



**WYRE FOREST
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

THE CABINET

A G E N D A

Date: Thursday, 17TH March 2005

Time: 6.00 p.m.

**Venue: The Small Hall
Stourport High School
Minster Road, Stourport-on-Severn**

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

CABINET

The Cabinet Members and their responsibilities:-

Councillor S J M Clee	Leader, Strategic Overview & Direction
Councillor M J Hart	Deputy Leader, Commercial Services
Councillor Mrs M B Aston	Housing, Health and Rural Affairs
Councillor J-P Campion	Finance and Corporate Affairs
Councillor J W Dudley	Environment & Economic Regeneration
Councillor N J Desmond	Community & Leisure Services

SCRUTINY OF DECISIONS OF THE CABINET

The Council has one Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and five Policy and Scrutiny Panels, that have power to investigate policy issues and question members of the Cabinet who have special responsibility for a particular area of the Council's activities. The Cabinet also considers recommendations from the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and five Policy and Scrutiny Panels.

In accordance with Part 4 of the Council's Constitution Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Standing Order B4 any item on this agenda may be scrutinised by the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee if it is "called in" by any three non-Cabinet Members and the Chairman of the relevant Policy and Scrutiny Panel or by three members of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and any member of the relevant Policy and Scrutiny Panel.

The deadline for "calling in" Cabinet decisions is Tuesday 29th March 2005. Councillors wishing to "call in" a decision on this agenda should contact Mrs Diana Glendenning, Committee Officer, Telephone 01562-732763 or e-mail: diana.glendenning@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Urgent Key Decisions

If the Cabinet needs to take an urgent key decision, the consent of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee Chairman must be obtained. If the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee Chairman is unable to act the Chairman of the Council or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council, must give consent. Such decisions will not be the subject to the call in procedure.

For further information: -

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information you should contact Diana Glendenning, Committee Officer. Telephone : 01562-732763, e-mail diana.glendenning@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

**Wyre Forest District Council
CABINET
Thursday
17TH March 2005**

PART 1

Open to Press and Public

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3. **MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Cabinet held on the 17th February 2005 (Pages 1 - 13) and 22nd February 2005 (Pages 14 - 19).

4. **CALL INS** - a verbal update will be given on any decisions which have been "called in" since the last meeting of the cabinet.

5. **ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION**

Any item which, in the opinion of the Chairman requires consideration at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

6. **LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

6.1. **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

7. **FINANCE & CORPORATE AFFAIRS** ***John-Paul Campion***

7.1. **INTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL PLAN - 2005/2006**

(i) To consider a report from the Head of Financial Services on the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2005-2006 which was considered by the Audit Panel at its meeting on the 1st March 2005. (Pages 20 - 29)

(ii) To consider a recommendation from the Audit Panel that the Internal Audit - Annual Plan 2005-2006 be approved. (Page 30)

7.2. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

To consider a report from the Chief Executive that reviews the Council's Corporate Governance Framework. (Pages 31 - 46)

7.3. UNITS 8, 9 AND 21 HOOBROOK ENTERPRISE CENTRE

To consider a report from the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services that :-

(i) Seeks approval to accept surrenders of the tenancies of Units 8 and 9 and Unit 21 Hoobrook Enterprise Centre

(ii) To recommend to Council that the Scheme of Delegation is widened to allow the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services to accept surrenders of leases and tenancies where advantageous to the Council. (Pages 47 - 49)

8.

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMIC REGENERATION

James Dudley

8.1. BUILDING CONTROL BUSINESS PLAN 2005 - 2008

To consider a report from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that asks the Cabinet to agree the Building Control Business Plan 2005-2008. (Pages 50 - 51)

A copy of the Building Control Business Plan has been placed in Party Group Rooms and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details)

8.2. HEREFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE 'SOCIAL ENTERPRISE' SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP

To consider a report from the Chief Executive that:

(i) Informs the Cabinet of the development of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire 'Social Enterprise' Support Partnership.

(ii) Seeks approval from Council to the Partnership and its activities by approving a 'Memorandum of Understanding.' (Pages 52 - 58)

8.3. WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL EXTERNAL FUNDING STRATEGY

To consider a report from the Chief Executive which asks the Cabinet to recommend the Council to approve the External Funding Strategy. (Pages 59 - 61)

A copy of the External Funding Strategy has been placed in Party Group Rooms and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details)

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANELS

(To follow)

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC:

To consider passing the following resolution:

"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, 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

**PART 2
Exempt Information
Not Open to the Press and Public**

11. MINUTES

To confirm as a correct record the Exempt minutes of the Cabinet held on the 17th February 2005. (Page 62)

**12. HOUSING, HEALTH AND RURAL AFFAIRS
Maureen Aston**

**12.1. WYRE FOREST COMMUNITY HOUSING -
HOMELESSNESS CONTRACT**

To consider a report from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that asks Cabinet to give agreement to the final Service Level Agreements relating to the provision of the Council's homelessness, waiting list and housing advice functions by Wyre Forest Community Housing and to agree the final contract value. (Pages 63 - 65)

A copy of the Appendices to the Wyre Forest Community Housing Homelessness Contract has been placed in Party Group Rooms and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details)

13. TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN COMMUNICATED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.

Wyre Forest District Council
CABINET
Thursday 17th February 2005

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

OBSERVERS: Councillors J Baker, G W Ballinger, Mrs J Fairbrother-Millis, B T Glass, Mrs A Hingley, M J Kelly, Mrs L Hyde, C D Nicholls, Mrs F M Oborski, M M G Oborski, Mrs J L Salter, J A Shaw, M J Shellie, J C Simmonds and M J Stokes,

CM.653 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor J-P Campion.

CM.654 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor N J Desmond declared a personal interest with regard to agenda item 10.1. relating to Neighbourhood/Street Wardens as he is a board member of Wyre Forest Community Housing.

CM.655 MINUTES

DECISION: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13th January 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

CM.656 CALL INS

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

CM.657 ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CM.658 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader made no announcements.

CM.659 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANELS

1. **Recommendations from the Community and Leisure Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on the 6th January 2005**
Neighbourhood/Street Warden Schemes

The Chairman of the Community and Leisure Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel was in attendance to present the recommendations made on Neighbourhood/Street Warden Schemes.

On the 6th January 2005 officers had given a presentation from Wyre Forest Community Housing on Neighbourhood/Street Wardens. This scheme was held in very high regard. Although it was recognised that the scheme did not cover the whole of the district it did cover approximately 5,500 properties. However the Policy and Scrutiny Panel noted that the funding of the scheme was unfair in that Members felt that there should be a contribution from owner-occupiers and private tenants not just tenants of Wyre Forest Community Housing. The Panel had therefore requested that the Cabinet ask Council to carry on supporting the principle of a continued, secure Neighbourhood/Street Warden Service and to agree that the funding was unfair. They requested that the Council fund the total cost of the Existing Warden Scheme which was £230,000 per annum and that the money be included in the Council's Base Budget from April 2007 when the funding ceased.

The Leader commented that his administration was in favour of the Warden Scheme and recognised its value and benefit to the communities they served. He acknowledged the unfairness of the scheme in that the poorest and most vulnerable residents were funding the scheme whilst private tenants paid nothing for the scheme. The administration wished to take steps to alter this imbalance.

DECISION: the recommendations be noted.

2. **Recommendations from the Housing Health and Rural Affairs Panel 19th January 2005**

The Chairman of the Housing, Health and Rural Affairs Panel was in attendance to present his Panel's recommendations.

He commented that the full report to the Panel provided more comprehensive information than the summary presented to the Cabinet. He therefore asked that Cabinet Members be sent a copy.

