

Decision Schedule

Cabinet



TO ALL MEMBERS OF NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

Decision Schedule published on 18 September 2020

The following decisions were taken on 16 September 2020. They will become effective at Noon on 28 September 2020 with the exception of any particular decision(s), which is (are) the subject of a valid "call-in".

The deadline for submission of a 'Call-in' request form (available from Democratic Services) is 4.00 pm on 25 September 2020. Reports relating to staffing issues/confidential reports are not circulated to all Members of the Council as part of the consultation/call-in processes.

CAB 32/20

Revenue Budget Monitor July 2020

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report highlighted the current forecast position on the Council's revenue budget and the risks and opportunities that present themselves within the July position. The update builds on the May forecast as there is now further information and clarity on the recovery of the Covid-19 pandemic and the funding that has been made available for this.

The July 2020 revenue position forecasts an overspend of £683k. This is a significant improvement on the May forecast of £5.4m overspend, and reflects the changes and clarification of funding made available from Welsh Government (WG) in relation to Covid-19 related lost income and increased expenditure, in particular the availability of funding for this purpose for the remainder of this current financial year.

Since the May forecast there has been confirmation on a number of areas of funding provided by WG. Whilst this has provided some clarity and allowed officers to 'firm up' on a number of projections, there does remain a level of unavoidable uncertainty on the forecasts, given the unknown future of the pandemic and clarification on how recently announced funding for the remainder of the financial year will be administered.

Whilst a significant amount of the previously reported overspends relating to Covid-19 have been addressed through proposed funding provided by WG, budget issues remain in a number of areas. The key areas contributing to the forecast overspend are:

(i)	Undelivered 2020/21 and prior year budget savings	£1,540k
(ii)	Increased demand for independent fostering agencies	£446k
(iii)	Impact of on-going school budget overspending	£305k
(iv)	Staffing and other service area underspends	(£1,608k)

An area of significant concern is the level of forecast overspending across schools. Schools are currently forecasting an overspend of £1,417k and given the rate at which the schools' reserves have reduced over the last 2-3 years, these reserves are now insufficient to cover this level of forecast overspend in full. Whilst an improvement on the figure reported in May, this still causes problems for the Council in that a net £305k overspend and a forecast negative reserve at the end of the financial year will need to be funded by other Council budgets or from other Council reserves. This will have on-going negative consequences as set out within the report.

Appendix 1	Overall budget dashboard – July 2020
Appendix 2	Revenue summary monitor – July 2020
Appendix 3	Schools funding and balances
Appendix 4	Planned movement in reserves

The report asked Cabinet to:

- Note the overall budget forecast position and the significant overspending within service areas which is predominately resulting from undelivered MTFP savings impacted by the on-going pandemic, the risks associated with this and recommend that Heads of Service focus on and implement agreed savings as soon as is possible;
- Note the planning assumptions within the forecast position and in particular, the uncertainty around (i) the on-going impact that Covid-19 will have upon service areas and (ii) funding support available from Welsh Government (WG) for the remainder of the financial year;
- Note the forecast movements in reserves;
- Note the very significant financial challenges facing schools and the serious impact it will likely have on the Council's other revenue budgets and reserves. Note action currently in progress and the Head of Finance comments on the seriousness of this position.

Decision:

Cabinet unanimously agreed the report.

Consultation

Chief Executive; Heads of Service; Budget Holders; Accountancy Staff

Implemented By: Cabinet Members/Head of Finance/Senior Leadership Team/Corporate Management Team, and:

- **Heads of Service to complete their review of some of the key cost areas, which contribute to the overspending and maximising, where possible, available Housing Benefit funding for homelessness costs currently being incurred;**
- **Heads of Service to deliver agreed 2020/21 budget savings as soon as practically possible under the current situation but by the end of the financial year at the latest;**
- **Promote and ensure robust forecasting throughout all service areas.**

Implementation Timetable: On-going

CAB 33/20

Capital Programme Monitor July 2020

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report sought Cabinet approval on the requests for capital projects to be added to the Council's Capital Programme; to update Cabinet on the current available capital resources ('headroom'); and to update Cabinet on the current spending against the Capital Programme schemes highlighting the forecast outturn position for the programme as at November 2019.

