

Decision Schedule



Cabinet

TO ALL MEMBERS OF NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

Decision Schedule published on 15 February 2024

The Chair of Cabinet Member took the following decision on 14 February 2024. The decision will become effective at Noon on 22 February 2024, 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 21 February 2024.

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 10/24

2024/25 Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

As set out within the Corporate Plan, the Council had ambitious plans for the city, with the Capital Programme a key enabler in delivering this ambition. The current programme ran from 2023/24 to 2027/28. In line with the rolling programme management approach, the next iteration of the five-year programme ran from 2024/25 to 2028/29. The next iteration of the programme predominantly comprised of annual recurring allocations and a number of ongoing schemes from the existing programme.

The report included both the Capital and Treasury Management Strategies which, at their core,

- (i) confirmed the Capital Programme, as part of the Capital Strategy and,
- (ii) the borrowing limits and other indicators which governed the management of the Council's borrowing and investing activities, as part of the Treasury Management Strategy.

The Capital Strategy also set out the long-term context (10 years) in which capital decisions were made. It demonstrated that the Council's approach to taking capital and investment decisions is in line with service objectives, whilst considering risk, reward, and impact. It also demonstrated that these decisions were taken whilst having proper regard to stewardship of public funds, value for money, prudence, sustainability, and affordability.

The capital plans of the authority were inherently linked with the treasury management activities it undertook and, therefore, the Treasury Management Strategy was included alongside the Capital Strategy.

The main recommendations arising from the two strategies were outlined in the covering report.

Decision

That Cabinet recommended to Council for approval:

- The Capital Strategy (Appendix 2), including the proposed Capital Programme within it (shown separately in Appendix 1), and the borrowing requirements/limits needed to deliver the proposed programme.
- The Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Management Indicators, the Investment Strategy, and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy for 2024/25. (Appendix 3)
- As part of the above, Cabinet
 - approved the proposed Capital Programme, subject to Council approving the necessary borrowing limits that underpin this.
 - noted the increasing debt, and corresponding revenue cost of this, in delivering the rolling Capital Programme, and the implications of this over both the short and medium-long term with regard to affordability, prudence and sustainability.
 - noted the Head of Finance comments that borrowing needed to be limited to the extent that it stabilised the Capital Financing Requirement and did not add pressure to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, and the recommended prudential indicators on borrowing limits to achieve this.
 - noted the feedback provided by the Governance & Audit Committee on 25 January 2024 (paragraph 8).

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Head of Finance

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 11/24

2024/25 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The draft budget proposals for 2024/25 agreed in the January Cabinet meeting were subject to detailed consultation, and the results were set out within the report and its appendices.

Whilst the draft Welsh Government funding settlement was received prior to setting the draft budget, the Cabinet recommended a final budget, and the Council would agree a final budget and rate of Council Tax before the final settlement was known. Whilst not ideal, this happened on numerous occasions over recent years and whilst no changes were expected other than potentially cost neutral movements in specific grants into/ out of the final settlement, there were potentially more uncertainties coming from this in 2024/25 and the report set out those uncertainties and the potential mitigation for these potential risks / uncertainties. Therefore, Cabinet was finalising their 2024/25 budget based on the funding position made up of the draft Revenue Support Grant, the confirmed increase in the Council's tax-base and Council Tax income at the rate that was recommended at this meeting.

This report summarised the key aspects of the draft budget, feedback on the consultation and other key contextual matters before setting out the current position on the 2024/25 budget which Cabinet considered. The final proposals were announced at the meeting, following consideration of the above.

