

## Attendance

### Members of the Cabinet

Cllr Ian Brookfield (Chair)  
Cllr Peter Bilson (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Harman Banger  
Cllr Steve Evans  
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre  
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal  
Cllr Linda Leach  
Cllr Louise Miles  
Cllr John Reynolds

### Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
Mark Taylor	Deputy Chief Executive
Emma Bennett	Director of Children's Services
Tracey Christie	Head of Legal Services
Ross Cook	Director of City Environment
John Denley	Director of Public Health
Ian Fegan	Director of Communications and External Relations
Charlotte Johns	Director of Strategy
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
Becky Wilkinson	Head of Adults Improvement
Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer

### In Attendance

Cllr Obaida Ahmed

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## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

**1        Apologies for absence**

No apologies for absence were received for the meeting.

**2        Declaration of interests**

The following non pecuniary interests were declared in Item 5 (Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2020-2021 including Rents and Service Charges):

Councillor	Reason
Ian Brookfield	Wolverhampton Homes Leaseholder
Linda Leach	Wolverhampton Homes Leaseholder

3 **Minutes of the previous meeting - 17 December 2019**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 December 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

5 **Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2020-2021 including Rents and Service Charges**

Councillor Peter Bilson presented the report on an updated Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2020-2021 for recommendation to Full Council. The Business Plan aimed to balance the provision of new homes for rent, whilst continuing to invest in better and safer homes programmes to the existing stock and improving and redeveloping housing estates. The report also provided, as an integral part of that Business Plan, a proposed HRA budget for 2020-2021, including proposed rents and service charges to take effect from 1 April 2020, and a proposed HRA Capital Investment Programme for the period 2020-2021 to 2024-2025 for recommendation to Full Council.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to:

1. Adopt the Business Plan set out at Appendix 1 to the report as the approved Housing Revenue Account Business Plan including
  - a. The revenue budget for 2020-2021 at Appendix 1 to the report
  - b. The Capital programme for 2020-2021 to 2024-2025 at Appendix 2 to the report that includes the following among the proposed investment plans:
    - Continued investment in the New Build Programme
    - Further investment for the Heath Town Estate refurbishment programme
    - Plans for estate remodelling
    - Resources for a programme of planned Medium and Low-Rise Fire Safety Improvements.
2. Approve the implementation of an increase of 2.7% to social housing rents in accordance with the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 and gives 28 days' notice to all secure and introductory tenants of the rent increase from 1 April 2020.
3. Approve the rates for garage rents and service charges set out in Appendix 3 to the report and formally notify tenants.
4. Approve Management Allowances for Managing Agents as follows:
  - Wolverhampton Homes - **£40,090,000**
  - Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board - **£1,460,000**
  - New Park Village Tenant Management Co-operative - **£383,000**
  - Springfield Horseshoe Housing Co-operative - **£360,000**
  - Dovecotes Tenants Management Organisation - **£1,113,000**

5. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing in consultation with the Director of City Assets and Housing to approve an adjustment of allowances relating to the management of 162 properties currently managed by Wolverhampton Homes that have elected to be managed by Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board.

Cabinet resolved:

1. That the consultation responses as outlined at Appendix 4 to the report be noted.
2. That it be noted that from 1 April 2020 the Regulator of Social Housing would regulate social rents charged by Local Authorities. The rent increase at 2.7% is chargeable in line with Government policy set out in the Rent Standard 2020.
3. That the issues discussed in the 2018 Social Housing Green Paper which sets out five principles for a new fairer deal for social housing tenants focusing on the provision of safe and decent homes, resolving complaints, empowering tenants, tackling stigma and building new homes be noted.
4. That it be noted that the National Building Safety Programme of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Grenfell Inquiry pending its full outcomes, would inform future building safety planning. The Hackett Review 2018 makes recommendations for residential building safety and improvements to be considered as part of all future Housing Revenue Account (HRA) asset management and improvement planning.
5. That it be noted that asset planning in 2020-2021 would look at the future management and asset planning for non-traditional homes, including high-rise homes.
6. That it be noted that a review of Tenant and Leaseholder engagement and participation arrangement, to include the role of the Wolverhampton Federation of Tenants Associations to ensure continued strong participation and 'tenant voice'. This work supports the monitoring of compliance against the Consumer Standards and strengthened customer insight.
7. That it be noted that a review of the HRA Total Operating Model from 2020-2021 would consider future planning for Better Homes Investment (from 2022), the outcomes of the National Building Safety Programme, the future HRA Asset Management Plan and future Management arrangements for Housing Landlord Services.

## 6 **Council Tax Base and Business Rates (NDR) Net Rate Yield 2020-2021 and Provisional Finance Settlement**

Councillor Louise Miles presented the report on the estimates for the Wolverhampton Collection Fund for 2020-2021, which the Council managed on behalf of local precepting bodies and central government. The report also provided an update on the provisional finance settlement. The report would inform the budget setting process for 2020-2021 for the Council and precepting bodies.

Resolved:

1. That the Collection Fund Council Tax Base for 2020-2021 be set at 64,726.80 Band D equivalents.
2. That the Collection Fund Business Rates, also referred to as Non-Domestic (NDR), Net Rate Yield for 2020-2021 be set at £74.5 million.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance to approve amendments to:
  - a. The final Business Rates Net Rate Yield as required as a result of changes to the NNDR1 form (National Non-Domestic Rates return) by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government or data revisions and changes in projections.
  - b. The Council Tax Base as a result of any data revisions and changes in projections.
4. That the outcome of the 2020-2021 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement be noted.
5. That it be noted that the final budget report presented to Cabinet on 19 February 2020 would reflect the outcome of the settlement, budget consultation, scrutiny work and detailed budget work for 2020-2021, including a review of all budget reduction proposals and the risks associated with their delivery.

## 7 **Collection Fund Estimated Outturn 2019-2020**

Councillor Louise Miles presented the report on the estimated outturn for Council Tax and Business Rates, also referred to as Non-Domestic Rates (NDR), transactions on the Collection Fund in 2019-2020. The report would inform the budget setting process for 2020-2021 for the Council and precepting bodies.

Resolved:

1. That the payments to the precepting authorities of their share of the Council Tax surplus in equal instalments be approved.

The estimated outturn in 2019-2020 is a cumulative surplus of approximately £526,000. Based on their proportion of the 2019-2020 council tax bill, as approved by Council in March 2019 the amounts are as follows:

- City of Wolverhampton Council £465,000
- West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner £44,000
- West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority £17,000

2. That the apportionment of the payments from the precepting authority of their share of the Business Rates deficit, also referred to as Non-Domestic Rates, in equal instalments be approved.

The estimated outturn in 2019-2020 is a cumulative deficit of approximately £122,000; this is as a result of a cumulative surplus totalling £544,000 brought forward from 2018-2019 and an estimated deficit in 2019-2020 totalling approximately £666,000. As prescribed by legislation the amounts are as follows:

- City of Wolverhampton Council £140,000 surplus
- West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority £1,000 deficit
- Central Government £261,000 deficit

3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to confirm any final changes to the forecast outturn reflecting any further information received ahead of the statutory deadline of 31 January 2020.

## 8 **Gender Pay Gap 2019 and Gender Profiling**

Councillor Louise Miles presented for information a report on the Council's Gender Pay Gap at 31 March 2019. The report compared the Council's performance with other neighbouring local authorities.

Resolved:

1. That the contents of the report on the Gender Pay Gap for 31 March 2019 be noted.
2. That it be noted that the median Gender Pay Gap for 31 March 2019 is 0.23% and the mean is 4.54%.
3. That it be noted how this compares with previous snapshot data on 31 March 2018 where the median gender pay gap was 0.00% and the mean was 7.14%.
4. That the gender split in service areas as at 9 April 2019 and the division of labour in the service areas be noted.
5. That it be noted that the Gender Pay Gap data would be published on the Gender Pay Gap reporting site on the GOV.UK website, together with the Gender Pay Gap report, as required by legislation and would also be published on the Council website.

## 9 **Wolverhampton Digital Infrastructure Strategy**

Councillor Louise Miles presented for adoption the Wolverhampton Digital Infrastructure Strategy to support the rollout of futureproofed digital infrastructure. The Strategy would deliver benefits to the economy of the city and support the delivery of the Council Plan.

Resolved:

That the Wolverhampton Digital Infrastructure Strategy be approved.

## 10 **Better Care Fund Section 75 Agreement (Pooled Budget 2019-2020)**

Councillor Linda Leach presented for approval the Section 75 Agreement (Pooled Budget) with NHS Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group (WCCG) for 2019-2020. The Agreement was a fundamental requirement of the Better Care Fund (BCF) and had to be finalised and signed by both the City Council and the WCCG in order for the pooled fund to be set up and the relevant funding to be received. Delegated authority was also sought to approve any amendments to the Agreement.

Resolved:

1. That the Section 75 Agreement (Pooled Budget) with the NHS Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group continue for 2019-2020.

2. That the Council enter into the Better Care Fund Section 75 Agreement along with any necessary ancillary agreements arising from the main agreement.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Members for Adults, Public Health and Well Being and Resources in consultation with the Director of Adult Services and Director of Finance to approve any amendments to the Section 75 Agreement (Pooled Budget) for 2019-2020.

11 **Blakenhall Dementia Day Service**

Councillor Linda Leach sought approval to undertake consultation on a proposal to transfer the Dementia Day Service currently delivered at Blakenhall Resource Centre to the Action for Independence venue at Albert Road. The current Blakenhall venue was not equipped to support a modern support service for people with dementia. The Action for Independence venue was equipped to support the service, there was capacity within the venue and day support was already provided there for people with other disabilities. Consultation with service users, carers and other stakeholders was required due to a move of venue being a major change to the service.

