



# Cabinet (Resources) Panel

## 20 January 2015

**Time** 5.00 pm      **Public Meeting?** YES      **Type of meeting** Executive  
**Venue** Committee Room 4 - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

### Membership

**Chair** Cllr Andrew Johnson (Lab)  
**Vice-chair** Cllr Roger Lawrence (Lab)

#### Labour

Cllr Peter Bilson  
Cllr Steve Evans  
Cllr Phil Page  
Cllr John Reynolds  
Cllr Paul Sweet

#### Conservative

#### Liberal Democrat

Quorum for this meeting is two Councillors.

### Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

**Contact** Andrew Harvey  
**Tel/Email** 01902 552752 or [andrew.harvey@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.harvey@wolverhampton.gov.uk)  
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**Website** <http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk>  
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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

# Agenda

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No. Title*

### MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 5 - 16)  
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record.]
- 4 **Matters arising**  
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes.]

### DECISION ITEMS (AMBER - DELEGATED TO THE CABINET)

- 5 **External Funding Update** (Pages 17 - 24)  
[To enter into service level agreements for the Neighbourhood Employment Skills Service project and into a memorandum of understanding on behalf of the Black Country, to attract match funding for employment and social inclusion priorities.]
- 6 **Civic Hall Improvements - Project Management** (Pages 25 - 28)  
[To delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Place, to select a project manager for the Civic Hall refurbishment scheme, using the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation framework.]
- 7 **Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy for Properties within the Black Country Enterprise Zone** (Pages 29 - 36)  
[To approve a local policy for discretionary rate relief in respect of newly built properties within the Black Country Enterprise Zone.]
- 8 **Invest to Save: Looked-After Children** (Pages 37 - 46)  
[To approve the establishment of three additional social work units to undertake intervention activities with the objective of reducing expenditure on looked after children and reducing social work caseloads.]
- 9 **Schedule of Individual Executive Decisions** (Pages 47 - 50)  
[To note the summary of open and exempt individual executive decisions approved by the appropriate Cabinet Members following consultation with the relevant employees.]

### PART 2 - EXEMPT ITEMS, CLOSED TO PRESS AND PUBLIC

- 10 **Exclusion of press and public**

[To pass the following resolution:

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

<i>Item No:</i>	<i>Title Applicable</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
11	Former Heath Town Baths and Library	3
12	Improving the City Housing Offer: New Build Council Housing Pilot Project	3
13	Care and Support Specialised Housing	3
14	Strategic Procurement: Award of Contracts for Goods, Services and Works	3

11 **Former Heath Town Baths and Library** (Pages 51 - 62)

[To agree the strategy for bringing this project forward and approve capital funding from the strategic disposals programme budget to enable the Council to carry out the required works to the building.]

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Para (3)

12 **Improving the City Housing Offer: New Build Council Housing Pilot Project** (Pages 63 - 68)

[To agree to proceed with the pilot project for the delivery of newbuild Council housing, using the Council's Strategic Construction Partnership.]

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Para (3)

13 **Care and Support Specialised Housing** (Pages 69 - 78)

[To endorse the expenditure and business plan for the Care and Support Specialised Housing scheme to supplement grant funding awarded by the Homes and Communities Agency.]

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Para (3)

14 **Strategic Procurement – Award of Contracts for Goods, Services and Works** (Pages 79 - 94)

[To agree the proposals in relation to contracts to be let and/or amended.]

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Para (3)

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# Cabinet (Resources) Panel

## Minutes - 9 December 2014

### Attendance

#### Members of the Cabinet (Resources) Panel

Cllr Peter Bilson  
Cllr Steve Evans  
Cllr Andrew Johnson (Chair)  
Cllr Roger Lawrence (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Phil Page  
Cllr John Reynolds  
Cllr Paul Sweet

#### Other Councillors in Attendance

Cllr Val Gibson  
Cllr Elias Mattu

### Employees

Andrew Harvey	Graduate Management Trainee
Emma Bennett	Service Director - Children, Young People and Families
Andrew Harvey	Graduate Management Trainee
Keith Ireland	Managing Director
Ros Jervis	Service Director - Well Being
Haley Macmichael	Category Manager
Martyn Sargeant	Head of Democratic Services
Mark Taylor	Director of Finance

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## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

- 1 Apologies for absence**  
Apologies were received from Cllr Samuels.
- 2 Declarations of interest**  
There were no declarations of interest
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting**  
Resolved:  
That the minutes of the meeting on 11 November be approved as a correct record.
- 4 Matters arising**  
There were no matters arising.
- 5 Redesignation of Director of Pensions post**  
Cllr Sweet introduced the report, explaining the Director of Pensions role needed to be reviewed in line with other strategic director posts.

Resolved:

- (1) To recommend to Council the re-designation of the Director of Pensions post to become Strategic Director – Pensions.
- (2) To recommend to Council the assimilation of the Director of Pensions into the Strategic Director pay grade at pay point 303 (£130,000).

6 **Quarter two capital budget monitoring**

Cllr Johnson introduced the report. The report highlighted that this year's General Fund budget is slightly underspent for 2014/15 with £122.6 million projected compared with the approved spend of £124.2 million. The report sought further approval from Council for additional resources for six new projects and seventeen existing projects totalling £24.9 million pounds. These projects include the Primary schools expansion programme, Civic Halls improvements, and the Westside development.

Cllr Page stated that road improvement works on St Peter's/St Edmunds access road had been included from existing resources but that this only equated to a virement of £50,000. Cllr Page queried whether this would be sufficient.

Tim Johnson, the Strategic Director Education and Enterprise stated that the Council needed to review the contracts when works were agreed as it is obvious the work required will exceed the £50,000, the Council therefore needs to make sure who is designated to carry out the work to bring the road up to standard when the land deals were agreed.

Cllr Page also advised that there may be some additional funding works to improve the road in about six months' time. The Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise agreed and stated that there was no point doing the work just for it to be done again later in the year.

Resolved:

1. The Cabinet (Resources) Panel recommends that Council:

- a) Approves the revised medium term general fund capital programme of £219.7 million, an increase of £24.9 million from the previously approved programme (paragraph 2.3), reflecting the latest projected expenditure for the medium term.
- b) Approves additional resources for six new and seventeen existing projects totalling £24.9 million.
- c) Approves the revised medium term Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme of £239.7 million, an increase of £2.0 million from the previously approved programme.
- d) Approves new capital projects for 'Heath Town estate redevelopment', the 'Installation and upgrade of Carelink alarm systems' and the programme for 'Garage demolitions' included within the revised HRA capital programme.

- e) Delegates authority to the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Communities and the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Strategic Director for Community and the Assistant Director Finance to award a grant from the Sports Investment Strategy.

2. The Cabinet (Resources) Panel agrees to:

- a) Approve six General Fund virements with a gross transfer value of £2.9 million detailed at Appendix B.
- b) Approve the updated schedules of works for the capital projects under the following directorates:
  - i) Community: Urban Parks Refurbishment, Sports Investment Strategy.
  - ii) Delivery: ICTS, Leisure Centres and Disposals.
  - iii) Education and Enterprise: BSF, Capital Maintenance and Expansion of Primary School Places.
- c) Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Assistant Director Finance to approve the allocation of the provision of the 'Disposals Programme' to individual capital schemes.
- d) Approve the HRA virement of £100,000 from the External Works programme to facilitate a new programme for 'Garage demolitions', for which approval is also sought.

3. The Cabinet (Resources) Panel notes:

- a) The expenditure position for quarter two of 2014/15 which stands at 27.3% of the approved general fund capital budget.
- b) The expenditure position for quarter two of 2014/15 which stands at 23.8% of the approved Housing Revenue Account capital budget.

7 **Quarter two treasury management activity monitoring**

Cllr Johnson introduced the report, which outlined the Council's revised strategy, which included revising the approved ratio of long and short term borrowing. In addition he explained that the Council is to move away from its current method for minimum revenue provision (MRP) from straight line to an annuity basis. This revision has been approved with the external auditor and will save £4.4 million against the General Fund budget.

