

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

Item 4	
Title	Performance and Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 and Budget Update 2024-2025
Status	Recommendations Approved
Record of Decision	<p>That Cabinet notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That early indications are that there are some emerging cost pressures in 2023-2024, mainly around increased demand and inflationary pressures as detailed in the report. These would be monitored, and an update would be provided in future reports to Councillors. 2. That early indications are that the outturn for 2023-2024 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) would be within budget. 3. That work is ongoing to set a balanced budget for 2024-2025 and would continue to identify measures which would provide a sustainable medium-term strategy. 4. That the Strategic Risk Register was approved by Cabinet on 12 July 2023 is detailed in Appendix 7 to the report. 5. That 47 sundry debt accounts totalling £30,845.08, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules. 6. That 573 council tax accounts totalling £420,213.78, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules. 7. That 39 Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) debts totalling £343,795.56, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

8. That 13 housing benefit overpayments totalling £2,261.53 as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the use of £1.1 million from the Licencing Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.5 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
2. Approve the use of £367,000 from the Regeneration Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.6 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
3. Approve the use of £281,000 from the Adult Social Care Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.7 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
4. Approve the use of £103,000 from the Youth Opportunities Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.8 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
5. Approve the use of £104,000 from the Efficiency Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.9 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
6. Approve 38 virements totalling £6.5 million, for transfers within directorates, as detailed in Appendix 9 to the report.
7. Approve the write-off of three Sundry debts totalling £171,225.85 as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report.
8. Approve the write-off of four Council Tax debts totalling £25,858.54 as detailed in Appendix 5 to the report.
9. Approve the write-off of two Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) debts totalling £41,357.30 as detailed in Appendix 6 to the report.

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

	<p>10. Approve the General Fund Budget Risks 2023-2024 register as detailed in Appendix 8 to the report.</p> <p>11. Approve the establishment of supplementary budgets within 2023-2024 as detailed in Section 7 of the report.</p>
<p>Options Considered</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In accordance with the Council’s financial procedures rules, all virements in excess of £50,000, or those that result in a transfer between employees and other controllable expenditure headings, require the approval of Cabinet. Contributions to and from reserves and the creation of supplementary budgets also require Cabinet approval. The write-offs, virements, use of reserves and creation of supplementary budgets detailed in this report which seek the approval of Cabinet are all considered prudent in the opinion of the Director of Finance. 2. In determining the proposed 2024-2025 Budget Strategy, consideration has been made to the deliverability of budget reduction and income generation proposals and budget pressures. If we were to not implement the budget strategy as proposed in this report, alternative options would need to be identified in order for the Council to set a balanced budget for 2024-2025.
<p>Reasons for Decision</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In order to ensure a balanced budget for 2024-2025 it is important that work is progressed as soon as possible. The approval of the draft strategy will enable the Council to undertake due diligence, consultation and scrutiny in a timely manner to fully inform the budget decision process in accordance with statutory deadlines. 2. In accordance with the Council’s financial procedures rules, all virements in excess of £50,000, or those that result in a transfer between Employees and Other Controllable Expenditure headings, require the approval of Cabinet. Contribution to and from reserves also requires the approval from Cabinet. The write-offs, virements and use of reserve requests detailed in this report which seek the approval of Cabinet are all considered to be prudent in the opinion of the Director of Finance.

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

Record of Conflicts of Interest	None
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	31 July 2023

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

Item 5	
Title	New Park Village Estate Redevelopment Programme
Status	Recommendations Approved
Record of Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the revised phasing plan for the demolition and new build of the Ellerton Walk redevelopment area as set out at Section 4.2 and in Appendix 1 to the report be approved. 2. That the relocation of the New Park Village Tenant Management Cooperative (NPV TMC) to an appropriate location within the New Park Village estate be approved. 3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Housing, in consultation with the Director of Resident Services, to agree: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The appointment of an architect for the detailed planning stage of the project. b. The appointment of an employer's agent to provide a quantity surveying and programme management role for the lifetime of the project. c. The appointment of a demolition contractor for the demolition stage of the project. d. The appointment of the main contractor for the new build stage of the project. e. The appointment of any consultants to carry out any relevant surveys and investigations necessary to the project. f. Any other appointments, agreements and variations not captured in this report that may be deemed necessary to facilitate the redevelopment of the New Park Village Estate. 4. That it be noted that an Independent Tenant and Home Advisor (TPAS) was appointed for the New Park Village Tenant Cooperative (NPV TMC) in November 2021 to support the NPV TMC and its residents and ensure that residents have access to impartial advice concerning the estate redevelopment. This contract is currently being reviewed.

