

Decision Schedule



Cabinet

TO ALL MEMBERS OF NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

Decision Schedule published on 8 September 2021

The Chair of Cabinet Member took the following decision on 8 September 2021. The decision will become effective at Noon on 16 September 2021, with the exception of any particular decision, which is the subject of a valid "call-in".

The deadline for submission of a 'Call-in' request form is 4.00 pm on 15 September 2021.

Reports relating to staffing issues/Confidential reports are not circulated to all members of the Council as part of the consultation/call-in processes.

Leader 51/21

July Revenue Budget Monitor

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The July 2021 revenue position forecasted an underspend of £5.332m. This forecast was inclusive of the continued financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and assumed full reimbursement of additional expenditure and lost income during the entirety of the year. This followed confirmation from Welsh Government that the Hardship Fund would remain available until March 2022.

Although there was an overall underspend being forecast, certain service areas were reporting overspends against specific activities. As in previous years, these overspends related to demand-led activity areas, such as Social Services, and therefore there was an inherent risk that they may change should demand levels change from current forecasts.

More than offsetting these specific pressures were projected underspends in relation to Capital Financing, the general contingency budget, the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, and other non-service budget headings. A number of these underspends were one-off in nature and would not necessarily recur in future years.

The key areas contributing to the overall position were:

(i) Undelivered 2021/22 and prior year budget savings	£683k
(ii) Key demand led areas across Social Services	£347k
(iii) Staffing and other service area underspends	(£994k)
(iv) Capital Financing	(£2,689k)
(v) General Contingency	(£1,373k)
(vi) CTRS and other Non-Service budgets	(£1,306k)

The position in relation to schools was somewhat different in comparison to previous years, due to the higher level of surplus balances carried forward from 2020/21. To some extent, these balances were being utilised during 2021/22, which was reflected by the projected £2,048k overspend. However, the overall level of balances anticipated to be carried forward into the 2022/23 financial year was still higher than in recent years. Despite this, thorough monitoring

needed to be maintained in this area, as four schools remained in a deficit position, and there was a possibility that this overall healthier position was only a temporary one.

The appendices to the report were as followed:

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

Decision

That Cabinet:

- Noted the overall budget forecast position and the potential for an underspend position to exist at the end of the financial year.
- Noted the continued financial challenges being experienced by certain, demand-led, services and the need for robust financial management in these areas, as well as the level of currently unachieved budget savings.
- Noted the risks identified throughout the report and in the HoF comments, particularly in relation to future years and the lasting impacts of the pandemic.
- Noted the forecast movements in reserves.
- Noted the improved overall position in relation to schools, when compared to previous years, but also note the remaining deficit positions for some schools and the risk of past issues re-emerging if good financial planning and management is not undertaken.

Action by

That Cabinet / Head of Finance / Corporate Management Team:

- HoS continued to keep under review the key risk cost areas and taking action, with Cabinet Members, to move towards balanced positions for those budgets currently projected to overspend.
- HoS delivered agreed 2021/22 budget savings as soon as practically possible, but by the end of the financial year at the latest.
- HoS and budget holders closely monitored the impact of the easing of restrictions relating to the pandemic and identify, escalate, and mitigate emerging risks in a timely manner.
- Cabinet Members and HoS promoted and ensured robust forecasting throughout all service areas, including agreeing and implementing appropriate actions to balance spend and available budgets.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People and Business Change

Implemented by: Head of Finance

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 52/21

Capital Programme Monitoring and Additions – July 2021

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Council had 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. This report was built on the investment already approved by Capital and the programme has increased by an additional £8,049k.

The July 2021 monitoring position highlighted the following:

- £159k forecast net underspend
- £30,228k reprofiling from 2021/22 into future years
- Additions of £5,759k and amendments to the capital programme of £2,290k taking the overall programme to £282,514k

Decision

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the additions and amendments to the capital programme (Appendix A), including the use of reserves and capital receipts requested in the report
2. Approved reprofiling of £30,228k into future years
3. Noted the update on the remaining capital resources ('headroom') up to and including 2022/23
4. Noted the capital expenditure forecast position as at July 2021

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People and Business Change

Implemented by: Head of Finance

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 53/21

Quarter 1 2021/22 Corporate Risk Register Update

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

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

At the end of quarter one, there were 18 risks recorded in the Corporate Risk Register that were considered to have a significant impact on the achievement of the Council's objectives and legal obligations. At the end of the quarter there were no corporate risks closed or risks escalated to the Corporate Risk Register.