Section:

- 1 Background
- 2 Finalising the budget
- 3 Financial planning assumptions
- 4 Public consultation
- 5 Medium term financial plan (MTFP)
- 6 Risk, reserves, financial resilience, and performance.
- 7 2024/25 proposed Council Tax

Appendix:

- Appendix 1 Minutes from the Employee Partnership Forum
- Appendix 2 Extracts from Scrutiny Committees
- Appendix 3 Extracts from Schools Forum minutes
- Appendix 4 Public budget consultation responses and feedback
- Appendix 5 Specific responses to budget proposals
- Appendix 6 Final Budget investments recommendations
- Appendix 7 Final Budget savings recommendations
- Appendix 8 Medium term financial plan (MTFP)
- Appendix 9 Reconciliation of movements since budget consultation
- Appendix 10 Financial resilience snapshot
- Appendix 11a Projected earmarked reserves
- Appendix 11b Summary of transformation fund spend and forecast
- Appendix 12 Fees and charges
- Appendix 13 Equalities Issues

Decision

Cabinet considered:

Budget proposals and medium-term plan (section 3-5), and

1. noted the formal consultation on the budget as outlined in section 4 and the feedback received, shown in Appendices 1 to 5.
2. noted the equality issues and the Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment (FEIA) on the budget proposals, shown in Appendix 13.
3. reviewed and confirmed the budget recommendations (Appendix 6 - 7), as currently summarised within the medium-term financial plan (Appendix 8) and those budget savings and investments confirmed verbally in the meeting, as follows:
 - £700k for highways infrastructure and building maintenance, at £500k and £200k respectively.
 - £300k additional funding for schools. This will specifically be earmarked within the schools funding formula for supporting children with additional learning needs.
 - £160k to social services safeguarding hub.
 - £595k to make provision for additional long-term borrowing and support the Council's capital programme costs.
 - £150k to the homelessness budget, to assist with temporary accommodation.
 - £145k to address the issues and impacts presented by specific grant reductions.

4. agreed the 2024/25 fees and charges of the Council shown in Appendix 12.

Overall revenue budget and resulting Council Tax 2024/25 (section 6 and 7), and

5. noted the significant risks and uncertainties within budget planning and specific issues highlighted in Section 6 of this report and the mitigation in place to manage.
6. recommended the detailed budget investments and savings and resulting Council Tax rate to full Council, noting that a formal resolution including the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent and Community Councils' precepts be presented to Council on 29 February.
7. a council tax increase of 8.5%.
8. approved expenditure and use of the Transformation Fund in line with the summary shown in Appendix 11b, noting they were based on detailed proposals reviewed by Cabinet in their January 2024 meeting.
9. approved the repurposing of earmarked reserves as set out in paragraph 6.7.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Head of Finance
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 12/24

Newport City Council Social Value Outcomes against Core Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMS) in Procurement

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The TOMs for social value were a measurement framework that allowed for an unlocking of social value through its integration into procurement and project management. The NCC core list of TOMs was approved by Cabinet in March 2023, and was subsequently embedded into procurement processes in the months following. Cabinet requested a six-monthly update on social value delivered through the NCC TOMs, and this was the first report of outcomes achieved. Appendix A provided value by supplier/contract, which for the first six months totalled £991,984.00.

Decision

That Cabinet:

Noted the social value outcomes to date in Appendix A, where TOMs were included in the tender/contract.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Head of Finance
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Leader 13/24

Newport City Council Response to External Pressures Impacting Council Services

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

This monthly report provided an update on the external pressures facing the Council which include the cost-of-living crisis and pressures on housing and homelessness services across Newport.

As with previous months, collaboration and partnership working was key to supporting Newport citizens and therefore this report provided information on how this way of working was enabling a greater access for our residents to support, advice, and guidance.

Decision

Cabinet considered the contents of the report on the Council's activity to respond to the external factors on Newport's communities, businesses, and council services.

Consultation

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

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

Leader 14/24

Cabinet Work Programme

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Leader presented the Cabinet Work Programme.

Decision

Cabinet agreed the Cabinet Work Programme.

Consultation

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

Implemented by: Governance Team Leader
Implementation Timetable: Immediate

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR J MUDD

14 February 2024

This document is available in Welsh / Mae's ffurflen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg
