

Attendance

Members of the Cabinet (Resources) Panel

Cllr Stephen Simkins (Chair)
Cllr Chris Burden
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal

Employees

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| Mark Taylor | Deputy Chief Executive |
| Ian Fegan | Director of Communications and Visitor Experience |
| Richard Lawrence | Director of Regeneration |
| Julia Nock | Deputy Director of Assets |
| David Pattison | Chief Operating Officer |
| Laura Phillips | Deputy Director of People and Change |
| John Roseblade | Director of Resident Services |
| Andrew Wolverson | Deputy Director of Commissioning and Transformation of Children's Services |
| Alison Shannon | Chief Accountant |
| Dereck Francis | Democratic Services Officer |
| Jacob Stokes | 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 Councillors Obaida Ahmed, Ian Brookfield, Paula Brookfield, Linda Leach and Beverley Momenabadi.
- 2 Declarations of interests**
No declarations of interests were made.
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting**
Resolved:
That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 February 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 4 One Public Estate - Asset Transformation Programme**
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal presented an overview of a One Public Estate - Asset Transformation Programme. Subject to planning consent, the project would offer the

opportunity to relocate council services to a central location of Hickman Avenue Depot. It would help bring together meals on wheels, catering and cleaning, catering kitchens, street lighting, a new salt barn and new facilities for Taxi Licencing. This in turn would help vacate Loxdale and Stowheath sites to then demolish the buildings and remediate the land and look to develop some 200 new homes on brownfield land. The project had attracted grant funding from numerous government initiatives along with the Council's own financial backing. It would also attract public open space contributions to provide better outdoor spaces for our communities.

Councillor Gakhal also mentioned the recent success in securing Levelling Up funding towards the Bilson Health and Wellbeing Hub that formed part of the Bilston Health and Regeneration Programme. The Council would be looking forward as soon as possible to seek approval for development of the health facility, which was another project that had received ongoing support from the One Public Initiative.

Cabinet Members placed on record their thanks to the officers involved in the project which had been in development for some time for their perseverance in pulling the scheme together and in securing the funding to enable the report on the project to be presented for approval. Members also welcomed the 200 homes that would be delivered on brownfield land.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to approve:

1. The creation of a capital project budget for the One Public Estate – Asset Transformation Programme, funded through grants and prudential borrowing as detailed within the report, subject to confirmation of successful grant bids.

That Cabinet (Resources) Panel approves:

1. The proposal to relocate Council services from various depot assets (as listed in the report) to a central location at Hickman Avenue Depot (North), improving service operation and efficiencies.
2. The site clearance and land remediation of the former Loxdale Primary School, Stowheath Day Training Centre and Stowheath Resource Centre (Stowheath) and the allocation for disposal with vacant possession for housing development, subject to outline planning consent. A further report is to follow in relation to approval of any development agreement.
3. Delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Digital City and the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Deputy Director of Assets to agree and enter into the required funding agreements, for the respective funding applications as detailed in the report.

That Cabinet (Resources) Panel notes:

1. The letter of support from MP Pat McFadden for the proposed scheme.

5

Treasury Management Activity Monitoring Quarter Three 2022-2023

Councillor Stephen Simkins presented, for information, the monitoring and progress report on treasury management activity for the third quarter of 2022-2023. The report

also highlighted the revised Prudential Indicators which were approved by Council on 1 March 2023.

Resolved:

1. That it be noted that the Council is continuing to operate within the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators approved by Council, and also within the requirements set out in the Council's approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2022-2023.
2. That it be noted that a revenue underspend of £3.5 million for the General Fund and a revenue overspend of £881,000 for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) are forecast from treasury management activities in 2022-2023.
3. That it be noted that mainly due to additional income being received than forecast over the Christmas period, the Council temporarily exceeded the limit of £10.0 million to be held in the Council's bank account by £4.4 million from 30 December 2022 until rectified on 3 January 2023.

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

Councillor Stephen Simkins presented the report seeking delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change to approve the award of the contract Taxi Driver Smart ID Cards once the evaluation process is complete. The procurement route for the contract would provide opportunities for the local supply chain to bid for the contract, supporting the Wolverhampton Pound.

Cabinet Members welcomed the introduction of smart ID cards for Wolverhampton's private hire and Hackney Carriage licenced drivers, that would help safeguard the general public and vulnerable people in Wolverhampton and in other areas where Wolverhampton-licenced drivers are licenced to operate.

Resolved:

That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change, in consultation with the Director of Resident Services, to approve the award of a contract for Taxi Driver Smart ID Cards when the evaluation process is complete.

7 **External Legal Support Relating to Civic Halls**

The intention to make a key decision on the report 'External Legal Support Relating to Civic Halls' at the meeting was not published in advance as required by the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. The decision was urgent and could not be reasonably delayed for the following reason:

- Due to the legal issues relating to the Civic Halls Project, the Council may need the advice and support of the external legal advisers prior to the lapsing of the 28 day period.

In light of the above, consent had been obtained for the key decision to be made at the meeting under the General Exception provisions.

Councillor Stephen Simkins presented the report on a proposal to continue using Trowers and Hamlins, external legal advisers to provide the specialist legal support and advice on the Civic Halls project up to a value of £500,000. This would ensure that the Council could robustly defend its position legally in any disagreements between the construction contractor Willmott Dixon and ensure that the terms of the Construction Contract are enforced. Councillor Simkins added that the external legal support had already proven good value for money as it had enabled the Council in successfully defending two large issues taken through the adjudication process by the Contractor.

Resolved:

That the Council's continued use of External Legal Advisors, Trowers and Hamlins, to provide specialist construction legal advice and support relating to the Civic Halls Project up to a value of £500,000 be approved.

- 8 **Community Asset Transfer – Blakenhall Community Resource Centre**
- Councillor Bhupinder Gakhel presented the report on a proposal to initially advertise Blakenhall Community Resource Centre for a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) and subject to applications being received the CAT would either be progressed or in the absence of a suitable application the property would be disposed of on the open market either by auction or informal tender upon terms to be agreed. The Community Resource Centre was a council owned asset consisting of a two storey detached property with associated car park. It was currently vacant, managed as a void property and was considered surplus to the Council's requirements. A Community Asset Transfer of Blakenhall Community Resource Centre would ensure the building was brought back into use to the benefit of the local residents.

Resolved:

1. That Blakenhall Community Resource Centre be declared surplus to the Council's requirements.
2. That the disposal method as a Community Asset Transfer of Blakenhall Community Resource Centre following advertisement of the same be approved.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing in consultation with the Deputy Director of Assets to approve the terms of the Community Asset Transfer and lease subject to receiving a suitable application.
4. That subject to not receiving a suitable application for Community Asset Transfer, disposal of the asset listed be approved via the open market disposal methods of either auction or informal tender upon terms and conditions to be agreed.
5. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing in consultation with the Deputy Director of Assets to approve the terms of the disposal through an Individual Executive Decision Notice.

9

Bell Street Box Space - Acquisition of Neville Garratt Centre

The intention to make a key decision on the report 'Bell Street Box Space - Acquisition of Neville Garratt Centre' at the meeting was not published in advance as required by the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. The decision was urgent and could not be reasonably delayed for the following reason:

- A unique opportunity had arisen to acquire the Neville Garratt Centre off market from NHS Property Services, where the vendor wishes to sell on/before 31 March 2023. Heads of terms for the sale/purchase were agreed (subject to Council approval) on 23 February 2023. Guidance on whether the appropriate approval route was an Individual Executive Decision Notice or Cabinet (Resources) Panel was not secured until 6 March 2023.
- The acquisition is considered necessary to enable the Council to meet its obligations to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and to achieve the outputs/outcomes/benefits from allocated capital expenditure to the Box Space project which forms part of the Future High Street Fund programme. There are significant additional benefits that flow from the acquisition detailed in the Cabinet (Resources) Panel report.
- The report contains sensitive commercial information (acquisition price), therefore a public version of the report would be created as well as an exempt version.

In light of the above, consent had been obtained for the key decision to be made at the meeting under the General Exception provisions.

Councillor Steve Evans presented the report on a proposal to acquire the freehold interest of Neville Garratt Centre for the Bell Street Box Space Scheme. The scheme involved the demolition of an empty parade of shops at 1-7A Cleveland Street and the future redevelopment of that site along with the adjoining Bell Street public car park, to create a vibrant leisure, hospitality and entertainment destination which brings footfall and economic benefit to the city centre and utilises converted shipping containers, along with new/ replacement public car parking. The Neville Garratt Centre was located adjoining the Bell Street car park and the Council owned site at 1-7A Cleveland Street. Combining the Neville Garratt site with the council's existing assets improved the potential to regenerate the area, better meet the outputs and outcomes envisaged for the Box Space scheme and delivered on the Council's obligations to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as part of the Future High Street Fund.

Resolved:

1. That the proposal to acquire the freehold interest of Neville Garratt Centre be approved.
2. That the reallocation of funds for the acquisition of the freehold interest of Neville Garratt Centre be approved, with the intention that subject to future Full Business Case approval, the property would be demolished as part of the Bell Street Box Space project site and the occupying council services relocated.

3. That the payment for the NHS legal fees and payment of any stamp duty land tax due and land registry costs related to this transaction be approved.
4. That the Deputy Director of Assets be authorised to confirm to the NHS, that the sale and subsequent redevelopment of the property would not directly disrupt the provision of or increase the costs of any “equipment services” to the NHS or its patients.
5. That authority be delegated to the Deputy Director of Assets, to sign the Heads of Terms and issue to NHS Property Services to enable the acquisition.
6. That authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Chief Operating Officer to enter into the contract of sale and any other ancillary legal agreements.
7. That it be noted that subject to Council approval of the Full Business case for the project, the acquisition of the Neville Garratt Centre for the Bell Street Box Space scheme would involve:
 - a. The future demolition and redevelopment of the property as part of the Box Space scheme development.
 - b. The future relocation of the Council Adult Services - Occupational Therapists (Adult Services) team currently occupying the property to enable its demolition; and
 - c. This is a more ambitious scheme and the increase in project scope could potentially change the overall cost of the scheme. This would need to be reviewed as part of the comprehensive business case to be brought forward. This would also look at further opportunities to secure external funding.

