

Time	4.00 pm	Public Meeting?	YES	Type of meeting	Executive
Venue	Council Chamber - 4th Floor - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SH				

Membership

Chair Cllr Stephen Simkins (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Obaida Ahmed
Cllr Ian Brookfield
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Beverley Momenabadi

Quorum for this meeting is three voting members.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

Contact Dereck Francis, Democratic Services
Tel/Email 01902 555835 or dereck.francis@wolverhampton.gov.uk
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Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 5 - 8)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record]
- 4 **Matters arising**
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes]

DECISION ITEMS (AMBER - DELEGATED TO CABINET (RESOURCES) PANEL)

- 5 **Procurement - Award of Contracts for Works, Goods and Services** (Pages 9 - 20)
[To approve the award of contracts for works, goods and services]
- 6 **Acquisition of Privately Owned Empty Property by Agreement or Compulsory Purchase: Sunnyside, Inkerman Grove, Wolverhampton, WV10 0EU** (Pages 21 - 30)
[To approve the acquisition of privately owned empty property by agreement or compulsory purchase]
- 7 **Progressing the City Learning Quarter** (Pages 31 - 54)
[To receive an update on the City Learning Quarter]
- 8 **Social Housing Management Report Quarter One, April – June 2021**
[To review and comment on the performance and key areas for improvement]
[report to follow]
- 9 **Exclusion of press and public**
[To pass the following resolution:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below]

Part 2 - exempt items, closed to press and public

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 10 | <p>Procurement - Award of Contracts for Works, Goods and Services (Pages 55 - 66)</p> <p>[To approve the award of contracts for works, goods and services]</p> | <p>Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Para (3)</p> |
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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet (Resources) Panel Minutes - 8 September 2021
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Attendance

Members of the Cabinet (Resources) Panel

Cllr Stephen Simkins (Chair)
Cllr Obaida Ahmed
Cllr Ian Brookfield
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal (Virtually)
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Beverley Momenabadi (Virtually)

Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
Emma Bennett	Executive Director of Families
John Denley	Director of Public Health
Charlotte Johns	Director of Strategy
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
Laura Phillips	Deputy Director of People and Change
Laura Gittos	Head of Governance
Julia Cleary	Systems and Scrutiny Manager
Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer

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 **Declarations of interest**
No declarations of interests were made.
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting**
Resolved:
That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 July 2021 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 **Procurement - Award of Contracts for Works, Goods and Services**

Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report seeking delegated authority to Cabinet Members to approve the award of contracts following completion of the evaluation process.

Resolved:

1. That authority be delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to approve the award of a contract for Hybrid Mail when the evaluation process is complete.
2. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, to approve the award of a contract for Supply and Delivery of Hot Beverages when the evaluation process is complete.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, in consultation with the Executive Director of Families, to approve the award of call-off contracts under the West Midlands Regional Supported Accommodation Flexible Framework Agreement 2021 when Staffordshire County Council awards contracts to successful providers under the framework agreement.

6 **Exclusion of press and public**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Part 2 - exempt items, closed to press and public

The Chair reported that as stated previously the meeting was in confidential session as the information included in the report could, if released into the public domain, prejudice the financial position of the Council or its partners. As such all present are under a legal duty of confidentiality and must not disclose any confidential information - to do so would not only be a breach of the Council's codes (for councillors and employees) but also a breach of the legal duty of confidentiality.

7 **Procurement - Award of Contracts for Works, Goods and Services**

Councillor Ian Brookfield presented, for information, the report on exemptions to Contract Procedure Rules approved by the Head of Procurement and Director of Finance during 1 to 30 of June 2021.

Resolved:

That the exemptions to the Contract Procedure Rules approved by the Head of Procurement and Director of Finance from 1 to 30 June 2021 be noted.

8 **Transfer of Housing Management functions of Springfield Horseshoe stock to Wolverhampton Homes**

The recommendations contained in the report, Transfer of Housing Management Functions of Springfield Horseshoe Stock to Wolverhampton Homes, were moved by Councillor Stephen Simkins and seconded by Councillor Ian Brookfield.

Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal reported on steps being undertaken to facilitate the voluntary winding up of Springfield Horseshoe Housing Management Cooperative as one of the Council's Housing Managing Agents and on the transfer of the housing management responsibilities to Wolverhampton Homes.

Resolved:

1. That the steps required from the City of Wolverhampton Council (Council) to support the winding down of Springfield Horseshoe Housing Management Cooperative (SHHMC) be approved.
2. That the transfer of the management responsibilities of the 249 properties under SHHMC management to Wolverhampton Homes, as the Council nominated housing managing agent be approved.
3. That the transfer of the SHHMC management allowance of £360,000 for 2021-2022 to Wolverhampton Homes net of costs incurred by the Council on behalf of SHHMC during 2021-2022 be approved.
4. That the City Council in purchasing three properties owned by SHHMC be approved. These properties would be purchased under the Affordable Housing Conversion Programme, would become part of the Council's affordable housing stock, to be managed by Wolverhampton Homes.
5. That it be agreed that provisional support arrangements would be provided by Wolverhampton Homes to help in the development of any partnership or Residents Group if one is required.
6. That it be agreed that the net cash balance generated from the winding down of SHHMC be transferred to the Council and ringfenced for investment on the SHHMC estate following consultation with residents.
7. That it be agreed that Housing Strategy continue providing the support needed help facilitate the winding up of SHHMC, including overseeing the TUPE transfer of SHHMC staff to Wolverhampton Homes and the Council.

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet (Resources) Panel 20 October 2021
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Report title	Procurement – Award of Contracts for Works, Goods and Services	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Ian Brookfield Leader of the Council	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	Claire Nye, Director of Finance	
Originating service	Procurement	
Accountable employee	John Thompson	Head of Procurement
	Tel	01902 554503
	Email	John.thompson@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Directorate Leadership Team	

Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

1. Delegate authority to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to approve the award of a contract for Corporate Bank Contract when the evaluation process is complete.
2. Delegate authority to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to approve the award of a contract for eServices software when the evaluation process is complete.
3. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change, in consultation with the Director of City Housing and Environment, to approve the award of a contract for a City Environment Back Office System when the evaluation process is complete.

1.0 Councillor Ian Brookfield, Leader of the Council

1.1 Delegated Authority to Award a Contract – Corporate Bank Contract

Ref no:	CWC21109
Council Plan aim	Our Money
Originating service	The Hub
Accountable officer	Sara Youles, Operations Manager Payments & Banking (01902) 551442
Leadership Team approval	1 September 2021
Accountable Lead Cabinet Member	Cllr Ian Brookfield, Leader of the Council (01902) 550352
Date Lead Cabinet Member briefed	1 September 2021
Procurement advisor	Carol Wintle, Procurement Business Manager (01902) 553836

1.2 Background

1.3 This contract covers the provision of corporate banking services for the Council (CWC).

1.4 The current contract is due to expire 31 March 2022, with the previous contract awarded in 2015 to Natwest via an open above threshold tender process.

