

Attendance

Mayor Cllr Claire Darke (Lab)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Obaida Ahmed	Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal	Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Mary Bateman	Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre	Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE	Cllr Celia Hibbert	Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Olivia Birch	Cllr Keith Inston	Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Cllr Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Cllr Jasbir Jaspal	Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Alan Bolshaw	Cllr Rashpal Kaur	Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE
Cllr Ian Brookfield	Cllr Roger Lawrence	Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Paula Brookfield	Cllr Linda Leach	Cllr Clare Simm
Cllr Alan Butt	Cllr Asha Mattu	Cllr Mak Singh
Cllr Craig Collingswood	Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN	Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Jacqui Coogan	Cllr Louise Miles	Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar	Cllr Beverley Momenabadi	Cllr Martin Waite
Cllr Steve Evans	Cllr Lynne Moran	
Cllr Val Evans	Cllr Anwen Muston	

Conservative

Cllr Paul Appleby
Cllr Payal Bedi-Chadha
Cllr Simon Bennett
Cllr Jonathan Crofts
Cllr Sohail Khan

Independent Member

Cllr Harman Banger

Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
David Pattison	Director of Governance
Mark Taylor	Deputy Chief Executive
Emma Bennett	Director of Children's and Adult 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
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
Laura Phillips	Deputy Director of People and Change
Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager

The proceedings opened with Prayers

Item No. Title

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Christopher Haynes, Councillor Milkinderpal Jaspal and Councillor Rupinderjit Kaur.

2 Declarations of interest

David Pattison, Director of Governance advised that all councillors were eligible to vote in accordance with the legislation and under the Council’s Constitution there was a standing dispensation to all councillors in relation to member allowances, business rates, housing matters and rents.

The following declaration of interest had been made:

Agenda item 6 - Final Budget Report 2021-2022 and Agenda Item 8 – Decisions Made Under Urgent Action Powers

Councillor	Interest	Reason
Sandra Samuels MBE	Disclosable pecuniary interest	A business owner who received a grant.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

The Mayor proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded, and it was resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 16 September 2020, be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

4 Communications

The Mayor was saddened to announce the death of former Councillor Pat Burns and former Council Leader Neville Patten.

The Council observed a minutes silence in tribute to the late Pat Burns and Neville Patten.

1. Queen’s Honours List

The Mayor was delighted to announce that four people with connections to Wolverhampton were recognised as part of the Queen’s New Year’s Honours:

- Liz Corrigan was awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to nursing during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Philip Cross was awarded an MBE for services in funding Starcross Youth Theatre in Wolverhampton.
- Joanna Jackson was awarded a BEM for services to young people through Girlguiding UK.

- Gregory Silvester was awarded a BEM for services to people with learning disabilities in sport.

The Mayor extended her sincere congratulations to Liz, Philip, Joanna and Gregory and confirmed that she had written a letter to all four on behalf of the Council.

2. Wolverhampton Literacy Festival

The Mayor was delighted to announce that the Wolverhampton Literacy Festival had returned for the fifth year, with more than forty online events and two thousand attendees. The festival featured authors, speakers and poets and attracted a global virtual audience across the world including Australia, America, Germany, Italy and the UK.

3. Ministry of Housing, Communities and local Government

The Mayor was delighted to announce that the City of Wolverhampton had welcomed the announcement that the Government had chosen Wolverhampton as the location to house its first ministerial department outside of London. The Mayor added this was a huge vote of confidence for the City and was delighted that the City had been chosen to host this significant move away from Whitehall.

4. New School Coming to Wolverhampton

The Mayor was delighted to announce that Star Academies had been given approval by the Department for Education to open a new secondary school in Wolverhampton as part of the Government's free schools programme. The school was expected to open in 2024.

5. Covid-19 Testing

The Mayor announced that free rapid testing for people without any symptoms of Covid-19 was available at six locations across the City. The Council had worked with local businesses across the City to help them to implement rapid testing within the workplace.

The Mayor added that she was thankful to the entire workforce and community organisations for their hard work to roll out rapid testing widely, especially to harder to reach communities. The Mayor encouraged all people without symptoms to have a regular Covid-19 rapid test.

6. Vaccine Roll-Out

The Mayor thanked staff and volunteers for their support in making the Covid-19 vaccine roll out a success. The Mayor encouraged all citizens to receive a Covid-19 vaccination to protect themselves and the community. The Mayor added that two of the Council's leisure centres WV Active Aldersley and WV Active Bilston Bert Williams, were being used as Covid-19 vaccination sites.

5 **State of City Address**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield, delivered his State of the City address. He paid tribute to those lost during the pandemic and extended the Council's condolences to families who had lost loved ones. He was proud how the community had come together to support one another and the Council's response to the pandemic. He also paid tribute to NHS colleagues.

He highlighted the achievements of the City, actions taken, future significant challenges and opportunities to come.

Councillor Wendy Thompson provided the principle speech in response to the State of the City Address.

6 **Final Budget Report 2021-2022**

Councillor Louise Miles presented the Final Budget Report 2021-2022 which encompassed the Capital Programme 2020-2021 to 2024-2025 quarter three review and 2021- 2022 to 2025-2026 budget strategy, Treasury Management Strategy 2021-2022, Final Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021-2022 to 2023-2024, Council Tax Formal Resolutions for approval.

Councillor Louise Miles outlined the recommendations of the report, drawing Councillor's attention to the challenges that the Council faced. She advised the proposed budget was balanced without the need to make significant or fundamental cuts to services.

Councillor Louise Miles advised that the Final Budget Report was underpinned by the Our Council Plan and Relighting our City Commitment to ensure that resources were aligned with the priorities of the Council.

Councillor Louise Miles advised that the Council was committed to supporting residents, children and young people, more good jobs and investment in the city and the City's green agenda.

Councillor Louise Miles advised that Council Tax would be increased by 1.99% and adult social care by 3%. She went on to outline the rationale for increasing these taxes.

Councillor Louise Miles thanked residents, partners and the youth Council for their support and contributions towards budget consultations.

Councillor Louise Miles advised that the budget set last year was affected and distorted by the impact of Covid-19. She acknowledged the funding received by central government as a result of the pandemic and provided a breakdown of the funding received and noted it was difficult to confirm the exact costs associated with Covid-19.

Councillor Louise Miles proposed the recommendations and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Wendy Thompson moved the following amendment to the budget:

1) Change to Council Tax Rate

A reduction from 4.99% to 3.99% in the council tax increase; funded from the Budget Strategy Reserve at a cost of £1.069 million.

At Page15 of this report:

At “Council Tax formal resolutions for 2021-2022” make the below changes:

At 2, delete: “£112,251,000” and insert: “£111,182,000.

At 3. (b) delete: “£530,476,000” and insert: “£531,536,000.

At 3. (c) delete: “£112,251,000” and insert: “£111,182,000”.

At 3. (d) delete “£1,765.49” and insert: “£1,748.68”.

At 3. (f) delete: “£1,765.49” and insert “£1,748.68”.

At Page 16 of this report:

At 4. Insert: “To note that West Midlands Mayor has not issued a precept to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council’s area as indicated in the table below.” after “To note that West Midlands Police and Fire Authorities have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council’s area as indicated in the table below.”

Delete the table at 4. and insert the below:

Precepting Authority	Valuation Band							
	A 6/9	B 7/9	C 8/9	D 9/9	E 11/9	F 13/9	G 15/9	H 18/9
West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority	42.02	49.03	56.03	63.04	77.04	91.05	105.06	126.07
West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner	118.37	138.09	157.82	177.55	217.01	256.46	295.92	355.10
West Midlands Mayor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Precepts	160.39	187.12	213.85	240.59	294.05	347.51	400.98	481.17

Delete the table at 5. and insert the below:

Billing Authority	Valuation band							
	A 6/9	B 7/9	C 8/9	D 9/9	E 11/9	F 13/9	G 15/9	H 18/9
City of Wolverhampton Council	1,165.79	1,360.09	1,554.38	1,748.68	2,137.27	2,525.87	2,914.47	3,497.36
Total Billing	1,165.79	1,360.09	1,554.38	1,748.68	2,137.27	2,525.87	2,914.47	3,497.36

Delete the table at 6. and insert the below:

Authority	Valuation band							
	A 6/9	B 7/9	C 8/9	D 9/9	E 11/9	F 13/9	G 15/9	H 18/9
Total Precepts	160.39	187.12	213.85	240.59	294.05	347.51	400.98	481.17
Total Billing	1,165.79	1,360.09	1,554.38	1,748.68	2,137.27	2,525.87	2,914.47	3,497.36
Total Council Tax	1,326.18	1,547.21	1,768.23	1,989.27	2,431.32	2,873.38	3,315.45	3,978.53

2) Creation of Children's Social Care Reserve Fund

That a new specific reserve to support the Children's Social Care Service is created from a virement from the Budget Contingency Reserve totalling £300,000.

3) Transfer of Funds from City Assets and Housing Division To Regeneration Division

An increase to the Regeneration Division budget by £136,000 to £6.639 million funded by a decrease of £136,000 to the City Assets and Housing Division budget to £10.312 million.

At page 116 of Budget Book 2021-2022, a one-year increase to the "Supplies & Services" of the Enterprise budget of £45,300 funded by a corresponding decrease to the Direct Employee Costs, Housing budget (page 42 of the Budget Book 2021-2022); generated from holding the Direct of Housing and City Assets post vacant for one year.