He explained that the Panel had undertaken a fascinating and worthwhile scrutiny exercise into two main areas - the Lifeline Service and Disabled Facilities Grants. The Panel had realised that there were so many services available for older people that it was better to concentrate the scrutiny exercise on just two areas. He provided the following information:-

Lifeline Service

The Lifeline Service would be losing its dowry from the Council on the 31st March 2005. It was clear from the scrutiny exercise that this was a very worthwhile and much needed service and the panel was concerned to ensure that vulnerable people would not be left without a service.

A series of meetings had been held with staff from Wyre Forest Community Housing and they had given reassurances that vulnerable people would not lose the service on the 31st March 2005. A consultation on the future of the service was being carried out. To date 611 people had confirmed their ability to pay, 249 were unable to pay, 153 people were undergoing benefit checks, 26 people had not responded and 23 people had requested a visit to talk the matter over further.

Disabled Facilities Grants

There was a problem in getting people assessed for Disabled Facilities Grants in that there were not enough Occupational Therapists to do the assessments. It was hoped that the appointment of additional Occupational Therapists would help to rectify the problem. However one solution that had been identified was to appoint technicians on a lower grade who would be able to assess people who required small adaptations.

DECISION:

1. **Services for Older People**

The recommendations be noted.

2. **Wyre Forest Primary Care NHS Trust**

The recommendations be noted.

3. **Wyre Forest Community Housing**

The recommendations be noted.

4. **Schools Waste/Waste Minimisation in Schools**

The recommendations be noted.

The Chairman of the Housing, Health and Rural Affairs Panel was thanked for his comprehensive report.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING HELD ON 3RD FEBRUARY 2005 (OTHER THAN BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS)

The Chairman of the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group was in attendance and presented the findings of the Group.

He commented on the lack of time that his Group had had to complete a proper scrutiny exercise. However he believed that although scrutiny exercises in the past on the budget had not worked, more effective scrutiny work had been achieved this year even allowing for the lack of time. One of the main problems the Group had had to deal with was the late announcement from central Government on what the Council's settlement.

The Group had managed to scrutinise 13 topics. The Group's Chairman conceded that it would probably have been better to scrutinise what was not being done rather than what was being done!

The Chairman highlighted the following parts of his Group's report:

- (a) There was an issue with regard to the Rowland Hill Conveniences concerning the Council's obligations/responsibilities that had not been recognised in the past. This may have distorted the handling of this matter but everyone was happy with the way it was being dealt with now. At some stage the frequency of cleansing of these toilets needed to be considered.
- (b) Any confusion concerning the White Wickets Changing Facilities had been resolved and the same applied to car parking.
- (c) The Group had not been in a position to say it supported any issue because it recognised the role of political groups in formulating their own opinions.
- (d) Some items gave cause for concern and dispute eg. the Town Hall Arts Centre Project. There was concern regarding the financial expenditure for this project and whether the allocation in 2007/08 was early enough to support the Project.
- (d) With regard to Single Site, there had been a clear failure to resolve this issue and it needed to be concluded quickly.
- (e) The controversy over the charges for the cemetery would need to be resolved when the cemetery opened.
- (f) The logic behind the proposal for car parking charges needed to be reviewed annually rather than biennially was understood by the Group.
- (g) Environment and economic regeneration needed to be separated out in more detail.
- (h) The commitment to a cinema needed to be made clearer to the public. They needed to know the distinction between the small cinema that would shortly be opening in Green Street, Kidderminster and the need for a large multi-screen facility elsewhere in the town.

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group thanked Officers and Members of the Group for their hard work in difficult circumstances. He specifically thanked Councillor Campion who had attended every meeting of the Task and Finish Group for his openness and frankness. He had been very clear and helpful in his assistance and the Group had enjoyed a good working relationship with him for which the Chairman was grateful.

The Chairman was thanked by the Leader for his report.

CM.660 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2005/2006

The Leader presented the Budget Proposals on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs.

He drew Members' attention to the Key Commitments as contained in the report.

He stated that the Cabinet was proposing a Council Tax increase of 3.94%, which equated to £174.66 for a Band D property. This was a rise of £6.62 compared to 2004/2005 when the charge was £168.04.

The Leader highlighted that the Cabinet had taken on board comments about the Civic Hall in Stourport and had included money for its redecoration and lighting from the Revenue Budget.

The Cabinet had also taken note of a recommendation from the Housing, Health and Rural Affairs Scrutiny Panel regarding Neighbourhood/Street Wardens and £60,000 had been included in the Revenue Budget for this.

Proposals regarding the Town Hall had been considered and the Leader reminded members that the Council had already included money to support Disability Discrimination works at Kidderminster Town Hall in the Capital Programme.

DECISION:

A. BUDGET AND FRAMEWORK STRATEGY

The Cabinet, having considered the Budget and Policy Framework Strategy, recommended on 13th January 2005, the Budget Reports, including the recommendations of the Finance & Corporate Affairs Policy and Scrutiny Panel, and the results of the Consultation exercise, *RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL :-*

1. COUNCIL TAX LEVY 2005/2006

A Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property of £174.66 for 2005/2006 (£168.04 2004/2005) an increase of 3.94% (£6.62 over 2004/2005).

2. THREE YEAR BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2005/2008

(* Unless otherwise stated page references relate to the pink book of budget reports 2005/2006 circulated with the Cabinet agenda of 28th November 2004

2.1 The following General Fund Revenue Budget be **APPROVED** including Expenditure and Income Service Options identified in Appendices 1 and 2 :-

	Revised 2004/05 £	2005/06 £	2006/07 £	2007/08 £
Net Expenditure on Services (per paragraph 4.1, of the Budget & Policy Framework Report Page 3)	11,886,610	12,445,840	13,210,590	13,826,510
<u>Less</u>				
Capitalisation of Revenue Expenditure as per paragraph 10 of Budget & Policy Framework Report Page 7)		266,000		
Income Service Options identified in Appendix 2 of the report	-	80,910	100,490	100,490

	11,886,610	12,098,930	13,110,100	13,726,020
Add				
Expenditure Service Options identified in Appendix 1 of the report	-	463,500	371,410	590,060
Less				
Use of Reserves	<u>546,320</u>	<u>479,180</u>	<u>958,120</u>	<u>1,324,230</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>11,340,290</u>	<u>12,083,250</u>	<u>12,523,390</u>	<u>12,991,850</u>
Less				
Business Rate, Government Grant and Collection Fund Surplus (Page 3) Assumes 2½% increase in grant 2006/07 onwards	<u>5,656,510</u>	<u>6,126,470</u>	<u>6,268,870</u>	<u>6,424,590</u>
Council Tax Levy	<u>5,683,780</u>	<u>5,956,780</u>	<u>6,254,520</u>	<u>6,567,260</u>
Wyre Forest District Council Tax Level assuming 3.94% increase for 2005/06 and 5% 2006/07 onwards	£168.04	£174.66	£183.39	£192.56

The Council:

- 2.2 **PROMOTE** efficiencies within the Council through organisational change in accordance with ‘Gershon’ principles, including the completion of an annual efficiency statement to enable us to divert funding to front line services and away from bureaucracy, together with the need in future years to maintain a balanced and sustainable budget.
- 2.3 **REAFFIRM** the Council’s policy relating to Working Balances, Reserves and Provisions and notes the amount of Reserves and Provisions available for use in the Budget process. (pages 22-23)
- 2.4 **REAFFIRM** the Council’s updated medium term Finance Strategy. (pages 24-30)
- 2.5 **APPROVE** the Capitalisation of revenue expenditure identified in paragraph 10.2 of the Budget Strategy Report (page 7) in order to generate additional revenue resources in 2005/2006. This has been accounted for by means of a Capital Service Option.
- 2.6 **RESTORE** its participation at future Local Government Association Annual Conferences.
3. **COUNCIL TAX BASE** (pages 39-43)
- 3.1 **APPROVE** a Council Tax base for Wyre Forest District of 34105 as detailed in the report on Calculation of Council Tax Base 2005/2006.
- 3.2 **CONTINUE** council tax discounts for Second Homes and Long Term Empty Properties continue at 25% for 2005/2006 onwards.
4. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/2006 ONWARDS** (pages 44-60)