Resolved:

1. That the proposal to initiate an eight week consultation period to discuss a proposal to transfer the current Dementia Day Service operating within Blakenhall Resource Centre to Action for Independence, Albert Road be approved.
2. That more detailed proposals be presented to Cabinet after the consultation period.
3. That it be noted that consultation would include full engagement with people using the service, their carers, support staff, Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group, Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust and the Alzheimer's Society.

12 **Scrutiny Review: Rewriting the Narrative - Youth Violent Crime**

Councillor Jasbir Jaspal presented for endorsement the recommendations in the action plan to the Scrutiny Review: Rewriting the Narrative – Youth Violent Crime,

Councillor Obaida Ahmed, the Chair of the Scrutiny Review Group was in attendance for this item. She gave a brief introduction to the review and the 10 key recommendation made by the Review Group, that aimed to support, enhance and share, existing good work where it has been identified and to seek assurances that where initiatives had proven successful that all possible steps are taken to ensure that these could continue.

The Cabinet congratulated Councillor Ahmed and her colleagues on the Review Group for their excellent work.

Resolved:

That the recommendations in the action plan to the Scrutiny Review: Rewriting the Narrative – Youth Violent Crime, as attached at appendix 1 to the report be endorsed.

13 **#YES (Youth Engagement Strategy)**

Councillor John Reynolds presented for approval a new Youth Engagement Strategy (#YES), developed with the views of 12,000 city children and young people (CYP) at its heart. Implementation of #YES would promote wellbeing, better connect young people to the city and give them a voice in shaping future opportunities. The Strategy also set out the funding required to drive the strategy forward as part of a wider plan to deliver a better deal for CYP in Wolverhampton.

Resolved

1. That the Youth Engagement Strategy, #YES, and the priorities identified by our children and young people (CYP) be endorsed.
2. That funding be approved to deliver #YES including:
  - A new, city-wide youth engagement team to better connect CYP to opportunities.
  - A new fund for CYP to co-produce activities and events.
  - Better access to information and signposting for CYP and families

14 **Tree and Woodland Strategy for Wolverhampton**

Councillor Steve Evans sought Cabinet's endorsement to a Charter for Trees, Woods and People and approval to a Tree and Woodland Strategy for Wolverhampton. The proposals would support the aims of the Council Plan, the Climate Emergency declaration and of several wider strategies, such as the Joint Public Health and Wellbeing Strategy. These actions would have a positive result for the City and help concentrate action to improve the cover and condition of trees and woodland in the City

Resolved:

- 1 That the Council's Tree and Woodland Strategy be approved.
- 2 That the principles of the Charter for Trees, Woods and People (the Tree Charter) be endorsed

15 **South Staffordshire Local Plan Spatial Housing Strategy Consultation**

Councillor Harman Banger presented for approval, the principles for the Council's response to the South Staffordshire Local Plan Spatial housing Strategy Consultation. In doing so he informed Cabinet that the City Council was committed to making full use of its brownfield options and protecting the green belt.

Resolved

1. That the following principles be approved as the basis of the Council's response to the South Staffordshire Local Plan Spatial Housing Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery consultation:
  - a. Support for the preferred housing growth option of local housing need plus 4,000 homes to meet wider Black Country and Birmingham Housing Market Area need;
  - b. Provision of detailed evidence to support the case that the Black Country is unlikely to be able to meet its own housing need up to 2038, and that the full 4,000 homes should be specifically allocated to meet Black Country needs;

- c. Recognition of the approach used in the selection of the preferred spatial housing option G and the benefits of developing a draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan for this option. It is important that the spatial housing option selected:
  - i. makes full use of brownfield and urban site options to minimise green belt release.
  - ii. ensures that sites selected for development are carefully located and planned to avoid areas of greatest environmental sensitivity and green belt harm, and to minimise impacts on infrastructure.
  - iii. ensures that any urban extensions are subject to an integrated health impact assessment; provide all necessary local shops, community and health facilities and primary school places on-site; provide secondary school places in appropriate locations; and address wider health service implications, to meet the needs of new residents and avoid impacts on infrastructure in neighbouring authorities.
  - iv. ensures that the infrastructure needs of smaller sites on the South Staffordshire boundary can be met without putting additional pressure on infrastructure in neighbouring authorities.
- d. Request that the impact of developments on the wider transport network is assessed, that development links effectively to the strategic transport network and avoids excessive pressure on sensitive transport links, and that developments minimise trip generation through all available mechanisms.
- e. Support for use of the very high green belt harm rating to prioritise site selection, whilst also suggesting that consideration is given to making use of landscape sensitivity ratings.
- f. Support for the existing Brinsford Strategic Park and Ride site allocation and request that this project and other supporting infrastructure which increases access to the rail network should be promoted in the new Plan.
- g. Support for the sites submitted by the Council to South Staffordshire as part of the "Call for Sites", as approved by Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 2 October 2018.
- h. Acknowledgment that the Council and South Staffordshire Council have been working together constructively on planning issues of mutual interest and request that close joint working on all relevant planning issues, particularly development proposals and infrastructure and delivery, continues throughout the Plan preparation process and is strengthened through the creation of a formal liaison group to regularly consider emerging proposals and their cross-boundary implications.