

Decision Schedule



Cabinet

TO ALL MEMBERS OF NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

Decision Schedule published on 14 July 2022

The Chair of Cabinet Member took the following decision on 13 July 2022. The decision will become effective at Noon on 21 July 2022, 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 20 July 2022.

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 41/22

Quarter 2021/22 Revenue Budget Outturn

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The revenue outturn showed an underspend of £18,404k, after core budget contributions to/ from reserves, which represented a 6% variance against budget. This variance against budget had arisen, in the main, due to the following:

- Receipt of significant one-off Welsh Government (WG) funds over and above that received from the 'Hardship Fund' for Covid specific expenditure and lost income.
- Underspends across all service areas due to changes in service provision and working practices caused by Covid, and;
- Underspends against the general revenue contingency budget, capital financing, council tax reduction scheme and council tax income, all of which were non-service budgets.

The underspend increased by £1,873k since the January forecast, in the main, this was because of late distribution of additional funding from WG to support education initiatives within schools and other areas.

The report explained the key variances against budget for the financial year ending 31 March 2022 and provided a summary statement of key issues, which had the potential to impact upon financial management in future years.

This report made recommendations to utilise the one-off underspend available to invest in the local communities and to protect the Council by enhancing its risk mitigation reserves. The details of which could be found within section 5 of this report.

- Appendix 1 Overall budget dashboard – March 2022
- Appendix 2 Revenue summary monitor - March 2022
- Appendix 3 School balance outturn position
- Appendix 4 2021/22 reserve movements
- Appendix 4a 2021/22 detailed reserve movements

Decision

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the outturn position, which was subject to audit; and the major variances for the year (sections one to three);
2. Approved use of the underspend and other reserve transfers as set out in section five of the report, noting the resulting level of the Council's general and earmarked reserves;
3. Noted the school's outturn and the position on the individual and total school reserves (section three).

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Implemented by: Head of Finance

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 42/22

2021/22 Capital Outturn and Additions

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 in the regeneration of the city centre. This report updated Cabinet on its capital programme and the outturn for the 2021/22 financial year.

The 2021/22 outturn position highlighted the following:

- The capital programme budget received by Cabinet in November for the year totalled £67.34m. Slippage of £9.8m was agreed by Cabinet, reducing the 2021/22 budget to £57.53m. Subsequent net additions/revisions amounted to £10.16m in 2021/22 and £186k in 2022/23, taking the overall programme for 2021/22 to a combined budget of £67.7m.
- Against this budget, costs were incurred totalling £52.7m introducing £15m net underspend.
- Of this underspend, service managers and budget holders confirmed that £13.9m related to delayed progress or overly optimistic profiling and, as such, this was being requested for slippage approval and these amounts added to 2022/23 budgets.

Decision

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the additions to the Capital Programme requested in the report (Appendix A).
2. Approved slippage of £13.9m from the 2021/22 budget into future years, noting the re-profiling of the programme that this gave rise to.
3. Noted the capital expenditure outturn position for 2021/22.
4. Noted the available remaining capital resources ('headroom') and the earmarked usage of that resourcing.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Implemented by: Head of Finance

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 43/22

Shared Prosperity Fund

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

In April 2022 the UK Government published details on the new £2.6bn Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

The funding was allocated to places across the UK on a needs basis and sought to support the UK government's Levelling Up objectives which were to:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they were lagging;
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they were weakest;
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they had been lost;
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.

To do this the SPF had three investment priorities:

- Communities and Place
- Supporting Local Business; and
- People and Skills

There was also a dedicated element of the fund that sat under the People and Skills priority; Multiply, which sought to improve adult numeracy skills. For each of these priorities there were a number of objectives and interventions which detailed the types of activity that can be supported by the Shared Prosperity Fund.

The primary goal of the UKSPF was to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. The SPF aligned and complemented the Levelling Up Fund, for which Newport's round 2 proposals to develop a National Technology Institute were approved for submission by Cabinet in June.

All places in the UK would receive a conditional allocation from the SPF. Newport's conditional allocation is £27,177,563, and an allocation of £5,672,986 for Multiply.

The 10 Local Authorities in the CCR have a combined conditional allocation of £230,432,573 and £48,100,003 for Multiply.

Local authorities within the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) were invited to collaborate and feed into one regional investment plan for the whole region. As part of this process there was a need to appoint one local authority to assume the role of the 'Lead Local Authority' for the SPF. It was proposed that Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC performed this role.

The development of the Regional Investment Plan was the beginning of the Shared Prosperity Fund process. The Plan would identify overarching interventions that relate to the three investment priorities of the SPF across the region. Not all regional interventions would be relevant to Newport, but this overarching strategy enabled us to start developing local priorities and a local delivery plan, in partnership with our communities and stakeholders.

The regional investment plan would need to be submitted to UK Government by 1 August 2022. The anticipated date for the first investment plans to be approved and payment awarded to Lead Local Authorities by UK Government thereafter was October 2022 onward.

