

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel

29 November 2023

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny

Venue Committee Room 3 - 3rd Floor - Civic Centre

Membership

Chair Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman (Lab)

Vice-chair Cllr Udey Singh (Con)

Labour

Cllr Qaiser Azeem
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Ciaran Brackenridge
Cllr Claire Darke
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Harbinder Singh
Cllr Iqra Tahir

Conservative

Cllr Ellis Turrell

Quorum for this meeting is three Councillors.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Scrutiny Team:

Contact Lee Booker
Tel/Email Lee.Booker@Wolverhampton.gov.uk
Address Scrutiny Office, Civic Centre, 1st floor, St Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

Copies of other agendas and reports are available from:

Website <http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/>
Email democratic.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Tel 01902 555046

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

If you are reading these papers on an electronic device you have saved the Council £11.33 and helped reduce the Council's carbon footprint.

Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i> |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Apologies |
| 2 | Declarations of interest |
| 3 | Minutes of previous meeting (Pages 3 - 10)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record] |

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4 | Budget and Performance Update (Pages 11 - 30)
[Director of Regeneration alongside Finance team to deliver update to Panel] |
| 5 | Good Growth Strategy (Pages 31 - 66)
[Report to be presented to the Panel] |
| 6 | Former Heath Town Baths Update (Pages 67 - 70)
[An update to the Panel to be given on progress] |

Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item No: 3

Minutes - 27 September 2023

Attendance

Members of the Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Qaiser Azeem
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Ciaran Brackenridge
Cllr Jenny Cockayne (attended as substitute)
Cllr Claire Darke
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Harbinder Singh
Cllr Udey Singh (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman (Chair)
Cllr Ellis Turrell

In Attendance

Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal (Cabinet Member for Visitor City)
Cllr Simon Bennett
Cllr Wendy Thompson

Employees

Richard Lawrence (Director of Regeneration)
Ian Feagan (Director of Vibrant City)
David Pattison (Chief Operating Officer)
Lee Booker (Scrutiny Officer)

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Celia Hibbert and
Cllr Iqra Tahir.

Cllr Jenny Cockayne substituted for Cllr Iqra Tahir.

2 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3 **Minutes of previous meeting**

Resolved: That the minutes for the meeting held on the 27 June 2023 be approved as a correct record.

4 **'Event City': a new five-year event strategy for Wolverhampton**

The Member for Visitor Economy raised the relevance of events in the City and explained how they benefitted the City's economy, culture & social well being. Further work was being done to further add to the City events.

The Director of Vibrant City began the presentation (a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes) by linking up the Event plan to the wider City Objectives and Strategies. He displayed a video to the Panel which showed the diverse nature of events that occurred in the City from 2022 up until the day of presentation. These included the Commonwealth games, music events, religious cultural events and Wolverhampton Pride. He confirmed to the Panel that the visitor economy had returned to pre-pandemic levels with the City hosting over 1000 events in the past year, of which the Wolverhampton Wanderers football team, The Grand Theatre, the newly re-opened Halls (formerly known as the Civic Hall) and the racecourse were highlighted for the large number of visitors they brought to the City.

The Director of Vibrant City highlighted the Council's contributions through investment into arts, culture and City events. He stressed the importance of events, as well as the complexity and cost in working towards these events. He said partnership working was extremely important as it could not be a "Council fixes all" approach. He discussed the "events ecology" of the City, which looked at the City's role in international, national and regional event hosting. Focus on better communications/advertisement with customers as well as enabling easy transport access to the City were key areas for strategy highlighted. Working with partners to increase the City's customer retainment through improving the City's infrastructure, transport, hotel availability were emphasised. Visitor numbers 2022 showed 92% percent of the City's visitors were day visitors so there was a desire to increase those staying over night. He informed the Panel of opportunities available for the next 3 years, these included secured grant funds from: the Towns Fund, The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Arts council NPO funding and the Arts Council Uplift fund.

The Chair thanked the Director of Vibrant City and informed the Panel that a Task & Finish Scrutiny Review Group would be occurring in the near future on the City night time economy.

A Panel member praised the report and celebrated the cultural diversity of Wolverhampton and the events reflecting that. She was pleased at the job creation from these events.

A Councillor expressed praise for the report but added a general criticism/observation that he felt the voluntary sector needed more support and promotion. He discussed his own volunteer work with a local Canal Club and talked at length about the canals Wolverhampton had to offer. He argued that these areas

were hidden contributors to the economy, as people travelling in canals for leisure would set up near the City whilst passing through and spend money. He recited figures about the Canal Festival, its success and mentioned this should have been mentioned in the report also.

The Vice Chair agreed with the Councillor and added that he felt it would be a good inclusion to the strategy to consider events within Wolverhampton that occurred outside of the City. He raised inconsistencies he found in the figures within the report and presentation and asked the Director of Vibrant City to explain why the figures were not consistent throughout. He wanted to know also if the Council were able to host their own events at the Halls.

The Director of Vibrant City explained that the Halls had now been taken over by EAG and that it was now a commercial enterprise with the running decided by them. He said it was not impossible for the Council to use the Halls, but this would require working with partners.

A Councillor said the report was a welcome remedy to negative comments other Councillors had made about the City. He read numerous figures about well attended events and money generated from them. He wanted to know if the figures showing that a high percentage of people only visited the City for the day was down to consumer choice or because of a lack of accessible accommodation within the City.

The Director of Regeneration noted that an item on Hotels was set to come to Scrutiny in the future and said more information on this would be available then.

A Panel member wanted to know what was occurring with the Creation Day Festival. He also wanted to know if the Council asked local residents what they wanted in the City rather than trying to attract external customers.

The Director of Vibrant City said they had used data and research from local sources and that the Council was using customer feedback to target and deliver what people wanted. He said it would be difficult to discuss Creation Day due to the legal discussions which were on going but he would give an update when it was possible to do so.

5 **National Brownfield Institute & Green Innovation Corridor**

The Director of Regeneration opened the presentation (a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes) by introducing the National Brownfield Institute (NBI) which, located in Wolverhampton, was a research centre which aimed to develop modern methods of building. It focused on utilising and repurposing brownfield sites. It was a part of the Council's "Green Innovation Corridor" and worked in partnership with the University of Wolverhampton. General information about its year long history was covered. The Green Innovation Corridor was part of a broader regional strategy, developed in partnership with the West Midlands Combined Authority and its member Councils. As part of a National Government policy to create Investment Zones which had investment and tax schemes to attract business, Wolverhampton's Green Innovation corridor was a non-taxed site. The Director of Regeneration informed the Panel that there were plans to open up New Commercial Floorspace at the Springfield Campus site which would aid the strategy of providing opportunities for businesses and growth in the City as part of the Green Innovation Corridor. An announcement around the Investment Zones from Government was due to be

delivered in Autumn 2023.

A Councillor stated he felt the NBI was putting Wolverhampton on the map and helping it become a centre for excellence when it came to developing modern construction methods.

A Councillor asked the Director of Regeneration to talk to the Panel about the connectivity to the sites for pedestrians and cyclists, as they felt it was a challenge to get across Stafford Street and the Ring Road to the site. She felt it was important to move society away from car reliance and wanted to know what was being done to enable people to take alternative methods of transport around the City.

The Director of Regeneration explained that changes to the transport infrastructure were part of a longer term plan and would be dependent upon the investment attracted into the area.

6 **Former Heath Town Baths**

The Director of Regeneration began the presentation (a copy is attached to the signed minutes) with a chronology of the Heath Town Baths development. A grade 2 listed building opened in 1933, it closed in 2006 and had been left derelict; it had been subject to anti-social behaviour such as deliberate arson. A procurement exercise was initiated by the Council to hire an private advisor to under-take a strategic marketing review to find a special purchaser for the site. After several bids, Gaddu Associates were the approved bidder by Cabinet in 2017 to develop the site in consultation with the Council. The proposal by Gaddu associates was the re-development of the Heath Town Baths site, developed in consultation with Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to provide nursery space, training and conference rooms, business start up spaces and community function rooms. A Skills and Employment Plan had been agreed and worked on by the Council's Wolves At Work team which would support the site. Gaddu Associates had ran public consultation events alongside the Council in 2022 to help recover momentum lost from the Covid-19 lock down period. An overwhelming response was recorded by the local Heath Town population. The planning application was approved in January 2023 by the Cabinet. The Council and Gaddu Associates aimed to enter into a longlease by Autumn 2023, which would last for a 125 year term. Once the lease was affected, the responsibility for the site would be on Gaddu Associates. Legal work was on going to enable the long-lease to be agreed. He informed the Panel that if Gaddu Associates did not gain access to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, they had agreed to still fund the project but on a longer timescale to completion.

