

**CABINET
THURSDAY 22nd MARCH 2007
EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, KIDDERMINSTER**

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

Observers: Councillors: G W Ballinger and Mrs F M Oborski.

CAB.223 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.224 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.225 MINUTES

DECISION:

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 22ND February 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.226 CALL INS

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

ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

Civic Reception - Kidderminster Harriers

The Leader asked the Cabinet to endorse a proposal that a Civic Reception be jointly hosted by Wyre Forest District Council and Kidderminster Charter Trustees for the Kidderminster Harriers Football Team on 14th May 2007.

DECISION:

It be agreed that a Civic Reception be jointly hosted by Wyre Forest District Council and Kidderminster Charter Trustees for Kidderminster Harriers Football Team on 14th May 2007.

CAB.227 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Meeting with CPA Inspectors

It was announced that a debriefing meeting would be held with the CPA inspectors at 12 noon on 27th March 2007 to receive feedback on their inspection of the Cultural Services Section of the Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services Division.

2. Condolences sent to Paul Ryder, Head of Human Resources

The Leader wished to send condolences from the Cabinet to Mr Paul Ryder, Head of Human Resources following the death of his mother.

CAB.228 CONSULTATION ON THE NEW REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME 2007 TO 2013

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that asked the Cabinet to endorse the Council's response to consultation from the Government Office for the West Midlands on the New Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programme 2007 to 2013.

DECISION:

The Council's response to the consultation from the Government Office for the West Midlands on the New Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programme 2007 to 2013, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet, be endorsed.

CAB.229 DEVELOPING A PROJECT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

A report was considered from the Chief Executive that advised Cabinet of the development of a Corporate Project Management Framework for the Council. The purpose of the Framework was to address shortfalls and provide an approach for procedures that could be applied to all Council projects both now and in the future.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

The Corporate Project Management Framework, as described in the Project Management Handbook as detailed in Appendix A of the report to Cabinet, be adopted.

CAB.230 GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY BODIES

A report was considered from the Head of Financial Services that outlined the allocation of resources to Voluntary Bodies for the period 2007/2008.

DECISION:

1. **The General Criteria for determining Grant Applications be used as a basis for future grant applications. (as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet)**
2. **Cash grants be made for the period 2007/2008 at the same level as at 2004/2007 to the following voluntary organisations as set out below:-**

	£
CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU	21,000
RELATE WORCESTERSHIRE	2,960
COMMUNITY ACTION WYRE FOREST	1,000
CASTLE ROAD DAY CENTRE (AGE CONCERN)	7,980
STOURPORT DAY CENTRE	1,040
	<u>33,980</u>

3. **The above organisations be informed that grants will be for one year only and that the Council will be inviting bids for grants in 2008-2009 from themselves and other local organisations.**
4. **A pump-priming grant of £250 be made to the Kidderminster Valentines.**

CAB.231 SECTION 106 EXPENDITURE : PROPOSED CYCLE ROUTE THROUGH BRINTON PARK

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that sought the approval of Cabinet for the expenditure of Section 106 monies on cycle route proposals at Brinton Park, Kidderminster.

The Cabinet Member For Planning, Health And Environment commented that it was proposed that a cycle route be established that linked Bewdley to Kidderminster via Birchen Coppice and Brinton Park. The route would provide more transport choice for residents of the Oldington and Foley Park Ward and improve accessibility by sustainable modes of transport to the town centre. The scheme had been worked up by both County and District Council Officers.

DECISION:

Approval be given to the expenditure of the identified Section 106 sustainable transportation monies for the proposed cycle route at Brinton Park for implementation in 2007/08 and the capital programme be amended to include this.

CAB.232 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PRACTICE NOTE 18 : GUIDANCE FOR PRODUCING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENTS

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that sought approval for a new Development Control Practice Note which would give guidance to developers and members of the public on the production of Design and Access Statements.

The Cabinet also considered a recommendation from the Planning (Development Control) Committee in conjunction with this report and it was noted that the committee endorsed the recommendation contained in the report to Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Health and Environment stated that it was mandatory for some planning applications and Listed Building Consents to be accompanied by a design and access statement. The Planning Department had already issued advice on design and therefore the purpose of this practice note was to give stakeholders clear guidance on the access part of the statement taking into account the equality and diversity scheme. The availability of advice on access statements would help applications to be determined within the required 8-13 week period.

