

## Attendance

**Mayor** Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE (Lab)  
**Deputy Mayor** Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre (Lab)

## Labour

Cllr Obaida Ahmed	Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal	Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr Mary Bateman	Cllr Celia Hibbert	Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE	Cllr Carol Hyatt	Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Olivia Birch	Cllr Jasbir Jaspal	Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Cllr Jaspreet Jaspal	Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Cllr Greg Brackenridge	Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal	Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Chris Burden	Cllr Rashpal Kaur	Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Craig Collingswood	Cllr Linda Leach	Cllr Clare Simm
Cllr Lovinyer Daley	Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN	Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Claire Darke	Cllr Louise Miles	Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Steve Evans	Cllr Beverley Momenabadi	Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Val Evans	Cllr Lynne Moran	Cllr Gillian Wildman

## Conservative

Cllr Simon Bennett	Cllr Andrew McNeil
Cllr Adam Collinge	Cllr Andrew Randle
Cllr Jonathan Crofts	Cllr Mak Singh
Cllr Wendy Dalton	Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Christopher Haynes	Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Stephanie Haynes	Cllr Ellis Turrell
Cllr Sohail Khan	Cllr Jonathan Yardley

## Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
Emma Bennett	Executive Director of Families
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
John Roseblade	Director of Resident Services

Item No. Title

- 1 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Qaiser Azeem Councillor Paul Appleby, Councillor Ian Brookfield, Councillor Paula Brookfield, Councillor Jas Dehar, Councillor Udey Singh and Councillor Olivia Birch for lateness
- 2 **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Philip Bateman declared a non-pecuniary interest in matters related to Ashmore Park Nursery School and in relation to Birmingham International Airport.

Councillor Mary Bateman declared a non-pecuniary interest in matters related to Ashmore Park Nursery School.

Councillor Wendy Dalton declared she had just been appointed to Uplands Junior School, Board of School Governors.

The Monitoring Officer, David Pattison advised that he was not aware of any councillor having a pecuniary or other registrable interest which prevented councillors from speaking or voting on an item at this meeting.
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting**

The Mayor proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded, and it was resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 25 January 2023, be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.
- 4 **Communications**
  1. **LGBT History Month**

The Mayor announced that she had been pleased to support a number of events that had taken place to celebrate LGBT History Month. She thanked the Deputy Mayor for attending the LGBT Rainbow flag raising on Wednesday 1 February.
  2. **Ukraine - One Year On**

The Mayor reported that it had been a year since Russia had launched its attack on Ukraine and that the city of Wolverhampton continued to stand firm with the Ukrainian people. She reported that the Deputy Mayor had represented the Council and the people of Wolverhampton at a ceremony where the flag of Ukraine had been raised on Friday 24 February.
  3. **Peter Bilson House**

The Mayor was pleased to announce that a new facility for supported accommodation would open on Bond Street and would be named after the former Deputy Leader of the Council, Peter Bilson. She announced that she would attend an opening ceremony with Peter's family and that it would serve as a lasting legacy to the man himself, who had played a key role in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Wolverhampton.

Prayers were offered.
  4. **International Women's Day**

The Mayor announced that International Women's Day would take place on Wednesday 8 March. She was pleased to announce that she had been invited to open the Council's 'Everywoman – Embracing Equity' event in the City Suite on the

day and invited everyone to attend to hear stories, experiences and wisdom from inspiring women.

#### **5. Mayors Charity Quiz Night**

The Mayor announced that the Charity Quiz Night would now take place in the City Suite on Thursday 9 March at 7pm and that the Mayoral Office could be contacted for further details.

#### **6. Commonwealth Day**

The Mayor announced that Monday 13 March would mark the celebrations for the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Commonwealth Charter by Queen Elizabeth II. She reported that the Commonwealth Peace Flag would be raised on the day, with a reception in the City Suite afterwards, and invited members to attend to commemorate the event.

#### **7. Ramadan 2023**

The Mayor announced that the Islamic Holy Month of Ramadan would begin on the evening of Wednesday 22 March and wished all members of the faith Ramadan Mubarak.

#### **8. Mayors RockFest 2023**

The Mayor was pleased to announce that The Mayors Charity Rockfest 2023 would take place over the weekend of 7 to 9 April and provided details of the event. She publicly thanked the organiser Doddy White and his team at Rockers Through The Ages for their sterling efforts to set up the event.

#### **9. King Charles' III Coronation Poetry Competition**

The Mayor announced that a poetry competition for children and adults would be launched to mark the King's Coronation, in partnership with the City's library service, and that details of how to enter could be found on social media.

#### **10. Death of Betty Boothroyd**

The Mayor was saddened to announce the death of Baroness Betty Boothroyd, who had served as the first female Speaker of the House of Commons from 1992 to 2000. The Mayor passed on the Council's condolences to her family and friends.

#### **11. Congratulations to Cllr Paul Appleby**

The Mayor passed on congratulations to Councillor Paul Appleby and his wife Becci on the birth of their second child, George.

### **5 Our City: Our Plan Refresh 2023/2024**

Deputy Leader of Inclusive City Economy, Councillor Stephen Simkins, presented the report on Our City: Our Plan Refresh 2023/2024 for approval. The refreshed council plan, Our City: Our Plan was detailed in appendix 1 to the report.

The plan sets out an ambition that 'Wulfrunians will live longer, healthier lives'. Delivery of this ambition would be supported by six overarching priorities: strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential; fulfilled lives for all with quality care for those that need it; healthy, inclusive communities; good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods; more local people into good jobs and training and thriving economy in all parts of the city. Supporting these six overarching priorities were three cross cutting principles: climate conscious; driven by digital and fair and equal.

The report also provided an update on the Council performance framework and how the Council would continue to monitor our progress towards delivering our city priorities.

Deputy Leader of Inclusive City Economy, Councillor Stephen Simkins, proposed the recommendations and the Cabinet Member for Resources and Digital City, Councillor Obaida Ahmed seconded the recommendations.

The report was debated by Council. Councillor Stephen Simkins replied to the debate.

Resolved:

1. That the Our City: Our Plan refresh, the City of Wolverhampton Council Plan be approved.
2. That cross party engagement be sought to deliver the priorities set out in Our City: Our Plan the strategic framework to level up our city.

## 6 **Final Budget Report 2023-2024**

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Digital City, Councillor Obaida Ahmed presented the report on Final Budget Report 2023-2024 for approval.

The Capital Programme 2022-2023 to 2026-2027 Quarter Three Review and 2023-2024 to 2027-2028 Budget Strategy provided Council with an update on the 2022-2023 financial performance of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programmes, whilst also providing a revised forecast for 2022-2023 to 2026-2027 as at quarter three 2022-2023. The report also recommend revisions to the current approved capital programme covering the period 2022-2023 to 2027-2028.

The Treasury Management Strategy 2023-2024 sets out the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2023-2024 for approval by Full Council. The report incorporates six elements, which are detailed in separate documents, appended to this report.

The 2023-2024 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 presented a balanced budget for 2023-2024 aligned to the Our City: Our Plan and an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023- 2024 to 2025-2026, for recommendation to Council. The Council had a balanced budget for 2023-2024, without the need to use general fund reserves. There was still a high level of uncertainty going forward and a significant financial challenge over the medium term with a projected deficit for 2024-2025 of £16.4 million, rising to £23.1 million by 2025-2026.

The Council Tax Base and Business Rates (NDR) Net Rate Yield 2023-2024 set the estimates for Wolverhampton Collection Fund 2023-2024, which the Council manages on behalf of local precepting bodies and central government. The report also sought approval to extend the Council's local scheme for Business Rates Discretionary Relief with effect from 1 April 2023.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Digital City, Councillor Obaida Ahmed proposed the recommendations and the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Simkins seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Ellis Turrell provided the principal speech in response to the budget report and moved the report Conservative Group Alternative Budget and outlined the rationale to the amendment to the budget. Councillor Wendy Thompson seconded the amendment to the budget and outlined the rationale for supporting the amendment.