Cllr Johnson requested that his appreciation for the work of treasury management and other financial officers should be noted in the minutes.

Cllr Lawrence supported the proposal stating that although the cost of MRP would be higher, in the longer term the impact of inflation over that period would significantly reduce that impact.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet (Resources) Panel recommends that Council approves:
  - a) The revised upper limits for treasury management indicator (TMI) 2 - upper and lower limits to the maturity structure of its borrowing.
  - b) The revised Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement for 2014/15, the new method of calculating MRP being on an annuity basis.
2. That Cabinet (Resources) Panel notes the contents of the report, and particularly that:
  - a) A mid-year review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement has been undertaken and the Council has operated within the limits and requirements approved in March 2014 except for temporarily exceeding TMI 2 - upper and lower limits to the maturity structure of its borrowing - until revised limits are approved by Council in order to generate savings by taking advantage of exceptionally low short term interest rates.
  - b) Savings of £4.4 million for the General Fund and £6.0 million for the Housing Revenue Account are forecast from treasury management activities in 2014/15.
  - c) Some of the credit ratings currently used in the Council's Annual Investment Strategy approved by Council in March 2014 will need to be amended in light of regulatory changes in the financial sector.

8 **Employee Benefits Package**

Cllr Sweet introduced the report as good news, with the launch of the new employee benefits packages taking place during January.

Resolved:

1. To approve the implementation of an employee benefits offer for Council employees which will go live in January 2015.
2. To approve that the Council's Efficiency Reserve be utilised (up to a maximum of £13,000) to support the scheme in its infancy, subject to the reserve being fully replenished once the scheme is established.

9 **Update on the Financial Sustainability of Authorities (NAO Report, November 2014)**

Cllr Johnson introduced the report, which analysed the national situation on the financial sustainability of local authorities. He explained extra work had been undertaken to see how Wolverhampton's situation compares with the national picture. The first part of the report indicated that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is not in a position to understand if authorities are getting into difficulties, with no clear benchmarking in place.



The report was welcomed as it indicated the situation of the Council against the national picture and there was confirmation that the National Audit Office is concerned about all councils.

Resolved:

To note the information on the November 2014 NAO report on the financial sustainability of local authorities.

10

### **Council Fees and Charges 2015/16**

Cllr Johnson introduced the report. He highlighted the fact that annually the Council is obliged to review its fees and charges and that these are impacted by a variety of factors such as inflation and changes in government policy. Employees were praised for their work with respective Cabinet members. Cllr Johnson stated that the fees and charges within the report were put forward with the best interest of the city and the economy at heart such as the freeze on car park charges to boost visitors and shoppers coming to the city.

Cllr Lawrence stated that the appendices clearly show that substantial charges have not been changed. The introduction of fees to employees for car parks would bring welcome income. Cllr Lawrence also highlighted increasing the amount of car parking spaces as a challenge for the Council.

Resolved:

1. To approve the fees and charges set out in appendices A to E of the report, to take effect from 1 January 2015 (or as soon as possible thereafter).
2. To approve in the following instances that authority be delegated to the responsible Head of Service to vary fees and charges during the financial year:
  - a) Where the cost of food (including frozen food) and drink procured for resale or onward supply increases, fees and charges may be increased in proportion with the increased costs, after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or their representative.
  - b) Where an opportunity arises to secure an act or event at short notice and the projected net cost of the act or event is to break even or better, after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or his representative.
  - c) Where an opportunity arises to secure an act or event at short notice and there is a projected net cost of the act or event, after consulting with the responsible Assistant Director and the Assistant Director Finance or his representative.
  - d) Where Strategic Executive Board agrees to a short-term change in fees and charges to ensure that a business opportunity can be pursued or secured; if the change is for a period or more than two months then the change to be referred to Cabinet (Resources) Panel for decision during the two month period.

- e) Where an opportunity arises to secure a sale by matching the price to that of an organisation the Council is in competition with, after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or his representative, ensuring that satisfactory 'price match' documentation is maintained to evidence the one-off fee amendment.
- f) Where the Council wishes to subsidise a charitable event that may not break even that this be considered via an Individual Executive Decision Notice (IEDN) to be approved by the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Communities, the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Assistant Director Finance, using a standard template.
- g) Where market conditions dictate, leisure membership may be varied after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or his representative, ensuring that satisfactory market information is maintained.
- h) Leisure centre activity prices may be varied in line with market conditions after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or his representative, ensuring that satisfactory market information is maintained.
- i) Charges to partner organisations for support services may be varied after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or his representative.
- j) Court summons costs charged to council tax and business rates payers may be varied following default on payments after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or his representative.
- k) Where there is an opportunity to secure an act or event or utilise available rooms or halls for hire across the cultural estate and the projected net cost of the act, event or room hire generates a commercial return (including taking account of secondary spend from catering and sales), authority shall be delegated to the Head of Service Entertainments and Events to vary the fees and charges after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or their representative. Any such variations will be recorded, along with the reason, as part of the normal audit process. Details of any variations should be reported to Strategic Financial Services in a format agreed by the Assistant Director Finance or his representative. This recommendation widens the scope of delegation of authority, which was approved by Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 15 October 2013, to cover all of the cultural estate.
- l) Where the Council wishes to generate income from advertising upon Council property the charges shall be agreed by the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Assistant Director Finance.
- m) Where the cost of poison procured for the purpose of pest control increases, pest control fees and charges may be increased in proportion with the increased costs, after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or his representative.
- n) Where new Information Commissioner guidance on charging for property searches is clarified and a relevant decision of Court of Justice of the

European Union obtained, that this be considered via an Individual Executive Decision Notice to be approved by the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Assistant Director Finance, using a standard template.

- o) Where market conditions dictate, charges for commercial waste collection may be varied after consulting with the Assistant Director Finance or his representative, ensuring that satisfactory market information is maintained.
3. To approve that, should any amendment be made to the VAT treatment of specific fees and charges, authority to vary those fees and charges be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources together with the responsible Cabinet Member in consultation with the Assistant Director Finance and the responsible Strategic Director.
4. To approve that authority be delegated to the responsible Cabinet Member in consultation with the responsible Strategic Director and the Assistant Director Finance to vary charges for bars and catering.
5. To approve that any variation to fees and charges made under delegated authority must be documented and retained to ensure that there is a robust audit trail.
6. To approve that, in accordance with the requirements of the Financial Procedure Rules, any other variation to fees and charges during the financial year must be approved in advance at Cabinet (Resources) Panel, using the standard report template.
7. To note that the fees and charges for the following items are not reviewed as part of this report as they will be subject to separate arrangements for their approval:
  - a) Adult social care contributions to care packages will be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet.
  - b) Street trading, Hackney Carriage and private hire licensing and general licensing charges will be considered separately by the Licensing Committee on 21 January 2015.
  - c) Food and drink prices will be dealt with through delegations.

11

### **Queen Street Gateway Townscape Heritage Project**

Cllr Bilson introduced the report seeking delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise, to approve the terms and conditions and administer the scheme. The report identified the use of £250,000 from the city centre capital budget to match fund the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, bringing the overall funding to £1 million. Cllr Bilson stated that this work will bring benefit to the city centre and the businesses situated on Queen's Street.

Resolved:

1. To delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise, to approve the terms and conditions to be applied to grants to property owners.
2. To note that, on 11 September 2013, Cabinet (Resources) Panel approved the use of £250,000 from the City Centre capital budget to match fund a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
3. To note that, subject to a successful round two bid, the Queen Street Townscape Heritage Project Officer post will be extended for the duration of the project and a Queen Street Townscape Heritage Community Project Officer will be appointed on a part time basis for two years.
4. To note that the Constitution delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise to administer heritage grants, including the making of grant offers and authorisation of grant payments made pursuant to such offers, in accordance with codes of practice and terms and conditions for grants as determined by the Cabinet (Resources) Panel.