The report confirmed the Council has an extensive capital programme, investing across the authority in areas such as schools, heritage assets, energy efficiency schemes, invest to save programmes and investing in the regeneration of the city centre. The report builds on the investment already approved by Cabinet with an additional £2,819k being added to the programme to further enable the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities.

The July 2020 monitoring position highlights the following:

- £375k net underspend on completed projects.
- £27,537k slippage from 2020/21 into future years due to an updated 21st Century Schools Band B cash flow received and a re-profiling of the programme overall.
- Additions to the capital programme of £2,819k, taking the overall programme 2019/20 to 2024/25 to £204,398k.

The report asked Cabinet to:

1. approve the additions to the Capital Programme requested in the report and identified in Appendix A of the report;
2. approve slippage of £27,537k, noting the re-profiling of the programme arising from this;
3. note the available remaining capital resources ('headroom') until 2022/23;
4. note the capital expenditure forecast position as at July 2020;
5. note the balance of and approve the allocation of in-year capital receipts.

Decision:

Cabinet agreed:

- (i) the changes to the Capital Programme and noted the monitoring position as set out in the report, including the use of capital receipts;
- (ii) to prioritise capital expenditure to maintain spend within the current affordability envelope.

Consultation

Heads of Service; Accountancy teams for relevant service areas; Relevant Service Area Project Managers; NORSE Property Services

Implemented By: Assistant Head of Finance

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

CAB 34/20

Risk Report Quarter 4 (2019/20)

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report presented to Cabinet the Council's Corporate Risk Register for the end of quarter 4 (31st March 2020).

The Council's Corporate Risk Register monitors those risks that may prevent the Council from achieving its Corporate Plan or delivering services to its communities and service users in Newport.

The report confirmed that in quarter 4 the Corporate Risk Register has 13 risks, which are considered to have a significant impact on the achievement of the Council's objectives and warrant monitoring by the Council's Senior Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team. The report also confirmed that at the end of quarter 4, 8 high level risks (risk scores 15 to 25); 3 medium risks (risk scores 10 to 14) and 2 low risks (0-9) had been identified which are outlined in the report. The Corporate Risk Register also saw the inclusion of the Covid 19 related risk.

The report asked Cabinet to consider the contents of the quarter 4 update of the Corporate Risk Register.

Decision:

Cabinet unanimously agreed the report.

Consultation

Corporate Management Team

Implemented By: Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

CAB 34/20

End of Year Performance Review 2019/20

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report presented Cabinet with an overview on service areas performance for 2019/20 against each of their service plans 2018/22 (for 2019/20); to acknowledge the successes delivered during the last financial year; and to address any areas of under-performance across the service areas.

The Well-being for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires Newport City Council to have a Corporate Plan which sets out its vision for how it will improve the lives of the current and future generations. Newport City Council's Corporate Plan 2017/22 has identified four Wellbeing Objectives

(Improving skills, education and employment opportunities; Promote Economic Growth and Regeneration whilst protecting the environment; Enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient; and to build cohesive and sustainable communities). To support the delivery of the

Corporate Plan, the Council's eight service areas have developed their service plans which outline how they will support and deliver the Council's objectives.

The report further confirmed that for the 2019/20 financial year, 58% of the actions identified in the service plans were completed with 25% on target. For the performance measures reported it was noted that:

- 61 out of 111 reported performance measures were 'on target' against their annual target;
- 17 out of 111 performance measures were 'short of target' against their annual target;
- 16 out of 111 reported performance measures were 'off target' against their annual target.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the reporting and benchmarking of national performance indicators were suspended. As service areas focused on essential frontline services this would have had an impact on service area's objectives, actions and performance measures – these are highlighted within the report where appropriate.

