

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

THURSDAY, 15TH OCTOBER 2009 (6.00PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors G W Ballinger (Chairman), Mrs J Greener (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, J Baker, Mrs H E Dyke, J Holden, C D Nicholls, J Parish, M W Partridge, M A Salter, M J Shellie, J Thomas, N J Thomas and G C Yarranton.

**Observers**

Councillors J-P Campion, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs F M Oborski and K H Prosser.

**CR.48 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A J Buckley and K J Stokes.

**CR.49 Appointment of Substitutes**

Councillor M J Shellie was appointed as a substitute for Councillor K J Stokes.  
Councillor G C Yarranton was appointed as a substitute for Councillor A J Buckley.

**CR.50 Declaration of Interests**

Councillors J Aston, Mrs J Greener, M J Shellie, J Thomas and G C Yarranton declared a personal interest in agenda item no. 6 – Recommendations from the Mortgage Review Panel, as they were board members of The Community Housing Group.  
Councillor K H Prosser declared a personal interest in agenda item no. 6 as he works for a company that provides mortgages but he did not provide them personally.

**CR.51 Minutes**

**Agreed: The minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**CR.52 Matters Arising**

Members were informed that the comments that appeared in the Express & Star on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2009 related to “Worcestershire Bold” and not the Budget Review Panel.

**CR.53 Recommendations from the Mortgage Review Panel**

The Committee received a report from the Chairman of the Mortgage Review Panel which detailed recommendations from the Review Panel.

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

Members were informed that the Review Panel had been set up to look at the possibility of the Council providing Shared Ownership Mortgages. During the course of the review, it became apparent that due to the current financial climate it would not be feasible to progress further at this stage. During the review, a meeting had also been held with Registered Social Landlords to investigate the options open to the Council.

The Director of Resources informed Members that he was aware of only one authority in the country that offered local authority mortgages.

Members thought that by giving local authority mortgages, it would help the housing crisis that the district found themselves in at the present time.

Members felt that a review should be held in six months time but it was accepted that the Council might still not be in a financial position to proceed at that time.

#### **Agreed:**

#### **Recommended to Cabinet:**

- 1. That the Council does not proceed at this time to offer shared ownership mortgages in respect of RSL properties.**
- 2. A letter be written to the Housing Associations advising them of the Panel's proposal to defer matters for 6 months. If the situation alters they would be advised.**
- 3. This matter be revisited in 6 months time.**

Councillor Prosser left the meeting at this point, 6.26pm.

#### **CR.54 Directorate Business Plans**

The Committee received an update on progress made on Directorate Business Plans.

Members asked if the quarterly reports could be printed in colour and to also include the date for which the data referred to.

Councillor Nicholls informed the Committee that he was scrutinising the Chief Executive's directorate and reported the following:

1. A target date of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009 for the annual report to be published had not been achieved as the report had not been presented to the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee until 9<sup>th</sup> July 2009 and then onto Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009.
2. The Apprenticeship Scheme that Human Resources were developing had been put on hold due to the current financial situation and a problem with national funding.
3. The progress on working days lost due to sickness absence and long term sickness had been considered by the Corporate Performance Clinic..

**Agreed:**

**The quarterly progress reports issued to Members of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Panel be printed in colour and to include a heading with the date that applied to the report.**

**CR.55 Recommendation Tracking Forms 2008/09**

The Committee considered the Recommendation Tracking Forms for 2008/2009.

The Committee/Scrutiny Officer took Members through the report and the following was agreed.

**Agreed:**

- 1. Recommendations from the No Surprises Review Panel  
The Committee/Scrutiny Officer to arrange for a hard copy of the updated Council phonebook to be issued to all Members of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee.**
- 2. Recommendations from the Citizens Advice Bureau Panel  
The Committee/Scrutiny Officer to find out if the Service Level Agreement had been finalised.**
- 3. Recommendations from the External Funding Review Panel  
The Committee/Scrutiny Officer to obtain information from the Regeneration & Economic Prosperity Section with regard to completed bids for external funding.**
- 4. Wyre Forest Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009/10  
The Committee/Scrutiny Officer to find out if the guide for householders on carbon footprint and surface water flooding had been produced.**

**CR.56 Feedback from Cabinet**

The Committee noted the contents of the Cabinet action list of 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009 which related to the Domestic Waste Collection & Recycling Review Panel.

**Agreed: The information be noted.**

**CR.57 Work Programme**

The Panel considered its work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Sustainable Community Theme, Corporate Plan Aims and the Forward Plan.

**Agreed:**

- 1. The Committee/Scrutiny Officer asked Members of the Committee to let her know if they could attend the next Budget Review Panel meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009.**
- 2. The Corporate Development & Improvement Manager informed Members that the results of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) would be brought to the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009 meeting.**

**CR.58 Press Involvement**

Members were informed that at the next meeting there would be an item relating to the Homeworking Policy and that a press release would be issued in advance of the meeting. Therefore the media team would shortly be liaising with the Chairman of this Committee for any comment. It was noted that this item might generate interest from the press and public.

**Agreed: The information be noted.**

**CR.59 Exempt Information**

**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 2, 6 and 7 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

**CR.60 Summary of Minutes**

The following proceedings were considered after the press and public had been excluded from the meeting. A summary of the minutes relating to these items has been made as “exempt Information” would be disclosed if the minutes were published in full.

**CR.61 Minutes**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

**CR.62 Single Site**

The Committee received a report from the Leader of the Council on Single Site.

The meeting ended at 7.07 pm.