12 **Provision of Additional Garden Waste Bins**

Cllr Reynolds introduced the report, explaining that residents have asked for extra bins but the Council can only charge for collection of these bins and not the disposal of waste. Cllr Reynolds stated that during the collection period, bins would be collected about 16 times a year which works out at around £2 per collection. The Council will charge residents £35 for a second bin. Cllr Reynolds stated that if residents request more than one additional bin then there will be a visit to the household to determine the reasons why.

Resolved:

To approve the introduction of an optional charge of £35 during the collection period to households that wish to have an extra garden waste bin.

13 **Operation Spring Clean Environmental Developments**

Cllr Reynolds introduced the report. Due to careful financial management £200,000 has been allocated for additional cleaning within the city. Money will also be used for a scheme to change attitudes to littering, particularly in the city centre. There will also be a scheme of work to recruit members of the public as community challengers, as well as a children's competition to get their pictures on the side of waste removal vehicles. Money will also be used to promote the healthy walking campaign in co-ordination with Public Health. Further to this the Express and Star is working with local businesses to try and keep the city centre clean.

Resolved:

To approve the allocation of £200,000 to provide:

- Extended hours for cleaning the city centre and arterial routes.
- Vehicle campaign banners.
- Community volunteers to assist in a deep clean of specific areas.
- In collaboration with Public Health, Healthy Walking Programmes to include litter picking.

**13a Empty Property Strategy - 133 Mount Road, Penn, Wolverhampton - Property Identified for Action**

The report was introduced by Cllr Johnson, who explained the property was in a poor condition, similar to other properties actioned under the empty property strategy.

Resolved:

1. To include 133 Mount Road under the Empty Property Strategy 2010-2015.
2. To authorise employees to enter into formal negotiations to acquire the property by agreement.
3. To approve, in principle, the use of compulsory purchase action if required.

**14 Schedule of Individual Executive Decisions**

Resolved:

To note the summary of open and exempt individual executive decision notices approved by the appropriate Cabinet Members following consultation with the relevant designated employees.

**15 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act set out below:]

Item No.	Title Applicable	Paragraph
16	Improving the city housing offer development of the former Tap Works, Fifth Avenue and Broome Road sites (Showell Road Housing Development)	3
17	Low Hill Residential Repairs (pods) Progress Report	3
18	Seeking approval to progress the Disposal Programme including the approach to Public Open Space	3
19	Public Health – Contracting Strategy	3
20	Strategic Procurement: Award of Contracts for Goods, Services and Work	3

16 **Improving the City Housing Offer - Development of the Former Tap Works And Fifth Avenue And Broome Road Sites**

Cllr Bilson introduced the report, which highlighted that the sites proposed will enable 150 properties to be built in total including affordable housing and specialised and supported housing through the CaSSH Scheme for those families who may have special needs. Cllr Bilson indicated this was the second development of this type following on from the Thompson Avenue development

Resolved:

1. On the three sites identified, to agree to support the development of the affordable housing as new Council housing, supported by Housing Revenue Account funds, as set out in the financial implications.
2. To agree to receive a further report on the outcome of the procurement process for the sites and approve the selection and appointment of a development partner, subject to signing of a development agreement and the grant of planning consent.
3. To agree to explore the possibility of using part of the development site(s) for delivery of new homes funded through the Care and Support Specialised Housing Scheme.

17 **Low Hill residential repairs programme (pods) - delivery progress report**

Cllr Bilson introduced the report highlighting progress made on the Low Hill residential repairs scheme and detailing further work to be carried out. He confirmed the cost of the works is included within existing budgets.

Resolved:

1. To approve the spend from the HRA capital programme for the Low Hill residential repairs scheme to bring the purchased properties up to meet the Decent Homes standard.
2. To note the progress made to date with the Low Hill residential Repairs (pods) programme for Council- owned (pod) properties (occupied and void).
3. To note the outcome of the consultation and continued negotiation with the private property owners with pods conjoined to Council-owned properties.

18 **Seeking approval to progress the Disposal Programme including the approach to Public Open Space**

Cllr Bilson introduced the report, which sought approval to declare land and property assets surplus to requirements and agree to their disposal.

Resolved:

To declare land and property assets surplus to requirements and to agree their disposal and any enabling works in accordance with the strategies set out in the report, specifically:

1. To dispose of land at Lower Horseley Fields, the Park Village Youth and Media Centre, Red Gables, 2/4 Cullwick Street, Lanesfield Community Centre, Corner House, Marsh Lane and property at Beldray Road.
2. To re-gear a lease and grant options to purchase relating to property at Strawberry Lane and the Social Care Offices at Alfred Squire Road.
3. To further progress the early disposal of the former St Luke's School, giving enhanced priority for the re-housing of two further caretakers occupying residential premises, should this be necessary in order to release these surplus assets for disposal.
4. To include the land at Grosvenor Street Heath Town in the Heath Town masterplan area.
5. To dispose of the following Council assets subject to the requirement that the purchaser/owner pays to the Council the sum specified for the provision or enhancement of public open space to meet the recreational needs of future residents of the development.
  - (a) Pennfields Special School and St. Luke's School sites subject to the loss of sports fields being mitigated by provision of sports pitches at Phoenix Rise.
  - (b) Wednesfield High and Danesmore School sites subject to the loss of sports fields being mitigated by provision of sports pitches at Coleman Avenue.
6. To approve the further detail around any agreed terms for the progression and disposal of the assets identified in the recommendations listed above by virtue of an individual executive decision delegated to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise.

19 **Public Health Contracting Strategy**

The Director for Public Health introduced the report, which highlighted that a tendering process is now in place and that the contracting strategy covers services that were transferred from the NHS to the Council 18 months ago. The strategy will help the Council meet its outcomes for public health in the city, which have been divided into six workstreams. The Director for Public Health informed Councillors that approval of contracts let under the strategy will all come to Cabinet (Resources) Panel.

Resolved:

1. To approve the timetables and associated contract amendments to allow for the re procurement of the six public health commissioning programmes:
  - Sexual health.
  - Healthy lifestyles.
  - Primary care.
  - Health protection.
  - Programmes five and six are proposed for merger and include school nursing and health visiting services which are currently separate.

2. To extend the out of scope voluntary sector contracts to enable the development of exit or continuation strategies.
3. To extend or cease the additional out of scope contracts and service level agreements.
4. To approve the service development proposals 2015/16 to support the sexual health and healthy lifestyles programmes.

20

**Strategic Procurement – award of contracts for goods, services and works.**

Councillor Johnson presented the report on the award of contracts for works, goods and services.

Resolved:

1. To award a contract to One Voice, of Regent House, Bath Avenue, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV1 4EG for the provision of advocacy services.
2. To purchase mediation services via the Herefordshire County Council framework for independent disagreement resolution and mediation services, for the duration of the framework agreement.
3. To award a framework agreement to Innovative Interfaces of Dublin, Ireland to provide a Library Management System to Black Country local authorities.
4. To agree the variation of fees for residential and nursing placements for older people at the newly negotiated rates.
5. To waive the Contract Procedure Rules to facilitate the purchase of alternative school placements, as and when required, from providers approved by the Education Business Partnership in conjunction with Early Help 5 -18.
6. To waive the Contract Procedure Rules to enable the purchase of inter-agency adoption services.
7. To waive the Contract Procedure Rules to enable the formation of contracts, as appropriate, for the provision of independent education services for individual children with special educational needs.
8. To delegate authority to the Chief Legal Officer to execute contracts in respect of the above as required.





# Cabinet (Resources) Panel

## 20 January 2015

<b>Report title</b>	External Funding Update	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Peter Bilson Economic Regeneration and Prosperity	
<b>Key decision</b>	No	
<b>In forward plan</b>	No	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Tim Johnson, Place	
<b>Originating service</b>	City Economy	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Heather Clark Tel Email	Strategic Projects and Funding Manager 01902 555614 Heather.clark2@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>		

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

1. Enter into service level agreements with delivery organisations of the Neighbourhood Employment Skills Service project.
2. Agree to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Big Lottery on behalf of the Black Country in order to attract match funding to employment and social inclusion priorities funded through the European Social Fund.