Cabinet was requested to:

1. Note the contents of the report
2. Take action in conjunction with the Directors and Heads of Service to address areas of poor performance.

Decision:

Cabinet unanimously agreed the report.

Consultation

Chief Executive; Strategic Directors; Heads of Service.

Implemented By: Strategic Directors and Heads of Service

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

CAB 35/20

Welsh Language Annual Report

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report reflected on Newport City Council's progress on its Welsh language commitments during the financial year 2019/2020.

Cabinet noted that the monitoring report is required to be published on the Council's website in accordance with statutory responsibilities under the Welsh Language Standards.

Furthermore, the Council is required to report annually on its progress in complying with the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

The statutory deadline for publishing the monitoring report is 30th June 2020, although in line with other regulatory bodies at the current time, there is recognition by the Welsh Language

Commissioner that the current pandemic may cause delays. The report confirms that the draft monitoring report has been published on the Council's website.

The report covers the fourth year of implementation, following the imposition of the majority of Welsh Language Standards in March 2016. The report provided Cabinet with an overview of the Council's progress in meeting the Welsh Language Standards.

Cabinet was asked to approve the final monitoring report and to publish it on the Council's website, in accordance with statutory deadlines.

Decision:

Cabinet unanimously agreed the report.

Consultation

Cabinet Member for Community and Resources; Welsh Language Elected Member Champion; Welsh Language Implementation Group; Heads of Service.

Implemented By: Head of People and Business Change, Heads of Service

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

CAB 36/20

Sustainable Travel

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report updated Cabinet on Sustainable Travel across Newport.

The report confirmed that good local transport connections have many benefits to people, businesses, the environment, and the overall economy. They are crucial to improving and sustaining the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of Newport. Some of the main benefits being:

- connecting people and communities;
- supporting economic growth by encouraging businesses to invest in the area;
- helping tackle poverty by enabling people to access education and employment;
- improving our environment and health by reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality and enabling people to travel more actively.

The report sets out the national context of transport, the impacts and opportunities of the Covid-19 pandemic and gives an update on recent improvements and future opportunities in Newport.

Cabinet was asked to note the information contained in the report.

Decision:

Cabinet unanimously agreed the report.

Consultation

Head of People & Business Change; Head of Law & Regulation; Head of Finance; Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for City Services; Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development.

Implemented By: Head of City Services and Head of People & Business Change

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

CAB 37/20

COVID-19 Recovery – Update

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The reported presented Cabinet with an update on the Council's progress being made towards recovering services and supporting Newport's communities as part of its Strategic Recovery Aims.

In March 2020, the Covid-19 health emergency impacted on the delivery of Council services, Newport's communities and businesses as lockdown and social distancing measures were introduced. At the start of the crisis, Newport was one of the first areas in Wales to see significant positive Covid-19 cases. The immediate response of the Council and its strategic partners was to preserve life and minimise the spread of the virus; maintain continuity of front line and supporting services; and to support the city's communities and the vulnerable.

In response to the easing of the lockdown measures and to support services to return back to a 'new normal', the Council's Cabinet endorsed the Strategic Recovery Plan. The report before Cabinet provides an overview of the action undertaken by the Council to date. It also outlines the ongoing activities that are being planned and delivered by the Council and its partners to support communities and businesses in their recovery and to manage any future localised outbreaks in the City.

Cabinet was asked to consider the contents of the report and note the progress being made to date, and the risks that are still faced by the Council.

Decision:

Cabinet unanimously agreed the report.

Consultation

Implemented By: Corporate Management Team

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

CAB 38/20

Cabinet Work Programme

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Leader presented the Cabinet Work Programme.

Decision:

Cabinet agreed the programme.

Consultation

Chief Officers; Monitoring Officer; Head of Finance; Head of People and Business Change

Implemented By: Cabinet Office Manager

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Signed:

COUNCILLOR JANE MUDD, CHAIR OF THE CABINET

Date:
