

Decision Schedule



Cabinet

TO ALL MEMBERS OF NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

Decision Schedule published on 15 June 2022

The Chair of Cabinet Member took the following decision on 15 June 2022. The decision will become effective at Noon on 23 June 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 22 June 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 33/22

Quarter 4 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 four, there were 16 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 quarter four, there were no corporate risks closed and two risks (In-year Financial Management / Safeguarding Risk) de-escalated from the Corporate Risk Register.

Overall, there were nine Severe risks (risk scores 15 to 25); seven Major risks (risk scores seven to 14); 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 four update of the Corporate Risk Register.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 34/22

Newport's Local Area Energy Plan

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The city-wide Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) for the whole Newport local authority area set out a vision for reaching a zero-carbon local energy system by 2050 together with a summary of evidence to support the vision. Also included in the plan was a route map to get there, including a set of actions for the Council to support the journey whilst recognising the role of other key actors in government, the energy sector and across the community. It provided Newport City Council with an understanding of the nature, scale, rate, and timings of changes needed for Newport's transition to a net zero energy system.

Decision

Cabinet approved the draft city-wide Local Area Energy Plan for the whole Newport Local Authority area.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Strategic Director, Environment and Sustainability, Head of Environment and Public Protection

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 35/22

Information Station Project

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

In December 2019 Cabinet agreed to seek an alternative commercial use for the ground and first floor of the Information Station as a tech hub and to relocate current staff and services to the Central Museum and Library. The sub lease of the Information Station was offered as part of a competitive tender to technology providers. On the basis of the tendered rent and their proposed business model, Tramshed Tech were identified as the successful operator. The face-to-face services were to relocate to the Central Library and Museum (CL&M) building and £1.3m of Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding was awarded for the refurbishment of the CL&M building.

In March 2020 the UK went into lockdown and face to face services were closed in line with government regulations. Face to face provision was restarted in September 2021 from the temporary location at the Riverfront. Extensive issues however, with the landlord of the Information Station (ArchCo) with regard to the consent to sub-lease, coupled with the global increase in price for construction projects and the ongoing delays, resulted in a budget variance of £140k.

ArchCo therefore gave their consent to the sub lease to Tramshed Tech and the works package for the CL&M building was retendered. This price would be held until 30 June 2022.

Decision

Cabinet agreed to meet the increased costs of the project in order to allow the proposal to proceed.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 36/22

Levelling Up Fund Round 2 – National Technology Institute

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

Since the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund (LUF) was launched in 2021, UK Government set out their long-term ambitions for the overarching levelling-up policy through the release of the Levelling Up White Paper. This paper detailed the six capital drivers which UK Government believed would overcome regional inequality. With this refined remit also came the second funding round of the LUF. Similar to the first round, the fund was distributed competitively, with up to £20m of capital funding available for regeneration and culture projects. The deadline for submissions was 12pm on Wednesday 6 July 2022.

Newport sought to leverage £20m of funding from the first funding round for the Northern Gateway Quarter of the City, focusing on the train station area, adjacent streets and public realm. Although this application was unsuccessful, subsequent advice from UK Government officials highlighted how an adjustment in approach could lead to a successful funding award. With this feedback considered, and with progress in establishing the Newport Knowledge Quarter concept gathering pace with the proposed relocation of the Coleg Gwent campus, there was a clear opportunity to develop a complementary use within the City Centre. This would be the introduction of a City of Newport National Technology Institute (NTI), a collaborative endeavour involving Cardiff Capital Region, further/higher education and employers with a focus on delivering high quality, higher level technical education and training.

This provision would fill a skills and qualification gap identified with employers and would complement and sit alongside the Institutes of Technology already operating in England. It was therefore recommended that the Council submits a bid to UK Government for funding to help 'level-up' the skills and training offer within Newport and the Knowledge Quarter, as well as enhance the overall mix of uses in the City Centre.

Decision

- Cabinet approved the submission of a bid to the second round of the Levelling Up Fund relating to the provision of a National Technology Institute in Newport City Centre.
- Cabinet also approved a change in the capital programme, as outlined in the financial summary, to fund the potential 'match-funding' for this project.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 37/22

Outturn Report on Treasury Management for the Period 2021/22

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

In line with the agreed Treasury Management Strategy, the Council continued to be both a short-term investor of cash and borrower to manage day-to-day cash flows. Current forecasts indicated that in the future, temporary borrowing would continue to be required to fund normal day-to-day cash flow activities and longer-term borrowing would increase to fund new commitments in the current capital programme as well as the impact of reduced capacity for 'internal borrowing'. However, during 2021/22, and symptomatic in the previous year too, the Council received a net inflow of extra-ordinary resourcing by way of extra RSG and grant whilst also experiencing a significant slippage in the capital programme spending, to become a net investor of funds in the short term, and this caused the unusual variance and non-compliance against the performance indicator previously set that monitored exposure to interest rate changes.

During the year the Council's net borrowing decreased by £44.5m from £128.3m at 31 March 2021 to £83.8m at 31 March 22.

The position described for 2021/22 above with the Council being a net investor and repaying long term borrowing (without the need to re-finance it) was short term and it was expected that the position would return to 'normal' and in line with the Council's position of holding relatively minimal investments and increasing its long-term borrowing over the medium term.

Decision

Cabinet noted the report on treasury management activities for the period 2021/22 and would provide comments to Council.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Head of Finance
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 38/22

Covid 19 – Response and Recovery Update

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

Following the April update to Cabinet, the Welsh Government removed all covid regulations. The case rate remained low across Newport and Wales and hospital Covid cases were also low in Gwent.

The Council was finalising policies and procedures to enable officers to hybrid work and since then, the local election in May held its first hybrid Council meeting. Council services were continuing to support communities and groups who were struggling with the cost of living crisis.

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 and Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 39/22

Post EU Transition (Brexit) Update for Newport City Council

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

Since the UK left the European Union in December 2020 the UK and Wales was adjusting to the trade arrangements and reacting to the wider global economic impacts and Covid restrictions.

The global economic challenges, and Ukraine conflict was placing cost of living pressure on households and businesses. There continued to be inflationary increases on food, fuel and energy prices. These pressures were set to increase further in 2022.

In response, Newport Council was implementing the Welsh Government's £150 Council Tax payment for properties in bands A to D and the unpaid carers support scheme. A further £15m was available through the Discretionary Assistance Fund to provided financial support to individuals and families who were experiencing extreme financial pressures.

There continued to be support provided to the city's EU/EAA communities with late EU Settlement Scheme applications and advice around rights and entitlements. Newport Council was supporting Ukrainian refugees and was offering support to the Ukrainian families living and working in Newport. Newport City Council also recognised the impact that the conflict in the Ukraine was having on wider EU communities, many of whom had links to neighbouring countries who were also affected.

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 and Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 40/22

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

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR J MUDD

15 June 2022

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