

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET
THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,
KIDDERMINSTER
24TH JULY 2008 (6:00PM)**

Present:

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

Observers:

Councillors: G W Ballinger, Mrs H E Dyke, P Dyke, M B Kelly, D J Millis, J Thomas and N J Thomas.

CAB.31 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs T L Onslow.

CAB.32 Declarations Of Interest

Councillor S J M Clee declared an interest in agenda item 7 as he is a member of the Carpet Museum Trust in his role as a County Councillor.

CAB.33 Minutes

DECISION:

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 26th June 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.34 Call Ins

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

CAB.35 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.36 Presentation – Carpet Museum Trust

The Chairman welcomed Richard Reed, Charles Talbot, Richard Pugh-Cook and James Dudley from the Carpet Museum Trust. Mr Reed gave a short presentation which updated Members on the Trust's current status. Members noted that it was pertinent to receive this information as the Council acted as a trustee to the Trust.

Mr Rees informed Members that the project had reached a critical phase and required the Council's support. Members were advised that the aims of the project were to:

- Create a friendly, modern and engaging museum
- Contribute to Kidderminster's regeneration
- Capitalise on Kidderminster's textile heritage
- Contribute to the life of the town
- Train people in craft skills
- Promote design and innovation

The history of the project was outlined including the bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Other funding had included support from the Kidderminster Education Foundation.

Members were informed that further financial support was required from the Council in order to make the project a success. A contribution of £75,000 was required towards the Stage 2 costs and annual revenue support of £35,000 was required from 2011. Also elected Member support was required when an approach for funding was made to Advantage West Midlands.

The Chairman thanked Mr Rees for his presentation. He felt the project was an exciting one and he was keen to protect the heritage of the district. With regard to the financial aspects of the project it was explained that it would be necessary for a service option to be worked out with the Head of Community and Partnership Services for the Cabinet to consider as part of the wider budget process. As for the member support with regard to the approach for funding from Advantage West Midlands the Leader was confident that the Cabinet Members for Leisure Services and Regeneration and Enterprise would be able to assist the Trust in connection with this aspect.

The Chairman hoped that the Carpet Museum would attract visitors from the Severn Valley Railway and the Safari Park into the town and he perceived this to be a partnership opportunity for working with these other attractions. He asked that a copy of the presentation be forwarded to the Principal Committee Officer so that it could be sent out to Members. He stated that an update on progress with regard to the Carpet Museum would be made to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee in September 2008.

DECISION:

The Principal Committee Officer to forward a copy of the presentation slides to Members.

CAB.35 Leader's Announcements

The Chairman referred to recent industrial action by members of the UNISON Trade Union. He stated that members of UNISON had been on strike on Wednesday and Thursday last week and approximately 100 staff members had supported the strike during the two days. It was noted that the operational side of services especially in relation to refuse collection had been severely affected, however these services had now resumed to normal levels and the recycling schedule was now recommencing as per the normal schedule.

The Corporate Management Team and the Leader would hold an investigation to see if there was any additional action they could take in such circumstances to protect the public whilst maintaining the right of officers to withdraw their labour.

The position of the Local Authority was that no additional money would be forthcoming for pay claims as it was not affordable. A further briefing would be given as soon as new dates for industrial action were known.

DECISION:

The Leader's announcements be noted.

CAB.36 Local Development Framework Revised Local Development Scheme

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that sought the approval of Cabinet for the submission of a revised Local Development Scheme for the district.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise explained that the Council was required to comment on a series of documents. A timetable contained in the report to Cabinet outlined the timetable for the implementation of the changes.

The Cabinet also considered the recommendations of the Regeneration and Enterprise Committee (as set out below):

DECISION:

- 1. The Local Development Scheme for Wyre Forest District be revised as set out in Appendix 1 to the Cabinet Report and the revised Scheme to be submitted to the Government Office for the West Midlands.**
- 2. The Head of Planning, Health and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise be authorised to make any necessary minor amendments to the submitted Local Development Scheme in order to meet Government Office for the West Midlands recommendations.**
- 3. Subject to not receiving any notification from the Secretary of State, under Regulation 11 (3a or 3b) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 as amended, the submitted revised Local Development scheme shall have effect from 30th August 2008.**

CAB.37 The Broome Conservation Area – Results of Consultation on Conservation Area Character Appraisal

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that requested the Cabinet to consider the results of the public consultation on the draft Character Appraisal for the Broome conservation Area and to agree the final document.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise stated that a similar exercise had been undertaken to that which had been carried out with other villages in the district whereby it was proposed that a Conservation Area be created.

The Cabinet was informed that no comments had been received from the consultation.

DECISION:

The Broome Conservation Area Character Appraisal be approved.

CAB.38 Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LAGBI) – Allocation of Uncommitted Grant

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment that reported to Members the 2008 Provisional Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LAGBI) Grant and asked the Cabinet to agree its future expenditure.