At page 117 of Budget Book 2021-2022, a one-year increase to the "Supplies & Services" of the Local Economy budget of £45,300 funded by a corresponding decrease to the Direct Employee Costs, Housing budget (page 42 of the Budget Book 2021-2022); generated from holding the Direct of Housing and City Assets post vacant for one year.

At page 120 of Budget Book 2021-2022, a one-year increase to the "Supplies & Services" of the Skills budget of £45,300 funded by a corresponding decrease to the Direct Employee Costs, Housing budget (page 42 of the

Budget Book 2021-2022); generated from holding the Direct of Housing and City Assets post vacant for one year.

Councillor Wendy Thompson provided the principle speech in response to the budget report and outlined the rationale to the amendment to the budget. Councillor Udey Singh seconded the amendment to the budget.

The report was debated by Council.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the amended motion:

Final Budget Report 2021 - 2022 (Resolution)	
Councillor Claire Darke	Against
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	Against
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	Against
Councillor Paul Appleby	For
Councillor Harman Banger	Against
Councillor Mary Bateman	Against
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	Against
Councillor Payal Bedi-Chadha	For
Councillor Simon Bennett	For
Councillor Olivia Birch	Against
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Against
Councillor Alan Bolshaw	Against
Councillor Ian Brookfield	Against
Councillor Paula Brookfield	Against
Councillor Alan Butt	Against
Councillor Craig Collingswood	Against
Councillor Jacqui Coogan	Against
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	For
Councillor Jasbinder Dehar	Against
Councillor Steve Evans	Against
Councillor Valerie Evans	Against
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	Against
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	Against
Councillor Celia (CeeCee) Hibbert	Against
Councillor Keith Inston	Against
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	Against
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	Against
Councillor Sohail Khan	For
Councillor Roger Lawrence	Against
Councillor Linda Leach	Against
Councillor Asha Mattu	Against
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	Against
Councillor Louise Miles	Against
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	Against
Councillor Lynne Moran	Against
Councillor Anwen Muston	Against
Councillor Phil Page	Against

Councillor Rita Potter	Against
Councillor John C Reynolds	Against
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	Against
Councillor Zee Russell	Against
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	Against
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Against
Councillor Clare Simm	Against
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	Against
Councillor Paul Singh	For
Councillor Udey Singh	For
Councillor Paul Sweet	Against
Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman	Against
Councillor Wendy Thompson	For
Councillor Martin Waite	Against
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	For
Carried	

The amended motion was LOST by 43 votes. There were nine votes for.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the substantive motion:

Final Budget Report 2021 - 2022 (Resolution)	
Councillor Claire Darke	For
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	For
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	For
Councillor Paul Appleby	Against
Councillor Harman Banger	For
Councillor Mary Bateman	For
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	For
Councillor Payal Bedi-Chadha	Against
Councillor Simon Bennett	Against
Councillor Olivia Birch	For
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	For
Councillor Alan Bolshaw	For
Councillor Ian Brookfield	For
Councillor Paula Brookfield	For
Councillor Alan Butt	For
Councillor Craig Collingswood	For
Councillor Jacqui Coogan	For
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	Against
Councillor Jasbinder Dehar	For
Councillor Steve Evans	For
Councillor Valerie Evans	For
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhil	For
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	For
Councillor Celia (CeeCee) Hibbert	For
Councillor Keith Inston	For
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	For

Councillor Rashpal Kaur	For
Councillor Sohail Khan	Against
Councillor Roger Lawrence	For
Councillor Linda Leach	For
Councillor Asha Mattu	For
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	For
Councillor Louise Miles	For
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	For
Councillor Lynne Moran	For
Councillor Anwen Muston	For
Councillor Phil Page	For
Councillor Rita Potter	For
Councillor John C Reynolds	For
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	For
Councillor Zee Russell	For
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	For
Councillor Stephen Simkins	For
Councillor Clare Simm	For
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	For
Councillor Paul Singh	Against
Councillor Udey Singh	Against
Councillor Paul Sweet	For
Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman	For
Councillor Wendy Thompson	Against
Councillor Martin Waite	For
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	Against
Carried	

The substantive motion was CARRIED by 43 votes. There were nine votes against.

Resolved:

1. That the revised City of Wolverhampton Council Capital Strategy be approved.
2. That the revised, medium term General Revenue account capital programme of £316.4 million, an increase of £1.6 million from the previously approved programme, and the change in associated resources be approved.
3. That the authorised borrowing limit for 2021-2022 to support the capital strategy as required under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 to be set at £1,166.2 million (PI3, Appendix 3 of the Cabinet report); the forecast borrowing was below the authorised borrowing limit.
4. That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021-2022 as set out in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report be approved.
5. That the Annual Investment Strategy 2021-2022 as set out in Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report be approved.

