

City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 27 July 2022

Item 4	
Title	Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2024 to 2025-2026
Status	Recommendations Approved
Record of Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The draft budget strategy and medium term financial strategy which underpin Our City, Our Plan, including changes to corporate resource assumptions, growth and inflation be approved. 2. That it be noted that significant progress had been made towards setting a balanced budget for 2023-2024 however there remains a high level of risk and uncertainty. Further options would continue to be explored to address the updated projected budget deficit of just under £1.0 million. 3. That it be noted that a number of assumptions have been made with regards to the level of resources that would be available to the Council as detailed in section 8 of the report. It is important to note there continues to be a considerable amount of uncertainty with regards to future income streams for local authorities. Any reduction in Government allocation of funding to the Council would have a significant detrimental impact and further increase the budget deficit over the medium term. 4. That it be noted that, due to external factors, budget assumptions remain subject to significant change, which could, therefore, result in alterations to the financial position facing the Council. 5. That it be noted that the updated projected budget deficit assumes the achievement of recurrent budget reduction and income generation proposals totalling £12.2 million over the period of 2022-2023 to 2025-2026. 6. That it be noted that a further update on the budget strategy would be presented to Cabinet in October 2022 and that there would be a period of formal budget consultation and scrutiny. This would also align to the annual refresh of Our City, Our Plan, setting out our key city priorities.

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	<p>7. That it be noted that it is forecast that by 2025-2026 the budget deficit would rise to £25.7 million and that work would continue to be undertaken to bring forward proposals to deliver a sustainable medium term financial strategy.</p> <p>8. That it be noted that the overall level of risk associated with the Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 is assessed as Red.</p>
Options Considered	In determining the financial strategy, consideration has been made to the deliverability of budget reduction and income generation proposals, and budget pressures. If we were not to implement the strategy outlined in this report, alternative options would need to be identified in order for the Council to set a balanced budget for 2023-2024.
Reasons for Decision	In order to ensure a balanced budget for 2023-2024 it is important that work is progressed as soon as possible. The approval of the draft strategy will enable the Council to undertake due diligence, consultation and scrutiny in a timely manner to fully inform the budget decision process in accordance with statutory deadlines.
Record of Conflicts of Interest	None
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	1 August 2022

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Item 5	
Title	Levelling Up Wolverhampton
Status	Recommendations Approved
Record of Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the approach to how the City of Wolverhampton Council is responding to the Levelling Up White Paper, working with key partners including the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to deliver our strategic framework for levelling up, Our City: Our Plan be endorsed. 2. That it be noted that the City of Wolverhampton had been proactively identified by Government as a place with strong local leadership and ambition, where investment can be maximised to catalyse economic transformation.
Options Considered	<p>Option 1: Do nothing.</p> <p>Option 2 and the chosen option: Working with key partners including the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to deliver our strategic framework for levelling up, Our City: Our Plan.</p>
Reasons for Decision	Cabinet is recommended to approve the approach to levelling up in the city to ensure a robust strategic framework to realise our ambitions transformation plans and meet the needs and priorities of local people.
Record of Conflicts of Interest	None
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	1 August 2022

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Item 6	
Title	Principal Social Worker Annual Report 2021-2022
Status	Recommendations Approved
Record of Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the work of the Principal Social Worker (PSW) and the continued impact it has on social work practice across Children’s and Adults Services be endorsed. 2. That the main priorities for the Principal Social Worker identified for 2022-2023 be approved.
Options Considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report highlights the impact on the service, city and residents that the PSW role can bring including ensuring quality of good social work practice and improved outcomes for people. There is evidence that this role has a positive impact on the profession and the people being supported across Adult and Children’s Services. 2. There is an option of not having a PSW, but it needs to be noted that the PSW role in adults is set out in statutory guidance. Without a PSW there could be a decline in quality of practice which would affect the lives of those children, young people and adults who seek social care support.
Reasons for Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The role of the Principal Social Worker (PSW) contributes to a number of key priorities across Children’s and Adults Services including Restorative Practice and Three Conversations© which are approaches and models that enable social workers to build professional relationships with people who need services that help and promote a strength-based approach to their practice. These approaches enable the workforce to strengthen families where children are at risk, promote the independence of older people and people with disabilities as well safeguarding people in vulnerable situations. 2. The PSW provides dedicated resource to the recruitment and retention strategy which in turn helps the Council reduce the spend on agency staffing. The role is also responsible for raising the profile of social work in the city which also contributes to making the City of Wolverhampton a social work employer of choice.

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	3. The role provides the professional knowledge required to drive local and regional workforce development plans that will contribute to high quality, excellent practice.
Record of Conflicts of Interest	None
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	28 July 2022

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Item 7	
Title	Public Health Annual Report 2021-2022
Status	Recommendation Approved
Record of Decision	That the publication of the Director of Public Health Annual Report for the period 2021 – 2022 be approved.
Options Considered	As this is a statutory requirement, there are no alternative options available.
Reasons for Decision	The Director of Public Health Annual Report is a statutory requirement.
Record of Conflicts of Interest	None
Dispensation Granted	Not applicable
Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)	1 August 2022