

# Decision Schedule

## Cabinet

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### TO ALL MEMBERS OF NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

#### Decision Schedule published on 16 October 2020

The following decisions were taken on 14 October 2020. They will become effective at Noon on 26 October 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 23 October 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.

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#### **CAB 39/20**

#### **Corporate Annual Report 2019/20**

#### **Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

The report presented to Cabinet the Corporate Annual Report 2019/20 and detailing the progress of delivery against the Corporate Plan 2017/22.

The report confirmed that Newport City Council launched its Corporate Plan 2017/22 'Improving People's Lives' and set 4 Well-being Objectives:

- i) to improve skills, education and employment opportunities;
- ii) to promote economic growth and regeneration while protecting the environment;
- iii) to enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient; and,
- iv) to build cohesive and sustainable communities.

This year's Annual Report reaffirms the commitment to delivering the Corporate Plan objectives in 2020/21 and demonstrates how the Council is contributing towards the delivery of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2018/23.

The report further confirmed this is the third year of reporting against the Corporate Plan objectives and this year's Annual Report reflects back on the achievements made, lessons learned from decisions made and looks forward at what will be delivered in 2020/21. Additionally, the Annual Report also reflects on the Council's Covid-19 response and how this has contributed towards the delivery of the Council's Strategic Recovery Aims.

This year's report highlights the achievements made by the Council including:

- the improvement in Primary Schools' Categorisation;
- increase in household recycling;
- the delivery of the 'Baby and Me' initiative;
- Launch of the Council's commitment to be Carbon neutral by 2030;
- the redevelopment of Ringland Community Centre and,
- the launch of the Neighbourhood Hubs.

As part of the 2009 Local Government Measure the report stated the Council will publish the Annual Report in Welsh and English on the Council's website by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

The report asked Cabinet to endorse the Annual Report in order for officers to publish the report by the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 deadline, in accordance with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and Local Government Act 2009.

**Decision:**

Cabinet endorsed the report and agreed for officers to publish the Annual Report by the deadline date of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

**Consultation**

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee; Corporate Management Team.

**Implemented By: Corporate Management Team**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**CAB 40/20**

**Quarter 1 2020/21 Corporate Risk Register Update**

**Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

The report presented to Cabinet the Council's Corporate Risk Register for the end of quarter 1 (30<sup>th</sup> June 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 contained a summary of risks which are as follows:**

At the end of quarter one (1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020) there were 19 corporate risks which consisted of:

- 13 Severe risks (15 to 25);
- 4 Major Risks (7 to 14); and
- 2 Moderate Risks (4 to 6).

In comparison to the quarter four (2019/20) risk register (presented to Cabinet In September 2020), there was one new risk and five escalated risks from service area risk registers. Additionally, there were six existing corporate risks that had changed direction and seven risks that had remained the same as quarter four.

In accordance with the Council's Risk Management Policy, risks that are escalated from the Service Area are presented to the Council's Corporate Management Team and Chief Executive to decide whether the risks are included onto the Corporate Risk Register for monitoring or if they are kept within the service area's own risk register and monitored by the service area.

**New / Escalated Risks**

- **Pressure on Adult & Community Services (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 16 to 20)** – This was due to the impact that Covid-19 had on the delivery of Adult Social Care

services. There is pressure on the finances and long term sustainability of adult care and services having to redesign themselves to accommodate the Covid-19 guidelines. These impact on the perception and delivery of services. Adult services are working with providers to understand the impact of Covid-19 and new guidelines.

- **Ash Die Back Disease (New Risk Score 20)** – The Council's City Services had undertaken a review of Council owned trees to risk assess the number of Ash trees in the city that were at risk or had Ash Die Back. The results of the review identified approximately 8,600 Ash trees that belong to the Council. The risk score reflects the high financial costs and urgency to remove the trees before they fall and cause damage.
- **Pressure on the delivery of Children Services (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 16 to 20)** – The pressure is derived from Covid-19 in terms of the quantum of work and nature of the work alongside the impact on staff with the societal changes. There is currently no real way to minimise this pressure and attempts to mitigate the risk are reliant on maintaining communication and minimising tasks which are likely to increase during the year.
- **Cyber Security (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 12 to 16)** – In quarter one public sector bodies were notified of the increased threat level to the UK to gain access to data held by central and local government through hacking, ransomware and phishing attacks. Additionally, with the increased number of people working from home, this vulnerability has increased.
- **Pressure on Homelessness Service (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 12 to 16)** – The Welsh Government implemented new statutory legislation to support the homeless and rough sleepers into accommodation and provide support. Welsh Government provided phase one funding to the Council and has recently received phase two funding to continue this support.
- **Pressure on Housing Service (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 12 to 16)** – Due to the implementation of the statutory legislation for homeless, rough sleepers and the most vulnerable this has impacted on the delivery of the housing service. Furthermore, due to the vulnerable economic position and the furlough scheme ending in October, there could be more pressure to provide assistance for residents that may be at threat of redundancy and/or reduction in pay.

#### **Change in direction of risk score (Quarter One)**

- **COVID-19 Pandemic Outbreak (Increase from 20 to 25)** – The number of positive cases and deaths resulting from community spread was at its highest in quarter one. During this period the Council was focused on supporting the communities that were impacted by Government restrictions and then implementing the easing of restrictions.
- **Balancing the Council's Medium Term budget (Increase from 15 to 16)** – In quarter one there remains a significant budget gap over the medium term financial plan with no medium term strategy / actions agreed at this point.
- **City Centre Security and Safety (Reduction from 15 to 10)** – Due to Covid-19 and the social distancing measures in place this has meant the probability score has decreased to two for this quarter.
- **In year financial management (Increase from 3 to 9)** – While the July monitoring position shows a relatively small overspend, this is following the full use of the contingency and with a number assumptions made on the recovery of expenditure and loss of income as a result of the Covid pandemic. Also there is a risk that if the pandemic sees a significant second wave, there may be an adverse effect on the monitoring position without funding from Welsh Government.
- **Climate Change (Reduction from 12 to 9)** – Due to Covid-19 lockdown measures, Council staff have been working remotely which has reduced the environmental impact due to a reduction in commuting, use of fleet vehicles and use of Council buildings.
- **Newport Council's Property Estate (Reduction from 12 to 8)** – Due to the Council moving to remote working, the Council is now reviewing how it uses the Council buildings and facilities for the future.

The report asked Cabinet to consider the contents of the quarter one update of the Corporate Risk Register and to monitor the progress of actions taken to address the risks identified in the report. The purpose of this is to give the Cabinet sufficient assurance and oversight of the main overarching risks that the Council faces in delivering the objectives of the Corporate Plan.

**Decision:**

Cabinet agreed the report and to monitor progress of actions taken to address the risks identified in the report.

**Consultation**

Corporate Management Team

**Implemented By: Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**CAB 41/20**

**Pay and Reward Policy 2020/21**

**Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

The report confirmed that the Localism Act 2011 required English and Welsh local authorities to produce a “pay policy statement”, initially for the financial year 2012/13, and then on an annual basis. The legislation outlined a number of statutory requirements which must be included in any pay policy statement.

The Pay and Reward Policy 2019/20 has been reviewed and two changes are proposed for the 2020/21 policy;

- i) to remove the car block allowance for Chief Officers and,
- ii) to insert a clause regarding the restriction of re-employment for employees taking voluntary redundancy or settlement agreements from the Council.

These changes are detailed in the report. The report also includes information on the Gender Pay Gap and Pay Relativities within the Council.

Cabinet was asked to agree to recommend the updated Pay and Reward Policy to full Council for approval in order to meet the statutory requirements for a ‘pay policy statement’ to be published on an annual basis.

**Decision:**

Cabinet agreed the report and recommended the updated Pay and Reward Policy to full Council for approval.

**Consultation**

Corporate Management Team

**Implemented By: Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**CAB 42/20**

## **Shared Resource Service (SRS) Data Centre Business Case**

### **Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

The report updated Cabinet on the Shared Resource Service (SRS) business case proposal to migrate IT infrastructure of Newport City Council and other SRS partners

The report proposed the migration of the Council's IT infrastructure and that of other SRS partners from Blaenavon, Newport and Ebbw Vale to an alternative data centre location. A review by SRS had identified that even more secure data centre facilities can be provided over public infrastructure at a lower cost. The proposed change of physical data centre location compared with the original business case, rather than a change in strategic direction, is the main reason for this report being put forward to Cabinet for consideration and approval.

#### **The report outlined several options available for consideration:**

- Do nothing – this would result in certain failure of equipment causing loss of service for extended periods of time. This is not considered as a viable option for partners as it would not be fit for purpose given the reliance on IT for service delivery. Newport's current data and compute facilities are end of life
- Do minimum, by replacing all environment facilities within SRS's data halls on a phased approach. This would be significantly more expensive and less resilient than the preferred option and would also require Newport moving all current facilities to Blaenavon
- Reduce to a single data hall in Blaenavon. This option would be a similar amount of work to another migration but would not meet the future needs of partners. This option continues with higher costs than are required but does meet the supportability. The SRS Strategic Board also rejected this option as too high cost in January 2020. This would also require Newport moving all current facilities to Blaenavon
- Alternative provision - move to an alternative data centre. This offers all of the data centre requirements the SRS needs and delivers at a reduced overall cost compared with the current provision

The preferred option outlined in the report is to approve the proposed data centre move to alternative data centre provision. This provides all of the data centre requirements the SRS needs for partners and delivers at a reduced overall cost compared to updating the current data centre provision. Newport does not have a viable 'do nothing option' due to the current state of our current data centre facilities. All options require capital investment to 'move' so it is logical to choose the highest quality and cheapest option.

The report proposed that Cabinet:

- accept the SRS preferred option of moving the necessary Council IT infrastructure and that of other SRS partners to another data centre location, and,
- delegates authority to the Head of People & Business Change to implement that preferred option to move the necessary council IT infrastructure to another data centre led by SRS in conjunction with SRS partners.

#### **Decision:**

Cabinet agreed the proposals contained in the report.

#### **Consultation**

Chief Executive; Head of Law and Regulation; Head of Finance; Cabinet Member for Communities and Resources

**Implemented By: Head of People and Business Change**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**CAB 43/20**

### **Expectation of Reduction in the Number of Children who are Looked After**

#### **Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

The report updated Members in respect of the Welsh Government expectation of a reduction in children looked after numbers across the Council, including work with partner agencies e.g. the Public Services Board.

The report confirmed the First Minister has prioritised a reduction in the numbers of children who are looked after across Wales. In May 2019 a report was presented to Cabinet focusing on the plan submitted to Welsh Government and the proposed actions to meet the expectation of a reduction. The report highlighted the potential challenges this presents more widely across the Council.

The report provided an update in terms of both the continued expectations of Welsh Government and the actions of Children's Services in Newport.

The report confirmed that over the past 18 months the numbers of children in care in Newport has remained largely stable. Currently there are 385 children in the authority's care. During the past 18 months the highest at any one point has been 396 whilst the lowest has been 378. Even at the higher figure this is below the Welsh average. Of these children, currently:

- 22 are with the authority as a shared arrangement with parents - this group of children are mainly children with very complex needs in terms of disability;
- 22 as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children;
- 341 are all subject to court orders and thus the decision for them to be in care has been overseen and agreed by the family court.
- The authority continues to work with a further 140 children on the Child Protection Register as well as about 2,200 children each year using a Care and Support Plan.

The report's appendices identified the most recent quarterly report, the most recent weekly data return and the August additional information.

There are no decisions arising from the report, the purpose of which is to ensure Cabinet Members are fully sighted on the expectations from Welsh Government for Children's Services and the challenges this poses.

#### **Decision:**

Cabinet accepted the report.

#### **Consultation**

Children's Services Staff; Cabinet Member for Social Services

**Implemented By: Head of Children and Young People Services**

## **Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**CAB 44/20**

### **Annual Monitoring Report Submission and Local Development Plan Review**

#### **Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

The report to Cabinet reported on the 2020 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the Local Development Plan (LDP) and sought endorsement from Cabinet to submit to Welsh Government.

The report confirmed the Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted by the Council in January 2015 and is the development plan for Newport. An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is submitted to Welsh Government every October and reports on the progress of the LDP against a set of indicators.