The Conservative Group Alternative Budget was debated by Council.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the amended motion:

<b>Conservative Group Alternative Budget (Amendment)</b>	
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	Against
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	Against
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	Against
Councillor Mary Bateman	Against
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	Against
Councillor Simon Bennett	For
Councillor Olivia Birch	Against
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Against
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	Against
Councillor Chris Burden	Against
Councillor Adam Collinge	For
Councillor Craig Collingswood	Against
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	For
Councillor Lovinyer Daley	Against
Councillor Wendy Dalton	For
Councillor Steve Evans	Against
Councillor Valerie Evans	Against
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	Against
Councillor Christopher Haynes	For
Councillor Stephanie Haynes	For
Councillor Celia (CeeCee) Hibbert	Against
Councillor Carol Hyatt	Against
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	Against
Councillor Jaspreet Jaspal	Against
Councillor Milkinderpal Jaspal	Against
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	Against
Councillor Sohail Khan	For
Councillor Linda Leach	Against
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	Against
Councillor Andrew McNeil	For
Councillor Louise Miles	Against
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	Against
Councillor Lynne Moran	Against
Councillor Anwen Muston	Against
Councillor Phil Page	Against
Councillor Rita Potter	Against
Councillor Andrew Randle	For
Councillor John C Reynolds	Against

Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	Against
Councillor Zee Russell	Against
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Against
Councillor Clare Simm	Against
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	For
Councillor Paul Singh	For
Councillor Tersaim Singh	Against
Councillor Paul Sweet	Against
Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman	Against
Councillor Wendy Thompson	For
Councillor Ellis Turrell	For
Councillor Gillian (Jill) Wildman	Against
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	For
<b>Rejected</b>	

The amended motion was LOST by 37 votes.

The substantive report was debated by Council.

Councillor Obaida Ahmed replied to the debate.

The substantive motion on 2023-2024 Final Budget Report was put before Council.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the votes were recorded as follows for the substantive motion originally moved:

<b>Final Budget Report 2023-2024 (Resolution)</b>	
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	For
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	For
Councillor Obaida Ahmed	For
Councillor Mary Bateman	For
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	For
Councillor Simon Bennett	Against
Councillor Olivia Birch	For
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	For
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	For
Councillor Chris Burden	For
Councillor Adam Collinge	Against
Councillor Craig Collingswood	For
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	Against
Councillor Lovinyer Daley	For
Councillor Wendy Dalton	Against
Councillor Steve Evans	For
Councillor Valerie Evans	For
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	For
Councillor Christopher Haynes	Against
Councillor Stephanie Haynes	Against
Councillor Celia (CeeCee) Hibbert	For
Councillor Carol Hyatt	For
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	For

Councillor Jaspreet Jaspal	For
Councillor Milkinderpal Jaspal	For
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	For
Councillor Sohail Khan	Against
Councillor Linda Leach	For
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	For
Councillor Andrew McNeil	Against
Councillor Louise Miles	For
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	For
Councillor Lynne Moran	For
Councillor Anwen Muston	For
Councillor Phil Page	For
Councillor Rita Potter	For
Councillor Andrew Randle	Against
Councillor John C Reynolds	For
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	For
Councillor Zee Russell	For
Councillor Stephen Simkins	For
Councillor Clare Simm	For
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	Against
Councillor Paul Singh	Against
Councillor Tersaim Singh	For
Councillor Paul Sweet	For
Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman	For
Councillor Wendy Thompson	Against
Councillor Ellis Turrell	Against
Councillor Gillian (Jill) Wildman	For
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	Against
<b>Carried</b>	

The substantive motion was CARRIED by 37 votes.

