

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**CABINET**  
**THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,**  
**KIDDERMINSTER**  
**22ND NOVEMBER 2007 (6.00PM)**

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**PRESENT:**

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

**OBSERVERS:**

Councillors: J Aston, G W Ballinger, Mrs P V Hayward, M A W Hazlewood, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, M A Salter and S J Williams.

**CAB.101 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**CAB.102 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor J-P Campion declared a personal interest in agenda item number 8.2. relating to the Proposed Merger of North Worcestershire Crime and Disorder Crime Reduction Partnerships as he is a member of the Police Authority.

Councillor Holden declared a personal interest in agenda item number 6.3. relating to Section 136 Grant Aid to Stourport-on-Severn Town Council as he is a member of the Town Council.

Councillor M J Hart declared a prejudicial interest in application number 6.4. relating to Grants to Voluntary Bodies owing to his involvement with the Scout movement.

Councillors Mrs F M Oborski and S J Williams declared a personal interest in agenda item number 7.1. relating to the Sale of Land at East Street, Kidderminster as they are members of the Board of the Community Housing Group.

**CAB.103 MINUTES**

**DECISION:**

**The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25th October 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**CAB.104 CALL INS**

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

**CAB.105 ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION**

There were no items requiring urgent attention

**CAB.106 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader reminded Members that new Local Authority targets had been launched by the Worcestershire Assembly. He announced that there would be a presentation by the new Head of Community and Partnership Services at the Council meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2007 where members would have a chance to ask questions.

**CAB.107 BUDGET MONITORING - SECOND QUARTER 2007/2008**

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

The Leader drew Members' attention to Appendix 2 of the report which outlined the major revenue variations for quarter two (to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007). This document outlined extra costs and savings/additional income to the Council. He assured Members that there was nothing of great significance to report.

**DECISION:**

- 1. The projected budget variations and comments outlined within the report to Cabinet be noted. Any overspends or projected loss of income be considered as supplementary estimates or virements on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2008, when the Cabinet considers the revised Budget prior to onward approval by Council.**
- 2. The Income Generation Report be noted.**
- 3. The Heads of Service continue to monitor closely the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme.**
- 4. The updated Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule 2007/08, brought about by slippage and reassessment, be noted.**
- 5. The Prudential Indicators 2007/2010 be noted.**
- 6. The Budget Risk Management Matrix be noted.**
- 7. The Supplementary Estimate/Virement Report be noted.**
- 8. The Efficiency Gains Report be noted.**

**CAB.108 SECTION 136 GRANT AID TO STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN TOWN COUNCIL**

A report was considered from the Head of Financial Services that asked the Cabinet to consider a request by Stourport-on-Severn Town Council for payment of Section 136 Grant Aid for 2007/2008.

The Leader commented that Stourport-on-Severn Town Council were planning to use the Section 136 Grant Aid money on the Stourport Pride Scheme. Further details of how the money would be spent would be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity for approval.

**DECISION:**

**The Grant Aid application from Stourport Town Council be approved in principle with delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity to approve, following agreement of the actual proposed project.**

*Councillor M J Hart left the room during consideration of the agenda item below.*

**CAB.109 GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY BODIES**

A report was considered from the Head of Financial Services that outlined requests from KD15 Scouts and Far Forest Scouts for grants to assist with the purchase of equipment and renovation of their buildings.

The Leader stated that the Council had £1,000 available to use for small, worthwhile pump priming projects. Both groups were applying for £250. He considered that they were both excellent groups that provided useful outside activities for children.

**DECISION:**

- 1. A Grant of £250 be given to KD15 Scouts.**
- 2. A Grant of £250 be given to Far Forest Scouts.**

**CAB.110 BENEFITS SERVICE - VISION AND OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS SERVICE STRATEGY UPDATES**

A report was considered from the Head of Financial Services that sought endorsement of the updated Vision and Objectives of the Benefits Service and the updated Benefits Service Strategy. A review of these documents had been undertaken to ensure that they remained in line with current best practice and it was noted that only minor changes had been made to them.