- 4.1 **APPROVE** the Base Capital Programme and Vehicles and Equipment Renewal Schedule.
- 4.2 **NOTE** the availability of the unallocated Capital Receipts and the ability to use Prudential Borrowing for new Capital Service Options.
- 4.3 **APPROVE** Capital Service Options and associated funding as identified in the schedule of proposed Expenditure Service Options - see Appendix 1 of the report.
- 4.4 **REAFFIRM** the Council's Capital Strategy.
- 4.5 **CONTINUE TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY** to the Head of Financial Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs to determine the most advantageous option of how to fund vehicle and equipment renewals in order to obtain value for money, by means of either medium term Borrowing (based upon anticipated life of vehicle and equipment) or by Leasing.
- 4.6 **CONTINUE** to dispose of surplus assets in order to generate new usable capital receipts, where this is proven to be economically viable in accordance with the Asset Management Plan.
5. **PRUDENTIAL SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE AND THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT 2005/2006** (Pages 61-73)
 - 5.1 **ADOPT** the Prudential Indicators and limits within Sections 3-6 of the Report.
 - 5.2 **APPROVE** the Treasury Management Strategy 2005/2006 within Sections 7-11 and associated Prudential Indicators within Section 12 of the Report.
 - 5.3 **REVISE** these Indicators following the approval of the Council's Budget Strategy as the indicators are based upon current approvals.
6. **EXPENDITURE SERVICE OPTIONS** (pages 74-90)
 - 6.1 **APPROVE** Expenditure Service Options and associated funding as identified in Appendix 1 of the report.
7. **INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS** (pages 91-114)
 - 7.1 **APPROVE** Income Service Options and associated fees and charges as identified in Appendix 2 of the report .
 - 7.2 **APPROVE** the schedule of Car Parking Charges and authority to amend the car parking places order (as set out in Cabinet Agenda Item 7(e)).

8. RISK MANAGEMENT AND THE BUDGET PROCESS (pages 115-121)
- 8.1 **ENDORSE** the Budget Risk Management process identified in the Risk Management and Budget Report and **NOTE AND ENDORSE** the Budgetary Response to identified risks as detailed on the Budget Risk Matrix Appendix 1 of the Report.
- 8.2 **MONITOR** ongoing Budget Risk quarterly as part of the Budget Monitoring process.
9. KEY COMMITMENTS 2005/2006
- 9.1 **APPROVE** the following Key Commitments for 2005/2006 :-
1. **Financial Accountability**
 2. **Environment and Economic Regeneration**
 3. **Worcestershire Hub**
 4. **Single Site (office centralisation)**
 5. **Kidderminster Cinema**
- 9.2 Appendix 3 sets these in the context of national, regional and countywide priorities.
- 9.3 Appendix 4 provides strategic statements for each Key Commitment.
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CM.661 B. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DECISION:

The recommendations of the Finance and Corporate Affairs Scrutiny Panel from its meeting held on 3rd February 2005, as set out in the report of its Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group circulated with the Cabinet agenda be approved.

- c. CONSULTATION ON THE CABINET'S BUDGET PROPOSALS 2005-2008

DECISION:

That the report be noted.

d. **FINAL DETERMINATION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT AND COLLECTION FUND SURPLUS 2005/2006**

DECISION:

The final settlement and formal calculation of the Collection Fund surplus as detailed in the report be incorporated into the Council's Budget Strategy and resultant Council Tax Levy for 2005/2006.

e. **INCOME SERVICE OPTION - PROPOSED CAR PARKING CHARGES**

DECISION:

The proposed charges be noted as these are included as one of the Council's income service options.

f. **ADDITIONAL CAPITAL RESOURCES (LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF FINANCE SERVICES)**

DECISION:

The letter from the Head of Financial Services outlining additional Capital and Revenue resources be noted.

CM.662 REPORT ON BUDGET MONITORING

A report was considered from the Head of Financial Services that reported on the monitoring of the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 and Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) guidelines.

DECISION:

- 1) The projected budget variations and comments outlined within this report be noted;
- 2) The Heads of Service continue to monitor closely the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme;
- 3) The Head of Financial Services submit further reports to the Cabinet on a quarterly basis;
- 4) The revised Prudential Indicators 2004/2007 be noted; and
- 5) The Budget Risk Management Matrix be noted.

CM.663 NEW CONSERVATION AREA FOR STONE, NR. KIDDERMINSTER

The Leader welcomed Mr M Hobson, (representing the Chairman of Stone Parish Council) to the meeting.

The Cabinet considered a report from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment. Members were advised that the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 placed a duty on every local planning authority from time to time, to determine which parts of their area were of special architectural and/or historic interest, the character of which it was desirable to preserve or enhance and to designate them as Conservation Areas.

Although it was not a statutory requirement to consult prior to the agreement of a Conservation area, advice in PPG.15 stated that there should be consultation with local residents and other local interested parties. It was therefore agreed to undertake a public consultation on the possibility of Stone being designated as a Conservation Area in September 2004.

It became clear during the public consultation that there were a number of problems. Firstly that the area was too wide and took in an area named Fenney Wood which was managed woodland. It was also clear that the buildings already listed in Stone were protected by their listing. The other buildings in Stone were not of such great architectural importance to the District and therefore did not need to be considered as part of the conservation area. The land around Stone was designated green belt and this meant that it would be difficult to get planning permission for development.

When designating areas as conservation areas it was important to have the agreement of local residents as the Council would need to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the Area. In order to secure the implementation of such proposals the support of residents and landowners was highly desirable.

The Leader asked Councillor Hobson for his comments. Mr Hobson read extracts from a letter from Stone Parish Council members that outlined their reasons for not wishing Stone to be designated a Conservation Area. He also commented that he believed that the Council should have published details of the public consultation in the local newspaper and on the local Parish Council noticeboard. The Leader thanked Councillor Hobson for his contribution to the meeting.

In view of the results of the consultation the Cabinet Member proposed not to proceed with the designation of the Conservation area at this time.

DECISION:

It be agreed not to proceed at this time with the designation of a Conservation Area in Stone, Nr Kidderminster.

CM.664 DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that informed Members of feedback received from Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) regarding the initial Draft Local Development Scheme (LDS) agreed by the Cabinet on the 16th December 2004 (minute number CM.577 refers).

Members noted that the purpose of a Local Development Scheme was to communicate the District Council's intended work programme for planning policy over the next 3 years. It had been requested that the Local Development Scheme for this Council be submitted to the Secretary of State before 28th March 2005.

The Head of Planning, Health and Environment stated that it had been intended that the Government Office would be sent all the documentation relating to the Local Development Scheme. However the Government Office West Midlands had advised that the Planning Inspectorate had raised concerns regarding the grouping of the Core Strategy with the Site Allocations and Development Control Policies Development Plan documents. It considered that the Core Strategy Development Plan Documents should be submitted and examined before the other two Development Plan Documents in order to ensure that the strategic issues were dealt with first. In its opinion this would avoid strategic matters getting slowed down in detail and also avoid the possibility of abortive work being carried out on the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

The Head of Planning, Health and Environment envisaged that as the Local Development Plan was straightforward, it was likely to be approved and then it would come into effect 4 weeks after submission.

DECISION

- 1. The Local Development Scheme for Wyre Forest District be based on the draft dated 2nd December 2004 as amended by Appendices 1 and 2 of the Report.**
- 2. Subject to not receiving any notification from the Secretary of State, under Regulation 11 (3b or 3c) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, the submitted Local Development Scheme shall have effect from 27th March 2005.**

CM.665 FEASIBILITY STUDY TO PROVIDE 250 EXTRA CAR PARKING SPACES FOR THE DISTRICT

A report was considered from the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services that outlined options available relating to the provision of a multi-storey car park in Kidderminster Town Centre.

The Cabinet was advised that the Council's consultants, Colin Buchanan and Partners had undertaken a parking review in December 2003 covering the three town centres of Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley. The resulting report concluded that there was a need for additional off-street parking in Kidderminster town centre. At the Executive meeting on 22nd April 2004 officers had been instructed to engage consultants to identify the preferred site and design option for the provision of an additional 250 car parking spaces (minute number ED.305 refers).

DECISION:

- 1. Pike Mills be the site of the new multi-storey Car Park.**

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2. **Approval be given in principle to the provision of a multi-storey car park based on a brickwork clad construction with the provision of retail space at street level with ground, first and second floor parking.**
 3. **The Head of Cultural, Leisure & Commercial Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Economic Regeneration, the Head of Financial Services and the Head of Legal & Democratic Services appoint consultants to undertake:-**
 - i. **Traffic Assessment**
 - ii. **Business Case Analysis**
 - iii. **Design, Costing & Planning**
 4. **The Head of Cultural, Leisure & Commercial Services be authorised to undertake £25,000 of capital expenditure from the car parks service option to improve the lighting at the Bromsgrove Street surface level car park.**
 5. **The Head of Cultural, Leisure & Commercial Services, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Environment & Economic Regeneration, be authorised to spend the balance of the car park improvement budget on traffic management improvements, infill improvements and general maintenance work on the Council's existing car parks.**

CM.666 IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHILDREN'S ACT 2004 ON DISTRICT COUNCILS

A report was considered from the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services that advised Members of the responsibilities for District Councils arising from the Children's Act (2004).

It was noted that there were 5 key areas for the District Council where the Children's Act would have an impact. These were:-

- Housing and Homelessness
- Leisure and Play
- Planning, public space and the built environment
- Partnerships with voluntary and statutory agencies
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

It was proposed that the Council should have a Lead Councillor and Lead Officer who could ensure that Children's Services were considered at every opportunity. There were no financial implications arising from these proposals.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

1. The report be noted
2. The Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure Services and the Head of Cultural, Leisure & Commercial Services (or his authorised representative) be Lead Councillor and Lead Officer respectively for Children's Services and to ensure that the requirements of the Act are carried through.
3. The Head of Cultural, Leisure & Commercial Services (or his authorised representative) represent the Council on the Children's Fund Board.

CM.667 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 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CM.668 SUMMARY OF MINUTES

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 13th January 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

2. COUNCIL TAX AND NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES WRITE OFF OF AMOUNTS OUTSTANDING

The Cabinet agreed to write off sums in respect of National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax as detailed in the report considered by Cabinet.

Wyre Forest District Council
THE CABINET
Thursday 22nd February 2005

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, N J Desmond.

OBSERVERS:

Councillors: G W Ballinger, A J Buckley, Mrs H E Dyke, Mrs J Fairbrother-Millis, B T Glass, Mrs A T Hingley, M B Kelly, Miss S C Meekings, M M G Oborski, Mrs J L Salter, M J Shellie and K J Stokes.

CM.761 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

CM.762 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor N J Desmond declared a personal interest in the Service Option relating to Neighbourhood Wardens as he is a Board Member of Wyre Forest Community Housing.

CM.763 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2005/2006/CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

Further to minute CM.660 of its 17th February 2005 meeting, the Cabinet considered revised Budget Proposals for 2005/2006 in conjunction with a report from the Head of Financial Services on Consequential Amendments to Prudential Indicators. Both reports were circulated at the meeting.

(a) Budget and Policy Framework Strategy 2005/2006

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs advised that consideration had been given to proposed amendments to the Cabinet's Budget Strategy put forward by the Independent Kidderminster Health and Hospital Concern Group, Labour Group, Liberal Democrats and Liberal Group. These had been scrutinised by the Finance and Corporate Affairs Policy and Scrutiny Panel at its meeting the previous evening, 21st February 2005.

He informed Members that in the light of the proposals made by the Groups the following additions had been included into the budget (as detailed in the report now before the Cabinet):-

-
- A) Spennells Playing Field - Provision of a Youth Shelter in support of Aggborough/Spennells Community Action Group in providing teenage facilities on Spennells Estate.
- B) Town Hall Arts Centre - to provide resources to take the proposed Arts Centre Scheme forward to listed building planning application position. Expenditure subject to Council approval following consideration of a detailed business case. The necessary DDA works to the Town Hall would be progressed during 2005/06 from the Capital Programme Provision
- C) Community Alarm Equipment - to extend Council Policy and provide a capital grant out of 'Right to Buy' receipts to Wyre Forest Community Housing of £500,000 over a period of 7 to 8 years for the purchase of new and replacement equipment. Wyre Forest Community Housing in return will continue to provide a free lifeline service to users whose free service under the Housing Transfer arrangements is due to end on 31st March 2005.
- D) Regeneration and Economic Development Activities - To continue to budget for 2005/2007 for the Economic Development and Tourism Section to fund Wyre Forest District Council Business Grants, Business Support, Strategy Development, partnership projects and promotional activities.
- E) Concessionary Travel - WFDC Scheme - To maintain existing charge for bus permit at £6.00. To increase the cost of a single journey from 40p to 50p from 01/07/06. The increase to be partially offset the Council's payments of revenue foregone to bus operators that have increased by 30% as a result of usage and revised calculations for reimbursement. Net cost of service 2005/06 = £374,830. A scrutiny exercise to be carried out during the next municipal year to investigate moving to a National Scheme and to a Countywide Scheme from 1st April 2006.

It was noted that the Cabinet's Budget Proposals would be considered by the Council at its meeting the following evening, 23rd February 2005.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

The Cabinet, having re-considered the Budget and Policy Framework Strategy, recommended on 17th February 2005, and recommendations and considerations of the Finance & Corporate Affairs Policy and Scrutiny Panel, on 21st February 2005, ***recommend to Council :-***

1. COUNCIL TAX LEVY 2005/2006

A Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property be £174.66 for 2005/2006 (£168.04 2004/2005) an increase of 3.94% (£6.62 over 2004/2005).

2. THREE YEAR BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2005/2008

2.1 The following General Fund Revenue Budget be approved including Expenditure and Income Service Options identified in Appendices 1 and 2 :-

2006/07	Revised 2004/05 2007/08	2005/06
£	£	£
Net Expenditure on Services (per paragraph 4.1, of the Budget & Policy Framework Report Page 3)	11,886,610 13,210,590	12,445,840 13,826,510
Less		
Capitalisation of Revenue Expenditure as per paragraph 10 of Budget & Policy Framework Report Page 7)		266,000
Income Service Options identified in Appendix 2	-	40,910
<u>100,490</u>	<u>100,490</u>	<u>40,910</u>
	11,886,610	12,138,930
	13,110,100	13,726,020
Add		
Expenditure Service Options identified in Appendix 1	-	465,500
459,160	477,310	
Less		
Use of Reserves	546,320	521,180
Net Expenditure	11,340,290	12,083,250
	12,523,390	12,991,850
Less		
Business Rate, Government Grant and Collection Fund Surplus (Page 3)		5,656,510
<u>6,126,470</u>	<u>6,268,870</u>	<u>6,424,590</u>
Assumes 2½% increase in grant 2006/07 onwards		
Council Tax Levy	5,683,780	5,956,780
<u>6,254,520</u>	<u>6,567,260</u>	
Wyre Forest District Council Tax Level assuming 3.94% increase for 2005/06 and 5% 2006/07 onwards	£168.04	£174.66
£183.39	£192.56	

The Council:

- 2.2 **PROMOTE** efficiencies within the Council through organisational change in accordance with 'Gershon' principles, including the completion of an annual efficiency statement to enable us to divert funding to front line services and away from bureaucracy, together with the need in future years to maintain a balanced and sustainable budget.
- 2.3 **REAFFIRM** the Council's policy relating to Working Balances, Reserves and Provisions and notes the amount of Reserves and Provisions available for use in the Budget process. (pages 22-23)
- 2.4 **REAFFIRM** the Council's updated medium term Finance Strategy. (pages 24-30)
- 2.5 **APPROVE** the Capitalisation of revenue expenditure identified in paragraph 10.2 of the Budget Strategy Report (page 7) in order to generate additional revenue resources in 2005/2006. This has been accounted for by means of a Capital Service Option.
- 2.6 **RECOMMEND** the restoration of the Council's participation at future Local Government Association Annual Conferences.
3. **COUNCIL TAX BASE** (pages 39-43)
- 3.1 **APPROVE** a Council Tax base for Wyre Forest District of 34105 as detailed in the report on Calculation of Council Tax Base 2005/2006.
- 3.2 **COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS** for Second Homes and Long Term Empty Properties continue at 25% for 2005/2006 onwards.
4. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/2006 ONWARDS** (pages 44-60)
- 4.1 **APPROVE** the Base Capital Programme and Vehicles and Equipment Renewal Schedule.
- 4.2 **NOTE** the availability of the unallocated Capital Receipts and the ability to use Prudential Borrowing for new Capital Service Options.
- 4.3 **RECOMMEND** Capital Service Options and associated funding as identified in the schedule of proposed Expenditure Service Options - see Appendix 1.
- 4.4 An **UPDATED** Capital Programme (including proposed Capital Options) is enclosed as Appendix 5.
- 4.5 **REAFFIRM** the Council's Capital Strategy.

- 4.6 ***DELEGATED AUTHORITY*** continue to be given to the Head of Financial Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs to determine the most advantageous option of how to fund vehicle and equipment renewals in order to obtain value for money, by means of either medium term Borrowing (based upon anticipated life of vehicle and equipment) or by Leasing.
- 4.7 ***CONTINUE*** to dispose of surplus assets in order to generate new usable capital receipts, where this is proven to be economically viable in accordance with the Asset Management Plan.
5. **PRUDENTIAL SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE AND THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT 2005/2006 (Pages 61-73 and Agenda Item 5)**
- 5.1 ***ADOPT*** the Prudential Indicators and limits within Sections 3-6 of the Report.
- 5.2 ***RECOMMEND*** the Treasury Management Strategy 2005/2006 within Sections 7-11 and associated Prudential Indicators within Section 12 of the Report.
- 5.3 ***RECOMMEND*** the amendments to Prudential Indicators identified in Appendix 1 of Agenda Item 5.
- 5.4 ***RECOMMEND*** the consequential list of Prudential Indicators and Limits as detailed in Appendix 2 of Agenda Item 5.
6. EXPENDITURE SERVICE OPTIONS (pages 74-90)
- 6.1 ***RECOMMEND*** Expenditure Service Options and associated funding as identified in Appendix 1.
7. **INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS (pages 91-114)**
- 7.1 ***RECOMMEND*** Income Service Options and associated fees and charges as identified in Appendix 2.
- 7.2 ***RECOMMEND*** the schedule of Car Parking Charges and authority to amend the car parking places order (as set out in Cabinet Agenda Item 7(e).
8. **RISK MANAGEMENT AND THE BUDGET PROCESS (pages 115-121)**
- 8.1 ***ENDORSE*** the Budget Risk Management process identified in the Risk Management and Budget Report and ***NOTE AND ENDORSE*** the Budgetary Response to identified risks as detailed on the Budget Risk Matrix Appendix 1 of the Report.

8.2 **MONITOR** ongoing Budget Risk quarterly as part of the Budget Monitoring process.

9. KEY COMMITMENTS 2005/2006

9.1 The Council approve the following Key Commitments for 2005/2006 :-

1. Financial Accountability
2. Environment and Economic Regeneration
3. Worcestershire Hub
4. Single Site (office centralisation)
5. Kidderminster Cinema

(Note: Appendix 3 of the report sets these in the context of national, regional and countywide priorities.

Appendix 4 of the report provides strategic statements for each Key Commitment.)

(b) Consequential Amendments to Prudential Indicators as a result of the Above Recommendation to Council

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

1. The amendments to Prudential Indicators identified in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.
2. The consequential list of Prudential Indicators and Limits as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 6.10 pm.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH March 2005

AUDIT PANEL

1ST March 2005

Internal Audit – Annual Audit Plan 2005 – 2006

COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	
CORPORATE THEME:	Improving Corporacy & Performance
KEY PRIORITY:	Financial and Asset Management
STRATEGY:	Audit Resource
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor J-P Campion
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Financial Services
CONTACT OFFICER:	Joan Hill – Extension 2102
AN OPEN ITEM	

1. Purpose of Report
 - 1.1 To inform members of the Internal Audit - Annual Audit Plan 2005 – 2006, attached as an Appendix.
- 2 Recommended:
 - 2.1 It is recommended that the Internal Audit – Annual Audit Plan 2005 – 2006 attached as an Appendix be recommended to Cabinet.
- 3 Background
 - 3.1 The requirement for an Internal Audit function is explicitly required in the local government legislation under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. This legislation requires that authorities “make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs”.
 - 3.2 More specific requirements for internal audit are detailed in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 in that the Council must “maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper internal audit practices”. The guidance accompanying the legislation states that proper internal audit practices are those contained within the CIPFA’s Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom 2003.
 - 3.3 For reference purposes CIPFA’s definition of Internal Audit is the following:

Internal Audit is an assurance function that primarily provides an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the control environment comprising risk management, control and governance by evaluating its effectiveness in achieving the organisation’s objectives. It

objectively examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of the control environment as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.

3.4 Further CIPFA adds that:

Whilst Internal Audit “primarily” provides an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the control environment, it may also undertake other, non-assurance work at the request of the organisation subject to the availability of skills and resources. This can include consultancy work: indeed, Internal Audit intrinsically delivers consultancy services when making recommendations for improvement arising from assurance work, and fraud-related work.

3.5 In accordance with the Code of practice the Council approved Terms of Reference for the Internal Audit service in December 2003. These terms of reference at paragraph 3.1 (a) require the audit plan for the forthcoming financial year to be approved prior to the start of the financial year.

3.6 The Executive approved the three-year Strategic Plan for the period 2003 to 2006 in March 2003 which prioritised the areas to be audited over the period and allocated resources to each area. The Strategic Plan was prepared following an Internal Audit Needs assessment, which evaluated the risk and materiality of the authority’s activities and identified all areas that needed Internal Audit attention.

3.7 The main aim of the Strategic Plan is to provide overall direction to the Internal Audit service.

3.8 The strategic plan is viewed flexibly as issues may arise during the currency of the plan which divert Internal Audit away from planned work. This unfortunately has been found to be a common event and therefore the plan is seen as a statement of intent, which can be amended, as necessary, without having a damaging effect on the overall direction of the audit service.

3.9 The Annual Audit Plan is a detailed operational plan which has been prepared to ensure that changes in priorities or risk are considered for 2005 – 2006 in line with the Code of Practice on Scope of work. This includes the requirements of the Financial Services Manager (Audit & Benefits) as the Council’s Chief Auditor to provide an opinion on the internal control system of the authority each year. In addition the requirements of the Statement of Internal Control to be included within the Council’s annual financial statements signed by Chief Executive and the Leader has also been taken into account.

3.10 The Annual Audit Plan has been prepared in accordance with the “managed audit approach” with the external auditors to maximise the total audit resource available to the Council.

3.11 The Annual Audit Plan has been circulated to all Chief Officers for comment and discussion as well as to the External Auditors, KPMG.

3.12 Performance of the service is monitored against this plan each quarter during the year, which is reported to the Head of Financial Services and to the Audit Panel.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Consultees:

CMT
KPMG – External Auditors

Background Papers:

Strategic Audit Plan 2003 – 2006
Quarterly Audit Reports 2004

Appendix

Internal Audit – Annual Audit plan 2005 – 2006

21.2.05

APPENDIX

INTERNAL AUDIT

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN

2005 – 2006



ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

		<u>2005/06 DAYS</u>
Systems and Probity	NOTE 1	598
Computer Audit	NOTE 2	80
Bought in Computer Audit	NOTE 2	50
Contract Audit	NOTE 3	60
Sub-Total Planned Work		788
Consultancy and Advice		50
Fraud and Corruption Contingency		50
Specific Duties	NOTE 4	50
WORK LOAD		938
AVAILABLE DAYS	NOTE 5	760
Balance	NOTE 6	178
TOTAL		938

NOTES

1. The days per service are shown on Pages 1 to 8.
2. An analysis of the areas covered is shown on Page 9.
3. An analysis of the area covered is shown on Page 10.
4. A breakdown of the specific service duties follows on Page 11.
5. An analysis of the available days is shown on Page 12.
6. It is proposed to resource the balance of days through the use of the expenditure service option.

OVERALL COMMENTS

The plan does not allow for any work be carried out on Best Value or Value for Money reviews for Internal Audit or to assist other departments in their plans.

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

	Page	System Audit Days
Corporate Systems	2	160
Cultural, Leisure and Commercial	3	58
Financial Services	4	235
Human Resources (including ICT)	5	60
Legal and Democratic Services	6	25
Planning, Health and Environment	7	35
Strategy and Performance Unit	8	25
TOTAL		598

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

CORPORATE SYSTEMS

	2005/06 Days
Car Loans	5
Corporate Dress	5
Creditors	40
Debtors	30
Flexible Working Hours	10
Inventories	10
Petty Cash Payments	10
Post Opening Procedures	10
Postal/Franking	10
Professional Subs	10
Scale of Charges	20
TOTAL	160

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

CULTURAL, LEISURE AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Head of Service – Andrew Dickens

	2005/06 Days
Accounting and Budget Control	10
Asset Management Plan	5
Bewdley Craft and Museum	3
Cemetery	10
Creditors (including purchase ordering)	5
Pest Control: Dogs, Rats and Wasps	5
Bewdley Leisure Centre	5
Glades	10
Stourport Sports Centre	5
TOTAL	58

Cultural and Arts, Leisure Strategy, Sports Development ,Parks and Open Spaces, Commercial Services,Street Scene, Car Parks, Technical Services

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Head of Service – Keith Bannister (Section 151 Officer)

	2005/06Days
Accounting	10
Benefits	100
Budget Control and Monitoring	5
Cash Income and Bank	30
Concessionary Travel	5
Council Tax	40
NNDR	20
Treasury Management	10
VAT	15
TOTAL	235

Corporate Accountancy, Revenues, Audit, Benefits (Housing and Council Tax),
Accountancy Services. Cashiers

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ICT

Head of Service – Paul Ryder

	2005/06Days
Payroll including Travel Claims	30
PAYE	10
Recruitment	10
Training Expenses	10
TOTAL	60

Human Resources, IT, Website, Equal Opportunities, Training and Development,
Risk Management, Health and Safety, Payroll,
Member Services (Secretarial and Clerical)

NOTE

Computer Audit and Bought in Computer Audit days are shown on Page 9.

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Head of Service – Caroline Caygill (Monitoring Officer)

	2005/06Days
Debt Recovery Procedures	5
Electoral Registration and Elections	15
Terrier	5
TOTAL	25

Monitoring Officer, Legal, Democratic, Land Charges, Electoral Registration and Elections, Printing, Terrier, Councillor Support (Advice and Information)

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

PLANNING, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Head of Service – Mike Parker

	2005/06 Days
Development Control	10
Hackney Carriages	15
WFCH Agency Including Homeless	10
TOTAL	35

Planning, Local Plans, Development Control, Building Control, Conservation and Trees, Sustainability (policy), Enforcement, Highways and Transport, Housing, Environmental Health, Licensing (including Liquor licensing)

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006
STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE UNIT

Chief Executive

	2005/06Days
Data Protection/Freedom of Information	5
E-government	5
Partnerships	10
Performance Management	5
TOTAL	25

Policy and Performance, Economic Development and Tourism, Special Projects and Partnerships, Organisational Change and Communications, E-government, Best Value Performance Indicators, Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Newsyrye, Community Safety

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

Computer Audit – 80 Days

Assistance and Advice to users re:

BACS, Computer Operations, Internet Security and E-mail policy and procedures, Cash receipting system replacement, Financial Management System replacement, ICE Group Matters, System development and feasibility studies

And the following reviews:-

	2005/06 Days
Internet/E-mail Access and Usage	10
Network security including IT Management review	15
Wireless Technology	5

Bought in Computer Audit – 50 days per annum

Services currently provided by the Internal Audit section of the City of Worcester.

Application Control Reviews:-		Days
IBS	NNDR	10
Agresso	General Ledger	20
	Bank Reconciliation	
	Debtors (Accounts Receivable)	
	Creditors (Accounts Payable)	
	(System go live date 1 st April 2005)	
Radius	Cash Receipting	10
	(System go live date 1 st September 2005)	
	Internet, Website and E-mail Security	10
	TOTAL	50

ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005 TO 2006

Contract Audit – 60 days

Contract Audit includes:

- Contract Specifications
- Tendering Process including Tender lists
- Award of Contract
- Contract Monitoring
- Contract Payments
- Contract Register
- Final Accounts as appropriate
- Post contract reviews

And the following Specific contracts/ items:-

	<u>Days</u>	<u>Division</u>
Works relating to Duke House Council Offices	5	CLCS
Works relating to Town Hall Worcestershire Hub	10	CLCS
Leisure Contract (Glades, SSC and BLC)	5	CLCS
Disposal of Council Assets	10	CLCS
Corporate purchase agreements	5	CLCS
Worcestershire HUB Contract	5	Corporate

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
17th March 2005

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE AUDIT PANEL MEETING
HELD ON THE 1ST MARCH 2005

INTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2005-2006

The Audit Panel considered the Internal Audit - Annual Audit Plan 2005-2006 at their meeting on the 1st March 2005.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

The Internal Audit, Annual Audit Plan 2005-2006 attached as an appendix to the report, be approved.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING
17 MARCH 2005

Corporate Governance Framework

COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	Internal Organisational theme
CORPORATE PLAN THEME	Improving Corporacy and Performance
KEY PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate Development• Organisational Performance
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor John-Paul Campion (Finance & Corporate Affairs)
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Walter Delin, Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER	Peter Jones, Corporate Performance advisor (Ext 2723) Email:peter.jones@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES	Appx 1: Corporate Gov Framework Appx 2: Progress Sheet (2004/05) Appx 3: Proposed Action (2005/06)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To review the Council's Corporate Governance Framework.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

2.1 The action taken to implement the Corporate Governance Framework since the last report to the (then) Executive on 18th March 2004, as set out in Appendix 2 to this report, be noted.

2.2 The proposed action to implement the Corporate Government Framework in 2005/06, as set out in Appendix 3 to this report, be approved.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council adopted a Corporate Governance Framework (CGF) in February 2003. This defines 'Corporate Governance' as "the system by which local authorities direct and control their functions and relate to their communities".

3.2 Our CGF is based on a framework developed by CIPFA/SOLACE specifically for local authorities and is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report for background information.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Matters relating to the implementation of the CGF are reported to Members annually, the last report being to the Executive on 18 March 2004. A summary of the agreed action for the year (2004/05) and the latest progress is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report.
- 4.2 Proposed action to be taken in 2005/06 is set out in **Appendix 3**. It should also be noted that following the Council's recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the development of an Improvement Plan, Appendix 3 also shows links (where applicable) to Improvement Plan issues, in addition to the CGF dimensions.
- 4.3 For Members' further information, an Independent Commission* on Good Governance in Public Services has recently published guidance (*The Good Governance Standard for Public Services*), which identifies a new set of principles for good governance:-
- Focussing on an organisation's **purpose and outcomes** for citizens and service users
 - Performing effectively in clearly defined **functions and roles**
 - Promoting **values** for the organisation and demonstrating these through **behaviour**
 - Taking informed, **transparent decisions** and **managing risk**
 - Developing the **capacity and capability** of the governing body to be effective
 - **Engaging stakeholders** and making **accountability** real.

This guidance has only just been published and a further report on its impact on the Council's CGF will therefore be given to Members later this year (2005).

(* Established by CIPFA, the Office for Public Management and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation)

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The contents of this report are within the Council's existing policy framework.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

8. CONSULTEES

- Corporate Management Team

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Corporate Governance in Local Government : A Keystone for Community Governance CIPFA / SOLACE (2001)
- The Good Governance Standard for Public Services *The Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services (2005)*

AGENDA ITEM NO

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
17th March 2005

Units 8, 9 and 21 Hoobrook Enterprise Centre

COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	Local Organisation Theme
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	Improving Corporacy and Performance
KEY PRIORITY:	Financial and Asset Management
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor John Campion
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kevin Moore 2958 kevin.moore@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES	None

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to accept surrenders of the tenancies of Units 8 and 9 and Unit 21 Hoobrook Enterprise Centre.
- 1.2 To propose that the Scheme of Delegation is widened to allow the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services to accept surrenders of leases and tenancies where advantageous to the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 **The surrender of Contract Auto Engineering Ltd's tenancy of Unit 21 Hoobrook Enterprise Centre be accepted.**
- 2.2 **The surrender of EMP Static Guarding's tenancy of Units 8 and 9 Hoobrook Enterprise Centre upon their completing a tenancy of Unit 21 Hoobrook Enterprise Centre be accepted.**

The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND to Council

- 2.3 **The Scheme of Delegation to Officers be amended to give the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services authority to accept surrenders of leases and tenancies where advantageous to the Council.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The tenant of Unit 21 Hoobrook Enterprise Centre, Contract Auto Engineering Ltd, has outgrown these premises and has served 6 months' notice to terminate its tenancy, in order that it can move to larger accommodation off the Estate. The tenancy will terminate on 27 July 2005. The current rental is £4,530 pa.
- 3.2 EMP Static Guarding has a lease of Units 8 and 9 on a term expiring on 13th November 2009 paying £3,300 pa. EMP Static Guarding are also looking for larger premises and have agreed to take a lease of Unit 21 at a rent of £4,530 pa for a term expiring on 13 November 2009. The tenancy would start on the date their existing tenancy of Units 8 & 9 was surrendered.
- 3.3 Contract Auto Engineering are willing to surrender the remaining term of their tenancy of Unit 21 prior to its expiry in July. Units 8 & 9 would be re-let on the open market once vacated by EMP Static Guarding.

4. DELEGATED AUTHORITY

- 4.1 The present Scheme of Delegation allows the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services to agree terms for the grant of leases and tenancies within certain parameters. However, there is no delegated authority to accept surrenders of leases and tenancies. Members will be aware that this is the second report to Cabinet in a short space of time seeking approval to accepting a surrender of a lease in order to facilitate the re-letting of premises at a higher rental. In the interests of expediency, it is suggested that these are matters which could properly be dealt with under delegated authority.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Any decision to allow Delegated Authority to accept surrenders will be on the basis that this is only exercised where advantageous to the Council.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Actions taken under the Scheme of Property Delegations have to be reported to Members

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues.

8. **CONSULTEES**

CMT

9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

2nd March 2005

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
17TH MARCH 2005

Building Control Business Plan 2005-2008

COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME OPEN PLAN	Better Environment
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	Managing the Local Environment
KEY PRIORITY:	Development Assessment and Building Control
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor J. Dudley
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Planning, Health and Environment
CONTACT OFFICER	Ian Martin at Ext. 2526 ian.martin@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES	Building Control Business Plan 2005 – 2008 (available in Group Rooms - a public inspection copy is available on request (see front cover for details))

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 For Cabinet to agree the Building Control Business Plan 2005-2008.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

2.1 **The Building Control Business Plan 2005-2008, as set out in the separate appendix to this report be agreed.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The last agreed Building Control Business Plan was for the period 2002-2005. It is important that the Building Control Section has an up-to-date and discrete business plan to ensure that the service remains competitive in the market place against approved inspectors.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The proposed business plan 2005 – 2008 rolls forward and updates the previous business plan in a similar format. The actions within the business plan will help the building control section secure its market share of inspections and allow the service to remain competitive.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Building Control service operates a trading account which aims to break even over a three year rolling period. There are no financial implications which cannot be met from within budget.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Not applicable

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The adoption of the 2005 – 2008 business plan for Building Control will ensure the Council continues to provide a 'fit for purpose' and competitive service.

9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 Head of Financial Services

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Building Control Business Plan 2002 - 2005

28th February 2005

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING
17th MARCH 2005

Herefordshire And Worcestershire
“Social Enterprise” Support Partnership

OPEN	
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	Shared Prosperity
CORPORATE PLAN THEME	Promoting Economic Prosperity
CORPORATE PLAN KEY PRIORITY	Business Development and Advice
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor James Dudley
HEAD OF SERVICE	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER	Steve Singleton Ext 2752 steve.singleton@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDIX	Memorandum of Understanding

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the development of the Herefordshire & Worcestershire “Social Enterprise” Support Partnership and
- 1.2 To obtain District Council support to the Partnership and its activities by approving a “Memorandum of Understanding”.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 **The development of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire “Social Enterprise” Support Partnership, as detailed in this report, be noted and**
- 2.2 **To recommend that the Council sign up to the principles set out in the draft “Memorandum of Understanding”, as detailed in the Appendix to this report.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Social Enterprises are legally constituted businesses whose primary objectives are socially based, as opposed to the need to maximise

profit for shareholders and owners. Any financial surpluses are principally reinvested for social purpose in the business or in the community

- 3.2 Social Enterprises tackle a wide range of social and environmental issues and operate in all parts of the economy. By using business solutions to achieve public good, the Government believes that Social Enterprises have a distinct and valuable role to play in helping create a strong, sustainable and socially inclusive economy.
- 3.3 Successful Social Enterprises can play an important role in helping deliver on many of the Government's key policy objectives by:
 - helping to drive up productivity and competitiveness;
 - contributing to socially inclusive wealth creation;
 - enabling individuals and communities to work towards regenerating their local neighbourhoods;
 - showing new ways to deliver public services; and
 - helping to develop an inclusive society and active citizenship.

4. KEY ISSUES - CURRENT PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Worcestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council have been working with Community First* to develop an independent Partnership in response to the need for a more effective and co-ordinated approach to developing and supporting social enterprises in the two counties.

** "Community First" is the Malvern based charity that offers support and advice to voluntary organisations and local communities across the two Counties,*

- 4.2 The Economic Regeneration and External Funding Officer has represented this Council in the initial development process.
- 4.3 In order to take proposals forward the District Council (and other "partners") are requested to "sign up to" a "Memorandum of Understanding" - a draft of which is attached to this report (Appendix 1) which sets out:-
 - The Partnership's Aims for Social Enterprise development
 - Proposed Roles of partners
 - Partnership Structure
 - The Commitment required from Partner Organisations (see 4.3.1 below)
 - First Priorities.

- 4.4 Organisations involved in the Partnership are being asked to commit themselves to:-
- Aligning organisation's activity (ie the District Council's activity) to the social enterprise strategy framework.
 - Engaging with the Partnership around the co-ordinated development and delivery of support to social enterprises.
 - Sending a representative to partnership meetings.
 - Communicating with partners the intent to pursue funding opportunities relating to social enterprise development or support.
 - Working within task groups to achieve specific common actions.
 - Communicating the Councils plans and activity around social enterprise.
 - Collaborating where appropriate to deliver support infrastructure for social enterprise.
 - Badging any Social Enterprise promotional activity and literature in Herefordshire and Worcestershire under the partnership "brand".
 - Raising awareness of the partnership regionally and locally.
- 4.5 The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Partnership is seeking the support of wider organisations in order to move the proposals forward.
- 4.6 Worcestershire County Council will continue to take the lead role, on behalf of its local authority partners in the County. It is proposed that the Council continues to send a representative to future meeting and report back to CMT and the Cabinet as required as regards progress.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The concept of social enterprise is contained in the Community Strategy.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Participating in this partnership will enable the Council to promote a more effective and co-ordinated approach to developing and supporting social enterprises in the area.

9. CONSULTEES

None.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 “Unlocking Enterprise – Infrastructure Support for Social Enterprise Herefordshire & Worcestershire” report for Community First.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Social Enterprise Support Partnership Memorandum of Understanding

Social Enterprise can make a significant social and economic impact in local communities. It can help communities focus on their own regeneration, drive economic sustainability for the social economy and enable individuals to discover and reach their own potential despite disadvantage.

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Social Enterprise Support Partnership has been brought together in response to the Unlocking Enterprise research (February 2004), and the need for a more effective and co-ordinated approach to developing and supporting Social Enterprise in the two counties.

The Partnership's strategic aims for social enterprise development and support are to:

Grow the social enterprise economy
Form a sustainable social economy
Increase access to local services
Enable access to quality employment
Coordinate sector development and resourcing.

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Social Enterprise Support Partnership is an independent partnership of local authorities, business support agencies, voluntary and community sector support agencies, social enterprise development agencies and social enterprises. It is aligned to the Local Strategic Partnerships of Herefordshire and Worcestershire and the West Midlands Social Enterprise Network. Members of the Partnership are mutually accountable for achieving agreed objectives.

The Partnership's role will be:

• **Co-ordination**

Be the focal point for Social Enterprise development and support activity in the two counties, co-ordinating the activity of all agencies.

Gather intelligence on social enterprise activity and keep abreast of developments locally, regionally and nationally.

Seek resources to further the development of social enterprise in Herefordshire and Worcestershire and be the channel through which resources are directed.

• **Strategic**

Link with the Herefordshire Partnership and Worcestershire Partnership structures.

Drive the implementation of the social enterprise strategy and monitor its progress and impact.

Assess the value of individual partner input and evidence the value of the partnership's work.

Link with regional and national structures and strategies to develop the sector.

- **Quality of delivery**

Seek to improve the capacity of local agencies to deliver support to social enterprises and seek to reconfigure services and resources to improve delivery.

Encourage support organisations to work together, identify and support lead roles and responsibilities relevant to partner organisation's core expertise.

- **Promotional**

Promote the values of social enterprise

Consult with the local social economy.

Assist information sharing in the social economy through events and an e-newsletter.

Raise the profile of Social Enterprise in the two counties.

Ensure that the Herefordshire and Worcestershire 'voice' is heard in the development of Social Enterprise policy regionally and nationally.

Identify opportunities for social enterprise to make a difference.

The structure of the Partnership will be:

- A Strategic Co-ordinating Group which will meet 2-3 times each year to co-ordinate progress on the action plan. This will be facilitated by officers of Worcestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council, and is seeking a Chair from either the Social Enterprise sector or a regional organisation.
- Task groups working on particular projects identified in the action plan, some led by a particular organisation, and some involving a number of organisations, and cluster groups, bringing together people from organisations with similar interests, for instance social enterprises involved in waste and recycling.
- Subject to enthusiasm from the sector, the Partnership would seek to establish a regular Social Enterprise conference or Forum for social entrepreneurs in the area, possibly combining this with an annual trade fair.

Organisations involved in the Partnership are asked to commit themselves to:

- Aligning your organisation's activity to the social enterprise strategy framework.
- Engaging with the partnership around the coordinated development and delivery of support to social enterprises.
- Sending a representative to partnership meetings.
- Communicating with partners the intent to pursue funding opportunities relating to social enterprise development or support.
- Working within task groups to achieve specific common actions.
- Communicating your organisation's plans and activity around social enterprise.

- Collaborating where appropriate to deliver support infrastructure for social enterprise.
- Badging any Social Enterprise promotional activity and literature in Herefordshire and Worcestershire under the partnership 'brand'.
- Raising awareness of the partnership regionally and locally.

The first priorities of the Partnership in 2005 will be:

Establishing an effective referral and skills network between organisations and individuals working directly with social enterprises.

A Social Enterprise Forum/ Showcase at the Business Festival in May 2005.

Further awareness raising of the opportunities presented by social enterprise in the voluntary and community sector.

On behalf of _____ I hereby agree to participate in the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Social Enterprise Support partnership under the terms of this memorandum of Understanding.

Signed:

Date:

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING

17th March 2005

Wyre Forest District Council External Funding Strategy

	OPEN
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	Shared Prosperity
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	Promoting Economic Prosperity
CORPORATE PLAN KEY PRIORITY:	Regeneration
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor James Dudley
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Delia Yapp Ext. 2724 Delia.yapp@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDIX	Wyre Forest District Council External Funding Strategy – copy in Group Rooms - public inspection copy available on request

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise the Cabinet of the completion of the Council's External Funding Strategy.
- 1.2 To obtain approval to the Council's External Funding Strategy

2. Recommendation

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 **The District Council's External Funding Strategy be approved.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is increasingly dependent on securing funding from sources other than its own budgets to meet priorities and those of the community. This trend is set to continue with an increasing reliance on partnerships, exemplified by the role of Wyre Forest Local Strategic Partnership - Wyre Forest Matters.

- 3.2 A Strategy is required that will establish protocol and aid development to allow all officers, stakeholders and partner organisations that work with the District Council on externally funded projects to be aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- 3.3 An Officer External Funding Working Group, comprising representatives from all Council Divisions, been established to, amongst other things, oversee the development of the External Funding Strategy. (See Appendix)

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The Strategy's Objectives are:-

- To develop, maintain and audit a database of current and proposed WFDC internal and WFDC supported external projects, which use external funding.

In this regard a report will be submitted to the next meeting of the Cabinet setting out current and proposed WFDC internal and WFDC supported externally funded projects.

- To develop and maintain a database of external funding sources for the utilisation by officers across all Divisions to ease the external funding process.
- To enable consideration to be given in respect of WFDC taking on an Accountable Body role, in liaison with WFDC Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Head of Financial Services.
- To develop appropriate information sources and linkages via the WFDC website, ensuring relevant organisations in the District benefit from external funding resources and are aware of the services WFDC can offer.
- To develop a bid and funding monitoring system (to include unsuccessful bids).
- To ensure exit strategies are in place for externally funded projects, and forward strategies for continuing projects ensuring WFDC's Objectives are being met and long term position is maintained and effective.
- To monitor and evaluate completed projects.
- To give appropriate training to relevant officers responsible for external funding applications, project development, management and monitoring.
- To report to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet on progress of externally funded projects.
- To contribute to the annual Best Value Performance Plan.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The costs of subscribing to relevant funding database can be met from within existing budgets. The costs of providing associated training for relevant officers, which may amount to £1,500 for up to 3 days training, should be included within the future corporate training budget. The approval of this report and the Strategy should not, in itself, make the Council liable for any other additional financial commitments.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The adoption of the External Funding Strategy accords with the Council's Improvement Planning process following the 2004 Comprehensive Performance Assessment inspection.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The External Funding Strategy will enable the Council to adopt a more effective and co ordinated approach to external funding and to externally funded projects.

9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 WFDC External Funding Working Group
Worcestershire Partnership Funding Manager

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None

