

# Decision Schedule



## Cabinet

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**TO ALL MEMBERS OF NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL**

**Decision Schedule published on 18 September 2024**

The Chair of Cabinet Member took the following decision on 18 September 2024. The decision will become effective at Noon on 26 September 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 25 September 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.

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**Leader 44/24**

### **July Revenue Budget Monitor**

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

The July 2024 revenue monitoring position reflected a forecasted underspend of £0.112m, taking into account the contingency budget. Service areas were collectively forecasted to overspend by £6.641m, excluding schools. This significant service area overspending was offset by underspends in non-service areas, such as Capital Financing, producing a broadly balanced revenue budget forecast at this point.

The most significant areas of service area overspending were within Housing and Communities, due to the demand for temporary accommodation, and within Education, due to increased costs of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) / special school transport, and expenditure on local ALN provision.

Schools were separately projected to overspend on their revenue funding by £3.899m. This would be funded from schools' own reserves. The overspending came from both one-off as well as an element of recurring expenditure. Going forward, there was a risk that this level of recurring expenditure in excess of base budget funding would result in certain individual schools entering a deficit budget position i.e. negative reserves. Close monitoring would therefore be required during the remainder of this year to ensure that schools were managing their finances as required and taking action to ensure that deficit positions were avoided wherever possible.

Whilst a broadly balanced position was currently forecasted overall, it was important to note that there were a number of risks that could result in the position deteriorating over the course of the year. For example, the 2024/25 NJC pay award was not yet confirmed and, whilst the current offer was slightly less than budgeted, an increase in the final offer would place an in-year and future year pressure upon the Council's finances. As well as this risk, some of the demand issues that were causing the service area overspending could increase during the year and place further pressure on services such as Children's Services and Housing and Communities. Funding of increased Teacher's pensions costs from the WG was also yet to be confirmed.

The appendices to the report were as follows:

Appendix 1 Overall Budget Dashboard – July 2024

- Appendix 2 Revenue Summary Monitor - July 2024
- Appendix 3 School Balances Position
- Appendix 4 2024/25 Forecast Reserve Movements

### **Decision**

That Cabinet

- Noted the overall budget forecast position outlined within the report.
- Noted the overall shortfall in the delivery of savings accepted as part of the 2024/25 revenue budget.
- Noted the overall position in relation to schools, acknowledging the risk that further individual deficit positions could emerge by the end of the financial year.
- Noted the forecast movements in reserves.
- Approved the recommended reserve transfers, as set out in 4.3 and 4.4.
- Noted the risks identified throughout the report and in the Head of Finance comments, such as in relation to demand issues being faced and unconfirmed pay awards and Teacher's pension funding for 2024/25.

### **Consultation**

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

**Implemented by: Head of Finance**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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## **Leader 45/24**

### **Capital Programme Monitoring and Additions Report – July 2024**

#### **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. The report updated the Cabinet on its capital programme and the forecast for the 2024/25 financial year, and specifically:

- The starting capital programme budget for 2024/25 was £90.7m. Additions (largely grants) and revisions increased the budget by a net £8.2m and reprofiling of budgets into future years had reduced this year's budget by £16.2m, to provide a revised budget of £82.7m.
- Against this revised budget, costs were predicted to be £82.5m introducing a £207k net variance.

### **Decision**

That Cabinet

- Approved the additions to the Capital Programme requested in the report (Appendix A).
- Noted the predicted capital expenditure outturn position for 2024/25.
- Approved the reprofiling of £16.2m from the 2024/25 budget into future years
- Noted the available remaining capital resources ('headroom') and the earmarked usage of that resourcing.
- Noted the inclusion of the Treasury Management prudential indicators, included within the report.
- Approved the use of the headroom as noted in the report.

## **Consultation**

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

**Implemented by: Head of Finance**  
**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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**Leader 46/24**

### **Quarter 1 2024/25 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 strategic priorities or delivering services to its communities and service users in Newport.

At the end of quarter 1, there were 15 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.

Overall, there were 8 Severe risks (risk scores 15 to 25); 7 Major risks (risk scores 7 to 14); that were outlined in the report. In comparison to the quarter 4 (23/24) Corporate Risk Register, there was no change to the risk scores for 13 of the 15 risks. There were two risks (Pressure on Housing and Homelessness services and Stability of Adult Social Services providers) which had changed risk scores in quarter 1.

