

## WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**CABINET**  
**21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY, 2008**

### **Consultation On The Cabinet's** **Financial Strategy 2008/2011**

<b>AN OPEN ITEM</b>	
<b>COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:</b>	-
<b>CORPORATE PLAN THEME:</b>	Improving Corporacy & Performance
<b>KEY PRIORITY:</b>	Financial & Asset Management
<b>STRATEGY:</b>	Budget & Policy Framework
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Councillor John Campion
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	Head of Financial Services
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<b>APPENDIX 1</b>	Public Representations

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report on the outcome of the Financial Strategy consultation exercise.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE :-**

- 2.1 That the report be noted.**

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In 2002 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) issued guidance designed to assist local authorities in consulting the public on council tax and budget issues.
- 3.2 The Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2007 agreed to undertake a consultation on the proposed Financial Strategy as follows :-
- Public Meeting - invite members of the public to attend the Cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008 for a presentation by the Leader of the Council and to give their views;
  - Parish Councils – Invite representatives to Cabinet on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008 for their views;
  - Media Release;
  - Web Site;
  - Business Ratepayer Statutory Consultation;

- Corporate Service & Performance Scrutiny Committee.

- 3.3 A consultation press release was produced highlighting the major proposals and inviting feedback on the Cabinet's Budget Strategy.
- 3.4 A press release was issued and appeared in editions of the Express and Star and Kidderminster Shuttle/Times newspapers respectively, inviting members of the public to respond to the consultation exercise by either attending a meeting of the Cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008, or writing/e-mailing the Chief Executive with their views.
- 3.5 Parish/Town Council Clerks were contacted directly to request their involvement in the consultation process.
- 3.6 The statutory Business Ratepayer consultation process was carried out involving a web advertisement, the forwarding of Budget proposals to groups of Business Ratepayers and an invitation to meet with the Council for consultation purposes.

#### **4. OUTCOME**

- 4.1 Two representations were received in respect of the Consultation process and these are enclosed as Appendix 1.

The Council's Website received 205 hits on Have Your Say on Budget Plans, and 899 hits on the Podcast Cabinet Budget Proposals.

- 4.2 The Leader of the Council gave a presentation on the Cabinet's Financial Strategy 2008-2011 at the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008 Cabinet Meeting. Two Members of the general public attended this meeting and there were questions raised in respect of the detail of the proposal following the Cabinet Member's presentation.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

#### **6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council's consultation on Council Tax and Budget Issues has been carried out in accordance with guidance issued by ODPM in 2002.
- 6.2 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 from the Section 65 placed a statutory duty on Local Authorities to consult Business Ratepayers.

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 None.

**8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The Cabinet will need to consider points raised in the Consultation exercise in determining the final Financial Strategy.

**9. CONSULTEES**

- 9.1 Leader of the Council, Cabinet and CMT

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 Cabinet Financial Strategy 2008/2011  
10.2 Consultation Press Release  
10.3 ODPM Consultation Guidance 2002  
10.4 Local Government Finance Act 1992