Overall, there were 11 Severe risks (risk scores 15 to 25); four Major risks (risk scores seven to 14); two Moderate risks (risk scores four to six); and one low risk (one to three) that were outlined in the report.

As set out in the Council's Risk Management Policy, Cabinet reviewed the Corporate Risk Register on a quarterly basis ensuring procedures were in place to monitor the management of significant risks.

Decision

Cabinet considered the contents of the quarter one update of the Corporate Risk Register.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People and Business Change

Implemented by: Head of People and Business Change

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 54/21

Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report 2020/2021

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report provided an update on the work undertaken to improve arrangements for Safeguarding and protecting children and adults who required specific Council services and ensured that these arrangements were effective.

The report was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee in June 2021. The report documented the following:

- Scrutiny Recommendations (from previous reporting year)
- Internal/ External Audit and Inspection outcomes
- Safeguarding Training Data and outcomes
- Developments this year, including a review of the Corporate Safeguarding Work Plan
- Key data for Safeguarding
- Annual Review of Newport City Council Corporate Safeguarding Self -Assessment Audit (New 2020/21)
- Future Work, Areas of stress/risk, and Recommendations
- Corporate Safeguarding Work Plan (Current/ Future Year)

Decision

Cabinet accepted the Council's corporate safeguarding work plan for 2021/22 and comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People and Business Change

Implemented by: Corporate Director – People

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 55/21

Covid-19 Response and Recovery Update

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Covid-19 health emergency was ongoing for over 18 months since Newport received its first reports of cases in February 2020. During this time, the crisis impacted all communities, businesses and services delivered by the Council and partners across Newport. Newport as a City had to adapt and respond as necessary to the restrictions to minimise the spread of the virus. The Council's priority was to ensure the continuity of services with our strategic partners, supporting the most vulnerable residents, support businesses and ensure the safety of staff and customers.

This report provided an overview of what action the Council took to date, progress against its Strategic Recovery aims and Wellbeing Objectives.

Since the last Cabinet report in July 2021, restrictions had eased to Level 0 by the Welsh Government with some measures still in place to reduce the spread of the virus. However, the Covid (predominantly Delta) virus remained prevalent in the community but the vaccination programme and ongoing monitoring of the virus reduced the impact of the virus in the community and hospital settings.

Decision

Cabinet considered the contents of the report and noted the progress being made to date and the risks that were still faced by the Council and the City.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People and Business Change

Implemented by: Chief Executive and Head of People and Business Change
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 56/21

Post Brexit / Trade Agreement – Newport City Council

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The UK-EU trade arrangement was in place for 9 months. With the impacts of the global restrictions to manage the Covid pandemic and the implementation of the new UK-EU Trade arrangements the UK saw a number of economic sectors citing these impacts where there have been issues in the availability and cost of goods and materials. The public sector including Newport Council was monitoring closely how wider economic impacts were affecting delivery of services, large scale projects and communities in the short term and also the long term.

It was over two months since the deadline (30 June) passed for EU citizens to submit their applications for EU Settled Status. As of 31 July 2021, there had been over 2.85 million people granted Settled Status and 2.33 million granted pre-settled status in the UK (Figures not yet available for Newport). 270,000 applications that have either been refused, withdrawn or invalid with a further 58,200 received since the deadline passed.

Decision

Cabinet considered the contents of the report and noted the Council's Brexit response.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People and Business Change

Implemented by: Chief Executive and Head of People and Business Change
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 57/21

Cabinet Work Programme

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Leader presented the Cabinet Work Programme.

Decision

Cabinet agreed the Cabinet Work Programme.

Consultation

Senior Officers, Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People and Business Change.

Implemented by: Governance Team Leader
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR J MUDD

9 September 2021

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