

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2007**

**PROPOSAL FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A CHOICE BASED LETTINGS  
SCHEME FOR THE ALLOCATION OF PROPERTIES FROM THE  
HOUSING REGISTER**

The Committee considered a briefing paper from the Housing Services Manager, which provided Members with a briefing of the history and context of Choice Based lettings (CBL) Schemes and sought views on the proposals for the introduction of a CBL Scheme Model for the allocation of properties from the Housing Register.

It was noted that the Wyre Forest CBL scheme would go live in December 2007. It was requested that all Councillors need to be kept fully updated on the progress of CBL implementation because housing issues were a large part of a Councillor's casework.

Members felt it important for officers to remind people to reapply. Applicants were allowed two bids per cycle and were not penalised for making multiple applications. If someone was successful with both bids, that person would have the choice as to which property they would have.

Members perceived CBL would increase the work load for officers and felt that it could also give people false hopes. There was also concern that many people would not have facilities such as mobile phones and the internet. When it was suggested that the properties be advertised in the Kidderminster Shuttle, Members were informed that it would be a significant cost and therefore would not happen at this stage.

It was noted that there needed to be effective communication on how the scheme operates particularly for people currently on the waiting list. In order to operate under the Equalities Policy, everyone would need an equal chance to bid.

One of the concerns raised was that some people were not identified as having learning difficulties but would experience problems accessing services. There was more concern about these people because they had no support agencies to assist them. They therefore would not have the same chances as more able people. It was agreed that the health visitors and social services would also need to be aware of the process and how to advise families.

Members wanted an ongoing review of the situation so that they would know what pitfalls there were and would be able to deal with them quickly. It was

not intended that people would miss out on the opportunities available and for that reason, outreach working and communicating at ward level would become so important.

Members were informed that the time limit for bidding on properties was one week. It was also noted that relatives and agencies could bid on behalf of others.

**RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet:**

**The Choice Based Letting Scheme be approved taking account of the Committee's comments made above.**

**PREFERRED OPTION FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF)**

Members considered a briefing paper from the Forward Planning Manager, which provided an update on the preparation of the District Local Development Framework Core Strategy and which sought the Committee's views on a draft Issues and Options consultation paper, which was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

**RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:**

- 1. The Draft Issues and Options Paper (including the amendments and in the addendum) for the purposes of public consultation in accordance with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 be endorsed.**
- 2. The Draft Consultation Plan be endorsed.**

**DRAFT WORCESTERSHIRE INTEGRATED PASSENGER TRANSPORT STRATEGY (CONSULTATION)**

The Committee considered a briefing paper from the Senior Planner, which sought Members' views on the schedule of proposed responses to Worcestershire County Council's consultation on the Draft Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.

**RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet:**

**The schedule of responses to the Draft Integrated Passenger Transport Survey as set out at Appendix 2 of the report be endorsed for submission to Worcestershire County Council.**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL REVIEW PANEL – COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FUND FOR ELECTED MEMBERS**

See attached Community and Leadership Paper.

**RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet:**

**The Community Leadership Fund for Elected Members as amended be approved.**

**HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT**

See attached Highways Partnership Task and Finish Group Report.

**RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet**

- 1. In view of the difficulties in contacting members of the Highways Partnership Unit directly by telephone, District Council representatives on the Highways Partnership Forum be requested to raise any issues, such as concerns over poor road services, notified to them by other District Councillors.**
- 2. The District Council Members of the Highways Partnership Forum be asked to report back to the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee any concerns or problems that arise this year regarding the Highways Partnership Unit at Worcestershire.**
- 3. All Members of Wyre Forest District Council be sent detailed information about the Highways website.**
- 4. A copy of the newsletter that is sent by the Highways Partnership Unit to Parish Councils be circulated to all Members of Wyre Forest District Council.**
- 5. When laptop training is provided for Members by the ICT Department, time be spent on how to access the complex Highways faults reporting system.**