6. That the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators as set out in Appendix 3 of the Cabinet report be approved.
7. That the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement setting out the method used to calculate MRP for 2021-2022 as set out in Appendix 4 of the Cabinet report be approved.
8. That the method used to calculate MRP for 2020-2021 as set out in the Annual MRP Statement approved by Council on 4 March 2020 be amended to the method as set out in Appendix 4 of the Cabinet report.
9. That the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices as set out in Appendix 6 of the Cabinet report be approved.
10. That authority continues to be delegated to the Director of Finance to amend the Treasury Management Policy and Practices and any corresponding changes required to the Treasury Management Strategy, the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators, the Investment Strategy and the Annual MRP Statement to ensure they remain aligned. Any amendments would be reported to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Cabinet (Resources) Panel as appropriate.
11. That authority continues to be delegated to the Director of Finance to lower the minimum sovereign rating in the Annual Investment Strategy, in the event of the UK's credit rating being downgraded by the third credit rating agency, due to the unprecedented impact of Covid-19 on the economy.
12. That the net budget requirement for 2021-2022 of £258.5 million for General Fund services (paragraph 10.1 of the Cabinet report) be approved.
13. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021-2022 to 2023-2024 as detailed in Table 4 and the budget preparation parameters underpinning the MTFS as detailed in Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report be approved.
14. That a Council Tax for Council services in 2021-2022 of £1,765.49 for a Band D property, being an increase of 4.99% on 2020-2021 levels, which incorporates the 3% increase in relation to Adult Social Care, in line with Government expectations. (paragraph 8.4, Table 1 of the Cabinet report) be approved.
15. That work starts on developing budget reductions and income generation proposals for 2022-2023 onwards in line with the Five Year Financial Strategy (paragraph 10.5 of the Cabinet report).
16. That revisions to the local council tax support scheme (paragraph 8.7 of the Cabinet report) be approved.
17. That it be noted that the Council Tax base for the year 2021-2022 is calculated at 63,580.55 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"), as reported to Cabinet on 20 January 2021.

18. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2021-2022 is £112,251,000.
19. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2021-2022 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended:
- (a) £642,718,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act.
 - (b) £530,467,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £112,251,000 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - (d) £1,765.49 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T(section 1 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
 - (d) £0 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
 - (f) £1,765.49 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates
20. That it be noted that West Midlands Police and Fire Authorities have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as detailed in the report.
21. That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts as detailed in the report as the amounts of Council Tax for 2021-2022 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
22. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (3) (f) and (4) above, the City Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the

amounts of the Council Tax for the year 2021-2022 for each of the categories of dwellings as detailed in the report.

23. That a notice of the amounts payable in respect of chargeable dwellings in each valuation band for the year commencing on 1 April 2021 be published in at least one local newspaper and that in accordance with Section 3(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, this notice shall also make reference to the National Non-Domestic Rating Multiplier set by the Secretary of State, and specify that the Council Tax and the non-domestic rate demands are annual demands which cover the full financial year.
24. That the Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2021-2022 was not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
25. That as the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2021-2022 was excessive and that the billing authority was not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK Local Government Finance Act 1992.
26. That it be noted that the MRP charge for the financial year 2021-2022 would be £18.2 million; it was forecast to increase to £25.5 million in 2022-2023 (paragraph 2.14 of the Cabinet report).
27. That it be noted that Cabinet or Cabinet (Resources) Panel and Council would receive regular Treasury Management reports during 2021-2022 on performance against the key targets and Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators in the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy as set out in paragraph 2.12 and Appendices 2 and 3 of the Cabinet report.

7 **Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report - 2019/2020**

Councillor Alan Butt presented the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2019 – 2020 report for approval. He outlined the main areas of work undertaken by the Committee during the year. He outlined the change in style of proceedings following Committee Members feedback. He added that the Audit and Risk Committee had an instrumental role in providing independent and high-level focus on audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

Councillor Alan Butt also placed on record his thanks to the Members of Audit and Risk Committee in 2019-2020, both internal and external auditors and the Audit and Risk Team for their contributions.

Councillor Alan Butt proposed the recommendation and Councillor Jonathan Yardley second the recommendation and also placed on record his thanks to the Audit Team and auditors.

In response to Councillor Wendy Thompson's question regarding the three and a half vacancies in the Audit Team, Councillor Alan Butt agreed to provide a written

response to Councillor Wendy Thompson on how long these have remained vacant and whether these positions would be filled.

The report was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That the contents of the 2019-2022 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report be approved.

8 **Decisions Made Under Urgent Action Powers**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the Decisions Made Under Urgent Action Powers report for noting. The report detailed all the decisions taken under Urgent Action Powers due to Council meetings being cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield proposed the recommendation and Councillor Louise Miles seconded the recommendation.

Resolved:

That the decisions made under urgent action powers be noted.