



Finance and Treasury

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Simon Hall

January 2018

Draft Local Government Financial Settlement

In late December, the Secretary of State announced the draft Local Government Financial Settlement.

The main grants were unchanged from what had been indicated last year, which means that we will see cuts to our grants, despite the increasing population and demand pressures. This is despite the fact that the LGA has identified pressures of £2 billion on Adult Social Care and a similar amount for Children's Social Services.

The response from government has been to allow local authorities to increase local council tax by 2.99% and to confirm the arrangements for adult social care precept. In all government projections, they have assumed that local authorities put their council tax up by the maximum. This puts the burden for national obligations on local council taxpayers and is wholly inadequate when set against the pressures on council.

The delays in revising the needs formula means that the unfairness of Croydon's settlement is increasing, with population growth and greater need due to demographic pressures.

There was £19million announced to assist with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. However, despite all the issues we have and representations made to ministers, notably our role as a gateway authority, Croydon is set to receive just £370,000 of this. This is against the £5million plus pressure we face in this area.

Children's Improvement Finance Group

This group, chaired by myself and with Cllr Flemming and senior officers as members, continues to meet twice a month, to ensure that the relevant resources are made available to support the improvement programme and to ensure that we have a sustainable model going forward.

There have been some £3.5million of requests that have been approved and this group has undertaken detailed work on the budgets for Children's Social Care in 18/19 to ensure that appropriate growth is allowed for.



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Carillion

This administration had been monitoring Carillion closely for some time. Due to concerns we had, last year we ensured that the payment terms were changed, so that we were no longer paying in advance, but paying in arrears and withholding sums where there were service failures. This has protected us financially.

We had also put in place contingency plans. This is why, within less than 48 hours of Carillion going into liquidation, we had terminated the contract, brought the service in-house and transferred our excellent library staff to the Council, whilst ensuring continuity of service. I want to thank all officers who did so much work so quickly to deliver this.

Ward Boundary Changes - Polling Districts & Stations

The review of the polling districts and stations has been completed and will be presented to January Council for approval. This will ensure that the polling districts and stations reflect the new ward boundaries and facilitate electors across the borough voting. I would like to thank the officers for the hard work in bringing this important piece of work to fruition.

As the vast majority of residents will have changes to ward, at least the name, and a significant number of residents will have a new polling station to go to, household notification letters will be going out to all households in February, letting residents know of what ward they are in and where their polling station will be. In addition, where residents are changing polling station from the historic location, this will be highlighted on the polling card issued for the May elections.