

## Attendance

### Members of the Cabinet (Resources) Panel

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

### Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
Mark Taylor	Deputy Chief Executive
Emma Bennett	Director of Children's and Adult Services
Ross Cook	Director of City Housing and Environment
Charlotte Johns	Director of Strategy
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
David Pattison	Director of Governance
Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager
Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer

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

*Item No. Title*

- 1 Chair's Announcements**  
The Chair advised that Paragraph 39 of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972 states that any decision taken at a local authority meeting (including committees and sub committees) shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting. Whilst the law permits other members to join the meeting virtually, they cannot vote.
- 2 Apologies for absence**  
No apologies for absence were received for the meeting.

3 **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 7a (Celebrating our city's diversity: Commemorating Saragarhi) in view of his involvement in the project and his longstanding association with the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in Wednesfield. David Pattison, Director of Governance advised Councillor Gakhal that it would be sensible for him to leave the room when the report is being considered in view of the nature of his interest.

4 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 May 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

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

Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report seeking delegated authority to award a contract, on completion of the procurement process, for an Independent Tenant and Homes Advisor to help with consultations with residents in New Park Village on the redevelopment of Elephant Walk, New Park Village.

Resolved:

That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing, in consultation with the Director of City Housing and Environment to approve the award of a contract for Independent Tenant and Homes Advisor following the completion of a procurement process.

7 **Restart Employment Programme**

Resolved:

That the report be considered during the confidential session of the meeting on the grounds that the report contains commercially sensitive information under Part 1, paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

8 **External Funding Update 2021/2022**

Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the update report on bids and project change requests for external funding to meet the Council's priorities following the recent submission of bids to the Community Renewal Fund.

Councillor Obaida Ahmed reported that Covid-19 had shown that digital access was essential. The Cabinet was committed to the city being 100% digital and to the Wolverhampton population being 100% able to access digital. That meant supporting them through connectivity, the equipment they need, and the services they need to use the digital services. She hoped that Government was serious about its levelling up agenda and approves the Community Renewal Fund bids.

Resolved:

1. That the Council act as Lead Authority for the following Community Renewal Fund (CRF) bids to deliver key priorities for the city including:

- a. iGNITE (innovate, Grow, Navigate, Ideas, Technology, Entrepreneurship) – to support our vital local entrepreneurs, business start-ups and small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs) around e-commerce skills;
  - b. Working towards Improved Resource Efficiency and De-carbonisation (WIRED) – to support our city carbon reduction commitment and vital local businesses through a large-scale innovative resource efficiency and energy reduction programme;
  - c. Wolverhampton Employment and Skills Support for All (WESSA) – to generate more jobs and learning opportunities for local residents, through piloting innovative, targeted approaches to delivering support to get Wolverhampton residents back to work;
  - d. West Midlands Youth Engagement – to ensure we create more opportunities for our children and young people, through a bid to commission critical research into youth engagement.
2. That the Council act as delivery partner in the West Midlands Cultural Renewal and Creative Skills bid to the Community Renewal Fund, to support the revitalisation of our high streets with key activity around cultural and creative industries.
  3. That the Council support other key bids to the Community Renewal Fund that benefit Wolverhampton, including bids led by the voluntary community sector to support enterprise and employability, and the Good Things Foundation to provide intensive support to get people online which is in line with our ambitions around a fully digitally inclusive city.
  4. That authority be delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with Director of Strategy and Director of Finance to:
    - a. Approve acceptance of the grant funding agreements if the projects referred to in recommendation 1 above are successful.
    - b. Enter into back-to-back agreements with delivery partners if the projects referred to in recommendation 1 above are successful.
    - c. Approve necessary revenue and if required capital budgets in line with the funding agreement if the projects referred to in recommendation 1 above are successful.
    - d. Approve the use of the indirect costs element of any CRF grant to cover any additional administrative costs associated with the above funded programmes
    - e. Approve reimbursement of CRF grant to delivery partners who are awarded CRF.
    - f. Approve the payment of grants to businesses who are awarded CRF grant for WIRED.

5. That stressing importance of timely decisions from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, authority be delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Strategy and Director of Finance to deal with project adjustments if required.

9 **Celebrating our city's diversity: Commemorating Saragarhi**

Having previously declared a pecuniary interest in this item Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal left the meeting room whilst the report was considered.

Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report on a proposal for the Council to provide up to £35,000 from the Recovery Reserve to fund the Battle of Saragarhi statue project in Wednesfield to celebrate the diversity of the city, recognise the contribution of the Sikh community to the country and increase visitor footfall to Wednesfield.

Cabinet members spoke in support of the fitting and just project to celebrate the heroism and sacrifice of the 21 Sikh soldiers in the Battle of Saragarhi. It was noted that over £100,000 had been raised through donations from local community members and businesses and that the fundraising had been severely impacted by the global pandemic, Rather than delay the development, and delay the opportunity to bring increased footfall to the local area from the launch event planned in September and opportunities thereafter, the project was considered as a worthy recipient of Recovery Reserve funding to support post-Covid 'Relighting our City' plans.

Resolved:

1. That a £25,000 grant from the Recovery Reserve to the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in Wednesfield for landscaping work on council-owned land around the proposed monument to the Battle of Saragarhi in Wednesfield which celebrates the city's Sikh community heritage, recognises its contribution to our country and would also help 'Relight our City' and town-centre vibrancy be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Communications and External Relations and the Director of Finance to approve a further grant up to £10,000 from the Recovery Reserve for any unforeseen issues.

10 **Exclusion of press and public**

Resolved:

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

## **Part 2 - exempt items, closed to press and public**

- 11 **Procurement - Exempt- Award of Contracts for Works, Goods and Services**  
Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report on the award of contracts for works, goods and services.

Resolved:

1. That the award of contracts for the Supply of Independent Living Equipment to London Borough of Croydon of Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon, CR0 1EA for two years and eight months from 1 June 2021 to 30 November 2023 up to the contract value of £667,000 be approved.
2. That the exemptions to the Contract Procedure Rules approved by the Head of Procurement and Director of Finance from 1 - 30 April 2021 be noted.

12 **Disposal of Beckminster House**

Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal presented the report on a proposal to declare surplus to the Council's requirements Beckminster House, and to agree the disposal strategy for the asset to generate a capital receipt and revenue efficiencies.

The property was a Grade II Listed detached property and car park formerly used as offices. It was currently vacant and being managed by Corporate Landlord as a void property.

Resolved:

1. That Beckminster House be declared surplus to the Council's requirements:
2. That disposal of the asset listed via the open market disposal methods of either auction or informal tender upon terms and conditions to be agreed be approved.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive to approve the terms of the disposal through an Individual Executive Decision Notice.

13 **Lonsdale Road, Pennfields - Property acquisition and refurbishment.**

Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal presented the report on a proposal to acquire and refurbish property on Lonsdale Road, Pennfields. The retention and refurbishment of the property would provide an opportunity for the housing owned asset to be reinstated to a large family property, making best use of existing stock.

Resolved:

1. That the proposal for the refurbishment of the property and reinstate the building to the original large house as detailed in Option 4 of paragraph 4.11 to the report be approved.
2. That the commencement of consultation with the tenants within the council owned properties be approved and discuss their housing needs and rehouse them into alternative accommodation.
3. That the payment of home loss and disturbance compensation for the tenants displaced by the planned refurbishment of the property, in accordance with the Land Compensation Act 1973 be approved.

4. That negotiations begin with the leaseholder of 43 Lonsdale Road to acquire the leasehold interest, with vacant possession and the payment of home loss and disturbance compensation, in accordance with the Land Compensation Act 1973 be approved.
5. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing in consultation with the Director of City Housing and Environment to approve the purchase of the leasehold property as detailed in Option 4 of paragraph 4.11 to the report.
6. That the current condition of the council owned properties at 43A and 43B Lonsdale Road and investment required be noted.
7. That the current condition of the leasehold property at 43 Lonsdale Road and investment required be noted.

14

### **Restart Employment Programme**

Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre presented the report on a proposal for the Council to enter into an agreement with Serco, to support Wolverhampton residents in sustainable employment, as part of the government's new welfare to work programme, Restart.

It was noted that the proposal came within the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work. It was therefore proposed that the recommended delegation in the report to the Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy be amended to Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work.

Resolved:

- That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work, in consultation with the Director of Regeneration to:
- a. Approve the Council agreeing the final terms and entering into the required agreement with Serco for the Council to deliver employment and skills support to local unemployed residents, as a sub-contractor to Serco, as part of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Restart programme.
  - a. Approve the Council creating appropriate supplementary expenditure and income revenue budgets, including staffing, for the delivery of the Restart Programme.
  - b. Approve the Council entering into lease agreements with delivery venues, where required.