A Councillor quoted the Presentation and what uses the new scheme would be aimed at. She wanted to know what activities it would provide for young people.

The Director of Regeneration answered that Gaddu Associates had set out what their uses for the site were on the basis of proving what would be economically viable. He believed opportunities for young people would be in gaining employment and skills from the site and that uses of the building such as function rooms may provide a space for young people should businesses choose to cater to that age group.

Discussion occurred between Councillors and Officers about the legal sensitivity of

the topic. The Chief Operating Officer advised they would allow as much as possible to be in the public sphere but where sensitivities arose, these may need to be answered in a private sphere.

The Vice-Chair stated that the situation between 2017, when Gaddu Associates were first given the greenlight for the project, and 2023 were quite different. He said that Avison Young had commissioned a report on the site and had approached someone to give estimates on bringing the Heath Town baths back into use. He had given a vastly different quote to the quote Gaddu Associates had given to the Council. He said Gaddu Associates were hired as they stated they had experience in such projects but they had only formed in 2017 and had not since that time done any other development projects. He felt that given the building had caught fire around 2021/22 that it should be possible to put the project back out to tender as the asset had changed, as had the time. He wanted to know what was stopping the Council from doing this. He also wanted to know what the interest rates would be on the loan the developer may have to take out, should they be unable to secure funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. He wanted to know how Gaddu Associates would fund this.

The Chief Operating Officer explained the legal responsibilities the Council had, the relevant two being protecting and responsibly using tax payers money, the other ensuring that Heath Town Baths were brought back into productive use. Gaddu Associates made an agreement they would be given a long lease if they met certain requirements by the Council. It was a legal requirement that when Council's disposed of assets and land that they sold for market value, as determined by specialists. As of 2023, the agreement and cost of the land had been deemed as compliant with the law. He said there were areas in the contract and law which would allow the Council to take the project back under its control to tender elsewhere were it a necessity. He added this was not something that could be done easily due to the legal nature of the agreement. He said he and his legal team were currently looking to strengthen the agreement to ensure the development as currently agreed would proceed. Part of this was to ensure the development happened at pace and if it did not, that the Council had the option to change things to get a development done rapidly. Further due diligence checks were being done and a meeting between Gaddu Associates, The Director of Regeneration and the Chief Operating Officer would be occurring so that they could gain assurances that what was agreed was going to be delivered. He said the focus was on things always being legally compliant and that the development was paused until they could get assurances. The Chief Operating Officer said he would have to answer the other questions outside of the meeting privately due to legal sensitivity.

The Vice-Chair felt there should be a cut off point, where a phased approach should occur in the development, as it could not be allowed to continue indefinitely. He wanted the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Regeneration to do further scrutiny looking at what would occur should the National Lottery Heritage Funding not be gained.

The Chief Operating Officer agreed with the Vice-Chair and stated that part of the discussions would involve potential amendments to the terms of the lease depending on issues of progress, as well as funding. He said he would be happy to update the Panel on these points once discussions had occurred.

The Chair wanted the Chief Operating Officer to give the Panel an idea of the timing of the conversations so Scrutiny could keep track of the topic.

The Chief Operating Officer said that the agreement meant they needed to reach a conclusion on the lease by the end of Autumn, end of November being the latest.

A Member of the Council wanted to know if an updated business plan had been done to represent the changed landscape, as the previous one had been done in 2017 and the Covid-19 Pandemic had occurred between then and 2023. He also said he had spoken to a business, Tudor Medical Practice, who had expressed interest in the Heath Town Baths site previously but had decided not to proceed with developing a business plan. He said one of the reasons for this was asbestos in the building, he noted asbestos had not been discussed in the presentation or report. He said that Tudor Medical Practice had drawn up business plans for expansion on another site after they chose not to proceed (before Covid) and would be co-funded between them and the NHS. Pre-Covid the estimated quote for the development was around £3 million but coming back to the project post-covid in the changed economy, the quote was now £8 million. He wanted to know if the Council was aware if the costs estimated to develop the Heath Town Baths site were still the same as those originally agreed upon with Gaddu Associates in 2017. He wanted to know if the bank loans were still going to be based around the original 4 to 5 million figure quote. He wanted to know how Gaddu Associates planned to deal with potential spiralling labour and material costs in the event of not gaining additional funding. He felt the checks and due diligence now being done around the lease for safeguarding should have been done from the outset of the project. He said he had demonstrated other private businesses were interested in the land and felt the opportunity was there if Gaddu Associates could not deliver on the Heath Town Baths project.

The Chief Operating Officer stated that Gaddu Associates went through the full bidding process, whereas others did not, therefore they got the agreement. He said that asbestos was taken into consideration at the time as part of the assessment. He said that there was some protection in place in the lease with the ability to take back control of the site if necessary. He said the development had been paused so the Council could do further due diligence with Gaddu Associates in case further strengthening on the part of taking back control was required.

The Director of Regeneration responded to the points made by the Councillor on business plan and funding. He said as part of due diligence a meeting was booked for 11th October 2023 for a meeting to look into this and get reassurances the Council was happy to proceed with the process. He said the estimated cost was currently still £4 to £5 million but as part of the upcoming meeting with Gaddu Associates they would be enquiring if this had changed due to inflationary pressures, as well as enquire on progress in gaining funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

A Panel member sought clarification and understanding around the long stop and ultimate stop in the lease agreement. He had concerns about the security on the site as it currently stood, he wanted to know if Gaddu Associates had demonstrated to the Council that they would be able to guard the site.

The Chief Operating Officer said that they planned to look into the long stop process and potentially alter it to a more phased approach. He said part of the due diligence

checks in future conversations would be enquiring into security on the site with Gaddu Associates.

A Councillor raised concerns about a possible breach of the pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest disclosure rules in reference to a Councillor discussing another business's previous interest in the site. He wanted to know if this had breached the guidance and if the meeting should have gone off the record.

The Chief Operating Officer said he was confident the guidance and law had not been breached by the Councillor and stated that he believed the meeting had been conducted as transparently as possible in the public's interest.

A Member of the Council wanted to know why no work had been done on the site in 6 years. She also wanted to know if a contingency fund was accounted for in the event of unplanned costs going over budget on the site.

The Director of Regeneration explained that work had not been carried out by the developer yet as they were subject to planning permission and were still attempting to gain funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. He said the funding split plan was 80% from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with 20% coming from bank loans. The future meetings to conduct due diligence sought to look into this and question this, as well as to gain assurance that a contingency fund plan was in place.

A Panel Member wanted to know what the protocol was for if the November deadline was missed.

The Chief Operating Officer stated that the meeting they were having would allow them to clarify what was going on and in the event of things not being satisfactory they would return to the Panel to raise this for further discussion. He stated those discussions would need to be done with exemption due to legal sensitivities.

A Councillor asked if there would be a further opportunity to scrutinise the former Heath Town Baths when the updated information was available after Council Officers have met with Gaddu Associates.

The Chair and Chief Operating Officer agreed it would be beneficial but would be subject to discussion outside of the meeting in regard to whether it would require a separate meeting or if it could be brought to an existing future Panel meeting.

Resolved: That the Director of Regeneration and Chief Operating Officer would provide an update to the Panel on the former Heath Town Baths site at the next available Economy & Growth Scrutiny Panel.

7 **Date of next meeting 29 11 23**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as the 29 November 2023.

This page is intentionally left blank

Performance, Budget and MTFS

Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel
29 November 2023

Page 11

Agenda Item No: 4

Introduction

Budget Scrutiny for

- Background
- Draft Budget 2024-2025 and Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Our City Our Plan Performance
- Future Challenges
- Strategic Risk Register

Background

- This presentation provides an update on the budget position and the draft budget for 2024-2025.
- Scrutiny are asked to:
 - consider and comment on the draft budget and how it is aligned to priorities of the Council
 - Provide feedback to Scrutiny Board for consolidation and onward response to Cabinet on the Draft Budget 2024-2025 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

Draft Budget 2024-2025 and MTFS Overview

Draft Budget and MTFS

- The 2023-2024 budget and MTFS was approved by Full Council on 1 March 2023. We reported a forecast budget deficit of £16.4 million in 2024-2025 rising to £23.1 million over the medium term to 2025-2026.
- Work has been ongoing to reduce the deficit with an update to Cabinet on 18 October 2023. The budget deficit for 2024-2025 is now projected to be in the region of £2.6 million.
- However, the budget and MTFS include efficiency targets which are held corporately totalling £6.2 million in 2023-2024, of which only £2 million has been allocated on a recurrent basis and £4.2 million is one off in nature.
- In addition, the current working assumptions include a further £2.6 million efficiency target for 2024-2025.
- Therefore, in addition to the £2.6 million projected deficit, efficiencies totalling £6.8 million is still required to be identified for 2024-2025.