The Leader congratulated the Benefits Section on the work they undertook and the fact that they were performing within the top quartile despite having to endure problems with a postal strike and the administration of additional benefits as a result of the recent local flooding problems that had been encountered locally.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

**The Vision and Objectives of the Benefits Service, attached as Appendix 1, and the Benefits Service Strategy attached as Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet be endorsed.**

**CAB.111 HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT DEBT POSITION AS AT 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007**

A report was considered from the Head of Financial Services that informed Members of the Housing Benefit Overpayment debt position as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

The Leader went through the appendices. He commented that the debt position had not increased significantly. The increase was due to the fact that the department was handling more benefit cases than before. He commented that with regard to cases where money had been overpaid, the Council was rigorous in its recovery actions concerning fraud detection.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

**The Vision and Objectives of the Benefits Service, attached as Appendix 1, and the Benefits Service Strategy attached as Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet be endorsed.**

**CAB.112 SALE OF LAND AT EAST STREET, KIDDERMINSTER**

A report was considered from the Head of Property and Operational Services regarding the sale of land at East Street, Kidderminster.

The Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services informed the Cabinet that the land was owned by the Council and had formerly been a play area. In 2002 there had been a review of play areas and the administration at that time decided to remove the play equipment due to vandalism and anti social behaviour. Since that time the area had been landscaped and had more recently been allowed to develop into a semi-natural area to deter the gathering of groups of youths and the playing of games. It was proposed that the land should be disposed of and terms agreed with the Community Housing Group for housing purposes.

Members were informed that there had been a consultation undertaken with members of Greenhill Ward. He considered that this was a good example of where the No Surprises Protocol had been deployed as Members had returned slips to confirm they were happy with the proposals for the site.

The Cabinet were interested to note that the site had originally been that of the local Wash House. He suggested that if the road was to be named it should be called Wash House Close.

**DECISION:**

- 1. The Head of Property and Operational Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, be given delegated authority to agree terms with the Community Housing Group for the disposal of land at East Street for the provision of affordable housing.**
- 2. The proposal to dispose of the land be advertised in the press in accordance with Section 123 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972 and that any objections received as a results of such advertisement which, in the view of the Head of Property and Operational Services, are of such substance as to be material to the proposed sale be reported to the Cabinet for consideration.**
- 3. In the event that no objections need to be reported to the Cabinet in accordance with paragraph 2.2 above, the disposal of the land be completed with the agreed terms.**

**CAB.113 THE RECEIPT, AWARD AND ALLOCATION OF EXTERNAL FUNDING**

A report was considered from the Head of Community and Partnership Services that outlined the receipt, award and allocation of external funding.

The Leader commented that he wished to convey his grateful thanks to the officers concerned in the procurement of external funding. He stated that a lot of services were provided through the provision of this money.

**DECISION:**

- 1. The external funding detailed in paragraph 4 of the report to Cabinet, be noted and allocated to the revenue budget accordingly.**
- 2. The allocation of future external funding to the budget be delegated to the Head of Financial Services in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members.**

**CAB.114 PROPOSED MERGER OF NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIPS (CDRPs)**

A report was considered from the Head of Community and Partnership Services that reported on the preparatory work that had been undertaken to evidence some of the benefits and efficiencies that would be gained by merging the CDRPs for the local authority areas of Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest to create a North Worcestershire CDRP.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services stated that in June 2006 the Cabinet had agreed in principle to the proposed merger and possible benefits that might accrue from this. (Minute number CAB.22 refers). and efficiencies could be made. The report outlined the further steps necessary to take the merger a step further. He commented that the Cabinet would be considering a further report in February 2008 when detailed costings of the proposed merger would be outlined. He was keen to point out that the merger would only be agreed if the business case was viable. He was also proud to point out that if the proposed merger went ahead it would be the first of its kind in England and Wales.

Concern was expressed that there was only one police Diversity Officer for the whole of North Worcestershire. Members were under the impression that there would be a Diversity Officer for each District. As there had been a significant increase in the migrant population in Kidderminster, the need for a diversity officer for the district was apparent.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

**The Wyre Forest District Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership be formally merged with the CDRPs in Bromsgrove and Redditch to create a North Worcestershire CDRP, subject to robust consultation and engagement with Responsible Authorities and the ability to meet any additional financial implications within existing budgets that might be incurred in the short to medium term.**

**CAB.115 WYRE FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2006/07**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that informed the Cabinet about the production and content of the Annual Monitoring Report for 2006/07.

Concern was expressed about the reliability of the population statistics contained in Appendix 1 of the report. Members were aware that there had been an influx of migrant workers into the district and this would have an impact on accommodation within the district.

**DECISION:**

- 1. The Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2006/07 be submitted to the Secretary of State.**
- 2. The Head of Planning, Health and Environment be authorised to make any minor amendments to the text in the light of further information received prior to submission.**

**CAB.116 THE UPPER ARLEY CONSERVATION AREA - RESULTS OF CONSULTATION ON CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that asked the Cabinet to consider the results of the public consultation on the draft character appraisal for Upper Arley Conservation Area and to agree the final document.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Rural Affairs commented that in July this year (minute number CAB.44 refers) the proposals to create a conservation area in Upper Arley had been considered. A consultation had commenced and favourable comments had been received.

The committee also considered the comments from the Community and Regeneration Committee that the scheme be approved was agreed.

**DECISION:**

**The Upper Arley Conservation Area Character Appraisal be approved.**

**DECISION:**

**CAB.117 NEW DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PRACTICE NOTE 19 ; GUIDANCE ON RENEWABLE ENERGY**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that sought approval for a new Development Control Practice Note and associated guidance leaflets which would give guidance to developers and members of the public on how to incorporate technology relating to renewable energy in the design of new development.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity commented that this production of a new practice note was a good thing as it promoted energy efficiency. The Planning (Development Control) Committee had also considered a report on this matter at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2007 and had recommended that the Practice Note be agreed.

**DECISION:**

- 1. Development Control Practice Note 19 – Guidance on Renewable Energy be adopted and published.**
- 2. The leaflet – "Householder Guide to the Microgeneration of Renewable Energy" be adopted and published.**

**CAB.118 REVIEW OF SUB-NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment t advised Members of the background and emerging outcomes of the sub-national review of economic development and regeneration being undertaken by the government and asked the Cabinet to consider the possible implications for the District Council.

**DECISION:**

**The Council continue to take an active role in shaping the future of economic regeneration delivery in the region by participating in the consultation process as the sub-national review unfolds.**

**CAB.119 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that recommended that the Draft Statement of Licensing Policy (in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003) for the Wyre Forest District, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be adopted as the Licensing Policy Statement for the period January 2008 - January 2011.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Rural Affairs commented that in 2004 the Council had published its first Licensing Policy and was now required to review it in accordance with the Licensing Act for the next 3 years. A consultation had taken place with stakeholders and this had been completed on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2007. The responses were contained within appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet. She stated that consideration had been given to the responses received and where possible, changes had been made to the draft Statement. The Statement had been prepared in consultation with Licensing Officers across Worcestershire to ensure that information published by the Hub was consistent. Members were informed that the Licensing Objectives underpin all of the themes of the Council's Community Strategy and the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement. The revised Statement was due to be published by 7<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

**The draft Statement of Licensing Policy (in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003) (The Act) for the Wyre Forest District, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet, be adopted as the Licensing Policy Statement for the period January 2008 – January 2011.**



**CAB.120 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

Recommendations from the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee  
7<sup>th</sup> November 2007

Re : Upper Arley Conservation Area - Results of Consultation on Conservation  
Area Character Appraisal

**DECISION:**

**The recommendation from the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007 that the Upper Arley Conservation Area Character Appraisal be approved be endorsed.**

**CAB.121 EXCLUSION OF THE 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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.**

**CAB.122 SUMMARY OF MINUTES**

**District Cemetery - External Funding Options**

(i) Verbal report from the Head of Property and Operational Services

A verbal report was received from the Head of Property and Operational Services concerning external funding options for the district cemetery. The verbal report was noted by the Cabinet.

(ii) Recommendations from the Community and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

The Cabinet considered recommendations from the Community and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Panel from its meeting held on 7th November 2007 regarding the cemetery.

The meeting closed at 6.35 pm.