

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**CABINET**  
**THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,**  
**KIDDERMINSTER**  
**27TH JULY 2006 (6.00PM)**

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**PRESENT:**

Councillors: S J M Clee (Chairman), M J Hart (Vice-Chairman), J-P Campion, N J Desmond, Mrs A T Hingley.

**OBSERVERS:**

Councillors G W Ballinger and Mrs J L Salter.

**CAB.31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Mrs F M Oborski sent her apologies as she was unable to attend to present the recommendations from the Prosperity Panel (agenda item number 9.1.). She had therefore asked her Vice-Chairman to present them for her in her absence.

**CAB.32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**CAB.33 MINUTES**

**DECISION:**

**The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 29th June 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**CAB.34 CALL INS**

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

**CAB.35 ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

**CAB.36 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader had no announcements to make.

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**CAB.37     IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2005-2008**

A report was considered from the Corporate Performance Advisor that reported on the first year's progress with implementing the Council's three-year Improvement Plan and highlighted action to be taken during the second year.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs wished to thank the Corporate Performance Manager and his Team for their hard work undertaken in producing the report. The Improvement Targets that had been recommended for next year would be used both externally and internally to measure improvement.

**DECISION:**

1.     **The progress in meeting targets for year 1 (2005/2006) of the Improvement Plan in Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet be noted.**
2.     **The targets for year 2 (2006/07) in the updated Improvement Plan in Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet be agreed.**

**CAB.38     FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING A BRAND STRATEGY FOR WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

A report was considered from the Chief Executive on the development of the Council's draft framework for developing a Brand Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs commented that the Council currently did not have a uniform branding strategy and work was being undertaken to rectify the position. He drew the Cabinet's attention to the work that had been done to date and undertook to report on progress in the future.

A Member stated that he had raised the question of a corporate brand with the Chief Executive over eighteen months ago. He was surprised that things did not appear to have moved on much since that conversation. He was concerned to ascertain whether there was a timescale for this matter to be concluded.

In response to a member's concerns over the time being taken to develop the strategy, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Affairs commented that the matter was not a simple one that could be dealt with quickly. It required careful planning and the Cabinet had allocated some resources for this. It was noted that the opening of The Worcestershire Hub in Wyre Forest would tie in with the branding process.

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**DECISION:**

**The work progressed to date in the development of the Council's first Brand Strategy, as detailed in the report to Cabinet, be noted.**

**CAB.39 WEST MIDLANDS RAIL FRANCHISE CONSULTATION JUNE 2006**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning Health and Environment that informed Members of the content of the Department for Transport's consultation document on the West Midlands Rail Franchise and the key issues relating to the Wyre Forest District. The report set out comments and proposed responses to the consultation document for the Cabinet's approval for submission to the Department for Transport.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Health and Environment commented that the West Midlands Franchise was due to commence on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2006 and would run for seven years and ten months. The consultation document acknowledged the increased demand for services into Birmingham and stated that bidders for the franchise would be expected to address issues of safety and security and improve service levels at all stations.

It was noted that the Prosperity Panel had considered the West Midlands Rail Franchise Consultation at its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006. The Panel had recommended two additional comments be included in the submission to the Department for Transport as detailed in the decision below:

**DECISION:**

- 1. The schedule of comments set out in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet be approved for submission as the District Council's formal response to the Department for Transport's consultation on the West Midlands Rail Franchise.**
- 2. The Head of Planning, Health and Environment be authorised to submit the schedule of responses to the Department of Transport by 7<sup>th</sup> August 2006.**
- 3. The two additional recommendations from the Prosperity Panel at its meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 be included in the District Council's formal response to the Department for Transport's consultation on the West Midlands Rail Franchise as follows:**

**Appendix 1, Page 1**

**"The provision of extra services in the evening peak between Birmingham Snow Hill and Kidderminster and better off peak services."**

**"The District Council would welcome measures to improve connectivity to Birmingham International Train Station and the National Exhibition Centre for travellers from the Wyre Forest area."**

**CAB.40 REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY DRAFT PHASE ONE REVISION : THE BLACK COUNTRY**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that outlined the consultation arrangements for the first phase in the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the West Midlands. The approval of Cabinet was sought to representations to be submitted to the Government Office for the West Midlands.

There were implications for Wyre Forest as the Regional Spatial Strategy set out the overall direction as to what the Council's planning documents should reflect.

There were two main areas of concern. Firstly, the growth in the retail floor space at Merry Hill and the proposal that Merry Hill should be incorporated as a town centre within the Black Country. Secondly, there were concerns about housing as there seemed to be no provision within the Phase One Review to accommodate, within the Black Country, a share of the projected increase in demand for new housing across the West Midlands. It was a matter of some concern to the District Council in its preparations towards the Local Development Framework.

The Prosperity Panel had considered this matter at its meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and it was recommended that the suggested representations be approved. The Vice-Chairman of the Prosperity Panel commented that the Chairman had been very concerned about the growth in retail floor space at Merry Hill and the effect it would have on Kidderminster.

**DECISION:**

- 1. The comments and suggested representations set out in the report to Cabinet be agreed as the basis of formal representations to the Government Office for the West Midlands on the first phase in the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands.**
  - 2. The Head of Planning, Health and Environment be authorised to finalise submissions and represent the District Council at any future public examination.**
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**CAB.41     RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PROSPERITY POLICY PANEL 12<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2006**

The recommendations from the meeting of the Prosperity Panel held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 were considered.

**DECISION:**

1.     **Regional Spatial Strategy Draft Phase One Revision : The Black Country**

The recommendation from the Panel, as detailed in Minute Number CAB.40 above be agreed.

2.     **West Midlands Rail Franchise - Consultation Document June 2006**

The recommendations from the Panel, as detailed in Minute Number CAB.39 above, be agreed.

**CAB.42     RECOMMENDATIONS FROM LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE 17<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2006**

The recommendations from the Licensing and Environmental Committee's 17<sup>th</sup> July 2006 meeting were considered in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Conditions.

**DECISION:**

1.     **The silver livery apply to all new and replacement hackney carriage vehicles.**
  2.     **Approval be given to the proposal that wheelchair vehicles have an upper age limit of ten years to accord with London Carriage Office Guidelines as opposed to the current seven years.**
  3.     **The request from Mr T Owen, Regency Vehicle Hire, for a twelve-month moratorium on new licensing conditions for hackney carriage vehicle conditions be refused.**
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**CAB.43    EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**DECISION:**

**"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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.**

**CAB.44    MINUTES**

**DECISION:**

The Exempt Minutes of the Cabinet held on 29th June 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 6.15 pm.