

**City of Wolverhampton Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Wednesday, 19 October 2022**

<b>Item 4</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2024 to 2025-2026
<b>Status</b>	Recommendations Approved
<b>Record of Decision</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the draft budget strategy and medium term financial strategy which underpin Our City, Our Plan, including changes to corporate resource assumptions, growth and inflation and budget reduction and income generation proposals be approved.</li> <li>2. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Digital City, and the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work, in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Executive Director of Families, to approve changes to the local funding formula for Schools including method, principles and rules adopted.</li> <li>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. 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's allocation of funding to the Council would have a significant detrimental impact and further increase the budget deficit over the medium term.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>5. That it be noted that it is forecast that the budget deficit is £7.1 million for 2023-2024, rising to £31.6 million by 2025-2026 and that work would continue to be undertaken to bring forward proposals to set a balanced budget for 2023-2024 and deliver a sustainable medium term financial strategy.</li> <li>6. 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.</li> </ol>

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<b>Options Considered</b>	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 the report, alternative options would need to be identified in order for the Council to set a balanced budget for 2023-2024.
<b>Reasons for Decision</b>	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.
<b>Record of Conflicts of Interest</b>	None
<b>Dispensation Granted</b>	Not applicable
<b>Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)</b>	24 October 2022

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<b>Item 5</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Bus Services in the City
<b>Status</b>	Recommendations Approved
<b>Record of Decision</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Variation 002 of the Enhanced Partnership to include the improvements identified in the Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP) be approved.</li> <li>2. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change to approve Variation 003 of the Enhanced Partnership following the appropriate statutory consultation process.</li> <li>3. That the need to revoke the Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme (AQPS) for bus services in Wolverhampton be noted.</li> <li>4. That the proposed Variation 003 of the Enhanced Partnership which would capture the commitments of the AQPS and embed them in the Enhanced Partnership be noted.</li> </ol>
<b>Options Considered</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. City of Wolverhampton Council has committed to the provisions of the original EP and EP Plan. The implications of approving the recommendations in the report are a consistent and improved standard for bus service provision in the city, and the benefit of the delivery of the BSIP through funds allocated by the Department for Transport.</li> <li>2. Any alternative options may perpetuate inconsistency in service provision, and may result in less benefit accruing within Wolverhampton through the BSIP. There may also be harmful effects on future funding bids if commitment to the EP is not consistent across all Highway Authorities.</li> </ol>

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<b>Reasons for Decision</b>	Now that Government funding has been granted for delivery of the BSIP decisions are required to ensure variation of the EP and realise the benefits arising from implementation of the BSIP. In particular there is a timely need for a decision on Variation 002.
<b>Record of Conflicts of Interest</b>	None
<b>Dispensation Granted</b>	Not applicable
<b>Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)</b>	24 October 2022

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<b>Item 6</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Digital Wolverhampton Strategy Update
<b>Status</b>	Recommendation Approved
<b>Record of Decision</b>	That progress in delivering the priorities of the Digital Wolverhampton Strategy be noted.
<b>Options Considered</b>	<p><b>Option 1:</b> Do not deliver the Digital Wolverhampton Strategy. A failure to address broader issues in relation to digital inclusion, innovation and the economy could result in poor outcomes for the city.</p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> Delivering the Digital Wolverhampton Strategy will maximise benefits locally and tackle the digital divide, improving the digital skills and to provide digital support to businesses.</p>
<b>Reasons for Decision</b>	Delivery of the Digital Wolverhampton builds on progress made in the rollout of futureproofed digital infrastructure to maximise benefits to the residents and businesses. It supports innovation in delivery of services, growing the digital economy and supporting residents to access job opportunities, as well as addressing the digital divide.
<b>Record of Conflicts of Interest</b>	None
<b>Dispensation Granted</b>	Not applicable
<b>Decision available for implementation (subject to call-in)</b>	20 October 2022