1.5 A specification covering the full banking functionality for the main operating accounts and all other banking arrangements will be procured through an open tender, including:

- Five main accounts with facilities including but not limited to sweep/pooling and full bank file collection of all daily transactions for import into our back-office finance system that meets our specification
- A group overdraft facility
- An intraday limit
- 47 imprest accounts for schools and council services
- A main header account with 75 sub accounts for customers who we have been awarded Court of Protection
- Cash (including loose cash) and cheque processing through our appointed cash in transit contractor to a cash/cheque processing centre
- Consolidated and bulk cash facilities
- Automated credit and debit facilities
- Branch facilities for cheque encashment and occasional paying in

- BACS bureau and SUN sponsorship and transaction processing
- internet banking services for balance/group balance, transaction reporting, payment initiation including immediate/CHAPS and Foreign payments by a two level approval process, bank account statement export to reconcile with the file import for our back office system

1.6 Additional requirements for consideration:

- Bank accounts for two wholly owned companies, YOO Recruit and WV Living
- Two bank accounts with third party administration assigned to the West Midlands Pension Fund.
- A payment of council bills solution by customer online banking settled by faster payment via integration with our own web payment platform, hosted through its own unique (additional) bank account with a full import of transactions in the bank file mentioned at 1.1 this account would also need to sweep to the main current account.
- A virtual account with approximately 500 sub accounts for the saving for our young people in care until the age of 18.

1.7 In the event the contract is awarded to a new provider, a migration plan will be provided as part of the tendered contract requirements. The migration plan is anticipated at a minimum of six months and therefore holdover/dual operating with the incumbent bank will be required. This situation was provided for in the original contract award requiring the provider to hold terms for six months after contract expiry if the new award were to realise a change in provider.

1.8 If a migration plan is required, it will be project managed by the new bank and the Operations Manager for Payments & Banking. Resources would be sought from across the Council to support the plan and a board would be engaged to ensure cross party adherence to the timeline and overall satisfaction.

Proposed Contract Award	
Contract duration	Seven years (5+2)
Contract Commencement date	1 April 2022
Annual value	£50,000
Total value	£350,000

1.9 Procurement Process

1.10 The intended procurement procedure will be an open above threshold procedure in accordance with Public Contract Regulations 2015, the evaluation scoring balance will be 40% Quality, 50% price and 10% Social Value. Any amendments to the procurement

procedure will be reported in an Individual Executive Decision Notice (IEDN) to the relevant Cabinet Member in consultation with the relevant Director in accordance with the delegation within this report.

1.11 The evaluation team will comprise:

Name	Job Title
Sara Youles	Operations Manager Payments & Banking
Rachel Highfield	Banking & Finance Support Team Leader
Daren Herries	Head of the Hub
Greg Entwistle	Finance Manager

1.12 Evaluation of alternative options

1.13 In previous years there have been framework agreements available for use by Public Sector organisations. However, currently there are no frameworks available.

1.14 Reason for decisions

1.15 No frameworks are available to purchase the service requirements so an open process will be used. This will allow all service providers, who qualify, to submit a bid.

1.16 Financial Implications

1.17 The current banking services contract cost is accommodated within an overall bank charges budget of £431,000. An uplift in the cost of the contract is now anticipated as the current seven year fixed price agreement comes to an end. Any growth in the bank charges budget required will be incorporated in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in the medium term.

1.18 Legal implications

1.19 The procurement will be an above threshold procedure in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations and Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

1.20 Equalities implications

1.21 There are no equalities implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

1.22 All other implications

1.23 There are no other implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

1.24 Recommendation

1.25 Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to delegate authority to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to approve the award of a contract for Corporate Bank Contract when the evaluation process is complete.

2.0 Councillor Ian Brookfield, Leader of the Council

2.1 Delegated Authority to Award a Contract – eServices Software

Ref no:	CWC21149
Council Plan aim	Strong, resilient and healthy communities
Originating service	Revenues and Benefits
Accountable officer	Tracey Richards, Head of Revenues and Benefits (01902) 552493
Leadership Team approval	1 September 2021
Accountable Lead Cabinet Member	Cllr Ian Brookfield, Leader of the Council (01902) 550352
Date Lead Cabinet Member briefed	6 September 2021
Procurement advisor	Peter Holmes, Procurement Manager (01902) 556175

2.2 Background

2.3 The eServices software provides online forms which allow residents to self-serve and upload supporting information for:

- Making a new claim for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support
- Reporting changes for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support
- Verifying information held on our records remains accurate
- Notifying a council tax change of address
- Making an application for council tax discount or exemption

2.4 The forms provide an automated feed into CWC's Revenues and Benefits back-office system which, using a pre-defined workflow, automatically updates and processes the information, or pre-populates the information to be cross matched against evidence to verify its accuracy. The automation reduces manual processing and improves accuracy by taking away the need for manual rekeying of data. There are currently 13,600 notifications received annually. This is increasing with the introduction of the requirement to review our caseload of 17,500 housing benefit entitlement on a regular basis. Customers will be required to verify that the information held remains correct.

Proposed Contract Award	
Contract duration	Four years (2+1+1) Two years with options for two annual extensions
Contract Commencement date	1 August 2022
Annual value	£125,000
Total value	£500,000

2.5 Procurement Process

2.6 The intended procurement procedure will be in accordance with Public Contract Regulations 2015, the evaluation scoring balance will be 100% price. Any amendments to the procurement procedure will be reported in an Individual Executive Decision Notice (IEDN) to the relevant Cabinet Member in consultation with the relevant Director in accordance with the delegation within this report.

2.7 The evaluation team will comprise:

Name	Job Title
Tracey Richards	Head of Revenues and Benefits
Jennifer Hoare	Lead Technical Specialist
Lee Overton	System and Development Manager
Diana Foster	System Team Leader

2.8 Evaluation of alternative options

2.9 The removal of this contract would significantly increase the amount of manual intervention. This would require four additional full-time employees at an estimated annual cost of around £145,000, a cost in excess of the eServices software.

2.10 Reasons for decisions

2.11 The delegation is requested to ensure the contract can be awarded in good time, once the evaluation process is complete.

2.12 Financial Implications

2.13 It is anticipated that the annual contract cost will be funded from the £648,000 revenue budget currently set aside for running costs within the Revenues and Benefits service.

2.14 Legal implications

2.15 The procurement will be an above threshold procedure in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and Council's Contract Procedure Rules

2.16 Equalities implications

2.17 A stage one initial equality analysis has been completed. No equality implications were identified, and a full analysis is not required.

2.18 All other implications

2.19 There are no other implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

2.20 Recommendation

2.21 Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to delegate authority to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to approve the award of a contract for eServices software when the evaluation process is complete.

