

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE CABINET Thursday, 26th August 2004

PRESENT: Councillors: S J M Clee (Leader – Chairman), M J Hart (Deputy Leader – Vice-Chairman), Mrs M B Aston, J-P Campion, J W Dudley and N J Desmond.

OBSERVERS: Councillors G W Ballinger, A J Buckley, Mrs J Fairbrother-Millis, M A W Hazlewood, Mrs A T Hingley, J Holden, and K J Stokes.

CM.111 WELCOME TO CPA INSPECTOR

The Leader welcomed Masaud Subedar, CPA Inspector to the meeting.

CM.112 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

CM.113 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

CM.114 MINUTES

DECISION: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 29th July 2004 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CM.115 CALL INS

No decisions had been called in since the Cabinet's last meeting.

CM.116 ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

There were no items that required urgent attention.

CM.117 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stilking UK – Film Production

The Leader informed the Cabinet that a film company – Stilking UK would be filming on the Severn Valley Railway on the 7th September 2004. The filming would be done by helicopter and the company wished to inform local councils/governing bodies to keep them informed of their activities.

Historic Environment Champion

Following a request from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to appoint a champion for the historic environment, the Leader announced that Councillor M A W Hazlewood had been appointed to this role. The purpose of the appointment would be to ensure that the historic environment was at the heart of the Council agenda.

Venues for future meetings of the Cabinet

Some of the forthcoming venues for Cabinet meetings were announced. The meeting on the 30th September 2004 would be held at Duke House, Kidderminster; the 28th October 2004 meeting would be held at Stourport Community Centre; the 25th November 2004 meeting would be held in Chaddesley Corbett Village Hall and the 16th December 2004 meeting would be held in Offmore Farm Community Centre.

Fair Trade Towns

A request had been received to support Fair Trade status for Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport. The Cabinet was keen to support this initiative that aimed at using Fair Trade products in a number of local workplaces, encouraging local publicity and setting up a local steering group to ensure continuing commitment to Fair Trade status. The Leader would be writing to all Members in due course to impart further details of the scheme with a view to a resolution being passed at Council to adopt Fair Trade Status.

Kidderminster Town Hall Festival 2005

£2,000 had been contributed for 2004/2005 for the Kidderminster Town Hall Festival. Further consideration would be given to a service option for the financial year 2005/2006.

Capping of Fire Authority Budget

A leaflet had been produced by the County Council that outlined the changes to Council Tax during 2004/2005 as a result of the capping of the combined Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority budget. The Leader agreed to have a copy of the leaflet circulated to all members. He commented that Wyre Forest District Council had produced its own explanatory leaflet for Council Taxpayers and this would also be circulated to members.

Recycling

The Leader reminded members that it would shortly be the first anniversary of the adoption of the recycling scheme within Wyre Forest. The Leader and Deputy Leader were going to join a recycling crew on 8th September 2004 to see the operation of the service and to help with collections on that day.

CM.118 GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY BODIES

The Cabinet considered a report from the Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services that outlined the criteria for determining grant applications. It was noted that £12,980 was available for allocation to Voluntary Bodies for 2004/2007.

DECISION:

1. **The General Criteria for Determining Grant Applications as contained in the report be used as a basis for future grant allocations.**
2. **The Cabinet delegate responsibility to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs to make decisions on the award of grant aid to Voluntary Bodies after receiving recommendations from the Finance and Corporate Affairs Policy and Scrutiny Panel.**

CM.119 REPORT ON STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2003/2004

The Cabinet considered a report from the Head of Financial Services that asked the Cabinet to approve a pre-audit copy of the Council's Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2003/2004. It was noted that the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 which had been incorporated into the Council's Financial Regulations, required the Council's Statement of Accounts to be produced and approved before 31st August 2004. The Cabinet Member commented that the accounts would be presented to the Council's Audit Panel once they had been audited and then would be referred to full Council for approval.

DECISION: that the Pre-Audit Statement of Accounts 2003/2004 as detailed in the report be approved.

CM.120 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2003/2004 & INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2004/2005

The Cabinet considered a report from the Head of Financial Services that outlined the details of Treasury Management activities for the period 1st April 2003 to 31st March 2004 and reconfirmed the Council's investment Strategy for 2004/2005.

The cabinet member commented that it was an annual requirement to produce a treasury management annual report. It was noted that there had been a marginally lower level of interest achieved on investments. This shortfall was primarily due to the interest rate projection being marginally less than anticipated by the Council's Treasury Management Consultants.

DECISION:

1. **The Treasury Management Annual Report for 2003/2004 as detailed in the report be approved.**
2. **It be recommended to Council that the Council's Investment Strategy for 2004/2005 be approved.**

CM.121 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Cabinet considered a report from the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services that recommended to Council the adoption of a Procurement Strategy. The Cabinet Member commended that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister required all Local Authorities to have a Procurement Strategy.

DECISION: The report be noted and it be recommended to Council that the Procurement Strategy (that has been placed in Party Group rooms and Council Offices) be adopted.

CM.122 TRANSFER OF OPEN LAND OFF HERONSWOOD ROAD, KIDDERMINSTER

The Cabinet considered a report from the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services that sought approval to transfer land off Heronswood Road, Kidderminster into the ownership of the Council. The land was currently in the ownership of Fairclough Homes and was untidy and unsightly. Fairclough Homes had agreed to pay a commuted sum towards the ongoing maintenance of the land.

DECISION:

1. **The report be noted**
2. **The Open Land at Heronswood Road, Spennells, near the junction of Dunlin Drive as detailed in the report be acquired into the ownership of the Council.**
3. **The Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services and the Head of Financial Services be authorised to conclude the transfer of the land currently owned by Fairclough Homes.**

CM.123 APPOINTMENT OF PART-TIME FOOD AND SAFETY OFFICER (SELF-FUNDED)

The Cabinet considered a report from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that sought agreement for the appointment of a part-time Food and Safety Officer, self-funded with income from running external food hygiene training for an initial trial period of 12 months.

DECISION :

1. **The Head of Planning, Health and Environment be authorised to offer a 12 month appointment for a part-time Food and Safety Officer.**

2. **The Head of Planning, Health and Environment report to Cabinet on the success of the appointment prior to the end of 12 months and advise on future actions.**

CM.124 DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISION TAKING ON THE AWARD OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that asked the Cabinet to consider delegating responsibility for decision making on the award of financial support for affordable housing provision from the capital strategy to the Cabinet Member for Housing Health and Rural Affairs in conjunction with the Housing Health and Rural Affairs Policy and Scrutiny Panel.

DECISION :

1. **Responsibility be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Rural Affairs to make decisions on the award of financial support for affordable housing through the Council's capital strategy following consideration and recommendation by the Housing, Health and Rural Affairs Policy and Scrutiny Panel.**
2. **Should the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Rural Affairs disagree with the recommendation of the Housing, Health and Rural Affairs Policy and Scrutiny Panel the matter be referred to Cabinet for a final decision.**

CM.125 CAR PARKS – REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS

The Cabinet considered a report from the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services that sought Members' approval to undertake planned repairs and improvement works to pay and display car parks in Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley.

The Cabinet Member commented that some money had been set aside from last year for tidying up two key car parks – Dog Lane and the car park behind the Civic Centre in Stourport. The Dog Lane Car Park was to be cleaned up and extended. The car parks behind the Civic Centre would be resurfaced and relined. There was also the issue of proper signposting of car parks to be addressed in a uniform style. Other car parks were not included in these works because they were currently being surveyed and the results would be sent to Cabinet shortly.

DECISION:

1. **The report be noted**

2. That the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services be authorised to commence repairs, improvements and safety works to Stourport Riverside Car Parks, Dog Lane Car Park, Bewdley and improvements to pay and display car park signs across the district.

3. A future report be presented by the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services to the Cabinet for consideration relating to the capital expenditure of the £70,000 balance of the Car Park Service Option, pending the outcome of discussion with the Council Consultants following the recent car parks feasibility study.

CM.126 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

DECISION : “That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraphs 7 and 8 of Schedule 12A to the Act.”

CM.127 SUMMARY OF MINUTES

The following matters were considered after the press and public had been excluded from the meeting.

Minutes

The Exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 29th July 2004 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.