Draft Budget and MTFS

- The projected budget deficit rising to over £20 million for 2025-2026.
- Work will continue to be undertaken to bring forward proposals to set a balanced budget for 2024-2025 and deliver a sustainable medium term financial strategy.
- Budget setting process is still under way. The Draft Budget presented in these slides is subject to changes.

2023-2024 Draft Budget and MTFS 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 Overview

Page 17

Scrutiny Panel	2023-2024 Gross Expenditure Budget £000	2023-2024 Gross Income Budget £000	2023-2024 Net Revenue Expenditure/ (Income) Budget £000	Pay Related growth* £000	Growth 2024-2025 £000	Savings 2024-2025 £000	2024-2025 Draft Net Revenue Expenditure / (Income) Budget £000
Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel	16,405	(10,747)	5,658	-	-	-	5,658
Health Scrutiny Panel	30,993	(29,897)	1,096	-	(360)	-	736
Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel	226,224	(114,443)	111,781	10,645	(4,674)	4,423	122,175
Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel	88,320	(49,485)	38,835	-	15	(1,000)	37,850
Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel	262,674	(209,208)	53,466	-	1,000	-	54,466
Adults Scrutiny Panel	139,025	(43,447)	95,578	-	11,699	-	107,277
Net Budget Requirement	763,641	(457,227)	306,414	10,645	7,680	3,423	328,162
Corporate Resources			(306,414)		(19,154)		(325,568)
Budget Challenge as at 18 October 2023							2,594

- Draft revised budget for 2023-2024 does not reflect passing out 2023-2024 pay award. This is held corporately. The 2023-2024 pay award was approved on 1 November and budgets will be passed out to services over the next few months
- * Pay related growth currently held corporately – includes provision for a 3% pay award
- **projected budget deficit assuming the delivery of efficiency targets totalling £6.8 million in 2024-2025

Overview – Uncertainties

- There continues to be significant uncertainty around
 - Future funding
 - Inflationary pressures
 - Demand for services
 - Future pay awards – currently assumes 3% in 2024-2025 and 2% for future years

Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel

Draft budget 2024-2025 and MTFS

Draft Budget

Service	2023-2024 Gross Expenditure Budget £000	2023-2024 Gross Income Budget £000	2023-2024 Net Revenue Expenditure/ (Income) Budget £000	Pay Related growth* £000	Growth 2024-2025 £000	Savings 2024-2025 £000	2024-2025 Draft Net Revenue Expenditure / (Income) Budget £000
Arts and Culture	1,712	(858)	854	-	-	-	854
City Events	2,777	(2,015)	762	-	-	-	762
Adult Education	3,706	(3,801)	(95)	-	-	-	(95)
Skills	3,043	(2,191)	852	-	-	-	852
Libraries	2,074	(500)	1,574	-	-	-	1,574
City Development	1,534	(1,034)	500	-	-	-	500
Director City Development and City Investment	758	(93)	665	-	-	-	665
Enterprise	801	(255)	546	-	-	-	546
Total	16,405	(10,747)	5,658	-	-	-	5,658

- Draft revised budget after reversal of one-off virements
- The 2023-2024 pay award was approved on 1 November and is currently held corporately.
- The forecast impact of the 2024-2025 pay related growth increments, NI and potential pay award is also held corporately. Current working assumptions make provision for a pay award of 3%
- At this point in time some growth and efficiency targets are being held in Corporate Accounts and will allocated when services have identified where it needs to be reflected.

Our City Our Plan Performance





Performance Overview

Thriving economy in all part of the city

Number of indicators	Number showing improved or sustained performance	Number showing decreased performance	Number with no update
6	3	2	1

Performance Overview

Thriving economy in all part of the city

Indicator	WLV June 2022	WLV Aug 2022	WLV Dec 2022	WLV Mar 2023	WLV June 2023	WLV Sept 2023	DoT
Number of jobs created / safeguarded in the city through the Investment Team	93	169	203	219	278	116	
% of premises in the city with full fibre coverage	18.0%	18.0%	37.8%	54.1%	60.9%	62.8	
Number of rapid electric car charging points in the city	30	30	32	32	32	32	
Wolverhampton based businesses supported by the council			157	98	46	110	

Indicator	WLV 2018 Count	WLV 2018 %	WLV 2019 Count	WLV 2019 %	WLV 2020 Count	WLV 2020 %
Businesses that survive one year in the city (2020 latest data)	1,020	93.2	1,135	95.0	1,135.0	94.6
Businesses that survive five years in the city (2016 data only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	495	29.7%

Performance Overview

Thriving economy in all part of the city

In light of the changing funding and wider environment, the council is developing a new business growth programme. Supporting businesses is an ongoing priority and performance at Q2 shows improved performance around the number of Wolverhampton based businesses supported by the council.

The number of jobs being safeguarded through the city investment team has decreased since the last quarter, though if we compare June 2023 to June 2022, we can see 185 more jobs have been created/safeguarded.

Business survival rates are high in Wolverhampton for years 1,2 and 3 but after year 3 survival rates fall, this has been highlighted and is something that will be taken into consideration with the business support offer.

Future proofed digital infrastructure acts as the backbone to improved service delivery as part of the development of a smart city. Wolverhampton's full fibre coverage has been increasing and has gone from just 18% coverage in June 2022 to 62.8% in the latest quarter. The city has been recognised nationally as a 'rising star' in fibre.

Performance Overview

Jobs and Skills

After increases in the Unemployment Claimant Count through the end of 2022-23, the claimant count for working aged residents remained stable through 2023-2024. The Council continues to try and influence improved performance in this area through partnership working and initiatives such as Wolves @ Work.

The number of apprentices and graduates placed within the council has doubled over the past 15 months through the Council's commitment to contributing to its employment support offer to help get local people into jobs and training and growing our own leaders of the future.

Risks / Key areas to note

Adult Education

- The financial risks relate to no growth in the grant funding for service provision and the resulting need to deliver outputs and outcomes whilst absorbing inflationary cost pressures.

City Development

- Ongoing inflationary pressures could impact the delivery of capital schemes within the City. These pressures continue to be monitored and to mitigate these risks contingency budgets are being reviewed.

City Events

- Given the city's level of ambition, there are financial risks relating to increasing the scope and number of events attracting external funding and delivery within approved resources.

Earmarked Reserves

- Full list of Earmarked Reserves balances of all reserves at the end of 2022-2023 financial year were last reported to Cabinet on 12 July 2023 which can be access from:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 12th July, 2023, 5.00 pm :: Wolverhampton City Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Page 27

Forecast Reserves balances for 2023-2024 will be going to Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel on 7 December 2023.

Strategic Risk Register

- Risks last reported to the Cabinet on 15 November 2022.
- The following strategic risks relevant to this panel:
 - High Unemployment
 - City Centres – Council Led Development Projects
 - City Learning Quarter
 - Business Support
- Strategic Risk register is available at:
- <https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s256782/Appendix%206%20-%20Strategic%20Risk%20Register.pdf>

wolverhampton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel 29 November 2023
--	---

Report title	Good Growth Strategy	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Steve Simkins	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable Director	Charlotte Johns, Director of Strategy and Growth	
Originating service	Policy and Strategy	
Accountable employee	Laura Collings Tel Email	Head of Policy and Strategy 01902550414 laura.collings@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Strategic Executive Board	26 September 2023

Recommendation(s) for decision:

Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Consider and comment on the Good Growth Strategy, at appendix 1.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the development of a new strategic economic plan for the city, Good Growth strategy ahead of formal consultation on the strategy between December 2023 and January 2024.

2.0 Background

2.1 We want all business, residents, families and communities to benefit from the growth and new opportunities in our city. This strategy sets out a new vision for economic growth in Wolverhampton, a vision which is focused on delivering good growth. It explains the main focus of our work, and actions we aim to deliver that can propel Wolverhampton's economic prospects and, fundamentally, the life chances and wellbeing of our residents so that 'All Wulfrunians live longer healthier lives'. There are many encouraging signs:

- Over the last 10 years the City of Wolverhampton has seen major successes, including the award-winning £1 billion i54 business park.
- World leading low carbon research and innovation at the new National Brownfield Institute at the University of Wolverhampton's Springfield Campus.
- Skills levels across the city have risen steadily over the last five years.
- 89% of the city's schools are rated good or outstanding by OFSTED above the national and regional average.
- We are delivering first class learning facilities with a seamless learner offer through the City Learning Quarter.
- There are growing sectors in digital, creative industries and professional services bringing new jobs as well as established clusters in advanced manufacturing and aerospace.
- Thousands of fantastic employment opportunities in our foundational sectors of health and social care, hospitality and retail, and logistics which provide vital services to local people.

2.2 The city, like many post-industrial places faces long term social and economic challenges. We believe our industrial heritage is an asset to our economy, but it has left a legacy of brownfield sites that present redevelopment challenges, and the restructuring of our economy has left pockets of low skills. Productivity levels, the amount of value created for every hour somebody works, have been poor for the UK since the financial crisis and Wolverhampton has also struggled.

3.0 Good Growth Strategy

3.1 We now face a new growing challenge to support our residents and businesses to decarbonise our economy and make our city net carbon neutral by 2041. The success of this strategy ultimately relies on delivering not just good growth, but good green growth.

3.2 To deliver on this the strategy we will focus on three themes supported by nine priorities.

- Place
 - Support delivery of sustainable communities and workplaces
 - Inclusive, low carbon transport network
 - Secure the potential of our city and town centres
- People
 - Education, skills and employment system that meets local needs
 - Improve health and wellbeing removing barriers to employment
 - Build community wealth through the Wolverhampton Pound
- Productivity
 - Help businesses and organisations increase their productivity
 - Collaborate with businesses and the university to stimulate innovation
 - Maximise the city's investment potential

3.3 The plan focuses on aligning strategic objectives with operational delivery and priorities includes. A policy position outlining the Council's key areas of focus, challenge, and opportunity under the priority. Key activity highlighting planned projects, investment and activity which will support delivery of the priority areas.

4.0 Consultation and Engagement

4.1 The strategy builds on already extensive engagement with residents and key stakeholders. Including:

- Education, Skills and Employment Strategy consultation process.
- Education and skills providers through our recently completed review of post 16 provision in the city.
- Employer perspective from the development of the West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan
- Wider engagement with residents through our Cost Living support, Healthy Lifestyles survey and other citywide engagement.

4.2 A formal consultation process on the strategy will be held from December to January 2024 to gain further input on our proposed priorities. This will include focus groups and workshops with residents, partners and businesses. In addition, there will be a digital survey to give all residents and stakeholders opportunity to provide their views.

5.0 Performance Framework

- 5.1 The Council continues to use a variety of means in which to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of operations against organisational strategic priorities and statutory requirements. Using data and analysis across all areas of the business, the Council actively encourages a golden thread of performance monitoring throughout all parts of every service.
- 5.2 As part of the further development of the strategy an economic performance framework will be developed aligned to each of the priorities. Further work will be undertaken to refine these throughout the consultation period. The final framework will also be aligned to the Our City: Our Plan performance framework.
- 5.3 The framework will provide high-level city data on key priorities, benchmark city performance against national and regional data, highlight the impact of targeted interventions and inform strategic decision-making.

6.0 Delivery and Future Economic Governance

- 6.1 The delivery of this strategy will be a major priority for the Council working across all sectors, public, private, community and voluntary. The key to realising these opportunities in this strategy is collective leadership bring our partners, businesses and communities along on the journey to drive system change.
- 6.2 As part of our delivery plan for the strategy we will build on the many fantastic partnerships, boards and networks the Council and it's partners currently work within. Considering that the economic landscape of the city and region has changed significantly in recent years there may be opportunity to enhance these.
- 6.3 For example the folding in of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership to the West Midlands Combined Authority has meant a new regional approach to delivering business support. There are also new policy areas where we may, given economic shifts look to develop further partnerships to support delivery, particularly around our low carbon and green economy priorities.

7.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 7.1 Option 1 would be to not to develop an overarching economic framework for the Council which sets out key priorities. This could mean that local people are not able to access the existing and emerging opportunities in our city and local business do not have access to the right support to enable growth.
- 7.2 Option 2 and the chosen option is to develop a strategic economic plan for the Council which will provide a framework to maximise economic prosperity for local people and businesses.

8.0 Reasons for decision(s)

- 8.1 The priorities and activity identified in the strategy have been developed through a robust evidence base and engagement with residents and city stakeholders.

9.0 Financial implications

9.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with the strategy itself although the subsequent actions, projects and programmes will have financial implications. Any further budget approvals will be sought in line with the Financial Procure Rules.

9.2 All costs associated with engagement and the preparation of the plan will be accommodated within existing resources.

[LD/21112023/X]

10.0 Legal implications

10.1 Whilst there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, legal advice will be sought throughout the development of a new strategic economic plan, if and when required.

[RR/21112023/Q]

11.0 Equalities implications

11.1 An equalities analysis for the strategy will be undertaken and mitigations to any negative impacts identified. Fair and Equal is one of the three cross cutting principles of the refreshed plan. All activity noted in the plan will also be subject to individual equalities analysis.

12.0 All other Implications

12.1 The strategy has implications across the Council, including climate change, health, and wellbeing and digital which will continue to be considered and managed as part of the delivery of this plan.

12.2 Health and wellbeing is an important part of everyday life. It is integral to leading a happy and healthy lifestyle. There is an inextricable link between health and employment prospects. Through this strategy and Our City: Our Plan priorities we will ensure that our communities are stronger, healthier, and thriving places to live.

12.3 The plan is aligned to the Digital Wolves strategy setting out how as a city and as a council we can support local people to develop the digital skills they need to gain and sustain employment.

1.1 The performance framework for each thematic area of the plan will enable continued oversight of the indicators that underpin the central commitment to Wulfrunians living longer, healthier lives.

13.0 Schedule of background papers

13.1 N/A

14.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Good Growth Strategy

Good Growth Strategy City of Wolverhampton

Draft for Consultation

Contents

- Foreword.....3
- Our Story4
- Our Role as a Partner, Enabler and Leader5
 - Our Place in the Region6
 - Our City: Our Plan7
- Wolverhampton’s Economy8
 - Output Gap8
 - Sector Profile9
- Our Approach to Good Growth.....12
- Place.....14
 - Support the development of sustainable communities and workplaces14
 - Inclusive, low carbon transport network.....15
 - Secure the potential of our city and town centres15
- Productivity19
 - Help businesses and organisations to increase their productivity19
 - Collaborate with business and academia to stimulate innovation.....20
 - Maximise the city’s investment potential21
- People24
 - Education, skills and employment system that meets local need24
 - Tackle health and wellbeing barriers and encourage inclusive employment25
 - Build community wealth through the Wolverhampton Pound26
- Delivering Good Growth29

Foreword

We want all business, residents, families and communities to benefit from the growth and new opportunities in our city. This strategy sets out a new vision for economic growth in Wolverhampton, a vision which is focused on delivering good growth. It explains the main focus of our work, and actions we aim to deliver that can propel Wolverhampton's economic prospects and, fundamentally, the life chances and wellbeing of our residents so that 'All Wulfrunians live longer healthier lives'.

Our Story

Over the last 10 years the City of Wolverhampton has seen major successes, including the award-winning £1 billion i54 business park, the £150 million Interchange transport hub, the £17.5 million National Brownfield Institute at the University of Wolverhampton's Springfield Campus and the £16 million construction of the i9 office complex – now home to the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities' second headquarters. We have innovative businesses across a range of sectors, hard-working employees, an expanding skills sector, world class connectivity and a growing arts and culture scene. All of this and much more has led to growth – driving forward our economy and building confidence. **Our city economy is now worth £4.7 billion pounds and supports over 100,000 jobs.**

But more is needed. The city, like many post-industrial places faces long term social and economic challenges. We believe our industrial heritage is an asset to our economy, but it has left a legacy of brownfield sites that present redevelopment challenges, and the restructuring of our economy has left pockets of low skills. Productivity levels, the amount of value created for every hour somebody works, have been poor for the UK since the financial crisis and Wolverhampton has also struggled.

We now face a new growing challenge to support our residents and businesses to decarbonise our economy and make our city net carbon neutral by 2041. Wolverhampton made history by becoming the first English city to sign the European Circular Cities Declaration a major environmental designed to accelerate the adoption of circular economies across the continent. The success of this strategy ultimately relies on delivering not just good growth, but good green growth.

The scale of the prize is significant – **up to 2040 the city's economy is projected to grow by £2 billion to £6.7 billion** an increase of 43%. We want to go further and faster. This strategy sets out targeted interventions and priorities which could see us eclipse our projected growth to deliver more jobs and higher incomes for local people.

Our Role as a Partner, Enabler and Leader

The City of Wolverhampton Council is one piece of a complex economic system which operate across multiple footprints and actors. Delivering real economic change requires key partners to align around a shared vision. To make that happen, the Council commits to using it's role as a partner, enabler and leader to deliver change.

- We'll make it as easy as possible to work with us – streamline our processes, join up our services.
- Use our assets effectively to support and enable good development in our city.
- Lead the development of game changing investment through city and regional partnership including the Green Innovation Corridor, i54 western extension and Canalside.
- Be a lead partner and applicant for new public funding opportunities to support business investment, skills development, and employment support.
- Leading and co-ordinating Wolverhampton's response on how the city tackles challenges and opportunities associated with climate change and the necessary transition to a zero-carbon economy.

Our Place in the Region

The City of Wolverhampton played a pivotal role in setting up the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), which was established through a Parliamentary Order in June 2016. Since then, the city alongside the six other constituent authorities of the WMCA have been at the forefront of devolution in England.

The Levelling Up White Paper published on the 2 February 2022 announced a 'Trailblazer Devolution Deal' for the West Midlands and Greater Manchester. It was the third devolution deal for the region. On the 15 March 2023 the Chancellor announced the conclusion of negotiations on a third deeper devolution deal for the region. Including:

- Levelling Up Zones (LUZ): Commitment from government to work with the WMCA and constituent authorities to designate of 'growth zones'.
- Housing and Regeneration: Local leadership of the Affordable Homes Programme for the first time outside of London worth at least £200 million and a £100 million brownfield land fund.
- Retrofit: Piloting the devolution of net zero funding, including for buildings' retrofit, through allocation rather than competition in the period from 2025 onwards.
- Adult Skills and Employment: Devolution of non-apprenticeship adult skills functions and grant funding, local flexibilities, over Free Courses for Jobs and Skills Bootcamps. A commitment to a co-design approach to all future contracted employment support programmes with the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Business Productivity: A new role for WMCA in the governance of the British Business Bank UK funds in the Midlands and stronger relationship with the UK Infrastructure Bank. Stronger partnership between the government and WMCA across a range of international trade activities.
- Innovation: Building on the Innovation Accelerator programme, a Strategic Innovation Partnership to give WMCA a new and influential role informing the national research and innovation ecosystem, a knowledge transfer programme focused on local strengths and a pilot to boost innovation adoption and diffusion by local businesses.
- Transport: The deal also includes the provision of essential infrastructure especially public transport connectivity to give communities access to essential services, facilities and opportunities.

Our City: Our Plan

Our City: Our Plan is our strategic framework for levelling up, co-produced with over 4500 local people and stakeholders and approved at Full Council on 2 March 2022.

We have one plan for our 'place', derived bottom up and collectively owned with clear interface with Levelling Up missions. The plan outlines an overarching ambition that Wulfrunians will live longer, healthier lives, and outlines six priorities.



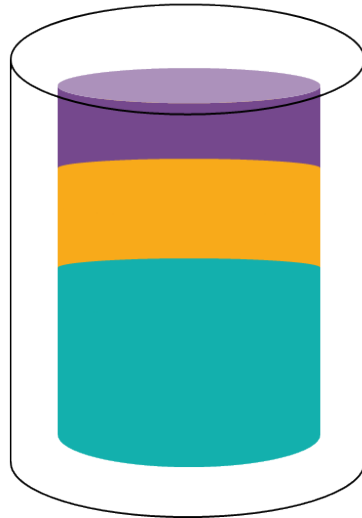
Wolverhampton's Economy

A full profile of Wolverhampton's economy can be found in the strategic economic evidence base.

Output Gap

Page 44

Wolverhampton
Output Gap
£2.7bn



Skills Levels

NVQ4+ Qualifications

Wolverhampton: 35.2% England: 43.2%

£186.2m



Employment

Employment Rate

Wolverhampton: 70.8% England: 75.1%

£337.7m



Economic Dynamism

Enterprises

Wolverhampton: 369 Enterprises per 10,000 pop.

England: 459 Enterprises per 10,000 pop.

£2.17bn

Sector Profile

Wolverhampton's economy is broken down between 'strategic' sectors focused on growth - and some more "foundational" (health & wellbeing, public sector including education and retail), critical to employment but with a more enabling role in the economy.

Summary of GVA, jobs and enterprises by defined sector¹ for Wolverhampton (and percentage of total for England):

	GVA (£m)			Jobs			Enterprises (Snapshot)		
	2020	%	England %	2020	%	England %	2020	%	England %
Advanced Manufacturing	£816	15.9%	10.5%	13,150	12.8%	10.3%	785	10.2%	12.1%
Building Technologies	£304	5.9%	5.8%	4,350	4.2%	4.7%	1005	13.0%	13.1%
Business Services	£1,185	23.0%	42.5%	16,475	16.0%	25.4%	2,260	29.3%	38.6%
Environmental Technologies	£114	2.2%	3.2%	1,160	1.1%	1.1%	60	0.8%	0.5%
Health & Wellbeing	£772	15.0%	8.6%	22,500	21.8%	15.1%	435	5.3%	4.9%
Public Sector inc. Education	£917	17.8%	12.0%	16,250	15.8%	15.6%	185	2.4%	3.7%
Retail	£658	12.8%	10.5%	18,500	18.0%	15.0%	1,595	20.6%	14.8%
Transport Technologies	£195	3.8%	3.7%	5,655	5.5%	5.2%	840	10.9%	5.1%
Visitor Economy	£185	3.6%	3.1%	5,525	5.4%	7.7%	560	7.2%	7.0%
Wolverhampton Total	£5,146	100%	100%	103,000	100%	100%	7,725	100%	100%

There are a number of sector specialisms present in Wolverhampton where the city holds a competitive advantage and where there is significant growth potential to support many firms, sectors and supply chains as well as the overall economy. The potential contribution of these

¹ Shaded boxes indicator Wolverhampton has a higher or same proportion that the national proportion for that sector

is different, varying in size and scale, and the rate at which productivity is projected to improve. Our two biggest sectors and drivers of productivity and growth are.

- **Business Services:** The city's largest sector generating £1.2 billion of GVA annually. Over 17,000 jobs concentrated in creative and digital, financial services, real estate and other sub sectors. Despite its considerable size in the city the density of business services sector remains lower than the England average.
- **Advanced Manufacturing:** 16% of all the city's Gross Value Added (GVA) is generated by businesses delivering goods or services in the advanced manufacturing sector with the automotive and aerospace industries being dominant. There are strong sub sectors in the food and drink production and metals/materials. 10% of all jobs in the advanced manufacturing sector in England are in Wolverhampton. The sector is a crucial part of Wolverhampton's future growth but also faces challenges as we transition to new technologies and automation, manage the circular economy transition and ongoing energy crisis.

We have three sectors in our city which are smaller in size than our main specialisms but are demonstrating growth in GVA or jobs.

- **Building Technologies:** Wolverhampton has a higher proportion of building technologies GVA compared to the Black Country and national averages (6.5% of the local total GVA compared to 5.9% in the Black Country and 5.8% across the UK). Between 2017 and 2020, Building Technologies GVA in Wolverhampton increased by 1.7%, performing much better than the UK overall (-9.4%).
- **Transport Technologies:** While GVA returned by the transport technologies sector decreased between 2017 and 2020 we saw the number of jobs increase in Wolverhampton by over 20%. A positive trajectory for jobs growth in the sector but a limited number of high value jobs.
- **Environmental Technologies:** Productivity in Wolverhampton's environmental technologies sector stands at £98,276 GVA per employee. This is not only higher than economy-wide productivity in Wolverhampton but is the second highest environmental technologies productivity of all four Black Country local authority areas.

Underpinning our strategic sectors are those elements of the local economy which provide vital services to people who live, work and visit our city. Whilst they generally produce lower levels of productivity, they are large generators of jobs in critical occupations such as health care workers, teachers and those delivering high street amenities which support city and town centre's.

- Health and Wellbeing: The largest generator of jobs in the city is the health and wellbeing sector with 22,550 jobs which more than a fifth of all city jobs. Wolverhampton has a higher proportion of health & wellbeing businesses than both the Black Country and UK average (5.6% compared to 5.5% and 5.2% respectively).
- Retail: Traditionally important to our city's high streets retail equate to 20% of all enterprises in our city. A vital part of vibrant thriving places to but a sector which continues to face challenges on the back of the pandemic and the shift to online shopping. Increasing footfall levels is key to unlocking the future sustainability of a contracting retail offer in the city. Our wider plans for city and town centre revitalisation
- Public Sector: Predominantly driven by jobs and growth in the education sub sector.