Decision

That Cabinet:

- 1) Endorsed Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCT) as the Lead Local Authority for the UK SPF for the Cardiff Capital Region and submit the Regional Investment Plan by 1 August 2022.
- 2) Delegate powers to the Head of Law and Standards to agree the legal agreements associated with the UKSPF with the Lead Local Authority on behalf of Newport City Council.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Implemented by: Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 44/22

Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) – Vision, Issues and Objectives

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

As part of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) process, public engagement had been undertaken in respect of the draft Vision, Issues and Objectives. The eight-week engagement process sought to increase awareness of the RLDP process, seek consensus on the key issues identified for the Plan, and request feedback on the draft Vision and Objectives which will set the direction for the RLDP.

Decision

Cabinet noted the consultation comments received on the Draft Vision, Issues and Objectives and endorsed the proposed responses.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Implemented by: Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 45/22

Welsh Language and Annual Report

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Council was required to report annually on its progress in complying with the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. This report covered the sixth year of implementation, following the imposition of the Council's Welsh language standards in March 2016.

The attached report provided an overview of the Council's progress in meeting the Welsh Language Standards, included information required by law to be published on an annual basis, a summary of key achievements during the year, and priority areas for future work.

Decision

Cabinet approved the final monitoring report and published it on the Council's website, in accordance with statutory deadlines.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Implemented by: Strategic Director, Transformation and Corporate and Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 46/22

Welsh Government Bus White Paper Consultation – One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket: Planning Buses as a Public Service for Wales

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

Bus services play a vital role in facilitating social inclusion and addressing climate change. Historic declines in patronage accelerated following the Covid Pandemic. The Welsh Government proposed changes to the legislation governing planning and procuring Bus Services, with a move from commercially led provision to centrally planned services through a franchising arrangement.

Whilst the aspirations for service enhancements were strongly supported, there were considerable risks associated with the proposals, including significant implications for the council in respect of funding and staff resources. Proposals would also dilute the Authorities powers of intervention, with a move to centralised planning and procurement, which were subject to the approval of the Minister.

The Welsh Government proposals also introduced additional business risks for the viability of Newport Bus in its current form.

There was limited detail within the White Paper and supporting Regulatory Impact Assessment to evaluate the financial implications and potential impact on other budget streams. This was a particular concern and Officers were engaged in ongoing discussions with Welsh Government to seek clarity.

In view of these issues, the council was preparing a robust response highlighting our concerns.

We are working closely with the Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority (CCRTA) who had commissioned technical consultancy support to provide an independent review of the Regulatory Impact Assessment. This work was due to be completed on the 13 July and was intended to be incorporated in our response.

The consultation commenced during the Local Elections, despite a formal request from the WLGA to defer. Welsh Government granted Newport City Council a limited extension until the 20 July 2022.

Decision

Cabinet noted the issues identified and progressed to date in preparing Newport Council's response and delegate Authority to the Leader and Cabinet Member to amend and approve the final consultation submission once supporting information was available.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Implemented by: Head of City Services
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 47/22

Newport City Council Covid Recovery and External Influences

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

In the last two years, Newport City Council faced unprecedented challenges in responding to the Covid pandemic and the UK leaving the European Union. Recognising the impact that these had on communities and businesses in Newport, the Council's Cabinet agreed four Strategic Recovery Aims supporting: Education and Skills, Economic and environmental recovery, Health and Wellbeing of citizens, and post Covid recovery. Newport Council also established a Brexit task and finish group to support the preparation of EU/EAA citizens, businesses, and residents to prepare for leaving the EU.

This report summarised the work the Council had undertaken alongside its partners and communities to respond and recover from these events across Newport's services, communities, and businesses.

This would be the final report of the Strategic Recovery Aims to Cabinet. However, ongoing opportunities, challenges and risks that the Council and the City are facing with the cost of living crisis, Ukrainian conflict, post EU transition and a range of local and global challenges, regular updates of progress would be reported to Cabinet against the Council's new Corporate Plan.

Decision

Cabinet considered and noted the contents of the report and would receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Chief Executive, Director of Transformation and Corporate, Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 48/22

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

PART 2 EXEMPT OR CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

To consider whether to exclude the Press and Public during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it will involve the likely disclosure of exempt or confidential information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and exclusion outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Leader 49/22

Newport Indoor Market

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Head of Regeneration and Economic Development and Head of Finance/Deputy Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Standards gave a presentation to Cabinet on the Indoor Market and the request from the developer for an extension of the current loan.

Cabinet considered the options put before them in relation to the financial summary outlined in the presentation as well as the legal implications.

Decision

Cabinet agreed:-

- (i) To extend the amount of the current loan funding from £5.5m to £6m;
- (ii) To convert the current development loan to a term loan and extend the repayment period to 5 years;
- (iii) To require the developer to pay interest to the Council on the extended loan on a monthly basis at a minimum interest rate of 5% per annum, until the point at which the loan and previously rolled-up interest has been repaid in full;
- (iv) To authorise the Head of Law & Standards and the Head of Finance to agree and complete the necessary deed of variation to the Funding Agreement;
- (v) To fund the additional £500k from one-off resources.

Consultation

Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance, Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Implemented by: Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR J MUDD

14 July 2022