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on external funding opportunities and pipeline projects and seek necessary approvals.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Cabinet (Resources) Panel received a report on 21 October 2014 giving an update on bidding activity and progress on externally funded projects. The intention is to provide ongoing quarterly funding updates, rather than reporting separately on each individual external funding opportunity. This report provides an update for the third quarter of the 2014/5 financial year. The report is organised around the themes in the Council's new Corporate Plan Framework.

## 3.0 External Funding Update

- 3.1 Wolverhampton City Council bidding activities has resulted in the attraction of £1.5 million to the city with a further £9.086 million bids submitted awaiting results.

## 3.2 Stronger Economy and Place

The following external funding bids have been supported by the City Council under the "Stronger Economy and Place" corporate priority:

Funding source	Description of Project(s) to be funded	Funding	Status
Marketing Birmingham's European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Investing in the city region project	The following proposals have led by the City Economy Service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attracting investment into the Black Country focussing on growth of the city's priority sectors, particularly within the city's three major regeneration areas (Junction 2, City centre and Bilston Urban Village)</li><li>Research and development activities to create, enter and test new trading markets in niche business conferencing, exhibitions, rehearsal and performance space, potential for offering new types on entertainment, indoor cultural, leisure and sporting events</li></ul>	£70,000	Funding secured subject to spend

Energy Catalyst	<p>The following proposal has been led by Encraft, supported by the City Economy Service.</p> <p>The project aims to optimise regional clusters of smart electricity networks to investigate the feasibility of a distributed control solution for electricity networks at locality level. The project aims to benefit Wolverhampton residents and businesses, however there is interest to roll out across the Black Country. The project will act as a pilot to inform the pipeline of low carbon projects.</p> <p>Note: no match funding is required from Wolverhampton City Council apart from staff time and it is possible to claim back up to £30,000.</p>	£226,000	Funding secured
Arts Council of England's Museum Resilience Funds (jointly with University of Wolverhampton)	<p>The following proposal has been developed jointly by the City Council (City Economy Service) and University of Wolverhampton:</p> <p>An 18 month project to explore ways of working more closely with the University of Wolverhampton contributing to the sustainability of Wolverhampton's Museums, Galleries and Archives. There are several collections and community engagement posts included, which will support the project. The project will start from the first of April 2015 and will finish end of September 2016. There would be £28,000 of in kind support met from existing resources</p>	£166,910	Bid submitted in November. Decision expected 2 March 2015
Local Growth Fund round 2 (via Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal)	<p>The following projects are on the project pipeline for round 2 of the local growth fund:</p> <p>Led by City Economy Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land at Cable Street (remediation of 20 acre site)</li> <li>• Tower and Fort Works: to enable residential development opportunity</li> </ul>	<p>£8.32 m</p> <p>£600,000</p>	Projects submitted under round 2 of Local Growth Fund

	<p>Led by Wolverhampton City College, with facilitation by the City Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relocation of Wolverhampton City College</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the following 'game changers' were presented on behalf of the Black Country for further consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centre of excellence in construction and the built environment on the former Springfield Brewery</li> <li>• Enterprise Zone extension</li> <li>• Transport improvements around Junction 2 and links to the city centre including public transport</li> <li>• WCC also supported a funding application by Marston's brewery for £900K for re-development of their site at Chapel Ash</li> </ul>	£35.2m	
Regional Growth Fund (RGF) Grants Programme for SMEs	<p>Wolverhampton City Council is acting as the accountable body for the Growth Hub business support model.</p> <p>As part of this role, WCC administers the grants scheme worth £1.6 million to SMEs in the Black Country.</p> <p>Six businesses will contract with WCC/Growth Hub to draw down grants for growth activity and job creation between December 2014 and June 2015.</p> <p>Cabinet approved WCC acting as accountable body status and to agree business grants on 14 May 2014.</p>	£1.6M	Funding secured from RGF. Contracting phase underway.

### 3.3 Stronger People and Communities

The following external funding bids have been supported by the City Council under the "Stronger People and Communities" corporate priority:

Funding source	Description of Project(s) to be funded	Funding	Progress
European Regional Development Fund	The following proposal has been led by the City Economy Service:	£503,000 additional funds	Funding secured to increase and extend the

	<p>Extension of Neighbourhood Employment Skills Service (NESS) project delivered by a voluntary community sector partnerships including original partners YMCA, Bilston Resource Centre and TLC and new partners Access to Business, Job Change, Gloucester Street Community Centre and Topps.</p> <p>Note: Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 10 January 2012 agreed for Wolverhampton City Council to act as accountable body for the Neighbourhood Employment Support Service (NESS) on behalf of a the Learning Platform, a partnership of voluntary community sector organisations. Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 29 July 2014 approved the extension of the project and delegated authority relating to the distribution of the grant to delivery partners.</p>		<p>project. Approvals required to enter into service level agreements with delivery partners.</p>
<p>Transformational Challenge Award 2015-16</p>	<p>The following project has been led by Children's, Young People and Families:</p> <p>Pathway to support: addressing looked after children through redesigning the way adult service providers access support for children who are secondary to the service provided to the adult in the household</p> <p>Note: Details of this initiative were outlined in the Cabinet (Resources) Panel Report on 21 October 2014.</p>	<p>£789,000</p>	<p>Funding secured</p>

- 3.4 The **Black Country European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) Strategy:** developed on behalf of the Local Enterprise Partnership, outlines the Black Country's priorities for allocating European funding between 2014 and 2020. As part of its delivery, the Big Lottery has agreed to provide new match funding for employment and social inclusion priorities, therefore doubling the funding available for activities, amounting in total to over £40 million over the lifetime of the programme. Black Country priorities include employment support for over 25's, family poverty including troubled families, targeted community support, financial and digital inclusion. As part of the next stage of the process, the Black Country must enter into a memorandum of understanding

between the Big Lottery fund and LEP Area Partnership ESIF sub-committee. The social inclusion strand of the Black Country European Investment Strategy and negotiations with the Big Lottery are being led by Wolverhampton City Council on behalf of the Black Country.

#### 4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 Wolverhampton City Council is due to receive an additional £70,000 of funded activity through Marketing Birmingham's Investing in the City Region with match already identified from existing Place revenue budgets.
- 4.2 The Growth Hub funding is secured from RGF with match funding from the businesses themselves. This project is covered in reports to Councillor and the grants programme details will be covered in further reports to Councillors.
- 4.3 Additional grants to delivery partners, for which Wolverhampton City Council is accountable body, enabled through the extension and expansion of NESS are set out below. Match funding is being provided by the delivery partners.

<b>Delivery Partner</b>	<b>Grant</b>
Bilston Resource Centre (BRC)	£103,246.75
Jobchange	£103,246.75
Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)	£103,246.75
The Learning College (TLC)	£103,246.75
Gloucester Street Community Centre (GSCC)	£34,415.58
Topps	£30,974.03
Access to Business	£51,623.38
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£530,000.00</b>

- 4.4 The Local Growth Fund projects would be subject to separate individual reports setting out full financial implications if they progress to later stages.

[MF/09012015/L]

#### 5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 Service level agreement (SLA's) are required for the ERDF funded Neighbourhood Employment Skills Service project to ensure that the voluntary community sector providers adhere to European rules and regulations as set out in the ERDF funding agreements and therefore minimise risk to the Council as accountable body.
- 5.2 The memorandum of understanding between the Big Lottery fund and the LEP Area Partnership ESIF sub-committee sets out the relationship between and responsibilities for delivering the employment and social inclusion priorities of the Black Country European Investment Strategy.

- 5.4 The terms and conditions attached to the SLA's and the Memorandum of Understanding will comprise a robust, fair and reasonable approach to the distribution of the various funds.

[RB/31122014/D]

## **6.0 Equalities implications**

- 6.1 External funded projects must evidence positive equalities implications as part of the bidding process. In addition, particular funded projects such as Neighbourhood Employment Skills Service (NESS) centres have positive equalities implications since they are working with some of our most vulnerable residents to move them towards and into employment.

## **7.0 Environmental implications**

- 7.1 External funded projects must evidence positive sustainability implications. Particular funded projects, such as the project looking at smart electricity networks will have a positive impact on the environment.