3.0 Councillor Steve Evans, Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change
3.1 Delegated Authority to Award a Contract - City Environment Back Office System

Ref no:	CWC21148
Council Plan aim	Our Digital
Originating service	Business Services
Accountable officer	Chris Howell, Commercial Regulation Manager (01902) 554554
Leadership Team approval	31 August 2021
Accountable Lead Cabinet Member	Cllr Steve Evans, City Environment and Climate Change (01902) 861498
Date Lead Cabinet Member briefed	3 September 2021
Procurement advisor	Barry Greenwood, ICT Procurement Business Partner (01902) 552911

3.2 Background

- 3.3 Cabinet (Resources) Panel approved the award of the contract for Electronic Records and Document Management System to Idox plc for a duration of three years with option to extend for a further four years from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2025 for a total contract value of £735,000.
- 3.4 The contract was originally let by ICT and has transferred to the Commercial Regulation Manager as of May 2021.
- 3.5 Idox is the software which is used to manage and process Taxi Licensing which has required ongoing improvement and development to respond to statutory changes. To undertake recent system developments at cost outside of the contract value, a contract variation was drawn up in November 2019 for £560,500 to facilitate this work.
- 3.6 It is the intention to continue improving and developing the system to respond to statutory and legislative changes, however, to ensure the contract is compliant with Regulation 72 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 no further contract modifications are allowed. CWC is now seeking delegated authority to award a new contract for a city environment back office system.

Proposed Contract Award	
Contract duration	Five Years with the option to extend to One Year + 1 Year + 1 Year
Contract Commencement date	1 April 2022
Year 1 value	£236,820
Annual value (Year 2 onwards)	£202,370
Total value (based on 8 Years)	£1,653,410

3.7 Procurement Process

3.8 The intended procurement procedure will be a framework further competition in accordance with Public Contract Regulations 2015, the evaluation scoring balance will be 55% price and 45% quality. Any amendments to the procurement procedure will be reported in an Individual Executive Decision Notice (IEDN) to the relevant Cabinet Member in consultation with the relevant Director in accordance with the delegation within this report.

3.9 The evaluation team will comprise:

Name	Job Title
Chris Howell	Commercial Regulation Manager
Alison Johnston	Project Manager
Mark Flanagan	Section Leader – Licensing

3.10 Evaluation of alternative options

3.11 A full procurement exercise has been considered but due to the complex nature of the specification and the terms and conditions it was decided that a further competition on a framework would offer value for money, the suppliers have been pre-selected as being the best in the market and the terms and conditions have been agreed by the suppliers.

3.12 Reason for decisions

3.13 It was decided to use a framework agreement because it offered a quick route to market with pre-agreed terms and conditions and the suppliers have already been vetted by Crown Commercial Services as being the best in the market.

3.14 Financial Implications

3.15 The contract will be funded by existing budgets within Licensing Services.

3.16 Legal implications

3.17 The procurement will be an above threshold procedure in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

3.18 Equalities implications

3.19 There are no equalities implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

3.20 All other implications

3.21 There are no other implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

3.22 Recommendation

3.23 Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change, in consultation with the Director of City Housing and Environment, to approve the award of a contract for a City Environment Back Office System when the evaluation process is complete.

4.0 Evaluation of alternative options

4.1 All alternative options are included within the relevant section of the report.

5.0 Reasons for decision

5.1 The reasons for the recommendations are included within the relevant section of the report.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 All financial implications are included within the relevant section of the report.
[RP/05102021/Y]

7.0 Legal implications

7.1 All legal implications are included within the relevant section of the report.
[TC/04102021/C]

8.0 Equalities implications

8.1 The relevance to equalities and progress in terms of equality analysis will vary for each proposal included in this report. Accountable officers have and will ensure that evidence is collected and used to demonstrate compliance with the Council's legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

9.0 All other implications

9.1 All other implications are included within the relevant section of the report.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

10.1 Relevant background papers are included within the relevant section of the report.

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet (Resources) Panel 20 October 2021
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Report title	Acquisition of Privately Owned Empty Property by Agreement or Compulsory Purchase: Sunnyside, Inkerman Grove, Wolverhampton, WV10 0EU	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal City Assets and Housing	
Key decision	No	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	Heath Town	
Accountable Director	Ross Cook – City Housing and Environment	
Originating service	Private Sector Housing	
Accountable employee	Richard Long	Housing Improvement Officer
	Tel	01902 555705
	Email	richard.long@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	City Housing and Environment Leadership Team	28 September 2021

Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

1. Authorise the Director of City Housing and Environment to negotiate terms for the acquisition of the property Sunnyside, Inkerman Grove, Wolverhampton, WV10 0EU and, in default of that acquisition, give authority for a compulsory purchase order (CPO) to be made under Part II Section 17 Housing Act 1985 in respect of the property.
2. Approve expenditure for the potential acquisition of the property, with subsequent capital receipts being recycled within the Empty Property Strategy programme.

3. In the event that the property is improved and re-occupied to the satisfaction of the Director of City Housing and Environment, authorise withdrawal of the property from the CPO.
4. Following any acquisition, authorise the Director of City Housing and Environment to dispose of the property on the open market on condition that the property is refurbished and re-occupied within six or 12 months (as appropriate to the scale of the works).
5. Authorise the Chief Operating Officer to:
 - a) Take all reasonable steps as soon as it is reasonably practical to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the CPO including the publication and service of all Notices and the presentation of the Council's case at any Public Inquiry.
 - b) Approve agreements with the owners of the property setting out the terms for the withdrawal of objections to the CPO, and/or making arrangements for re-housing or relocation of any occupiers.
 - c) Approve the making of a General Vesting Declaration (the property is brought into Council ownership via this process).
 - d) Approve the disposal of the whole and/ or parts of the property by auction, tender or private treaty.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the Panel to authorise the acquisition of Sunnyside, Inkerman Grove, Wolverhampton, WV10 0EU by negotiation or by the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) under Section 17 of Part II of the Housing Act 1985 (CPO). Should it be possible to reach agreement on a mutually acceptable undertaking, agree to the withdrawal of the property from the CPO.
- 1.2 This decision is in support of the Council's Empty Properties Strategy which aims to bring long term empty properties back into use.
- 1.3 The reoccupation of empty properties brings in additional income to the Council via the New Homes Bonus paid to Local Authorities as a result of increased housing supply.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The property, highlighted on the attached plan, is an end-terraced property that was reported as empty in August 2016. Although the property did appear empty at the time, information was provided that the property was occupied. Due to the derelict and dilapidated condition of the property attempts were made to engage with the occupier to make an assessment for housing assistance. Unfortunately, the occupier did not come forward for assessment or assistance.
- 2.2 The property is currently listed on Council Tax as empty and furnished since 2015. It is difficult to establish precise periods of occupation without the co-operation of the occupier. However, it is confirmed that the property is currently empty. Contact has been made with the both parties listed as having title at land registry and assistance has been offered to resolve the matter. However, assurances from the owners that action to deal with the disrepair of the property and overgrown gardens has not taken place. In order to deal with the external disrepair and dilapidation of the property, a notice under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring the owners to remedy the detrimental effect of the property was served. No appeal against the notice was made and the notice has not been fully complied with.
- 2.3 The principle of establishing a revolving fund to drive forward the Private Sector Empty Property Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 11 January 2006. The revolving fund provides for properties that are consistent with the strategy to be acquired, marketed for sale and brought back into residential occupation. The arrangements proposed for the property identified are consistent with that strategy. Should the Compulsory Purchase Order be confirmed in favour of the Council, the Council would seek to dispose of the property by tender, auction, or private treaty. The property would be sold with the condition that the property is brought back to a required standard of repair within a specified time limit.

3.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 3.1 There are three options that the Council could consider:

- a) Do nothing – the property is likely to remain empty, continue to be a wasted housing resource, continue to have a detrimental effect on the amenity of the area and continue to be a drain on the public purse. If the property is re-occupied without substantial renovation, the condition of the property is likely to be detrimental to the health of the occupier(s) and the safety of both the occupiers and neighbouring properties/ persons could be at risk.
- b) Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) – An EDMO is considered to be a less draconian option than a compulsory purchase. However, the cost of refurbishment could place a strain on the Council's finances. It would not be possible to recover the cost of initial refurbishment and subsequent management/ maintenance through the rental income generated over the seven years that a Final EDMO could be in place.
- c) Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) – The prospect of a CPO often prompts the owner to act leading to the property being refurbished and re-occupied. However, if it is necessary to acquire the property, the proposals for the onward disposal and refurbishment set out at 5.0 of this report ensure that the property is brought back into use.

3.2 Based on the above it is recommended that the option of a Compulsory Purchase Order is progressed.

4.0 Reasons for decision(s)

4.1 The reasons for the decision are:

- a) To ensure that the property provides much needed housing by prompting the owner(s) either act voluntarily or via enforcement through a CPO.
- b) To ensure that health and safety concerns arising from the condition of the property are dealt with.
- c) To ensure that the property does not continue to be a drain on public resources.
- d) To ensure that the detrimental effect that the property is having on the area is removed.
- e) To ensure that the property has a positive financial impact on the public purse through additional New Homes Bonus funding.
- f) The proposal to pursue a CPO is the most cost effective in terms of financial and physical resources for the Council.

5.0 Proposals

5.1 Where it is necessary to make a Compulsory Purchase Order and this is subsequently confirmed in favour of the Council, the Council would usually seek to dispose of the property by tender, auction, or private treaty. The property would be sold with the condition that the property is brought back to a required standard of repair within a specified time limit.

5.2 Dependant on suitability and the resources available at the time of the acquisition, the property may be suitable to be brought back into the housing stock of the Council. If this option is considered appropriate, this would be the subject of a further report to Cabinet (Resources) Panel.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 In the event of an acquisition, the costs can be met from the approved capital budget for 2021-2022 of £410,000 for the Empty Property Strategy. The subsequent sale of the property would result in a capital receipt ring-fenced to finance future purchases through the Empty Property Strategy. Any non-capital costs incurred between purchase and sale, for example security measures, must be met from current private sector housing budgets.

6.2 As the Notice under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 has not been complied with, the additional statutory 7.5% compensation payment will not be applicable in this case.

6.3 Bringing empty properties back into use attracts New Homes Bonus to the City Council and will result in additional council tax revenue.
[JM/02092021/P]

7.0 Legal implications

7.1 Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 empowers local housing authorities to compulsorily acquire land houses or other properties for the provision of housing accommodation. However, the acquisition must achieve a qualitative or quantitative housing gain. In order to make a Compulsory Purchase Order under this power and achieve successful confirmation, the Council will need to show compliance with the requirements of the relevant statutory provision and circular 06/2004 Compulsory Purchase and the Crichel Down Rules. Where there are objections to a Compulsory Purchase Order the matter may go forward to a public inquiry and specialist Counsel may need to be engaged to present the Council's case.

7.2 Article 1 of Protocol 1 of the Human Rights Act 1988 guarantees peaceful enjoyment of possessions and would be engaged by the making of a CPO. However, the contents of this report and the actions recommended are considered to be proportional and compatible with the Human Rights Act 1988, particularly bearing in mind the above checks and balances on the Local Authority's power.
[TC/23092021/B]

8.0 Equalities implications

8.1 Equalities implications have been considered throughout the process and in assessing the outcome. An Equality Analysis has been completed and this does not indicate any adverse implications. Bringing an empty property back into use will improve the visual amenity of the area and can make the area more welcoming to some groups covered by the Equality Act 2010, in doing so this will promote participation in public life.

9.0 All other implications

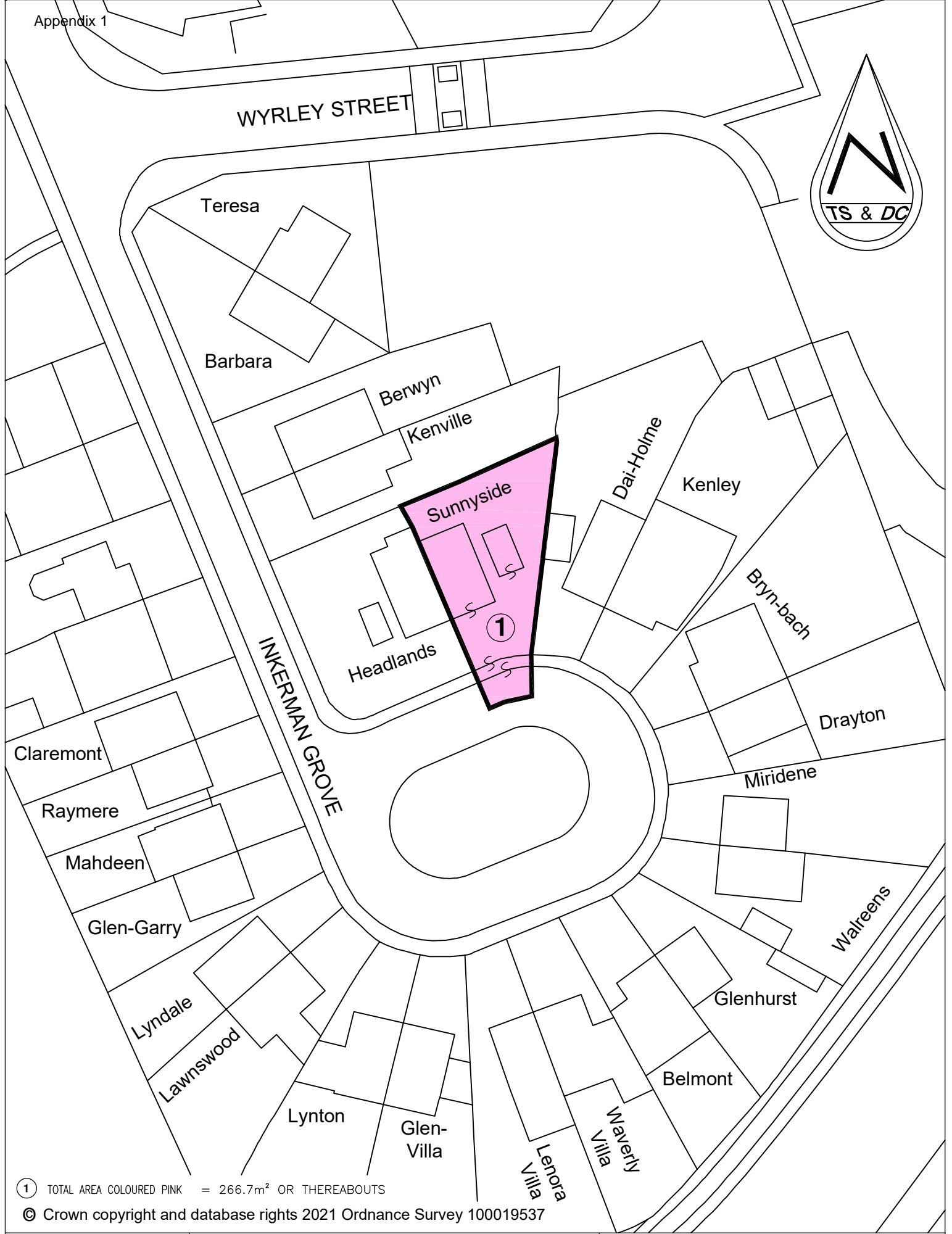
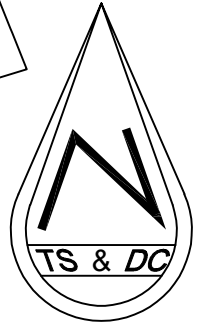
- 9.1 Long term empty properties can have a detrimental impact on neighbourhood sustainability and cause environmental blight. Bringing the property back into residential use will improve the appearance of the neighbourhood, enhance property conditions, contribute to the regeneration of the City and help to meet the Council's strategic objectives.
- 9.2 Where applicable, Corporate Landlord Estates Team will be required to produce valuations and arrange for the appropriate disposal of the property by auction or private treaty.
- 9.3 Bringing an empty property back into use will improve the health and wellbeing of the new occupants by providing safe and secure housing.
- 9.4 Enabling occupation and removing the detrimental effect of the property will reduce the anxiety associated with crime and the fear of crime that living adjacent to an empty property can cause.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