The Cabinet member for Regeneration and Enterprise commented that it was proposed the uncommitted grant be allocated for the general economic development and regeneration purposes on the following basis:

- £40,000 for the remainder of 2008/09
- £38,000 for 2009/10
- £20,000 for 2010/11

DECISION:

Agreement be given to the allocation of the uncommitted LABGI Grant as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report to Cabinet.

CAB.39 Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment advising Members of the consultation responses received during the initial stage of consultation on the Scoping Paper published in February 2008 and requested agreement to the next steps in the development of the Regeneration Prospectus.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise stated that following a presentation, comments from the public on the Prospectus had been considered and that further work would be undertaken on the Prospectus in association with the new town centre manager.

The Leader congratulated the Regeneration and Economic Prosperity Manager and his Team on the excellent work they had undertaken in connection with the Prospectus. Moreover an article in The Shuttle had prompted some local residents to say what they wanted to see incorporated in the Prospectus and this had been very useful.

The Vice-Chairman of the Regeneration and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee commented that a full and frank discussion had been held during the scrutiny of the Prospectus.

DECISION:

- 1. Approval be given to the proposed Head comments and recommendations by the Head of Planning, Health & Environment in response to consultation feedback set out in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 2. The next steps to preparing a ‘Regeneration Prospectus’ for Kidderminster as set out in the report to Cabinet be approved;**
- 3. Cabinet receive further reports to agree the final draft Prospectus prior to public consultation in October/November 2008.**

CAB.40 Community Leadership Fund – Criteria

A report was considered from the Head of Community and Partnership Services that recommended that an amendment to the eligibility criteria for the Community Leadership Fund 2008/09 be made.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Corporate Services advised the Cabinet that by amending the criteria it would enable Members to have greater flexibility when spending their allocation. It was also explained that the previous criteria precluded a Member from spending money outside their Ward. The new criteria encouraged the use of money for a project that extended beyond more than one ward boundary provided there was proven evidence of direct benefits for inhabitants within the individual ward. In all cases applications would be judged on a case by case basis and according to the individual merits of the application, thus enabling flexibility where required.

DECISION:

The eligibility criteria be amended to give Members the freedom and flexibility to spend their individual Community Leadership fund allocation on a District wide initiative provided that there is proven evidence of direct benefits for inhabitants in their Ward.

CAB.41 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 – Section 40 Duty to conserve Biodiversity West Midlands Biodiversity Pledge

A report was considered from the Head of Community and Partnership Services that informed the Cabinet of the new duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and also sought endorsement of the West Midlands Biodiversity Pledge.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure Services told the Cabinet that this Council was already fulfilling its obligations as an employer in reducing its carbon footprint.

RECOMMENDED to Council:

- 1. The natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) which placed a new duty to conserve biodiversity on all Public Authorities including Local Authorities be noted.**
- 2. Wyre Forest District Council's commitment to the West Midlands biodiversity Pledge and the implementation of the duties contained with Appendix 1 be approved.**

CAB.42 Recommendations From The Audit Committee – 23rd June 2008

The Cabinet considered recommendations from the Audit Committee from the meeting held on 23rd June 2008 as follows:

**1. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE FINANCIAL SERVICES
MANAGER – 2007/2008**

The Head of Financial Services explained that the Annual Report of the Financial Services Manager considered all internal audits that had been undertaken and presented recommendations that contributed towards the Annual Governance Statement. The Council had been considered by the Financial Services Manager to be adequate in terms of its control and environment.

DECISION:

The report from the Financial Services Manager for 2007/2008 attached as appendix 1 of the report to the Audit Committee be approved.

**2. UPDATES OF ANTI FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY
STATEMENT, UPDATES OF POLICY AND STRATEGY ON
FRAUD FOR HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT AND
PROSECUTION POLICY – UPDATE**

DECISION:

The updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy Statement, the updated Policy on Fraud for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, the updated Strategy for dealing with Theft, Fraud and Corruption, the updated Strategy on Fraud for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, the updated Fraud Response Plan and the updated Prosecution Policy attached as Appendices 1-6 of the report to the Audit committee be adopted.

**CAB.43 Recommendations from the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee –
10th July 2008**

Grants to Voluntary Bodies Review Panel

The Cabinet considered recommendations regarding Grants to Voluntary Bodies.

AGREED:

- 1. The criteria for grants to voluntary bodies be refreshed, in line with terminology used in the Worcestershire Compact and the revised Corporate Priorities and Community Strategy Themes (as detailed in Appendix C of the report to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee).**
- 2. The application form be revised to include more robust sections on how the allocations of funds meets Council and Sustainable Community Strategy aims and priorities, and clearer information on the beneficiaries of the project or scheme (as detailed in Appendix D of the report to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee).**
- 3. The conditions of Grant Aid form be refreshed to bring it in line with the revised criteria and to strengthen compliance with relevant legislation (see Appendix E of the report to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee).**
- 4. The Council allocate a small amount of funds for the purpose of emergency grants to voluntary organisations in the District.**

CAB.44 EXCLUSION OF 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 paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB.45 MINUTES

DECISION:

The Exempt Minutes of the Cabinet held on 26th June 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 7 pm.