DECISION:

- 1. The Development Control Practice Note 18, Guidance for Producing Design and Access Statements, as set out in the Appendix to the report to Cabinet, be adopted and published.**
- 2. Authority be delegated to the Head of Planning, Health and Environment to publish an accompanying advice leaflet setting out the information required to be submitted in Design and Access Statements.**

CAB.233 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that advised on progress regarding the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants in the district.

The Cabinet Member Planning, Health and Environment told the Cabinet that these grants had been administered by local government since 1996. The Government had consulted the district in 2005 and again in January 2006 with a view to improving the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants.

The Council supported the North Worcestershire Care and Repair Agency by seconding a case worker, providing office accommodation and a total budget of £800,000. The Council had also been working in partnership with Wyre Forest Community Housing to try to reduce the backlog of referrals.

She reported that there were financial implications if the maximum grant was increased from £30,000 to £50,000. She also perceived that possible changes might occur as a result of the consultation, and thereby the Council's policy on Disabled Facilities Grants might have to be changed.

DECISION:

- 1. A response be made to the Government's consultation on the future of Disabled Facilities Grants on the basis of the draft response in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 2. In the light of proposed changes, Cabinet endorses the new working arrangements, as detailed in paragraph 4.2 of the report to Cabinet, for funding Disabled Facilities Grants in Community Housing Group owned properties and private properties.**

CAB.234 SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL : WOLVERHAMPTON AIRPORT POLICY AREA – ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that sought the Cabinet's endorsement of officer representations on the issues and options consultation paper for the Wolverhampton Airport Policy Area Development Plan document.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Health and Environment stated that representations had to be made by 12th March 2007. The Council was opposed to the proposed expansion of the airport and had opposed the planning application which had been submitted but which had been eventually withdrawn.

DECISION:

The representations submitted by the Head of Planning, Health and Environment to South Staffordshire District Council, on the Wolverhampton Airport Policy Area Development Plan Document Issues and Options Paper, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report to Cabinet, be endorsed.

CAB.235 THE RECEIPT/AWARD/ALLOCATION OF EXTERNAL FUNDING

A report was considered from the Head of Cultural, Leisure and Commercial Services that outlined the receipt, award and allocation of external funding for Cultural Services.

DECISION:

The external funding, detailed in paragraph 4 of the report, be noted and allocated to the budget accordingly.

**CAB.236 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PROSPERITY POLICY PANEL –
7TH FEBRUARY 2007**

Re : Regeneration Projects Update, Stourport-on-Severn

DECISION:

The recommendations, as set out below, be noted:

1. The project updates be noted.
2. The Draft Stourport Pride Action Plan (set out at Appendix Two to the report to the Prosperity Policy Panel) be endorsed and recommended to Cabinet as the basis for preparing schemes over the short, medium and long term.

CAB.237 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SERVICE POLICY PANEL, 20TH MARCH 2007

Re : Affordable Housing Grant

DECISION:

The decision taken by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Health and Environment as set out below d (having considered a recommendation to this effect from the Prosperity Policy) be noted.

Approval be given to the bid from The Community Housing Group for funding of £420,000 for affordable housing through the Council's Capital Strategy, as detailed in the briefing note from the Principal Housing Officer to the Service Policy Panel on 20th March 2007.

**CAB.238 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT CONTROL)
COMMITTEE, 10TH MARCH 2007**

**Re: Development Control Practice Note 18 : Guidance for Producing Design
and Access Statements**

See decision at minute number CAB.232 above.

CAB.239 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 paragraph 2 part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB.240 SUMMARY OF MINUTES

The following proceedings were considered after the press and public had been excluded from the meeting. A summary of the minutes relating to these items had been made as 'exempt information' would be disclosed if the minutes were published in full.

CAB.241 MINUTES

DECISION:

The Exempt Minutes of the Cabinet held on 22nd February 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.241 LAND AT BRIDGE STREET, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment regarding proposals for land at Bridge Street. The Head of Planning, Health and Environment agreed to write a report for Council on proposals for this land.

The meeting closed at 6.12 p.m.,