

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES

THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,
KIDDERMINSTER

2ND JULY 2008 (6.00PM)

Present:

Councillors: Mrs H E Dyke (Chairman), J Phillips (Vice-Chairman), J Baker, A J Buckley, G H Eeles, Mrs J Fairbrother-Millis, Mrs P V Hayward, Mrs S M Hayward, C D Nicholls and G C Yarranton.

Observers:

There were no members present as observers.

CMS.11 Apologies for Absence:

There were no apologies for absence.

CMS.12 Appointment of Substitutes:

No substitutes were appointed.

CMS.13 Declaration of Interests:

No declarations of interest were made.

CMS.14 Minutes:

Agreed:

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th June 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CMS.15 Driving Standards Agency

The Committee received a briefing paper from the Scrutiny / Committee Officer and the Regeneration and Economic Prosperity Manager which appraised Members of the Driving Standards Agency's (DSA) decision to close the Castle Road Test Centre in Kidderminster.

Members' attention was drawn to the population density information detailed in section three of the briefing paper. Members noted that the DSA had taken the District's population density information from the 2001 Census and that, if the calculations for the principal urban areas of the District were used, it would impact upon the distance residents would have to travel to a test centre. This was

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particularly pertinent if applied to the DSA's criterion for distances candidates are required to travel to practical test centres.

The Committee noted that, according to appendix 1 to the briefing paper, which detailed the DSA's programme for relocation, the Kidderminster Test Centre was closing due to the condition of the property. Clarification was requested on the ownership of the property.

Members noted that, according to appendix 1 to the briefing paper, the DSA were anticipating that following the closure of the Kidderminster test centre, residents would access the test centre in Lower Gornal, some 12.9 miles away. Members felt that familiarisation could be a key factor and that residents from the District would be at a distinct disadvantage when taking their practical driving test as they would be unfamiliar with the local area.

The Regeneration and Economic Prosperity Manager advised Members that, detailed in appendix 3 to the briefing paper, a number of sites available in the district had been selected for potential consideration by the DSA. Sites included those that could be used for a larger multi purpose test centre and sites that could be utilised for a smaller car testing centre.

Members discussed the need to collect the views of the public on this matter and the media requirements for the review. It was suggested that the Wyre and BBC Hereford and Worcester radio stations be approached in addition to the Shuttle and Express & Star newspapers. It was also noted that the Council's web site could be used to collect public opinion.

The Committee were advised, by the Vice Chairman, that Driving Instructors had organised a public meeting to take place on Monday 7th July 2008, 8pm, at the Kidderminster Rugby Club to which a representative of the DSA was due to attend.

AGREED:

- 1. The first meeting of the DSA Review Panel take place on Monday 14th July 2008, 5pm at Duke House.**
- 2. The second meeting of the DSA Review Panel take place on Monday 28th July 2008, 5pm at Duke House.**
- 3. The Scrutiny / Committee Office Liaise with the Media Officer regarding press coverage for this item.**
- 4. Details on the ownership of the Kidderminster Test Centre, Castle Road, Kidderminster be researched for the first meeting of the review panel.**

CMS.16 Feedback from Cabinet

The Chairman advised the Committee that she had attended the Cabinet meeting held on 26th June 2008 to put forward the recommendations set by this committee on 19th June 2008 which related to the Fixed penalty Notices for Litter Review Panel.

Members were advised that the Leader of the Council had thanked the Review Panel for a very robust and detailed review and that the recommendations as printed were agreed by Cabinet.

CMS.17 Work Programme:

The Panel considered its work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Community Strategy, Corporate Plan, Annual Priorities and the Forward Plan.

The Scrutiny / Committee Officer advised Members that Councillor Mrs Oborski had put in a formal request for the Committee to scrutinise the potential for an arts centre development at Kidderminster Town Hall.

The Chairman informed Members that she would like to include in the work programme a review of the performance of Police Call Centres, as she had received a number of complaints from local residents who had indicated they were not satisfied with the service provided.

AGREED:

The work programme for the current municipal year be approved subject to:

- 1. The first meeting of the DSA Review Panel take place on Monday 14th July 2008, 5pm at Duke House.**
- 2. The second meeting of the DSA Review Panel take place on Monday 28th July 2008, 5pm at Duke House.**
- 3. The first meeting of the Citizens Advice Bureau take place on Wednesday 30th July 2008, 5pm at Duke House.**
- 4. A review to scrutinise the potential for an arts centre development at Kidderminster Town Hall be added to the Committees work programme for December 2008.**
- 5. A review of the performance of Police Call Centres be added to the committees work programme for December 2008.**

CMS.18 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 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 I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

CAR.19 MINUTES

AGREED:

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 19th June 2008 be confirmed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting ended at 7pm.