## **8.0 Human resources implications**

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications to this report.

## **10.0 Corporate landlord implications**

- 10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications to this report.

## **11.0 Schedule of background papers**

- Cabinet (Resources) Panel 21 October 2014 Update on external funding
- Cabinet (Resources) Panel 10 January 2012 Neighbourhood Employment Skills Service

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# Cabinet (Resources) Panel

## 20 January 2015

<b>Report title</b>	Civic Hall Improvements – Project Management	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Peter Bilson Economic Regeneration and Prosperity	
<b>Key decision</b>	No	
<b>In forward plan</b>	No	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Tim Johnson, Place	
<b>Originating service</b>	City Economy	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Heather Clark	Strategic Projects and Funding Manager
	Tel	01902 555614
	Email	Heather.clark2@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	N/A	

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member of Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Place to use the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Framework for selecting a Project Manager for the Civic Hall refurbishment scheme.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek permission to award a contract to manage the appointment of the Civic Hall Refurbishment Project Manager as a direct call off from the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Framework 2664, Lot 3

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Cabinet (Resources) Panel received a report on 29 July 2014 summarising the work that has been undertaken to advance the Civic Halls improvement project. The Council secured £6.6 million through the Black Country Local Enterprise Growth Deal to support the delivery of a major refurbishment and improvement of the Civic Halls and £400,000 for seed corn funding for the Grand Theatre. Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 1 October 2014 approved a capital programme budget for the Civic Halls improvements of £10.4 million funded from external grant of £6.2 million and £4.2 million as a virement from the capital allocation for regeneration priorities.
- 2.2 The Civic Halls is the largest business in the Black Country's creative and entertainment sector, generating £4.3 million of Gross Value Added (GVA) in the local Wolverhampton economy. Alongside this the Grand Theatre supports a further £3.6 million of GVA in the wider economy. Both venues have already been independently assessed as supporting 637 jobs directly and indirectly within the wider economy. Both venues are Grade 2 listed buildings owned by the Council.

## **3.0 Civic Hall Improvements**

- 3.1 A key condition of the funding is to spend £1.5 million during 2015/16 financial year which requires strict adherence to timescale including procuring the contractor in line with OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) rules and requirements which takes six months.
- 3.2 A dedicated project manager is required to ensure the project is delivered in line with the funding agreement and key milestones are met. A technical team will undertake the detailed design stage anticipated to be completed by July 2015.
- 3.3 To procure a project manager the Council's procurement code and OJEU rules need to be followed. This can be achieved by using an OJEU compliant framework for the provision of project management services, and it is therefore intended to use the ESPO framework described below.

## **4.0 The ESPO Framework**

- 4.1 The ESPO framework is a national framework agreement for the provision of property advice and property management to schools and other relevant public buildings. It has been established for use by all local authorities and public sector bodies within the UK.

- 4.2 The framework offers customers a quick, simple and competitive route to obtaining property advice and management services. It is essentially a select list of suppliers, all with a proven track record of delivering property advice and management services, from whom local authorities, schools and other eligible UK public bodies may purchase services quickly and simply.
- 4.3 The benefits of using the ESPO framework for the appointment of the Project Manager are detailed below:
- Quick and easy to use. The framework is already EU/UK compliant, the procurement has already been done.
  - It's free so there will be no charge to the Council for using this framework;
  - Pre-agreed conditions. No need to worry about what terms and conditions to use as they have already been pre-agreed under the framework and underpin all orders;
  - The framework is centrally managed and monitored by ESPO
  - Great choice as there is a total of 17 suppliers across the whole contract;
  - Suppliers listed on the framework were assessed during the procurement process for their compliance of bid, compliance with contract regulations, financial stability, insurance, equality and diversity, health and safety, environment, track record, quality assurance, business continuity management and resilience of the supply chain and social value before being awarded a place on the framework.
- 4.4 The ESPO framework therefore permits the Council to directly call off a project manager provider. The framework has a good range of providers with a track record in major complex refurbishment projects with a wider range of stakeholders, and allows the Council to tailor the scope of duties in line with the outcomes required for the Civic Hall refurbishment.

## **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 The Council secured £6.6 million of external funding towards the improvement project through the Black Country Local Enterprise Growth Deal to support the delivery of a major refurbishment and improvement of the Civic Halls, together with seed corn funding for the Grand Theatre. £4.2 million of Council funding was approved by Cabinet on 1 October 2014. The total budget for the scheme includes £200,000 for project management costs.

[MF/05012015/E]

## **6.0 Legal implications**

- 6.1 Procurement frameworks allow direct calls offs to organisations that offer best value for money. The ESPO framework 2664 was tendered in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 and is open to Wolverhampton City Council.

[RB/12122014/W]

## **7.0 Equalities implications**

7.1 An equalities analysis has been completed which found that there was no evidence that the needs of certain groups would not be met. Improvements to the Civic Halls will promote equalities, as they include making the buildings more accessible to disabled people and creating a more family friendly environment. Equalities implications relating to the framework have been considered at procurement stage.

## **8.0 Environmental implications**

8.1 Opportunities around low carbon are being explored as part of the Civic Hall improvements.

## **9.0 Human resources implications**

9.1 The Civic Hall improvement project will help safeguard all jobs in the Council's Entertainment Service and enable the Council to move from reliance on zero hours contracts to create one of the largest intermediate labour markets in the city.

## **10.0 Corporate landlord implications**

10.1 Corporate Landlord teams have advised the service area from the outset. This has included consideration of timescale, scope of programme and resourcing of specialist team members.

## **11.0 Schedule of background papers**

- Cabinet (Resources) Panel) 29 July 2014 Black Country (Growth Deal - Civic Halls and Grand Theatre Improvement Programme)
- Cabinet Panel 1 October 2014 Black Country Growth Deal – Cultural Capital Programme



# Cabinet (Resources) Panel

## 20 January 2015

<b>Report title</b>	Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy for New Properties within the Black Country Enterprise Zone	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Andrew Johnson Resources	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	Bushbury North, Oxley	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Keith Ireland, Managing Director	
<b>Originating service</b>	Revenues and Benefits Service	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Sue Martin	Head of Revenues and Benefits
	Tel	01902 554772
	Email	Sue.martin@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>		

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to approve a local policy for discretionary rate relief in respect of newly built properties within the Black Country Enterprise Zone

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The report seeks approval from Cabinet (Resources) Panel for a local policy to allow discretionary rate relief in respect of newly built premises within the Black Country Enterprise Zone falling within the City of Wolverhampton.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Black Country Enterprise Zone became operational from 1 April 2012 comprising a portfolio of development sites situated in Darlaston, Walsall and Wolverhampton North. The Wolverhampton North part of the zone is made up of the i54 site and four other development opportunities in the immediate surrounding area.
- 2.2 On 10 October 2012, Cabinet endorsed a report on the Black Country Enterprise Zone-business rate uplift as follows:
- (i) For i54 the business rate uplift is returned to Wolverhampton City Council and Staffordshire County Council to reimburse the two authorities for the financial investment made to deliver the motorway link and other on-site infrastructure works.
  - (ii) For the remaining Enterprise Zone sites business rate uplift is pooled into a Black Country Investment Fund to be deployed by the Black Country LEP to support the Black Country's economic priorities.
- 2.3 Under the provisions of section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended by Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council can introduce a local policy to allow 100% rates relief to businesses within the enterprise zone for a period up to five years subject to State Aid de minimis rules.
- 2.4 Government will fund the cost of the relief through the business rates retention scheme.

## **3.0 The local policy**

- 3.1 The principle behind enterprise zones is to encourage local growth and regeneration. The proposed scheme provides for 100% discount to be granted to businesses occupying newly built properties within the enterprise zone.
- 3.2 The relief will be granted for five years from the date of occupation provided the business moves in between 1 February 2015 and 31 March 2018.
- 3.3 The proposed scheme is shown in Appendix A.

## **4.0 Financial implications**

- 4.1 The proposed discretionary relief policy is fully funded by central government through the business rates retention scheme.