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

Options Considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should the revised phasing plan not be approved then the original four-phase plan will need to be reverted to. Residents would need to be formally consulted again on this, potentially delaying the redevelopment. NPV residents are also widely supportive of the two-phase plan, so reverting to the original phasing plan could be problematic. 2. Should a suitable location for the NPV TMC office not be found elsewhere on the estate they could continue to use their existing premises. However, this would delay the commencement of the demolition stage of the redevelopment, as the TMC office is located within the first phase.
Reasons for Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval to redevelop the NPV estate was granted at Cabinet (Resources) Panel 23 July 2019 and so the Council is already committed to the regeneration of NPV. NPV residents are also fully expecting the estate to be redeveloped, and so any further delay to the project must be minimised wherever possible. 2. The maisonette blocks at Ellerton Walk are in poor condition, and the walkways around the estate have suffered structural damage and need replacing. Any delay in finalising the phasing plan and appointing the necessary contractors (architect, demolition contractor, main contractor) to the project could be detrimental to the mental health and wellbeing of the NPV residents. 3. A damp and mould issue on the maisonette blocks was highlighted in Summer 2022. City of Wolverhampton Council and Wolverhampton Homes have put a programme in place to replace poor-quality heaters and windows in the maisonettes. The decanting of residents from these affected blocks will support the December 2023 timeline and, where possible, reduce the number of properties that require remedial works.
Record of Conflicts of Interest	None
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	31 July 2023

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

Item 5a	
Title	Canalside South - Selection of Preferred Developer
Status	Recommendations Approved
Record of Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the selection of the landowning partnership's (City of Wolverhampton Council and Canal & River Trust) development partner following the evaluation process of best and final bids and in accordance with the final commercial terms and recommendations of the appended Transaction Report be acknowledged, endorsed, and approved. 2. That the Council enter into an exclusivity period with the development partner on the terms outlined in the report. 3. That the Council enter into a Collaboration Agreement with Canal & River Trust. 4. That authority be delegated to the Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer, s.151 Officer and Director of Regeneration to finalise all necessary legal agreements to affect the land transaction based on the terms outlined in the report. 5. That it be noted that 'best and final' bids were requested from shortlisted underbidders in accordance with updated technical information, pre-application planning advice. Legal and commercial assurance and advice received to date has ensured a robust evaluation process has been undertaken to satisfy s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972. 6. That it be noted that the preferred bidder has been agreed between the partners (City of Wolverhampton Council and Canal & River Trust) following a detailed evaluation and assessment process. 7. That it be noted that the process undertaken has enabled shortlisted underbidders to submit best and final offers following the completion of site due diligence, intrusive investigation, design development and planning feedback.

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

	<p>8. That it be noted that a draft development agreement is in place that would enable expedited exchange and completion (on a subject to planning basis only) thereby ensuring that adherence to the original forecasted programme is maintained.</p> <p>9. That it be noted that Vacant Possession (VP) would be provided in accordance with the timescale set out by the developer following receipt of planning approval to enable the implementation of development. This would require suspension of all interim activities and uses for the site to enable this important scheme to progress unimpeded.</p>
Options Considered	As detailed in the exempt report.
Reasons for Decision	As detailed in the exempt report.
Record of Conflicts of Interest	None
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	31 July 2023

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

Item 6	
Title	Exclusion of press and public
Status	Recommendation Approved
Record of Decision	That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
Options Considered	Not applicable
Reasons for Decision	Not applicable
Record of Conflicts of Interest	Not applicable
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	Not applicable

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

Item 7	
Title	Canalside South - Selection of Preferred Developer
Status	Recommendations Approved
Record of Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the selection of the landowning partnership's (City of Wolverhampton Council and Canal & River Trust) development partner following the evaluation process of best and final bids and in accordance with the final commercial terms and recommendations of the appended Transaction Report be acknowledged, endorsed, and approved. 2. That the Council enter into an exclusivity period with the development partner on the terms outlined in the report. 3. That the Council enter into a Collaboration Agreement with Canal & River Trust. 4. That authority be delegated to the Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer, s.151 Officer and Director of Regeneration to finalise all necessary legal agreements to affect the land transaction based on the terms outlined in the report. 5. That it be noted that 'best and final' bids were requested from shortlisted underbidders in accordance with updated technical information, pre-application planning advice. Legal and commercial assurance and advice received to date has ensured a robust evaluation process has been undertaken to satisfy s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972. 6. That it be noted that the preferred bidder has been agreed between the partners (City of Wolverhampton Council and Canal & River Trust) following a detailed evaluation and assessment process. 7. That it be noted that the process undertaken has enabled shortlisted underbidders to submit best and final offers following the completion of site due diligence, intrusive investigation, design development and planning feedback.

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 26 July 2023

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Options Considered	As detailed in the exempt report.
Reasons for Decision	As detailed in the exempt report.
Record of Conflicts of Interest	None
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	31 July 2023