

Attendance

Members of the Cabinet

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

Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
Mark Taylor	Deputy Chief Executive
Emma Bennett	Executive Director of Families
Ian Fegan	Director of Communications and External Relations
Charlotte Johns	Director of Strategy
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
Laura Phillips	Deputy Director of People and Change
Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager
Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Linda Leach.
- 2 **Declaration of interests**
No declarations of interests were made.
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting**
Resolved:
That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 October 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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Capital Programme 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 Quarter Two Review

Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the update report on the financial performance of the 2021-2022 General Revenue Account and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programmes. The report also provided a revised forecast for 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 as at quarter two of 2021-2022. Councillor Brookfield referred to the raft of projects in the capital programmes that covered every part of the city and reflected the priorities of the Council. He also highlighted some of the key projects in the programmes that would improve life chances, skills, and transpose the green economy of the city. Revisions to the current approved capital programmes covering the period 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 were recommended to Full Council for approval.

Resolved:

That Council is recommended to approve:

1. The revised, medium term General Revenue Account capital programme of £298.1 million, an increase of £6.7 million from the previously approved programme, and the change in associated resources.

That Cabinet approves:

1. The virements for the General Revenue Account capital programme detailed at Appendix 4 to the report for:
 - i. existing projects totalling £4.3 million;
 - ii. new projects totalling £1.7 million.
2. The virements for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme detailed at Appendix 4 to the report for:
 - i. existing projects totalling £3.6 million.

The Cabinet notes:

1. That there is an intentional 'over-programming' of projects to reflect the reality that some projects will inevitably be delayed due to unexpected circumstances or changes to priorities. Over-programming aims to ensure that, as far as possible, the resources available are fully utilised.
2. That the following capital projects are included in a bid for external European Regional Development Fund grant as part of the Wolverhampton Investment in Smart Energy programme. If successful, and subject to confirmation of grant funding, this could attract up to 40% of external funding that would reduce the amount of internal resources required to fund the Corporate Asset Management programme. Any realised changes in resources as a result of grant confirmation will be reflected in future monitoring reports for approval.
 - Aldersley Leisure Centre (Hockey Pitches) – External lighting to include electrical controls & lighting columns;
 - Bradley Resource Centre – Mechanical Plant upgrade;
 - Civic Centre – Flue replacement.

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Treasury Management Activity Monitoring - Mid Year Review 2021-2022

Councillor Ian Brookfield outlined the salient points from the monitoring and progress report on treasury management activity for the second quarter of 2021-2022 as part of the mid-year review, in line with the Prudential Indicators approved by Council in March 2021. He reported that treasury management was a vital part of how the Council operated. Without it, projects listed in the previous report 'Capital

Programme Quarter Two Review’ and policies the Council is pursuing to help the residents of the city would not go into effect.

Resolved:

That Council is asked to note:

1. That a mid-year review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement had been undertaken and the Council had operated within the limits and requirements approved in March 2021, however due to the reprofiling of some capital programmes the authorised limit and operational boundary for commercial activities for 2022-2023 is forecast to be slightly in excess of the best estimate included in the Treasury Management Strategy presented to Council on 3 March 2021. This would be reviewed as part of the 2022-2023 Treasury Management Strategy.
2. That revenue underspends of £899,000 for the General Revenue Account and £706,000 for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) are forecast from treasury management activities in 2021-2022, arising as a result of re-phasing of the capital programme and lower interest rates forecast on borrowing.

The Cabinet notes:

1. That there had been no change to the UK’s credit rating and therefore the Director of Finance had not been required to use the delegated authority approved by Council on 17 July 2020 to amend the Annual Investment Strategy.

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Performance and Budget Monitoring 2021-2022

Councillor Ian Brookfield outlined the salient points from the update report on performance against the Council’s Relighting Our City priorities, and on the financial performance and projected outturn for 2021-2022 as at quarter two.

Resolved:

1. That the establishment of supplementary expenditure budgets within the 2021-2022 approved budget as detailed in section 9.0 of the report for grant funded expenditure be approved.
2. That the use of £1.0 million from the Regeneration Reserve to fund various transformation work as detailed in paragraph 10.4 of the report be approved.
3. That the use of £105,000 from the Budget Contingency Reserve to fund additional resource to ensure the Council delivers on the Fairness and Inclusion agenda as detailed at paragraph 10.5 of the report be approved.
4. That the contribution of £200,000 to the Budget Contingency Reserve to support environmental works in 2021-2022 as detailed in paragraph 10.6 of the report be approved.
5. That the use of £124,000 from the Recovery Reserve/ Covid Emergency grant to fund additional resources within Insight and Performance to support the work around jobs, skills and enterprise as detailed at paragraph 10.7 of the report be approved.