Local planning authorities are required to commence a full review of their LDPs every four years. Newport's LDP has been successful and it was considered that a review was not necessary last year, but the Plan will be six years old in January 2021.

The review will update policies and legislative requirements that have been introduced since the LDPs adoption (for example the Well-being of Future Generations Act). It will also help to identify new development and regeneration sites to aid Newport's recovery following Coronavirus and promote Newport's growth aspirations in line with the draft National Development Framework. The LDP will also continue to protect Newport's best historical and environmental assets.

The report proposed that Cabinet approve submission of the AMR to Welsh Government, including the recommendation for review, and endorse the next steps of the LDP review process. This option will provide Newport with an opportunity to update the LDP within its new context of legislation, regulations and social, economic and environmental context to ensure it is providing the most appropriate and ambitious policy framework for Newport. The Council would also be meeting its legislative requirement for a timely review of the LDP. A revised LDP would also ensure the benefits of continuing a strong plan-led approach that provides effective and consistent planning decisions and certainty for investment and minimises undesirable speculative development.

The report stated that following the production of the draft Review Report and Delivery Agreement, the documents will be presented to Cabinet in December 2020 seeking approval for public consultation in January 2021. The consultation process will take a minimum of 8 weeks and the responses will be fed back to Cabinet in March 2021 where endorsement of the document will be sought. The documents will then go before Full Council in April 2021 seeking formal approval to submit to Welsh Government.

#### **Decision:**

Cabinet approved:

- i) the recommendation to commence a formal review of the Local Development Plan;
- ii) the documents to go before full Council in April 2021 to seek formal approval to submit to Welsh Government.

#### **Consultation**

Chief Executive; Head of Law & Regulation; Head of Finance; Head of People & Business Change

**Implemented By: Acting Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**CAB 45/20**

**COVID-19 Response and Recovery – Update**

**Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

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

The report confirmed that 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. 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. The report provided an overview of what action the Council has taken to date and the progress against the Strategic Recovery Aims

Following the last Cabinet Report in September 2020, Newport had seen a significant increase in the number of positive Covid-19 cases in the community and has entered into a localised lockdown; the restrictions associated with this are identified in the report. The Council's Civil Contingencies 'Gold Team' alongside its Track, Trace and Protect service, Incident Response Teams and partners including the Strategic Coordination Group have taken necessary actions and shared communications with the community in order to reinforce current restrictions and reduce the spread of the virus.

The report asked Cabinet to consider and note the contents of the report and for Cabinet/Cabinet Members to receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.

**Decision:**

Cabinet agreed the report and for Cabinet to receive updates from officers.

**Consultation**

Senior Leadership Team; Corporate Management Team; Officer leads across the Authority

**Implemented By: Corporate Management Team**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**CAB 46/20**

**Newport City Council Brexit / Trade Negotiations Preparations Update**

**Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

The report presented an update to Cabinet on the Brexit Trade Negotiations' preparations that Newport City Council has taken since the last Cabinet Report in February 2020.

The report confirmed that following the signing of the Withdrawal Agreement by the UK Parliament



on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020, the UK Government has been in negotiations with the EU on establishing a trade agreement by the deadline date of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. Whilst the focus of the UK and Wales has been on its Covid-19 response, the trade negotiations have been ongoing and in the last two months the risk of the UK and the EU not coming to an agreement has grown considerably and there is now an increased risk of the UK falling back onto World Trade Organisation arrangements.

Since February 2020, Newport Council's focus has been on supporting communities and the economy with its Covid-19 response. In July, the Council's Brexit Task & Finish group recommenced and there is now renewed focus on understanding the risks and issues to the Council, the local economy and communities taking necessary actions to mitigate these.

Cabinet was asked to consider and note the contents of the report and for Cabinet/Cabinet Members to receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.

**Decision:**

Cabinet agreed the report and to receive further updates from officers

**Consultation**

Heads of Service; Brexit 'Task and Finish' officer group

**Implemented By: Corporate Management Team**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**CAB 47/20**

**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**

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Signed: .....

COUNCILLOR JANE MUDD, CHAIR OF THE CABINET

Date: