

Attendance

Members of the Cabinet

Cllr Stephen Simkins (Chair)
Cllr Obaida Ahmed
Cllr Chris Burden
Cllr Craig Collingswood
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
Cllr Louise Miles

Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
Mark Taylor	Deputy Chief Executive
Emma Bennett	Executive Director of Families
John Denley	Director of Public Health
Charlotte Johns	Director of Strategy
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration
Claire Nye	Director of Finance
David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
John Roseblade	Director of Resident Services
Becky Wilkinson	Director of Adult Social Services
Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services and Systems Manager
Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i> |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Apologies for absence
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Paula Brookfield. |
| 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 12 July 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. |

4 **Performance and Budget Monitoring 2023-2024 and Budget Update 2024-2025**
Councillor Obaida Ahmed presented the first update report of the financial year regarding performance, budget and risk for 2023-2024. There were early indications of some emerging cost pressures mainly around increased demand and inflationary pressures. These would be monitored and an update provided in future reports to Cabinet. The report also provided an update on the 2024-2025 budget and work being undertaken to address the forecast budget deficit reported to Cabinet in February 2023. Councillor Obaida Ahmed also stated that the Council remained focused on delivering Our City: Our Plan and monitoring the indicators as set out in the revised performance framework for 2023-2024. High level analysis was also occurring on new data recently published by the Office for Local Government (Oflog) in four areas: adult social care, waste management, skills and finance. The data was a small snapshot of what local authorities do and what could be measured. The Council continued to use a variety of means in which to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of operations against organisational priorities and statutory requirements.

Resolved:

That Cabinet notes:

1. That early indications are that there are some emerging cost pressures in 2023-2024, mainly around increased demand and inflationary pressures as detailed in the report. These would be monitored, and an update would be provided in future reports to Councillors.
2. That early indications are that the outturn for 2023-2024 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) would be within budget.
3. That work is ongoing to set a balanced budget for 2024-2025 and would continue to identify measures which would provide a sustainable medium-term strategy.
4. That the Strategic Risk Register was approved by Cabinet on 12 July 2023 is detailed in Appendix 7 to the report.
5. That 47 sundry debt accounts totalling £30,845.08, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
6. That 573 council tax accounts totalling £420,213.78, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
7. That 39 Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) debts totalling £343,795.56, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
8. That 13 housing benefit overpayments totalling £2,261.53 as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, have been approved for write-off by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the use of £1.1 million from the Licencing Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.5 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
2. Approve the use of £367,000 from the Regeneration Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.6 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
3. Approve the use of £281,000 from the Adult Social Care Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.7 of the report of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
4. Approve the use of £103,000 from the Youth Opportunities Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.8 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
5. Approve the use of £104,000 from the Efficiency Reserve as detailed in paragraph 8.9 of the report and establishment of associated supplementary budgets.
6. Approve 38 virements totalling £6.5 million, for transfers within directorates, as detailed in Appendix 9 to the report.
7. Approve the write-off of three Sundry debts totalling £171,225.85 as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report.
8. Approve the write-off of four Council Tax debts totalling £25,858.54 as detailed in Appendix 5 to the report.
9. Approve the write-off of two Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) debts totalling £41,357.30 as detailed in Appendix 6 to the report.
10. Approve the General Fund Budget Risks 2023-2024 register as detailed in Appendix 8 to the report.
11. Approve the establishment of supplementary budgets within 2023-2024 as detailed in Section 7 of the report.

5 **New Park Village Estate Redevelopment Programme**

Councillor Steve Evans presented the update report on progress made to date with the New Park Village Estate Redevelopment project. Approval was requested to a range of recommendations that would help support and progress the development. These included a change to the previously approved four-phase plan to a two-phase plan for demolition and rehousing of Ellerton Walk, Shawbury Road and Valley Road; temporary relocation of New Park Village Tenant Management Cooperative office on the estate in order to proceed with demolition of the phase one properties; and delegated authority to agree appointments as the project moves through the various stages of development. Extensive consultations had taken place with tenants who were supportive of the proposal. Councillor Steve Evans welcomed that the site at Longford Road, separate to the redevelopment area (Ellerton Walk, Shawbury Road and Valley Road) was being considered for general needs bungalows. A business case was being put together to present to the Planning Service.