[NA/05122014/R]

## **5.0 Legal implications**

- 5.1 Pursuant to Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council has the general power of competence to do anything that individuals generally may do.
- 5.2 Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011 amends section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to allow local authorities to reduce the business rates of any local ratepayer.
- 5.3 The legislation states the Council may only grant relief if it would be reasonable to do so having regard to the interests of council tax payers in its area. Given the Government has committed to reimburse local authorities it is deemed to be in the interests of its council tax payers to grant relief. It also requires a local authority to have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State when deciding whether to grant relief. As such relief will only be available below the State Aid de minimis level, currently €200,000 or £158,400 (December 2014) for most businesses over a rolling three year period, and the Council will need to take the steps outlined in the appendix to ensure that recipients do not exceed that threshold.

[RB/16122014/Z]

## **6.0 Equalities implications**

- 6.1 A stage one equality analysis has been completed. No adverse impacts were identified and a full analysis is not required.

## **7.0 Environmental implications**

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications.

## **8.0 Human resources implications**

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications.

## **9.0 Corporate landlord implications**

- 9.1 There are no corporate landlord implications.

## **10.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 10.1 Black Country Enterprise Zone – business rate uplift report to Cabinet 10 October 2012  
<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=130&Meeti nglId=720&DF=10%2f10%2f2012&Ver=2> (item 5D)

# **Wolverhampton City Council**

## **Business Rates Discretionary Relief**

### **(Newly Built Properties in the Enterprise Zone) Policy**

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Purpose and principles of the policy**
- 3 Requirements for applications**
- 4 Decision making framework**
- 5 Duration of awards**
- 6 State Aid**
- 7 Review process**



## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This policy sets out the circumstances in which reductions in rate liability will be granted to properties located in the designated Black Country Enterprise Zone and falling within the City of Wolverhampton.
- 1.2. The Black Country Enterprise Zone became operational from 1 April 2012 comprising a portfolio of development sites situated in Darlaston, Walsall and Wolverhampton North. The Wolverhampton North part of the Zone is made up of the i54 site and four other development opportunities in the immediate surrounding area.
- 1.3 Under the provisions of section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended by Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council can introduce a local policy to allow 100% rates relief to businesses within the enterprise zone for a period up to five years subject to state aid de minimis rules.
- 1.4 The Government will fund the cost of the relief through the business rates retention scheme.

## **2. Purpose and principles of the policy**

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to
  - Ensure that all applications are treated in a fair, consistent and equal manner.
  - Set a framework for how ratepayers can apply for this relief.
  - Make clear the limited criteria under which relief will be awarded.
  - Set out the delegated authority for dealing with applications.
- 2.2. Each application will be considered on its individual merit but in making a decision on the award the decision maker will give due consideration to the requirements of the policy framework.
- 2.3. This policy has been written in line with Government guidance and awards will only be considered where the conditions to receive full reimbursement from Government are met. Any amendments to Government guidance that amend restrict the scope of awards qualifying for full reimbursement will take precedence over this policy.

## **3. Requirements for applications**

- 3.1. Applications will only be considered where a state aid statement has been completed by the ratepayer, or where the ratepayer is an organisation, a person properly authorised to make an application on behalf of the organisation.
- 3.2. The Council will request any supporting evidence it considers necessary to properly assess the merits of the application.

- 3.3. The ratepayer must allow a Council Officer access to the property by appointment during normal working hours within two weeks of the Council receiving the application if it is necessary to verify any details regarding the property.
- 3.4. Ratepayers must continue to pay any amount of rates that fall due whilst an application is under consideration.

#### **4. Decision making framework**

- 4.1. Businesses that will benefit from the relief will be occupiers of newly built non-domestic properties within the City of Wolverhampton that are in the Black Country Enterprise Zone. To qualify the property must be completed and occupied between 1 February 2015 and 31 March 2018, or such other date if the Government amends the scheme for relief.
- 4.2. New structures are to be considered 'completed' when the building or part of the building of which they form part is ready for occupation for the purpose it was constructed. Where a completion notice has been served in respect of the building or part of the building, the effective date is that specified in the notice.
- 4.3. The policy is not intended to capture properties that have been refurbished, it is intended to capture those that have been the subject of substantial structural construction e.g. properties that are built on existing foundations or built around a retained façade are likely to benefit from the relief.
- 4.4. Where a new property is created as a result of a split or merger of other properties, or where the existing property is altered for example with an extension, the same test will apply i.e. the property must be wholly or mainly comprised of new structures completed within the necessary timeframes to benefit from the relief.
- 4.5. The relief will run with the property rather than the owner. If a new business moves into the property before 31 March 2018 (or such other date if the Government amends the scheme) the new occupier would be entitled to claim the relief subject to State Aid de minimis rules.
- 4.6. If the business is entitled to small business rates relief, enterprise relief will be granted after small business rates relief has been applied.
- 4.7. Properties that qualify for the relief will be given relief of 100% for the relevant period.

#### **5. Duration of awards**

- 5.1. Enterprise discretionary rate relief will be granted for a period up to five years.
- 5.2. Ratepayers are required to notify the Council immediately of any change in circumstances that may affect their entitlement to relief.

## **6. State Aid**

- 6.1. Relief will not be awarded in any circumstances where it appears that an award will result in the ratepayer receiving State Aid that is above the current de minimis level (€200,000 or £158,400 at December 2014 over a rolling three year period for most businesses). Each application must be accompanied by a statement signed by the appropriate person representing the business setting out the amount of State Aid, including but not limited to discretionary rate relief, which the ratepayer has received within the previous three years. Applications will not be considered until this statement is received.

## **7. Review process**

- 7.1. There is no statutory right of appeal against a decision made by the Council regarding discretionary rate relief. However, the Council recognises that ratepayers should be entitled to have a decision reviewed if they are dissatisfied with the outcome.
- 7.2. The letter notifying of the outcome of an application for relief will include instructions on how to request a review and the address where any request for review should be sent.
- 7.3. The Council will accept a written request for a review of its decision. The request should include the reasons for requesting a review and any supporting information.
- 7.4. A request for review must be made within one calendar month of the date of the decision letter.
- 7.5. Reviews will be considered by an officer independent of the original decision maker.
- 7.6. The applicant will be notified of the outcome of the review in writing.
- 7.7. This review process does not affect a ratepayer's legal right to seek leave to challenge a decision by way of Judicial Review.

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## Notice of key decision to be made under General Exception provisions

The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

**Date of notice:** 6 January 2015

**To:** Councillor Peter O'Neill  
Chair of Scrutiny Board

**From:** Emma Bennett  
Service Director, Children and Young People

An intention to make the following key decision, which is to be considered by the **Cabinet (Resources) Panel** on **20 January 2015**, was not publicised in advance as required by the Regulations.

**Report title:** Investing to Save: Improving the Quality of Early Intervention by Social Workers by the Reduction of Caseloads

**Classification:** PUBLIC

*The reason(s) for the omission from the forward plan of key decisions and the reason(s) why this decision cannot be delayed until the requisite 28 days have elapsed are:*

- On the 10 December 2014 agreement was given by The Leader, Councillor Lawrence; the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Johnson and the Lead Member for Children and Families, Councillor Gibson for the recruitment of additional social work units within Children's social care.
- This 'invest to save' key recommendation was made in light of discussions regarding the increasing numbers of Looked After Children and the need for early intervention to stabilise and eventually reduce the numbers.
- In light of staffing issues, high caseloads and the red risk to the MTFs posed by the cost of Looked After Children (average £40,000 per child per year) it is imperative that this proposal is presented for approval urgently.

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# Cabinet (Resources) Panel

20 January 2015

<b>Report title</b>	Investing To Save: Improving The Quality Of Early Intervention By Social Workers By The Reduction Of Caseloads	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Young People	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	No	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Linda Sanders, People	
<b>Originating service</b>	Children and Young People	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Emma Bennett	Service Director: Children and Young People
	Tel	01902 551449
	Email	emma.bennett@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	N/A	

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## Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

- i) Approve the establishment of three additional social work units to undertake intervention activities with the objective of reducing expenditure on looked after children and reducing caseloads.
- ii) Approve the use of £500,000 from the Looked After Children's service budget to fund this investment and achieve cost avoidance by continuing to reduce the numbers of looked after children
- iii) Approve option 1 - Peripatetic Units as the preferred approach to maximising effectiveness of the additional resources.