- 10.1 An Action Plan to Deliver the Empty Property Strategy 11 January 2006;
- 10.2 Private Sector Empty Property Strategy 2019-2024;
- 10.3 The Council's Annual Housing Supply Statement, 31 March 2020.

11.0 Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Site plan
- 11.2 Appendix 2 - Photographs



① TOTAL AREA COLOURED PINK = 266.7m² OR THEREABOUTS

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date	August 2021
scales	1:500
drawn by	AJP
dwg. no.	Inkerman Street Sunnyside.dwg

THE MAP REFERRED TO IN
 THE WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL
 (Sunnyside Inkerman Grove)
 COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2021

City of Wolverhampton Council

Strategic Director – Place
 Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square, Wolverhampton
 Tel. (01902) 556556

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<p>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</p>	<p>Cabinet (Resources) Panel 20 October 2021</p>
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Report title	Progressing the City Learning Quarter	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Stephen Simkins Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration	
Originating service	City Development	
Accountable employee	Zareena Ahmed-Shere Tel Email	Regeneration Manager 07890397677 Zareena.ahmed-shere@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Regeneration Leadership Team Strategic Executive Board	28 September 2021 7 October 2021

Recommendations for decision:

That Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Delegate Authority to the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Directors for Regeneration and Finance to:
 - a. Approve the Council entering into a Grant Agreement in order to secure a grant of £7.75 million from the West Midlands Combined Authority’s Investment Programme for implementation of the City of Wolverhampton Technical Centre, Phase 1 of the City Learning Quarter.
 - b. Approve the Council entering into the required Development Agreement and Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment / Information Communication Technology Agreement with the City of Wolverhampton College to enable the tender, procurement and delivery of building works to complete Phase 1 City Learning Quarter.

- c. Approve the Council entering into (subject to confirmation of funding award and the associated full terms and conditions) any future Levelling Up Fund Grant Agreement for the City Learning Quarter Phase 2.
 - d. Approve the Council entering into various legal agreements with the City of Wolverhampton College to facilitate the procurement of the required contracts (to include Construction, Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment, Information Communication Technology, and multiple moves) for the delivery of City Learning Quarter, Phase 2.
 - e. Award contracts for the delivery of the City of Wolverhampton Technical Centre, Phase 1 of the City Learning Quarter to the preferred contractor identified following a competitive tender and procurement exercise.
2. Approve the increase to the capital budget for the Phase 1 project to a total budget of £8.1 million, funded in full by grant, as per the details in the financial implications.
 3. Authorise the Council to extend Consultant contracts to provide ongoing Project Management, Commercial Advice and Cost Management services through to completion of the City Learning Quarter Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Recommendations for noting:

That Cabinet is asked to note:

1. That the Council has submitted to a grant application seeking £20 million from the Government's Levelling Up Fund to support City Learning Quarter, Phase 2 and that the outcome is awaited.
2. That proposed changes to the funding strategy for City Learning Quarter, Phase 2 will be the subject of a future Cabinet report.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The City Learning Quarter (CLQ) comprising Phase 1, The City of Wolverhampton College Technical Centre (CoWTechC) and Phase 2 (City Centre Learning Hub) is the Council's biggest regeneration priority as it is fundamental and instrumental in helping the City to Level Up. CLQ is a City of Wolverhampton College led programme that is being supported by the Council to facilitate a comprehensive scheme. CLQ will significantly contribute to the Council's Relight Recovery Plan by stimulating learning and economic activity. CLQ also supports Wolverhampton's New Horizon 2030 Vision that sets out the ambition to address the current mismatch in existing skill levels and those required by local employers and in economic growth sectors. CLQ will be a key driver to close the productivity gap in relation to increasing resident skills levels and employability by providing technical education in economic growth areas.
- 1.2 The report seeks approval to enter into a Grant Agreement with the WMCA (West Midlands Combined Authority) and increase the project budget, following the successful award of a £7.75 million grant that will enable CoWTechC, CLQ, Phase 1 to proceed to delivery stage. Delegated approval is sought to enter into the appropriate agreements as the final terms are still to be determined and these will be detailed within the Individual Executive Decision Notice (IEDN).
- 1.3 In line with the Project Board decision, to deliver a comprehensive scheme, it was agreed that the Council will take responsibility for the tender and procurement of all projects in the CLQ Programme. Delegated approval is sought to approve the award of a contract when the evaluation process is complete. The CoWTechC facility will be created on College owned land at its Wellington Road, Bilston Campus. The Council and College will enter into a Development Agreement and Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment / Information Communication Technology Agreement to enable the tender, procurement and implementation of building contracts for CoWTechC including fitting out.
- 1.4 As well as highlighting the successful outcome of the above WMCA grant funding application, the report also provides an update on the overall status of the CLQ Programme and the various external funding applications that have been submitted to support CLQ Phase 2 during 2021. These are the Council's submission to Government on 17 June 2021 of a Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid that covers the Wolverhampton South West Parliamentary Constituency area and the College's Stage 1 grant application submitted in March 2021 to the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund (FECTF).
- 1.5 The report also updates the proposed CLQ funding package which has been developed with the College in light of the recent Government announcements of funding opportunities and provides an account of progress and associated scheme costs.
- 1.6 Consultants were appointed by the Council in January 2019 and have provided programme, project and cost management consultancy advice consistently since that point in time including commercial and procurement advice conditioned with formal market feedback.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Council is leading on the ambitious CLQ programme in partnership with City of Wolverhampton College supported by external consultants.
- 2.2 The two phased CLQ Programme includes consolidation of the College's three campuses (Paget Road, Wellington Road, and Metro One) into two centrally located and accessible College campus sites; City Centre (Metro One) and Wellington Road, Bilston that will provide modern learning facilities. Phase 1 of the Programme will create a standalone purpose built Technical Centre that will provide advanced engineering and motor vehicle (traditional / hybrid / electric) courses. Phase 2 will create lifelong learning hub in the City Centre around the Old Hall Street and St. George's Parade at the Metro One College building site and will enable provision of integrated education services that meets Post 16 learner and employer demands through the co-location of:
- City centre campus for the City of Wolverhampton College
 - Modernised, reconfigured, accessible and digitally enabled Central Library
 - Centralised and expanded Adult Education provision

The creation of the above outstanding and sustainable learning facilities and improved public realm at two accessible sites will address the challenges of the current College's inefficient estate which is spread across three campuses in Wolverhampton, thereby providing an inflexible and disparate offer. The main Paget Road campus buildings are considerably outdated, requiring high maintenance and its city fringe location makes access particularly difficult by public transport. The College campuses are also in variable states of repair and increasingly unsuitable for modern learning environments, contributing to a decline in student intakes in recent years, as well as undermining its financial viability. The Council's Adult Education offer is also spread across several buildings around the city and in variable states of repair. The Central Library is a Grade II listed building in urgent need of upgrade, renovation and modernisation to meet the needs of existing and future users.

- 2.3 CLQ will create two learning hubs at City Centre and Bilston (connected by bus and tram links) that will support lifelong learning and civic participation for people of all ages, backgrounds and ensure future vitality of Library and Adult Education provision. The project will also help unlock plans for a city-wide collaborative commissioning model of Post 16 provision meeting employer and learner demands enabling further opportunities for joined up curriculum planning.
- 2.4 Post completion CLQ will enable the release of multiple sites including the existing outdated and inaccessible main 1950's College campus at Paget Road for the development of much needed new homes to meet local demand in this prime location.

- 2.5 On 20 September 2017, Council approved a capital budget of £50 million for the City Learning Quarter and approved that authority be delegated to Cabinet to approve final business case and funding strategy.
- 2.6 On 31 July 2019 Cabinet was updated on the CLQ programme and approved the delivery of the scheme in line with the business case and funding strategy. A funding application to the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership was submitted during 2019 to fund advanced development works for CLQ Phase 1 and Phase 2.

3.0 Progress

- 3.1 CLQ remains a top priority for the Council to transform learning and skills in the City by creating jobs, providing professional qualifications, and linking with local businesses as well as providing environment and regeneration benefits - all of which are vital for Covid-19 recovery.
- 3.2 Across the wider CLQ programme the Council were successful in securing a grant of £0.4 million from the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership which together with the Council funding contribution of £6 million has enabled progression of advanced development works.
- 3.3 The CLQ programme will be delivered on two sites (City Centre and Bilston) both of which have been fully acquired and assembled. Technical surveys, detailed design, intrusive ground investigations, demolition of existing structures, site clearance and other enabling works are all complete. Both Phases 1 and 2 now benefit from planning permission that was secured in 2020 and 2019 respectively and the majority of the pre development commencement planning conditions have already been discharged. Both Phases 1 and 2 have been designed to RIBA Stage 3 for inclusion in a tender pack that is ready to be issued to the market. A high level CLQ project delivery programme has established, and Project Management and Governance Structure are in place and will be adapted as each Phase moves into the implementation stages.

CLQ Phase 1, CoWTechC

- 3.4 In March 2021, the Council were made aware of funding available from WMCA's Investment Programme for eligible delivery ready projects. Subsequently the Council made a funding application to WMCA seeking £7.75 million to deliver Phase 1 CoWTechC. Following rigorous assessment process and further clarifications submitted to WMCA, CoWTechC was considered by WMCA's Investment Panel on 11 May and subsequently the funding sought of £7.75 million was approved at Investment Board and WMCA Board on 29 June and 23 July respectively. This decision has enabled full funding for this standalone project to be secured enabling progression to delivery phase.
- 3.5 The brand new purpose build CoWTechC facility will be situated at the rear of the College's existing Wellington Road campus. As part of this project the existing Motor Vehicle and Engineering departments will be relocated from their current location at

Paget Road to the new CoWTechC building which will provide state of the art bespoke learning / teaching spaces. The accommodation will include an engineering workshop, welding bay, motor vehicle workshop, fabrication workshop, paint spray bay, motor vehicle and engineering, Computer Aided Design and robotics teaching spaces and associated external works. As part of the vision to develop STEM Centre of Excellence, CoWTechC will offer learners pathways into obtaining high level technical skills in Advanced Engineering and Automotive Electric Vehicle (EV) Centre of Excellence / Green Technologies under the Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs) in response to specific skill requirements / skill shortages reported by local employers (only 3% of existing Motor Vehicle engineers are qualified to work on electric vehicles). The project responds to the Government’s announcement to end new petrol and diesel car production by 2030. The curriculum will ensure that Post 16+ training meets local business needs and provides the skills required for economic growth by providing a pipeline of talented candidates to local employers who face challenges in recruitment of skilled workers. The improved status and image of the College with employers and learners will further improve College / industry collaboration capitalising on the College’s partnership with KIA Motors UL, Lucas-Nulle GmbH and the Institute of Motor Industry (IMI) to target learners and local residents into employment.

- A. CoWTechC will enable the following benefits to be realised 5 years post completion. In line with the WMCA funding agreement there are is a requirement to report on the progress of these outputs at specific dates.

Scheme Outputs	
Jobs created at the College	5
Jobs safeguarded in the College	65
Jobs created and safeguarded in the economy	137
Learner Assists by Year 5	2,444
Apprenticeships Started by Year 5	458
Business Assists by Year 5	90 (including 45 SMEs)
New Learning Floorspace	2,415 sq. m
Brownfield Land Regenerated	0.67 hectares
Gross Value Added	£46 million

- B. The intent (informed by market intelligence of current conditions) is to procure the project through an open market competitive tender process seeking a lump sum tender price as an alternative to relying on selecting a contractor through a Construction Framework such as SCAPE and West Midlands Construction Framework. This route is likely to take a similar amount of time albeit generate more competition. Procurement rules for the Most Economically Advantageous Tender will be observed and costs will be benchmarked prior to contract let to ensure value for money is secured. Delegated approval is sought to approve the award of a contract when the evaluation process is complete.

C. The Council will be procuring the building contract (that includes fixtures, fittings and equipment / Information Communication Technology) for CoWTechC. As the project will be delivered on College owned land, to construct this scheme, the Council will be required to enter into a Development Agreement and all other legal agreements necessary to facilitate delivery. If this report is approved CoWTechC will be progressed in accordance with the high level indicative delivery programme below:

Key Activity	Duration
Contractor Procurement / Contract Award	5 months
Contractor Site Mobilisation	2 months
Construction Period	12 months
Building Fit Out / Information Communication Technology	40 Months

3.6 On 17 September 2021 WMCA issued to the Council for review an initial draft Grant Agreement for £7.75 million for delivery of Phase 1 CoWTechC project. The Council is required enter into a Grant Agreement with WMCA to formally accept the award and receive these funds, the terms of which are currently being finalised and will be approved under the delegations requested above. Draft terms of the Grant Agreement are detailed in Appendix 2.

CLQ Phase 2, City Centre College Campus / Learning Hub

3.7 Funding Applications to support CLQ Phase 2 FECTF (£25.4 million) and LUF (£20 million) were submitted on 22 March and 17 June 2021 respectively. CLQ met the Government’s gateway criteria for these funding programmes as the business case is well advanced / development ready; the project enjoys the support of local Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton South West, Black Country LEP, WMCA, Council Leader and key Cabinet Members and wider stakeholders. The project is also able to commence expenditure of such grants during the 2021-22 financial year and meet the requirement for the project to be delivered in its entirety and financially complete by March 2024.

3.8 The funding application to the LUF is under consideration and Government’s announcements of awards is expected in Autumn 2021. Whilst the FECTF funding application has not been successful, the Council is currently in dialogue with the Department for Education to explore alternative funding routes. Following the outcome of these discussions and the LUF decision, the project scope, costs and funding strategy will be reviewed and reported to Cabinet.

4.0 Evaluation of alternative options

4.1 The option to do nothing is not recommended this will result in a missed opportunity to fully fund and deliver the CoWTechC project and realise the direct economic, social and environmental benefits arising from the scheme.

- 4.2 The Project Board has considered the refurbishment of the main Paget Road College campus and other buildings at a cost of over £40 million as an alternative to the CLQ programme. This option was discounted as it would not enable growth in learner numbers, and poor access of this site by multiple public transport modes may result in decline in student numbers negatively impacting the financial position of the College.
- 4.3 The Project Board identified CoWTechC at the Bilston College Campus as the preferred option, as it creates a well-connected and efficient technical campus with a modern building that will appeal to learners and employers, deliver increased and improved learning that will drive the College's financial revival. As a result, the College will be able to safeguard existing jobs and employ more teaching and non-teaching staff. The new facilities / specialist trade workshops will imitate workplace environments which will improve learning outcomes with more learners attaining better results and the skill required by employers. The scheme will deliver economic benefits – jobs created and safeguarded, businesses assisted and improved skills, environmental benefits - improved efficiency of the campus, reduced private transport and traffic congestion and social benefits - enhanced learning experiences of young people and workforce members, plus the increased access in terms of both location and opening hours.

5.0 Reasons for decisions

- 5.1 The recommendation to enter into the Grant Agreement with WMCA for the funding of £7.75 million will enable the delivery of CoWTechC, Phase 1 CLQ to be secured and the project to proceed, funded in full by grants.
- 5.2 Although part of the overall CLQ Programme, this report is seeking approval to proceed with Phase 1 CoWTechC independently as at this point in time full funding for this scheme has been confirmed. CoWTechC is a standalone project, its delivery is not reliant on the outcome of funding applications for Phase 2 CLQ (City Centre) or any other third-party capital funding.
- 5.3 The Council will be procuring the building contract for CoWTechC which is situated on land at Wellington Road in College ownership. The recommendation to sign the required Development Agreement and Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment / Information communication Technology Agreement with the College will allow the commencement of activities leading to the procurement of a building contractor during Autumn/Winter 2021 and the delivery of the programme to planned timeframes to facilitate the opening of CoWTechC in late 2023 / Spring 2024.
- 5.4 The Council is confident that subject to the availability of WMCA grant funding, the CoWtechC scheme can be procured and is able to be fully completed within the timeframes required by the Grant Agreement.
- 5.5 CoWTechC will provide significant benefits in education, technical skills improvement, jobs, contributing to Wolverhampton's Relight Recovery Commitment and aligning to the Government's long term ambition to support post Covid economic recovery. CoWTechC

will improve the sustainability of the College and facilitate its expansion. The relocation of Advanced Engineering and Motor Vehicle (traditional / hybrid / electric) training from outdated and inaccessible 1950's Paget Road premises to a modern purpose built facility, featuring new workshops equipped with cutting edge machinery and equipment, replicating workplace environments will ensure an improved experience for all learners. CoWTechC is also better connected by greener and more sustainable transport modes (bus, tram, cycle, foot) which will help reduce private car use. This will attract additional student numbers, improve technical qualification attainment rates which allow learners to secure high value and better paid jobs that respond to employers demands, increasing labour productivity outcomes. If WMCA's grant offer is not accepted, then the opportunity to secure investment to commence the delivery of the CLQ Programme will be lost.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 The CLQ programme (Phases 1 and 2) will require a total revised forecast investment of £59.5 million. The funding strategy has moved forward as illustrated in the table below and noted within the report.

Funding Source	£ Million	Status
Council Contribution	6.0	Approved
BC LEP	0.4	Approved
WMCA Investment Programme	7.7	Approved
Levelling Up Fund	20.0	Bid submitted 17th June / decision expected Autumn 2021
Further Education Capital Transformation Fund / Department of Education Funding	25.4	Stage 1 Bid Submitted March 2021 was unsuccessful. Alternative funding routes are being explored with Department of Education
Total	59.5	

6.2 The WMCA grant of £7.75 million as detailed in the paper will fund the remaining expenditure to deliver CLQ Phase 1 (CoWTechC). The total project budget of £8.1 million was informed by a cost plan developed by Cost Management Consultants following feasibility, design and costing work to Royal Institute of British Architects Stage 3 and includes construction of the new facility, Information Communication Technology, fixtures, fittings and equipment and professional fees. The cost estimate is based on market rates, the most up to date RICS Building Cost Information Service indices and includes project contingency based on a priced risk register and an allowance for inflation. It is anticipated that the full cost of delivering this phase will be fully funded through the BCLEP and WMCA grants.