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 remaining 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 - Award of Contracts for Works, Goods and Services**

Councillor Stephen Simkins presented, for approval, the exempt report on the award of contracts for works, goods and services. The report also included, for information, exemptions to Contract Procedure Rules approved by the Head of Procurement and Director of Finance from 1 to 31 January 2023.

Resolved:

1. That the contract for Supply, Repairs and Maintenance of Industrial Catering Equipment be awarded to Swift Maintenance Services (1973) Limited of Unit

2 Albert Street, Wednesbury, West Midlands, WS10 7EW for a duration of four years from 1 May 2023 to 30 April 2027 for a total contract value of up to £300,000.

2. That the contract for the Dementia Community Support Service (Dementia Connect) with Alzheimer's Society of 43-44 Crutched Friars, London, EC3N 2AE, be varied for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 with a variation value of £72,895.
3. That the contract for the Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Service with Base 25 of 29 - 31 Temple Street, Wolverhampton, England, WV2 4AN be varied for an increase of contract value from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 with a variation value of £100,000.
4. That the contract relating to the West Midland Regional Foster Care Flexible Contracting Arrangement be extended for a duration of 12 months from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 with a variation value of £6.37 million.
5. That the exemptions to the Contract Procedure Rules approved by the Head of Procurement and Director of Finance from 1 to 31 January 2023 be noted.

12 **Disposal of Land and Property at Joeys Lane, Bilbrook**

Councillor Bhupinder Gakhil presented the report on a proposal to declare properties and surrounding land on Joey's Lane, Bilbrook surplus to the Council's requirements and to approve their disposal by auction.

Resolved:

1. That the properties and surrounding land on Joeys Lane, Bilbrook as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report be declared surplus to requirements.
2. That the disposal of the properties and surrounding land as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report be by auction.

13 **Bell Street Box Space – Acquisition of Neville Garratt Centre**

Councillor Steve Evans presented the exempt version of the Bell Street Box Space - Acquisition of Neville Garratt Centre report discussed at item 9 above. He drew Cabinet's attention to the costs of the Bell Street Box Space scheme and the Council's contribution; the forecast for demolition works and budget provision for the first phase of works for the scheme; and the acquisition costs for the Neville Garratt Centre, as contained in the exempt report.

Resolved:

1. That the proposal to acquire the freehold interest of Neville Garratt Centre be approved.
2. That the reallocation of funds for the acquisition of the freehold interest of Neville Garratt Centre be approved, with the intention that subject to future Full Business Case approval, the property would be demolished as part of the Bell Street Box Space project site and the occupying Council services relocated.

3. That the payment for the NHS legal fees and payment of any stamp duty land tax due and land registry costs related to this transaction as detailed in Section 1.12 of the report be approved.
4. That the Deputy Director of Assets be authorised to confirm to the NHS, that the sale and subsequent redevelopment of the property would not directly disrupt the provision of or increase the costs of any “equipment services” to the NHS or its patients.
5. That authority be delegated to the Deputy Director of Assets, to sign the Heads of Terms and issue to NHS Property Services to enable the acquisition.
6. That authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Chief Operating Officer to enter into the contract of sale and any other ancillary legal agreements.
7. That it be noted that subject to Council approval of the Full Business case for the project, the acquisition of the Neville Garratt Centre for the Bell Street Box Space scheme would involve:
 - a. The future demolition and redevelopment of the property as part of the Box Space scheme development.
 - b. The future relocation of the Council Adult Services - Occupational Therapists (Adult Services) team currently occupying the property to enable its demolition.
 - c. This is a more ambitious scheme and the increase in project scope could potentially change the overall cost of the scheme. This would need to be reviewed as part of the comprehensive business case to be brought forward. This would also look at further opportunities to secure external funding.

14

One Public Estate - Asset Transformation Programme

Councillor Bhupinder Gakhil presented the exempt version of the One Public Estate - Asset Transformation Programme report discussed at item 4 above. He drew Cabinet’s attention to the financial implications of the scheme as contained in the exempt report.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to approve:

1. The creation of a capital project budget for the One Public Estate – Asset Transformation Programme funded through grants and prudential borrowing as detailed within the report, subject to confirmation of successful grant bids.

That Cabinet (Resources) Panel approves:

1. The proposal to relocate council services from various depot assets (as listed in the report) to a central location at Hickman Avenue Depot (North), improving service operation and efficiencies.

2. The site clearance and land remediation of the former Loxdale Primary School, Stowheath Day Training Centre and Stowheath Resource Centre (Stowheath) and the allocation for disposal with vacant possession for housing development, subject to outline planning consent. A further report is to follow in relation to approval of any development agreement.
3. Delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Digital City and the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Deputy Director of Assets to agree and enter into the required funding agreements, for the respective funding applications as detailed in the report.

That Cabinet (Resources) Panel notes:

1. The letter of support from MP Pat McFadden for the proposed scheme.