for older people. The Council is demonstrating a willingness to explore new and creative ways of working in partnership in order to deliver services in times of increasing financial pressure."

This strong financial position can also be demonstrated by the fact that:

- The latest budget projections show that we are on course to meet the financial targets for 2016/17 and that the year end accounts will show a favourable budget variance.
- There is a detailed programme of efficiencies, income, savings and other measures in place for 2017/18 to deliver the £1.4m required to balance up the budget.

There are a number of developments and initiatives that are currently taking place that demonstrate our innovative and commercially minded approach to services including:

- investment of £3.0m in the purchase of the Wheatsheaf Walks site in Ormskirk town centre, which will generate a financial return for the Council
- continuing to invest in IT, for example through our digital by preference approach, to provide better quality services to customers while at the same time increasing efficiency and reducing costs
- investment of £1.7m in the Greenshoots project to provide high quality industrial units on Gorseley Place in Skelmersdale.

Looking to the future the financial prospects for the General Revenue Account continue to be challenging with reductions in government grant funding and other income sources anticipated up to 2020.