Our Approach to Good Growth

Our strategy is based on three interconnected themes and a central principle of 'good growth'.



Good Growth is Green Growth

There are several ways that climate change could stimulate the Wolverhampton economy:

- **Renewable Energy:** Establishing renewable energy infrastructure and attracting green energy companies to set up operations in the area can lead to the creation of manufacturing jobs for wind turbines, solar panels, and energy storage systems, and in installation and maintenance.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Green infrastructure projects such as flood defences, green roofs, and urban parks which would create jobs and improve the quality of life for residents.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Promoting energy efficiency measures can reduce energy consumption and lower emissions, leading to cost savings for businesses and homeowners, stimulating economic activity.
- **Transport:** Investing in sustainable transport infrastructure can reduce carbon emissions and create jobs in construction, manufacturing, and transportation services.
- **Research & Innovation:** Encouraging research and development in green technologies can lead to new business opportunities.
- **Education & Training:** Investing in education and training programs in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and other related fields can ensure that the local workforce is equipped with the necessary skills for green jobs.
- **Waste Management:** Implementing sustainable waste management practices and waste-to-energy technologies can, not only reduce environmental impacts, but also create jobs.

Place

This section sets out how we will make our places work, putting people first. Creating a city where you don't need a car, delivering jobs and homes in the right places, ensuring our city and local centres thrive, building in resilience and adapting for the future.

Support the development of sustainable communities and workplaces

The [Wolverhampton Investment Prospectus](#) sets out an ambitious regeneration programme for the city which is informed by social-economic indicators, market intelligence and investment appetite and therefore realistic and deliverable. The Prospectus includes large residential schemes such as Brewers Yard and Canalside South, the office led Commercial District and leisure opportunities around the Molineux and City Centre West. Some of the transformational regeneration schemes that are included in the Prospectus are on the verge of being ready for delivery and just require a small amount of intervention to make that possible. There are many exciting opportunities with strong interest from a range of investors.

Housing schemes in our city centre will help to diversify the city offer, drive football and support local businesses but our ambitions for city housing are much wider. We want every family in our city to have access to a safe, affordable secure home. There are pockets of poor-quality housing in the city and challenges for many with affordability. Through our Council owned housing company WV Living and our Housing Development team we will continue to drive forward the delivery of new homes and spearhead neighbourhood redevelopment to drive up quality.

New business models are creating a shift in demand for new workspace with hybrid working models increasing demand in the city's flexible workspace market. We are creating new workspaces and start-up spaces in locations outside of the city centre through providing funding to businesses for collaboration, co-working space and business development within local communities. As well as strategic employment sites such as I54.

Wolverhampton is rapidly developing a city-wide approach to green infrastructure. Building on the city's first solar farm a joint project between the City of Wolverhampton Council and Wolverhampton NHS Trust, including net zero homes, electric vehicle charging points, enhancing our green space, district heating and flood alleviation.

Inclusive, low carbon transport network

An effective and efficient transport network is critical to sustaining and growing the city's economic potential. Connecting local people to jobs, and businesses with their supply chains and markets. The city has seen significant investment in its transport infrastructure in recent years with a new city centre interchange, train station and tram network. We want to make Wolverhampton a city where no matter where you live you live you don't need to have a car, if you don't want one to access everything the city and region has to offer.

The city is predominantly car orientated with travel to work statistics showing that 54% of people drive a car or van to work which is greater than the national average of 45% (ONS 2021). Business trips in cars and light goods vehicles are responsible for the greatest proportion of emissions in the city. While car travel is a necessary element of residents travelling to work and moving around the city, if we are to meet our net zero target of 2041 a change in how we travel will need to happen.

The public transport system is the backbone of our whole sustainable transport network and will play a key role in delivering our Vision to address emissions and deliver a 45-minute region with connected 15-minute neighbourhoods. The [West Midlands Local Transport Plan](#) sets out a vision to deliver an integrated system, which is reliable, ticketing is easy and the services are efficient, accessible and comfortable. Shared services (such as car clubs and bike hire) are incorporated into the overall system so are seen as complementary to public transport.

Working with our partners we will lead a technology revolution. Exploiting our regional strengths in products such as public transport, connected and autonomous vehicles, 5G, Mobility as a Service and modern infrastructure construction techniques as well as battery technology to provide world-class transport services for residents and businesses.

Secure the potential of our city and town centres

City and town centres are critical parts of our local economy providing a range of functions to local people. They are hubs for independent businesses and often provide much valued spaces where people can socialise, connect and celebrate local identity through events and festivals.

The way people use our city and town centres has changed. There is a move away from retail to more social, leisure and entertainment activities. This doesn't mean that retail and hospitality are not important parts of our local economy, they are a vital part of providing much needed services to local people. It does mean that we need to diversify our city and town centre offer to so that we can provide a more balanced offer which attracts people to come and spend time on our high streets.

A key focus of that future sense of place for our city is the prominence of our cultural and creative offer. Wolverhampton is a uniquely diverse and vibrant city, with many different voices which make up our population. Our arts, culture and creative sectors reflect this landscape. We aren't starting from scratch with nationally significant cultural assets like Wolverhampton Football Club, The Halls, Wolverhampton Art Galley and the Grand Theatre. We can already proudly call ourselves an 'Events City' with over 1,000 events held in the city every year.

Supporting the growth of our cultural and creative sector is only part of the answer. It is part of a wider integrated approach to city regeneration, development and enhancements. Including excellent public transport connectivity, effective city marketing and welcoming public spaces.

Ourcome	Objectives
Support development of sustainable communities and workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Wolverhampton Local Plan to make sure we use our land and assets in the best possible way to meet our long-term housing and employment needs. • Work in partnership with Government, the West Midlands Combined Authority and developers to remediate and bring forward brownfield land for new development. • Work with developers and through our council owned housing vehicle WV Living to create the new homes the city needs. • We will tackle pockets of poor-quality housing through transformation estate renewal programmes. • Decarbonise our city housing stock working with Wolverhampton Homes and our Tenant Management Organisation to retrofit social housing, encouraging residents to access net zero grant funding green their homes and pursue passivhaus standard for new homes. • Create more accessible, inclusive communities and workplaces which have sustainable transport and digital connectivity at their heart allowing people to access opportunities without needing a car. • Work with public and private partners to establish renewable energy infrastructure in our communities reducing energy costs to residents and businesses.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver our wider programme of key employment sites Industrial Sites to provide shovel read employment sites for development. Building our successful intervention in the Bilston Employment site.
<p>Create an inclusive, low carbon transport network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Transport for West Midlands and other operators to deliver a consistently high quality, affordable public transport system. • Develop our walking and cycling network enabling people to move easily around the city and access a range of local destinations safely. • Encourage alternative modes of transport to reduce car usage and shift reliance on petrol and diesel as a means of moving around the city and region. • Support a technology revolution driving electric vehicle usage and infrastructure. • Work with partners to deliver major infrastructure projects to improve transport links in the city. • Provide safe and accessible roads, pavements and other public spaces for everyone, especially vulnerable users.
<p>Secure the potential of our city and town centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead transformational regeneration to diversify city and town centre offer creatin a mix of residential, employment and leisure space. • Use our planning powers to prevent poor quality development. • Make our city and town centres more walkable by reducing traffic flow, increasing footfall and dwell time. • Support a sustainable future for historic buildings across the city, and in particular listed buildings. • Develop a world class visitor and night time economy offer supported by our 5 year events strategy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen and promote arts, cultural and creative economy across Wolverhampton including a cultural and creative skills plan for the city, bespoke business support and establishing a cultural and creative partnership board.• Work in collaboration with our business networks and forums including City Centre and Bilston BID to promote our city and town centres.• Ensure our city and town centres are safe and accessible to all regardless of background.
--	--

Productivity

This theme sets out the ways in which we can improve productivity in Wolverhampton to enable businesses to innovate and grow. It also looks at how important it is to continue to build the profile of the city for the region and the UK.

Raising productivity is key to increasing wages and living standards, delivering growth and generating revenue that can be used to improve public services. Productivity is about businesses being able to adapt, pivot and survive through changes, driving efficiencies and 'working smarter not harder'.

Help businesses and organisations to increase their productivity

SMEs are the backbone of our economy and with targeted support there is potential to generate significant business growth. Nationally there is a long tail of SMEs who are not reaching their full potential and we need to provide more support to SMEs particularly those in the city where the productivity gap with London and the South East is significant.

If we can start to close this gap then it will create well paid job opportunities and additional tax revenue for the UK. More than two-thirds of all inward investment jobs created in the UK each year are as a result of expansions from existing investors. While new arrivals are a valuable contribution to the Wolverhampton economy, the most significant source of jobs and investment in the next few years is likely to be from companies already located here.

That is why we are our Invest: Business Growth offer which will work in partnership with Business Growth West Midlands and other public and private business support providers to help businesses increase their productivity through investing in new technology, new products, processes and employee skills. Support is available to help businesses to invest to create growth and new jobs.

SMEs are locally owned and embedded in their communities hence they have a vested interest in trying to support local communities. Work is ongoing to help businesses to make a wider difference to their local communities, examples include improving skills and employment opportunities for local and disadvantaged people, paying staff the Real Living Wage, or paying small business suppliers in accordance with the Prompt Payment Code.

Annually our city generates hundreds of new start-ups. Many will begin at home or in locations close to where they live. Increasing the survivability and growth of start-ups and young businesses will create more employment opportunities in some of our more disadvantaged communities and we tailor our support packages to focus on these areas. IGNITE Wolverhampton provides an initial gateway to tailored business support with a range of support programmes available to help new businesses.

Collaborate with business and academia to stimulate innovation

To us, innovation infrastructure means an environment for creating. We need spaces for creativity and collaboration where ideas can be nurtured, a testbed to accelerate the application of products and research, academic research that support the ecosystem and spin out the businesses of the future.

In Wolverhampton we are proud to be home to The National Brownfield Institute part of the city's Springfield Campus which brings together specialist researchers, consultants, and industry experts to advance research into brownfield land remediation and the circular economy. We are already seeing the benefits of being home to world class R&D facilities and have seen an increase in the sustainable construction sector in the city.

We are building an innovation hub of the future at the Green Innovation Corridor which will draw together innovation driven entrepreneurs, start-ups and business to share ideas and access capital to accelerate the development of new ideas. It will be underpinned by the University of Wolverhampton, one of our anchor institutions from across the city who share our values and goals.

We're also home to well established innovation site at i54. Home to our nationally significant advanced manufacturing cluster with MOOG, Collins Aerospace and JLR operating and exporting globally at the site.

We recognise that we are still at the start of our journey in comparison to other leading innovation cities, but this means that new companies can truly make their mark when they choose to invest in Wolverhampton. If we are to push forward with our vision we must also address the imbalance funding R&D funding. In 2016 direct government R&D expenditure per capita was £60 in London and the South East of England and £14 in the West Midlands. Working with the West Midlands Combined Authority and Innovate West Midlands we will set the case for increased innovation funding for Wolverhampton and the region.

Maximise the city’s investment potential

Working in partnership to deliver major regeneration projects and new city jobs is now more important than ever as local authorities continue to work with challenging budget constraints. The Council’s unique position with a birds eye view of our city means we are ideally placed to co-ordinate major investment into our place. Ultimately, maximising the investment potential of our city is how we shape all of our assets and opportunities into a compelling package for potential investors.

Attracting inward investment can take many different forms. This includes new businesses setting up in the city, existing companies expanding and government and public sector relocations.

Reshoring presents a major opportunity for the city. Supply-chains are being rethought, with concerns over resilience, costs and carbon footprint. The pandemic has accelerated a trend which has been underway for several years. Shorter supply-chains are being implemented that offer resilience against global events. A study by the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS), 40% of organisations in the UK switched at least one international supplier to a domestic alternative in 2021.

There are increasing opportunities from government relocations as the public sector seeks solutions that help ‘level up’ opportunities outside of London. Government is committed to moving 22,000 civil service roles out of London by 2030 as part of its Place for Growth programme. Wolverhampton has been a major beneficiary of this trend with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities headquarters.

We will...

Priority	Objective
Help businesses and organisations to increase their productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a new digital front door for city businesses and ensure we are the ‘easiest council in the country to do business with’ and wherever possible businesses can self-serve to get the support they need. • Ensure a consistently high level of core services to businesses including planning, commercial waste, procurement, and business rates. • Enhance our local growth offer by aligning it with the Business Growth West Midlands offer. • City Growth Offer to businesses delivered in partnership with public and private partners. Set across 6 priorities.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance and Business Support 2. Leadership and Management 3. Workforce Development 4. Technology and Innovation 5. Green Business Support 6. Internationalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake Decarbonisation and Green Grant programmes to support businesses to become more energy efficient and reduce their emissions. • Develop integrated sector action plans to support our strategic and foundational sectors to increase productivity and growth. These will include bespoke skills, business support, infrastructure and inward investment opportunities and challenges
<p>Collaborate with business and academia to stimulate innovation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local businesses to identify innovation opportunities and connect them with funding and support through our Invest: Growth Offer. • IGNITE start up hub will provide wrap around support for spin outs. • Create the right environment and workspace for innovation to collaborate and thrive through established locations like I54 and our new Green Innovation Corridor. • Encouraging research and development in green technologies can lead to new business opportunities. • Work in collaboration with the University of Wolverhampton and other research institutions to increase links between industry and research to create the right conditions for innovation.
<p>Maximise the city's investment potential</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join up our city growth offer with our inward investment priorities to identify target sectors and functions for investment of existing businesses and to attract new businesses to the city.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with the West Midlands Growth Company to leverage our collective resource to identify international investment and export opportunities for the city.• Work with partners and businesses to exploit our growing sector specialisms to attract new business investment.• Champion the city's offer continuing to raise the profile of the city nationally and internationally as a great place to invest and do business.• Building an even closer relationship with investors and strategic employers through effective account management to better understand their needs and how they can contribute to growth in our city.• Deliver our soft landing platform for investors to make Wolverhampton the easiest Council in the country work with and invest with.
--	--

People

People are our city's greatest asset. There has never been greater demand for well skilled people with every sector and industry facing shortages and recruitment challenges. Causes include wage stagnation amid rising cost of living, job dissatisfaction, safety concerns relating to the pandemic, and the desire to work for companies with better remote-working policies.

Education, skills and employment system that meets local need

Skill levels in the city have been steadily increasing with the numbers of local people securing higher level qualifications at record numbers. However, there remain areas for improvement and the current education, skills and employment system in the city faces a number of challenges arising from a legacy of deindustrialisation, low aspirations, pockets of entrenched worklessness, relatively low pay, low skill levels more recently the Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis.

The Council is committed to continuing to drive up skills outcomes for our residents and has set out its holistic whole life approach to [Education, Skills and Employment in a new Council led strategy](#) which seeks to bring together partners to improve employment outcomes for local people and increase local economic growth.

Through this strategy we want to enhance the city's talent pool so that local people can get good quality jobs, businesses can access the skills they need to grow and we can attract new enterprise to our city. The role of academic and business partnerships in developing skills for the future is vital. Connecting employers to education and skills providers and that courses are being developed that align with the ever-changing needs of companies.

A key opportunity for Wolverhampton is integrating our industry specialisms with our approach to talent. These will be focused across our strategic sectors both large and growing, as well as our critical foundational sectors. Through the development of sector focused action plans we will identify and align the skills needs of businesses to help them grow and residents. These sectors will be further supported through business support and spatial development and infrastructure investment.

Tackle health and wellbeing barriers and encourage inclusive employment

Research from [The Health Foundation](#) shows that a local areas employment rate is related to how long people are likely to live and how many years they can expect to live in good health. In places with higher economic inactivity people are more likely to have a lower healthy life expectancy.

As adults in employment spend a large proportion of their time in work, our jobs and our workplaces can have a big impact on our health and wellbeing. In fact, employment can impact both directly and indirectly on the individual, their families and communities. Therefore, work and health-related worklessness are important public health issues, both at local and national level.

There is clear evidence that good work improves health and wellbeing across people's lives, not only from an economic standpoint but also in terms of quality of life. 'Good work' means having not only a work environment that is safe, but also having a sense of security, autonomy, good line management and communication within an organisation.

For many individuals, in particular those with long-term conditions such as mental health problems, musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions and disabilities, health issues can be a barrier to gaining and retaining employment.

Combined costs from worklessness and sickness absence amount to around £100 billion annually, so there is also a strong economic case for action. Addressing and removing health-related barriers requires collaborative work between partners from across the private, public and third sectors at both national and local level.

Enabling people with health issues to obtain or retain work, and be productive within the workplace, is a crucial part of the economic success and wellbeing of our city.

Therefore, it is important that people are supported to gain employment and maintain economic independence for themselves and their families, especially as they age. This is of particular importance for individuals with long-term conditions and disabilities, due to the barriers they face in gaining employment and retaining a job.

Collaborative work between partners from across the private, public and third sector is essential for creating pathways to good jobs. Local government plays an important role in bringing these partners together, as well as leading by example within their workforce. The call to action section below expands on the actions local authorities can take in the health and work agenda.

Build community wealth through the Wolverhampton Pound

Community Wealth Building (CWB) seeks to engage with the local economy so that wealth; both economic and social, can be kept and recirculated within our City and our communities. The Wolverhampton Pound will put our citizens and communities at the heart of all that we do, to ensure that local businesses, service providers and individuals are provided with the opportunities they have a right to expect; opportunities that will help to improve not just the local economy but the health, wellbeing and quality of life that all of our citizens deserve.

At its core CWB is a place-based approach which uses the strengths and assets of a local place to drive economic change. While different areas have interpreted the approach differently, they all share a common objective of generating local wealth to benefit the most disadvantaged communities.

Our approach to community wealth building is centred around ensuring fair employment and just labour markets, making financial power work for our local place and growing local and community ownership of the economy. One of the main objectives of the Wolverhampton Pound is to embed social value in the City to help leverage local spend and employment and make the City the best it can be for our communities.

Although the Wolverhampton Pound presents a new overarching approach to economic development for the city many of the actions and priority areas associated with it are not. Organisations across the city, in particular those in our VCS have been leading initiatives to support the growth of community wealth.

Acting alone the Council will have limited impact. The Wolverhampton Pound approach has been developed collaboratively with five key city partners who have made a commitment to work together as the Wolverhampton Anchor Network to deliver the priorities.

Priority	Objectives
An education, skills and employment system that meets local needs	Working with partners to deliver our Education, Skills and Employment strategy, and Wolves at Work Transformation Programme, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure we have a range of higher-level skills and training support available in the city aligned to growth sectors to support productivity and higher wage jobs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to maximise the number of apprenticeship and training opportunities for young people and adults in the city. • Work with our partners including businesses, job centres, training providers, colleges and the University to develop flexible pathways for local people who are in work to retrain and progress. • Establish clear pathways and entry routes for unemployed adults, particularly those from underrepresented groups to access employment in growth sectors or where there are skills shortages. • Build on the city centre youth hub at The Way, using our community hubs to deliver co-located employment and skills support to young people in their local areas.
<p>Tackle health and wellbeing barriers to work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners at DWP to deliver inclusive employment support opportunities for all raising awareness of support to create inclusive opportunities. • Work with employers and other city partners to champion inclusive employment practices to ensure there is a pathway to success for all residents in our city and healthy workspaces. • Work with partners from across the city to develop a new Public Mental Health Strategy for Wolverhampton outlining the actions we will take together to make sure local people can feel good and function well in our communities. • Through the Wolverhampton Deal encourage businesses develop 'Good Work', which is secure and inclusive.
<p>Grow community wealth through the Wolverhampton Pound</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure public and private investment opportunities create good work opportunities for local people and support our businesses to grow.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertake an annual spend analysis our five anchor institutions, understanding where we currently spend locally and where we could do more.• Analyse anchor supply chains to develop a 10-year procurement and commissioning pipeline.• Identify priority areas to direct more of our collective anchor network spend locally.• Incorporate and monitor social value/local employment clauses through the council’s supply chain.• Leverage agreements with investors and partners to maximise benefits for local people, including by securing the delivery of S106 skills and training opportunities.
--	---

Delivering Good Growth

The delivery of this Strategy will be a major priority for the Council working across all sectors, public, private, community and voluntary. It must also engage local communities in the delivery effort and inspire a sense of confidence in Wolverhampton's economic potential and future. The key ingredient of this is collective leadership, delivering our growth ambition will require strong entrepreneurial, whole-place leadership, bringing together business, civil society and political leaders, formally and informally, to drive system change.

Anchor Institutions

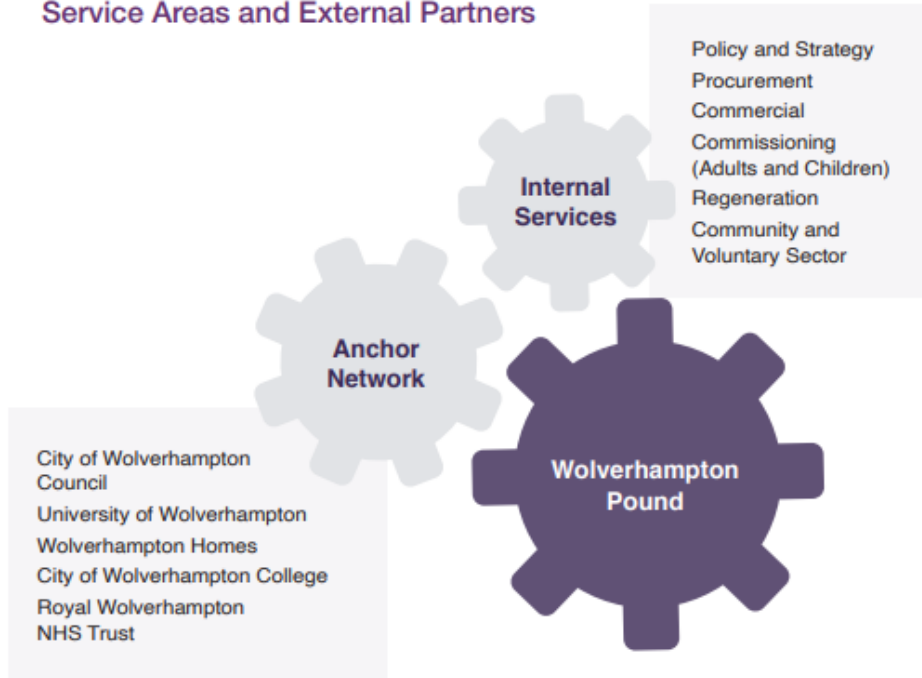
A key feature of the delivery of this strategy will be the role of Wolverhampton's Anchor Institutions. These are our large and influential private and public sector employers, sports and other institutions which can, in each of the key priorities, play a lead role in creating good growth. This could involve using their purchasing power to drive growth at a local level in Wolverhampton and providing employees with opportunities for in-work progression.

Anchor institutions share a number of key characteristics including:

- Spatial immobility: have strong ties to an area and are invested in it
- Size: tend to be large employers and have significant purchasing power
- Land and assets: occupy various sites across the city and have good community reach

Wolverhampton Anchor Network

Service Areas and External Partners



CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL



Former Heath Town Baths

Presentation to Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel

November 29th 2023

Background

The Building:

- Originally opened in 1932/33
- Grade II Listed
- The building housed a main pool, a children's pool, slipper baths and a wash house with drying facilities which served the wider community
- It is situated in Old Heath Town ,close to Almshouses, Holy Trinity Church.
- Closed fully in 2006
- Security deterrents currently in place including CCTV Solar Tower, Anti burglar spinners and increased security patrols.

Page 68



The Heath Town Public Baths, Wash-house and Library Buildings

Update following Scrutiny Panel on 27 Sept 2023

- Meeting held with Gaddu Associates/legal representatives and Council officers on 16th October 2023, where Gaddu Associates (GA) were requested to:
 - Accept the inclusion of overage agreement to the lease terms that allows the Council to receive an Overage Payment reflecting future uplift of land value arising from a change of use / variation to the planning consented scheme.
 - Provide detail of work specifications, phased/condensed delivery plan including key milestones, updated delivery costs and programme.
 - Provide guarantee / evidence of source of funding that demonstrates GA's ability to finance scheme in absence of HLF grant funding and provide evidence / track record of delivering similar schemes successfully.
- On 9 November 2023 the Council requested the above information to be submitted by 17/11/23. GA submitted the information on the 21st of Nov '23.
- Council officers have started exploring alternative delivery options for the scheme in anticipation of GA not progressing above in a timely manner:
- The City Assets team are reviewing opportunities under OPE including mapping, CWC assets within ½ mile radius to assess asset rationalisation opportunities, and adjacent plot ownership (CWC, Holy Trinity Church, Private).
- Possibility of new Health Hub on site with a number of potential services including medical centre/GP is to be explored.
- Alternatives options will need to factor the financial and viability considerations

This page is intentionally left blank