Resolved:

1. That the revised phasing plan for the demolition and new build of the Ellerton Walk redevelopment area as set out at Section 4.2 and in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
2. That the relocation of the New Park Village Tenant Management Cooperative (NPV TMC) to an appropriate location within the New Park Village estate be approved.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Housing, in consultation with the Director of Resident Services, to agree:
 - a. The appointment of an architect for the detailed planning stage of the project.
 - b. The appointment of an employer's agent to provide a quantity surveying and programme management role for the lifetime of the project.
 - c. The appointment of a demolition contractor for the demolition stage of the project.
 - d. The appointment of the main contractor for the new build stage of the project.
 - e. The appointment of any consultants to carry out any relevant surveys and investigations necessary to the project.
 - f. Any other appointments, agreements and variations not captured in this report that may be deemed necessary to facilitate the redevelopment of the New Park Village Estate.
4. That it be noted that an Independent Tenant and Home Advisor (TPAS) was appointed for the New Park Village Tenant Cooperative (NPV TMC) in November 2021 to support the NPV TMC and its residents and ensure that residents have access to impartial advice concerning the estate redevelopment. This contract is currently being reviewed.

6 **Canalside South - Selection of Preferred Developer**
The intention to make a key decision on the report 'Canalside South - Selection of Preferred Developer' 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 reasons:

- The marketing of Canalside South has been ongoing since initial Cabinet approval to the strategy on 28 July 2021 which culminated in the selection of Legal & General Modular Homes (L&GMH) as preferred bidder earlier this year.
- Following the recent announcement of L&GMH halting production of new homes there are commercial and legal sensitivities which have required input from the Council's advisors to review the short-listed tender parties as part of the original process and recommend next steps in the process of selecting a development partner.

- In order to maintain momentum and adherence to the original programme of activities, to ensure market values and tender information remain current, and to protect the Council's position with regards to capital receipt and liabilities associated with holding the development sites an expedient decision is required by Cabinet.

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 update report on the completion of the sale and marketing process undertaken at Canalside South following the recent announcement that the previous preferred developer Legal and General Modular Homes had closed its modular homes production factory. To maintain momentum, through the Council's appointed commercial agents, the two shortlisted bidders had been invited to submit best and final offers. The outcome of the process had been independently verified. Approval was now requested to recommendations to progress the Canalside South development.

Cabinet members welcomed the update on the proposals and commended the speed in which the Council and its landowning development partner, Canal and River Trust had acted to secure a new developer to take on the Canalside South scheme.

Resolved:

1. That the selection of the landowning partnership's (City of Wolverhampton Council and Canal & River Trust) development partner following the evaluation process of best and final bids and in accordance with the final commercial terms and recommendations of the appended Transaction Report be acknowledged, endorsed, and approved.
2. That the Council enter into an exclusivity period with the development partner on the terms outlined in the report.
3. That the Council enter into a Collaboration Agreement with Canal & River Trust.
4. That authority be delegated to the Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer, s.151 Officer and Director of Regeneration to finalise all necessary legal agreements to affect the land transaction based on the terms outlined in the report.
5. That it be noted that 'best and final' bids were requested from shortlisted underbidders in accordance with updated technical information, pre-application planning advice. Legal and commercial assurance and advice received to date has ensured a robust evaluation process has been undertaken to satisfy s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972.
6. That it be noted that the preferred bidder had been agreed between the partners (City of Wolverhampton Council and Canal & River Trust) following a detailed evaluation and assessment process.

7. That it be noted that the process undertaken had enabled shortlisted underbidders to submit best and final offers following the completion of site due diligence, intrusive investigation, design development and planning feedback.
8. That it be noted that a draft development agreement is in place that would enable expedited exchange and completion (on a subject to planning basis only) thereby ensuring that adherence to the original forecasted programme is maintained.
9. That it be noted that Vacant Possession (VP) would be provided in accordance with the timescale set out by the developer following receipt of planning approval to enable the implementation of development. This would require suspension of all interim activities and uses for the site to enable this important scheme to progress unimpeded.

7 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 item of business as it involves 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

8 Canalside South - Selection of Preferred Developer

Councillor Stephen Simkins presented an exempt version to the Canalside South - Selection of Preferred Developer report discussed at item 6 above. The report included information on the financial implications of the scheme that was omitted from the public version due to its commercial sensitivity.

Resolved:

1. That the selection of the landowning partnership's (City of Wolverhampton Council and Canal & River Trust) development partner following the evaluation process of best and final bids and in accordance with the final commercial terms and recommendations of the appended Transaction Report be acknowledged, endorsed, and approved.
2. That the Council enter into an exclusivity period with the development partner on the terms outlined in the report.
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9. That it be noted that Vacant Possession (VP) would be provided in accordance with the timescale set out by the developer following receipt of planning approval to enable the implementation of development. This would require suspension of all interim activities and uses for the site to enable this important scheme to progress unimpeded.