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report proposes the establishment of three additional social work units within Children's social care to improve capacity to work with children in need of specialist services. This will provide services at a more intensive level and prevent the rise in looked after children. The proposal will also reduce increasing caseloads which are currently impacting on quality of practice and retention, which prevents the opportunity for front line managers to develop social workers to provide greater quality of service to the City's most vulnerable children and young people.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Cabinet (Resources) Panel received a paper on 23 July 2013 outlining the factors behind a £5.0 million overspend in 2012/13 in the services concerned with Children in Need (CiN), Child Protection (CP) and Looked After Children (LAC). That paper noted the fundamental reason behind the overspend as being the rise in children and young people needing services, and in particular the rise in the number of LAC with the average placement cost per child being £40,000 per annum.
- 2.2 Cabinet (Resources) Panel subsequently agreed in September 2013 to provide additional resources for two social work units at a full year cost of £527,000. The additional social work units were created in Areas 1 and 2 serving the whole of the Bilston area. These became operational in July 2014 as part of the reconfiguration of Children and Families Services known as the New Operating Model (NOM). In addition, Cabinet (Resources) Panel agreed that the investment would be in two stages and that the impact of stage one and the two additional social work units should be monitored with the second stage being implemented following demonstrable evidence of positive outcomes. This was also agreed as part of an overall plan of service changes aimed at ensuring that only those children and young people who need to be looked after are part of the looked after children system.
- 2.3 The impact of stage one and the additional social work units within the context of the implementation of the NOM has been subject to a full evaluation. This was reported to The Leader of the Council, Councillor Lawrence; Councillor Gibson, Cabinet Lead for Children and Families; and Councillor Johnson, Cabinet Member for Resources on the 10 December 2014. The evaluation concluded that the allocation of additional social work resources to Areas one and two across the Bilston area has provided some exciting opportunities to enhance practice and the management of both workload and partnership arrangements. This has positively impacted on the services to children and their families by providing greater opportunity to undertake more intensive individual work as well as improving the quality of both assessment and care planning. Although early days, it was concluded that this approach should eventually reduce the numbers of referrals meeting the social care threshold. This includes the number of children receiving looked after services, which although stable since May 2014, continues to threaten an upward trend. As a result of the NOM implementation it is estimated that the service has avoided additional costs of in the region of £2.0 million. This is based on the assumption that numbers of LAC would have continued to increase in line with 2013/14 trends.



2.4 Councillors Lawrence, Gibson and Johnson supported the implementation of stage two which is the proposed allocation of staffing resources to the equivalent of three additional social work units. It was acknowledged this will enable services to effectively address rising caseloads by providing greater opportunities to undertake more intensive direct work with children. If additional resources aren't agreed then the evidence suggests caseloads will continue to rise, impacting on the quality of service provision, leading to higher numbers of children receiving expensive specialist services and potential higher turnover of staff due to lowering of morale and increased sickness.

### **3.0 Progress, Options, Discussion**

3.1 There are key pressure points across Children's Social Care which adversely impact on the delivery of assessment and care management services. These are being caused by the high numbers of referrals into the children's social care system. Considerable work is currently taking place to ensure the front end of the service maintains consistent application of thresholds and more developments are planned. However there is still a high number of referrals that currently meet the correct threshold for assessment and this combined with those cases which require longer term specialist care management cause pressures and impact on the efficient progress of cases. Therefore there are a number of areas where additional resources will ensure more effective progress and resolution of work across the whole system. Most importantly, earlier intervention will eventually reduce the numbers of looked after children.

3.2 In addition, the recruitment and retention of front line managers and social workers continues to present challenges. The most recent round of recruitment appointed three permanent Consultant Social Workers (CSW). There are only ten permanent CSWs across an establishment of 29 posts. The remaining vacancies are covered by agency managers. All of the managers hold caseloads of children with more complex needs. Caseloads for these managers are currently as high as 25 cases. These managers should ideally hold no more than 6 cases and be able to use these cases to train newly qualified and inexperienced social workers through joint working. These large caseloads are impacting on their ability to effectively manage both social workers and their caseloads, and drive up quality interventions with children and families. The competing demand of the roles of casework and management is impacting on the Council's ability to recruit and retain experienced and skilled staff in these crucial posts.

3.3 A resource of £500,000 will provide approximately an additional 12 social workers. After careful consideration, taking in to account the challenges already highlighted, it is proposed to use any agreed additional resource on employing social workers and save on additional management and administration costs. This will make the most effective use of the additional resource. It will also reduce the need for the current level of agency staff including temporary additional staff over the current assignment. Current recruitment history both locally and regionally suggests that the workers recruited will be predominantly newly or recently qualified. They will require good levels of management support and professional development. However, providing this additional resource will enable the front line managers to become free of their caseloads and therefore enable

capacity to effectively develop these additional workers into highly skilled and experienced staff.

### 3.4 Option 1: Peripatetic units

To provide 3 peripatetic social work units which will focus on pressure points across the service. These will include: speeding up the assessment process for earlier resolution; stepping down social care cases to early help services and progressing cases that require child protection planning, court work and care planning more effectively leading to earlier and less costly resolution. This will also include focussing on effective permanency planning to ensure cases are fully resolved at an early date. Each unit will undertake an assignment of up to six months in a defined area of the service to reduce pressure and improve workflow before moving onto a new area of practice. Effective management and administration support will be identified from the existing resource.

### 3.5 Option 2: Developing specialist units

This would utilise the additional social workers into three specialist units to work on defined areas of service need across the assessment and care management service area. An example could include a defined court team working with applications within public law proceedings speeding up the court process and ensuring all deadlines were serviced promptly. This can be achieved to some extent through the vehicle of option one if carefully managed.

### 3.6 Option 3: Spreading the additional resource across the whole service

This proposal would be for the additional resource to be split up and added to existing units. On average this would add one social worker to 12 social work units, although some additional realignment to particularly pressurised areas could be agreed.

### 3.7 Option 4: Maintain current status quo

This option will leave the current staffing assignment in its overall position although the staff resource could be realigned to meet identified areas of service pressures. This would require identifying social workers with spare capacity and the flexibility to move away from defined geographically located and serving units.

### 3.8 Options Appraisal

Option	Advantages	Disadvantage
1 - Peripatetic units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This will provide service flexibility against assessed areas of needs.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The units could become ensnared, supporting teams with low staffing on a longer term basis thus losing their effective role.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It will provide measurable progress against defined service targets, freeing up existing capacity to develop more in depth and quality practice on existing cases.</li> <li>• The nature of the flexibility of this model will enable different areas of practice demand to be addressed simultaneously.</li> <li>• The three units can be utilised flexibly according to identified service pressures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The peripatetic model could have an adverse impact upon case allocation and stability for service users due to changes in social worker. This will require effective and careful management.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b> -Developing specialist units</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This would promote improved relations with particular partners and</li> <li>• The specialism would enable greater concentration of specialist expertise in one service area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential loss of specialist knowledge across existing units.</li> <li>• Greater number of changes in allocated social worker impacting on children and families.</li> <li>• There would also be less flexibility to respond to other service pressures in different parts of the service.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b> - Spreading the additional resource across the whole service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This would provide temporary additional capacity</li> <li>• This could include the option of the additional worker having a defined role including providing a duty role for the team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The additional resource would spread the capacity too thinly across the whole service reducing the impact of positive change.</li> <li>• Additional resource may be incorporated into the staffing assignment without a clearly defined role and purpose.</li> <li>• Any defined specialist role would be in danger of being subsumed due to staff shortages.</li> </ul>

Option	Advantages	Disadvantage
<p><b>4</b> - Maintain current status quo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No additional resources would be required.</li> <li>• This would provide the least organisational change to the current structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is in conflict with the findings of the recent evaluation of the current additional capacity which identifies rising caseloads even in those better resourced Areas.</li> <li>• This also relies on the CSW to hold onto their existing caseloads which will reduce the time spent on supporting and assisting workers.</li> <li>• This option is most likely to lead to continuing service pressures, impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the throughput of work and contribute to reduced staff morale, sickness and difficulties in recruitment and retention.</li> </ul>

3.9 Having considered the options appraisal, the preferred option for the service area is option one. This option will enable a resource to be targeted at recruiting up to an additional 12 peripatetic social workers to be used in a flexible way to meet service demands and challenges across the whole of Children’s social care. This option would free up the capacity of the current CSW’s to focus on supporting case management and the professional development of the social workers in order to improve the quality of assessments, care management and the throughput of work, thus impacting positively on outcomes for children and their families and further preventing the need for children to become looked after.

**4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 The cost of the additional peripatetic social workers have been assessed using maximum scale point of pay grades and including employers’ national insurance and pension fund contributions. On this basis, the indicative cost is £500,000.

4.2 It is expected that the indicative cost of £500,000 will be funded from savings generated within the Looked After Children’s Service, however, if this is not the case then it will be funded from the efficiency reserve.

4.3 The average cost of a LAC placement is calculated to be £40,000. Therefore, in order for this proposal to achieve a successful pay back of the £500,000 the LAC population requires a reduction of thirteen clients initially.’

4.4 Financial monitoring will be performed to assess the extent to which the additional peripatetic social workers have been successful in preventing costs that would otherwise have been incurred.

[NM/07012014/B]

## **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1 Child Protection services and services to Looked After Children and children in need provided primarily under the Children Act 1989, are statutory Social Services functions under Schedule 1 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. Under section 7 of the Act these services must be provided under the direction of the Secretary of State. The Council as a Social Services Authority does, however, have discretion as to how it organises its services. This report also supports the Council's duties as an employer under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to provide a safe system of work and manage employee workloads.

[TJ/08012015/K]

## **6.0 Equalities implications**

6.1 An Initial Equality Impact screening has been completed. There are no equality implications identified. The additional resources will positively impact on supporting and improving delivery services to some of our most deprived communities.

## **7.0 Environmental implications**

7.1 There are no environmental implications.

## **8.0 Human resources implications**

8.1 There will be implications for the recruitment and development of additional staff.

## **9.0 Corporate landlord implications**

9.1 There are no corporate landlord implications identified. Existing buildings where social workers are currently located will be utilised.

## **10.0 Schedule of background papers**

10.1 Report on the Impact of Additional Social Work Units to undertake Early Intervention under the New Operating Model. Report to the Looked After Children Budget Group of 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

10.2 Investing To Save: Improving the Quality of Early Intervention by Social Workers by the Reduction of Caseloads – Report to the Cabinet (Resources) Panel September 2013.

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# Cabinet (Resources) Panel

## 20 January 2015

<b>Report title</b>	Schedule of Individual Executive Decision Notices	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	All	
<b>Key decision</b>	No	
<b>In forward plan</b>	No	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Keith Ireland, Managing Director	
<b>Originating service</b>	Democratic Services	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Laura Gilyead Tel Email	Graduate Management Trainee 01902 553219 Laura.gilyead@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	N/A	

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### Recommendations for noting:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is asked to note the summary of open and exempt individual executive decisions approved by the appropriate Cabinet Members following consultation with the relevant employees.

## Schedule of Individual Executive Decisions

### Part 1 – Open Items

#### 1. Office of the Chief Executive

None

#### 2. Community

None

#### 3. Delivery

Decision maker	In consultation with	Date Approved	Contact Officer
Councillor Andrew Johnson	Managing Director	8 December 2014	Keith Daw, 01902 555764
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Corporate Asset Management Fund – Approval of Schemes for the Energy Efficiency Fund</b> That the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Assistant Director, City Services approves the energy efficiency project Installation of Building Management System/Zone Values (Scheme no.: 0230, Asset: Penn Hall Special School, CO Savings: 4.96 tonnes, Capital Cost: £7000, Annual Saving: £700, Pay back: 9.96 years)			

#### 4. Education and Enterprise

Decision maker	In consultation with	Date Approved	Contact Officer
Councillor Phil Page	Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise	10 December 2014	Emma Balchin, 01902 555269
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Instrument of Government for Springdale Junior School</b> That the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Learning, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise approves the proposed Instrument of Government for Springdale Junior School.			
<b>Decision maker</b>			
Councillor Phil Page	Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise	10 December 2014	Emma Balchin, 01902 555269
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Instrument of Government for St Andrew's (Church of England) Primary School</b> That the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Learning, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise approves the proposed Instrument of Government for St Andrew's (Church of England) Primary School.			
<b>Decision maker</b>			
Councillor Phil Page	Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise	10 December 2014	Emma Balchin, 01902 555269



<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Instrument of Government for Low Hill Nursery School</b> That the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Learning, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise approves the proposed Instrument of Government for Low Hill Nursery School.			
<b>Decision maker</b>	<b>In consultation with</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Councillor Peter Bilson	Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise	18 December 2014	John Healey, 01902 554007
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Queen Street Gateway, Townscape Heritage Scheme – extension of consultancy contract</b> That the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise approves the extension of the existing contract with Heritage Regeneration Solutions to comprise further work in connection with the round two submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Queen Street Gateway Townscape Heritage Scheme, within the existing budget.			
<b>Decision maker</b>	<b>In consultation with</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Councillor Peter Bilson	Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise	23 December 2014	Heather Clark, 01902 555614
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Development of a Low Carbon Project Pipeline</b> That the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise agrees to enter into a grant agreement to draw down funding for the low carbon development programme.			
<b>Decision maker</b>	<b>In consultation with</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Councillor Peter Bilson	Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise	23 December 2014	Bob Willis, 01902 555790
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Bus Lanes and Bus Gates: Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders to Facilitate Enforcement: Phase One</b> That the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise,			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approves the proposed bus lanes 7 am – 7 pm, Monday to Saturday TROs, as shown on the attached plans for Stafford Street, parts of Wednesfield Road, Willenhall Road and Wolverhampton Road.</li> <li>2. Approves the proposed 24 hours bus lanes TROs, as shown on the attached plans for Cleveland Street and Wednesfield Road.</li> <li>3. Approves the proposed bus gate, as shown on the attached plans for Wednesfield Road and Victoria Square.</li> <li>4. Approves the proposed revocation of all existing TROs which refer to bus lanes and bus gates insofar as they relate to Cleveland Street, Stafford Street, Wednesfield Road, Willenhall Road and Wolverhampton Road.</li> <li>5. Approves the proposed revocation of the existing TROs which refer to pedestrian zones insofar as they relate to Victoria Square.</li> <li>6. Authorises the Chief Legal Officer to advertise the above Orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and, subject to there being no unresolved objections, to subsequently</li> </ol>			

implement the orders.

## Part 2 – Exempt Items

### 1. Office of the Chief Executive

None

### 2. Community

Decision maker	In consultation with	Date Approved	Contact Officer
Councillor Steve Evans	Strategic Director, Community	8 December 2014	Joy Dale, 01902 551107
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Lord Street Very Sheltered Housing Service Contract</b> That the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Community, approves the award of the contract for Lord Street Very Sheltered Housing Service. The contract period will be for three years with an option to extend by up to a further two years.			

### 3. Delivery

None

### 4. Education and Enterprise

Decision maker	In consultation with	Date Approved	Contact Officer
Councillor Elias Mattu	Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise	28 November 2014	Corinne Miller, 01902 552050
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Disposal of low value collection items following a review of the collections as part of the Making Space programme in the West Midlands</b> That the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Communities, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise authorises the disposals outlined in the report.			
<b>Title and Summary of Decision</b>			
<b>Low Hill Residential Repairs (pods) – Private Property Acquisitions</b> That the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise, approves the completion of the purchase of a property and the sale of a property.			

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