- 6.3 Based on a delivery programme commencing late October 2021, the total expenditure for Phase 1 is profiled over financial years 2021-2022 to 2024-25; this fits within the terms of the grant funding.
- 6.4 The revised CLQ Phase 2 funding strategy now relies on securing external funding of £45.4 million, as detailed in the table above. Phase 2 CLQ could be at risk if funding from LUF and Department for Education are not realised as it is uncertain when new funding opportunities will come forward. In this event the Project Board will review programme costs, reconsider the work scope and alternative funding options, with appropriate approvals if required being sought through a future Cabinet report.
- 6.5 It is acknowledged at this stage the funding package for the main campus site is uncertain, however it should be noted that to date investment by the Council in Phase 2, the main site campus, has principally been incurred to bring forward the site for development. The expenditure incurred includes site assembly, demolition costs, site investigation and associated fees, along with design costs. The forward funding of this element of the project by the Council continues to be monitored and the intention is to recover any expenditure over and above the £6 million Council investment funded through borrowing from the grants should they be secured.
[HM/11102021/C]

7.0 Legal implications

- 7.1 By signing a Grant Agreement with WMCA, the Council will formally accept the grant award of £7.75 million for CoWTechC, together with the agreed terms and conditions including the requirement to report on the physical and financial progress of the scheme.
- 7.2 There is a risk that WMCA may require the Council to repay the grant funds if project works and financial expenditure are not completed by the 31 March 2025. Similarly, the WMCA could exercise the right to claw the funding back, withhold or suspend grant payments if there is a breach of the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement and / or they are of the opinion that the project is not likely to deliver by 31 March 2021.
- 7.3 To mitigate against potential risk identified at 7.2 above the project timescales/milestones will be kept under review together with close monitoring of the Council's obligations under the grant agreement.
- 7.4 There is an increased risk of project delays due to the Covid-19 virus and the volatility of the construction market with shortages of building materials reported that may result in higher contract prices. Provisions to manage delays and a contingency sums is in place to take account of price rises.
- 7.5 By signing a Development Agreement and the Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment / Information Communication Technology Agreement with the College, the Council will be in a position to procure and commission building works for CoWTechC on College owned land.

7.6 As the Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and potential judicial review all necessary legal agreements must be entered into to protect the Council from financial and reputational harm.

[LMC/04102021/K]

8.0 Equalities implications

8.1 This report principally asks for delegations of authority; for an increase in budget and has other recommendations for noting. The equality implications of these are minimal, Equality Analysis is an ongoing requirement under Section 149 of the Equality Act and future iterations of the analysis will be developed in a timely fashion to support those decisions yet to be made.

8.2 Moving forward and in terms of the wider equalities implications of the project itself; the Council will ensure that the CLQ programme (including CoWTechC) will comply with the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that the buildings have the appropriate facilities and equipment to enable equality of access and provision of training that addresses the needs of different groups in the local community and enables all to benefit from employment opportunities in key economic growth sectors. The CoWTechC facility will advance equalities for a range of learners including disabled learners who will benefit from improved access to better learning facilities. CoWTechC will provide learning / apprentice opportunities in Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) sectors to people of all ages and backgrounds. It will not negatively impact groups such as children, young people, care leavers, veterans, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, women and people with disabilities. By responding to the skills deficit and recruitment barriers reported by employers, CoWTechC will forge new pathways that take people from low skills and low aspirations to high value jobs and higher education.

8.3 CoWTechC is more easily reached by public transport and therefore provides an opportunity for individuals (who may have struggled to access an out-of-city centre course) to take up learning opportunities offered. There is also better connectivity by bus and tram between the CoWTechC and Metro One campus which will provide learners and College staff better access to more opportunities across both sites.

8.4 It is anticipated that the CLQ programme will deliver a growth in Post 16 student numbers by approximately 50% in 5 years, providing seamless opportunities for individuals to work, learn and professionally progress throughout their careers. The project aims to address gender and equal opportunity issues by aiming to reduce the number of Black Country adult residents with no qualifications, increase the number of residents participating in apprenticeships, increase the number of adult residents qualified to Level 4 or above and reduce the number of Not in Education Employment or Training (NEETs) by approximately 15%.

8.5 The four most deprived wards with respect to unemployment claimants (St Peters, East Park, Ettingshall and Bushbury South Low Hill) have double the national average unemployed. These wards will be targeted as part of the marketing for the new technical workshops at CoWtechC.

9.0 Covid 19, Health and Well-Being implications

- 9.1 The challenge of low skills, achievement, high unemployment and productivity gap that Wolverhampton faces have been further exacerbated by Covid 19. CLQ will help alleviate these challenges through skills improvement, enhancing people's employment prospects so that they are able to secure high skilled and high paid jobs in STEM sectors (where skill deficits) are reported by employers and in the Electronic Vehicle / green technologies growth industries.
- 9.2 Covid 19 implications on the building supplies and labour for the construction element of the project and potential price increases have been taken into account and reflected in the updated programme and built in project contingencies.
- 9.3 Learners and local employers will have an opportunity to benefit from the Kick Start scheme for young people and Apprenticeship Grant that was announced by Government on 4 October 2021 as part of the ongoing Covid 19 support package to help individuals, including the long-term unemployed and those made redundant after the end of furlough.
- 9.4 The brand new CoWTechC building, with its flexible teaching and learning spaces will allow the College to adapt the new facilities accordingly to deliver both face to face and virtual learning in response to Government's changing / new Covid guidelines relating to social distancing and workplace practices so that the College's curriculum may be provided in a healthy and safe environment that impacts positively on physical and mental well-being.

10.0 All other implications – Risks and Mitigations

- 10.1 A comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Business Case submission to the LEP / WMCA / LUF and recorded in a risk register. The risk register will be maintained and updated as the programme progresses, and risks will be managed accordingly.
- 10.2 The CoWTechC project has been de-risked as much as is practically possible with sub ground investigation and enabling works completed to clear the site. While the budget has been informed by consultant's knowledge of historic market information, RICS Building Cost Information Service indices and a Risk Register, there still is a risk that the CoWTechC building tenders may exceed current estimates. This is due to the impact of Brexit, Covid and increased regional activities fuelled by High Speed 2 (HS2) and Commonwealth Games which have created building supply and labour shortages and resulted an increase in labour and building materials costs (particularly steel). This volatility of the market may cause a delay in procurement of the project.
- 10.3 The most significant risk to the CLQ programme is failure to secure external funding for Phase 2. This would result in a delay to the delivery programme and inflationary cost escalation due to the requirement to rethink the scope and funding strategy and possibly abortive costs if Phase 2 is unable to proceed. The College will continue to retain and occupy the main Paget Road College campus where it will not be able to expand. Without additional learner numbers the College financial viability will be undermined

possibly resulting job losses and negative impact on local education provision and business needs.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

- 11.1 Full Council, 20 September 2017 – [City of Wolverhampton City College](#)
- 11.2 Cabinet – 31 July 2019 – [City Learning Quarter](#)

12.0 Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix 1 - WMCA Board – 23 July 2021 - City Learning Quarter (Phase 1) - City of Wolverhampton Technical Centre Business Case (Private)
- 12.2 Appendix 2 – WMCA Draft Grant Agreement Terms for City Learning Quarter, Phase 1 (Private)

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