

Copeland Council to report financial success

COPELAND Council is set to report a £170,000 underspend for the last financial year, its end-of-year accounts reveal.

The figure represents a “fantastic achievement” for the Council, says Mayor Mike Starkie, in light of the financial challenges the authority has faced in recent years.

The provisional accounts, that are pending the sign-off from external auditors, show that Copeland spent £10.34m of its £10.51m budget, and the money saved will go forward to provide extra funding for next year’s budget.

The budget was a ‘no cuts’ budget, and the underspend has been achieved by a combination of efficiencies across a host of departments and a higher-than-predicted income from commercial projects.

The figures do not include an additional £400,000 that has been saved in the recent support services review, which was completed after the 2016/17 accounting period.

Mr Starkie said: “It is a fantastic achievement for this Council that the accounts are not only under control, but we have come in under budget.

“It’s been widely reported that we have faced incredible financial challenges, both in the cuts imposed by central Government and internal difficulties unearthed during our own review of our finances.

“However, with the close scrutiny we have placed on our accounts, we have addressed historic issues, put robust processes in place and continue to become more modern and efficient.

“In terms of the budget itself, a council of our size could realistically expect to be between within five and 10 per cent of our target; after all, it’s a prediction, albeit an educated one. So to be within 1.6 per cent of budget, and with an underspend at that, is testament to our new approach and the work of our team and councillors. It’s a job well done.”



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