6. That the write-off of three Council Tax debts totalling £17,693.83 as detailed in Appendix 9 to the report be approved.
7. That the write-off of three Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) debts totalling £30,785.94 as detailed in Appendix 10 to the report be approved.
8. That the write-off of two Housing Benefit debts totalling £12,814.21 as detailed in Appendix 11 to the report be approved.
9. That the write-off of one Sundry Debt totalling £5,538.16 as detailed in Appendix 8 to the report be approved.
10. That 60 virements totalling £28.9 million, for transfers within directorates, as detailed in Appendix 12 to the report be approved.
11. That it be noted that the General Fund projected outturn for 2021-2022 is currently forecast to be an underspend of £235,000 (excluding the impact of Covid-19). This forecast underspend is after the transfer of £4 million into the Future Years Budget Strategy Reserve in accordance with the 2022-2023 budget strategy and £200,000 into the Budget Contingency Reserve to support environmental works.
12. That it be noted that at this stage in the financial year it is difficult to forecast redundancy costs. However, as forecast in recent years it is anticipated that the cost of redundancies can be met from reserves.
13. That it be noted that a £12.3 million surplus on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is projected compared with a budgeted surplus of £13.1 million as shown at Table 3 and in detail at Appendix 5 to the report. The projected reduction to the surplus of £841,000 would reduce redemption of debt by £841,000.
14. That it be noted that council tax accounts totalling £487,356.90, as detailed in paragraph 11.2 and Appendix 7 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
15. That it be noted that 32 Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) debts totalling £259,737.68, as detailed in paragraph 11.2 and Appendix 7 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
16. That it be noted that 51 housing benefit overpayments totalling £27,061.75 as detailed in paragraph 11.2 and Appendix 7 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
17. That it be noted that 135 sundry debt accounts totalling £72,957.29, as detailed in paragraph 11.2 and Appendix 7 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

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Relighting Our Council

Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report on a high level approach to 'Relighting Our Council', which had been developed in consultation and engagement with staff and key stakeholders. The vision and strategy set out how the Council would develop a workforce enabled to deliver for the future that maximises outcomes for local people, learning from the experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic and adopting modern, best practice ways of working.

Cabinet gave credit to the Council's employees and Senior Management Team for the way they operated throughout the pandemic and for engaging with the process for developing the new approach for delivering services to the public.

Resolved:

1. That the Relighting Our Council vision and strategy, which sets out the high-level approach to develop a new flexible and agile operating model in order to best meet the needs of our city be approved.
2. That the proposal to engage with the organisation and consult with the Trade Unions on the development of a fair, inclusive, and equitable 'Our employee/people offer' be approved.
3. That the drawdown of £200,000 funding which has been previously set aside in the Transformation Reserve for the Our Assets Programme and the utilisation of other existing funding allocations to facilitate this strategy, as outlined in the financial implications be approved.
4. That it be noted that in line with this high level Relighting Our Council strategy, further work would be done to develop a new workspace strategy, new employee offer and Our People Strategy, new staff sustainable travel policy and new digital strategy to ensure the delivery of better outcomes for local people.
5. That the outcome of the pre-decision scrutiny undertaken by the Our Council Scrutiny Panel on 2 November, summarised at paragraph 2.4 and appendix 2 to the report be noted.

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Updated Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy

Councillor Paula Brookfield presented the update report on how the Council is meeting its legal obligations under the RIPA and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA). The legislation helped the Council ensure it keeps its residents safe and the environment protected through the use of necessary and proportionate lawful covert investigation techniques such as covert surveillance, covert CCTV cameras and covert intelligence gathering. Cabinet was asked to approve an updated corporate RIPA Covert Investigation Policy and Corporate RIPA Operating procedure and to note the Council's response to the most recent inspection of its arrangements in respect to RIPA regulated matters.

Resolved:

1. That the updated, corporate RIPA Covert Investigation Policy and corporate RIPA Operating Procedure be approved.

2. That the contents of the report and the steps taken to address comments made by the most recent inspection of the Council's arrangements in respect to RIPA regulated matters be noted.