Resolved:

1. That the updated City of Wolverhampton Capital Strategy be approved.
2. That the revised, medium term General Revenue Account capital programme of £351.5 million, an increase of £11.1 million from the previously approved programme, and the change in associated resources be approved.
3. That the authorised borrowing limit for 2023-2024 to support the capital strategy as required under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 to be set at £1,213.0 million (PI3, Appendix 3 of the Cabinet report) be approved. The authorised borrowing limit includes a forecast provision for potential business cases that may be brought forward during the year, additional borrowing would only be authorised if the business case proves to be affordable over the medium term. The forecast borrowing is below the authorised borrowing limit.
4. That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023-2024 as set out in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report be approved.
5. That the Annual Investment Strategy 2023-2024 as set out in Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report be approved.
6. That the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators as set out in Appendix 3 of the Cabinet report be approved.

7. That the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement setting out the method used to calculate MRP for 2023-2024 as set out in Appendix 4 of the Cabinet report be approved.
8. That the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices as set out in Appendix 6 of the Cabinet report be approved.
9. That it be approved, that authority continued to be delegated to the Director of Finance to amend the Treasury Management Policy and Practices and any corresponding changes required to the Treasury Management Strategy, the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators, the Investment Strategy and the Annual MRP Statement to ensure they remain aligned. Any amendments would be reported to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Digital City and Cabinet (Resources) Panel as appropriate.
10. That it be approved, that authority continued to be delegated to the Director of Finance to lower the minimum sovereign rating in the Annual Investment Strategy, in the event of the UK's credit rating being downgraded by the third credit rating agency, due to the current economic climate.
11. That it be approved, that authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Digital City, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to amend the MRP statement should this be required following the outcome of the consultation.
12. That the net budget requirement for 2023-2024 of £306.4 million for General Fund services be approved.
13. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 as detailed in Table 6 and the key assumptions underpinning the MTFS as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the Cabinet report be approved.
14. That the Council Tax for Council services in 2023-2024 of £1,909.01 for a Band D property, being an increase of 4.99% on 2022-2023 levels, which incorporates 2% in relation to Adult Social Care be approved.
15. That the Reserves Strategy as detailed in Appendix 8 to the Cabinet report be approved.
16. That it be noted that the Council Tax base for the 2023-2024 was calculated at 65,994.12 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"), as reported to Cabinet on 18 January 2023.
17. That it be agreed, to calculate the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023- 2024 was £125,983,000.
18. That it be agreed, that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2023-2024 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended:
  - (a) £719,961,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act.
  - (b) £593,978,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
  - (c) £125,983,000 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).

(d) £1,909.01 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (section 1 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).

(e) £0 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.

(f) £1,909.01 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.

19. That it be noted, that West Midlands Police and Fire Authorities have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as detailed in the report.
20. That it be agreed, that the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables as the amounts of Council Tax for 2023-2024 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings as detailed in the report.
21. That it be agreed, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (3) (f) and (4) above, the City Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of the Council Tax for the year 2023-2024 for each of the categories of dwellings as detailed in the report.
22. That it be agreed, a notice of the amounts payable in respect of chargeable dwellings in each valuation band for the year commencing on 1 April 2023 be published in at least one local newspaper and that in accordance with Section 3(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, this notice shall also make reference to the National Non-Domestic Rating Multiplier set by the Secretary of State, and specify that the Council Tax and the non-domestic rate demands are annual demands which cover the full financial year.
23. That it be agreed, the Council had determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2023-2024 was not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
24. That it be agreed, as the billing authority, the Council had not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2023-2024 was excessive and that the billing authority was not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK Local Government Finance Act 1992.
25. That it be noted, the MRP charge for the financial year 2023-2024 would be £20.6 million; it was forecasted to increase to £22.4 million in 2024-2025 (paragraph 2.13 of the Cabinet report).
26. That it be noted, Cabinet or Cabinet (Resources) Panel and Council would receive regular Treasury Management reports during 2023-2024 on performance against the key targets and Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators in the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy, as set out in the paragraph 2.11 and Appendices 2 and 3 of the Cabinet report.

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]