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 1 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**

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**Leader 47/24**

### **Annual Digital Report 2023/24**

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

Digital technology played a critically important role in effective and efficient service delivery for organisations and Newport City Council relied heavily on this for effective day to day operation. The development of the Council's Digital Strategy 2022-2027 set the strategic vision for the use of digital technology across the organisation. The strategy had four themes: Digital Transformation, Digital Skills and Inclusion, Data and Collaboration and Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity. These themes were developed to align with the Council's Corporate Plan.

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the Digital Strategy against the desired outcomes and actions. This was the fifth Annual Digital Report but the first full year since the Digital Strategy's was formally adopted by the organisation. As such, the report was focused on the delivery of the strategy and its associated outcomes. It was focused at a strategic level and the differences made to service delivery. This included achievements highlighted in digital transformation and automation, supporting the Council to become even more efficient and better able to meet the needs of Newport residents and businesses.

### **Decision**

Cabinet endorsed the Annual Digital Report 2023/24 and proposed actions.

### **Consultation**

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

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

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## **Leader 48/24**

### **Climate Change Plan Annual Report**

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

Climate Change was one of the defining global challenges of our generation and there was an urgent need for the world to decarbonise, to limit global temperature rise and avert the worst impacts of climate change.

Newport City Council Climate Change Organisational Plan set out themes, priorities, actions and milestones that needed to be taken as a Council over the next five years to:

- Reach net zero as an organisation by 2030.
- Review the services provided to ensure they support the city's journey to net zero and adaptation to climate change.

Delivery of the plan commenced in April 2022 and the report covered:

- Projects that took place in 2023-24.
- The Council's Annual carbon emissions data.

### **Decision**

Cabinet reviewed progress and approved the Annual Report.

### **Consultation**

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

**Implemented by: Head of Environment and Public Protection**  
**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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## **Leader 49/24**

### **City Centre Leisure and Well-being Development**

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

Cabinet approved the delivery of a new Leisure and Well-being facility on land adjacent to the USW campus in February 2021. This decision followed a public consultation exercise which showed significant support for the development of a modern and sustainable facility in the city centre. Cabinet agreed a Council supported funding envelope and Welsh Government (WG) grant funding was also secured.

The November 2023 report to Cabinet noted that in response to the significant changes in energy costs, the Council accelerated its progress to net zero. As such the design of the new facility was developed to ensure that it maximised energy efficiency. It would be one of the first swimming pools built in the UK not to require gas heating, removing the need for costly retrofit in future years. The capital costs associated with this innovative approach would be funded by external grant.

Whilst the additional capital costs of the net zero heating design was met from grant funding, the impact of exceptional levels of construction inflation could not be fully mitigated by design modifications and wider external grant funding, which was now in the order of £17m for this project. As such the council needed to allocate an additional £600K from the Council's capital headroom to support the scheme, to leverage external grant funding at an intervention rate of over 56%.

The detailed design and ground enabling works were completed, and the main construction element was tendered, giving greater cost certainty. The preferred contractor would commence work in the next few months, with the build taking approximately 18 months to complete.

#### **Decision**

Cabinet

- Noted and approved the final details and associated costs of the scheme and authorised the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development to progress the project to completion.
- Approved an increase in direct council funding of £600k.

#### **Consultation**

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

**Implemented by: Head of Regeneration and Economic Development**

**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

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## **Leader 50/24**

### **City Centre Placemaking Plan – Cross Party Task and Finish Group**

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

In January 2024, Newport City Council commenced work to develop a new Placemaking Plan for Newport City Centre, replacing the current City Centre Masterplan launched in 2018. The Placemaking Plan would reflect the current and future aspirations for the city centre, ensuring in particular that genuine engagement with all stakeholders was a foundation for the development of the plan.

A Steering Group was in place to provide oversight on the development of the plan, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Democratic Services, and included private and third sector membership alongside senior officers of the Council. The final plan would be reviewed by the One Newport (Local Delivery Group of the Gwent Public Service Board) before being recommended for adoption by the Council.

The final plan aimed to present a vision and strategy for the future of the city centre that all stakeholders could own, champion and endorse. It was therefore essential that all democratically elected political parties and groupings had the opportunity to contribute to the Plan.

A task and finish group, drawn from across the political representation of the Council, that sat as a sub-group to the Placemaking Plan Steering Group, was recommended as the vehicle for ensuring this cross-party input took place.

### **Decision**

Cabinet agreed the creation of a cross-party task and finish working group to provide input to the development of the new Placemaking Plan for Newport City Centre. To be chaired by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Regeneration and operated in accordance with the Terms of Reference attached as Appendix 1.

### **Consultation**

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

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

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**Leader 51/24**

### **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**

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LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR D BATROUNI

18 September 2024

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

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