

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET
THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,
KIDDERMINSTER
27TH OCTOBER 2009 (6:00PM)**

Present:

Councillors: J-P Champion (Chairman), M J Hart (Vice-Chairman), N J Desmond, Mrs A T Hingley and Mrs T L Onslow.

Observers:

Councillors: G W Ballinger, Mrs H E Dyke and Mrs F M Oborski.

CAB.91 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor: S J M Clee.

CAB.92 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.93 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22nd September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.94 Call Ins

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

CAB.95 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items that required urgent attention.

CAB.96 Public Participation

No one had registered to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

CAB.97 Leader's Announcements

The Leader was sad to announce that the Council's Messenger, Steve Evans, had passed away following an illness. His wife, Rose, worked in the Democratic Services Department and the Interim Chief Executive and Members of the Cabinet wished to pass on their condolences to her and her family.

CAB.98 Budget Issues Report

A report was considered from the Director of Resources that identified the emerging budget issues which would affect the service and financial planning process, leading to the presentation of the financial strategy 2010-2013.

The Cabinet Member for Resources commented that it was considered that all Members and members of the public should be aware of all the financial pressures that the authority faced. Moreover, he alluded to the recession which was the worst that the country had experienced since the 1930's. He commented that the next government would be facing a major budget deficit and would need to take action accordingly. As a result, there would be a knock on effect for Councils in that the grant they would receive from the Government was likely to be reduced. Also, the Council could no longer rely on reserves to assist the budget as the interest rate was very poor. The Council was already committed through its capital programme to support 5 key areas, namely Single Site, District Cemetery Crematorium and Associated Facilities, ICT Strategy, Replacement of Vehicles and a Waste Strategy. It was, however, positive to note that the Council had received some of its investments back from Icelandic Banks and further monies were due to be returned in 2010. It was also highlighted that the pay rise had been 1% less than anticipated and this had saved the authority £100,000, and a pay freeze would save further monies.

The Leader stated that it was right to set out the issues early in the budget process. The authority would need to save £4 million in the medium term in addition to the savings made last year. He commented that the administration would work with the Budget Review Panel to formulate a Council-wide budget.

Decision:

- 1. The assumptions to be used within the Budget 2010-13 made within the report to Cabinet be endorsed.**
- 2. The work of the Budget Review Panel in undertaking the prioritisation exercise to assist forming Financial Strategy be supported.**
- 3. To continue to work with the Corporate Management Team, in order to bring forward the Financial Strategy on 22nd December 2009, ahead of consultation.**

CAB.99 Asset Transfer Policy

A report was considered from the Director of Legal and Corporate Services that recommended to Council that the proposed draft Asset Transfer Policy be adopted by Wyre Forest District Council.

The Cabinet Member for Legal and Corporate Services commented that the draft policy had emanated from the Quirk Review which had considered the transfer of public assets.

It was considered that the strategy would support community activities and reduce grant dependence and would build confidence in a community and empower residents to take control of their future. Members were advised that the Strategy had been agreed by a County wide group but the Strategy would not remove Council discretion in deciding whether to dispose of an asset in the first instance.

Recommended to Council: The proposed draft Asset Transfer Policy be adopted by Wyre Forest District Council and delegated authority given to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services to agree the final form of the Policy.

CAB.100 Bewdley Museum Annual Report 2009

A report was considered from the Director of Community and Partnership Services that requested that the Cabinet consider and endorse the Bewdley Museum Annual Report 2009.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Partnership Services commented that the Museum had had a successful year. It was noted that although the Museum had been closed for a longer period than normal, to allow for refurbishment, that visitor numbers had increased, and it was pleasing to see the Museum go from strength to strength.

Decision:

- 1. The Bewdley Museum Annual Report March 2009 be endorsed.**
- 2. The various projects that took place during 2008/2009 in relation to the Heritage Lottery funded redevelopment of the site, including a new Tea Shop, new craft workshops, exhibitions, toilets, brass foundry, education room, signage, interpretation, design, security and access issues be noted.**

CAB.101 Wyre Forest District Council Health Action Plan 2009/10

A report was considered from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that asked the Cabinet to consider adopting the Wyre Forest District Council Health Action Plan 2009/10.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services informed Members that the Health Action Plan linked in with the work to promote healthy living in the community and it focussed on Council employees. She wished to thank the Health and Sustainability Team for their work on the Action Plan.

Decision: The Wyre Forest District Council Health Action Plan 2009/10 be adopted.

CAB.102 Recommendations from the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Meeting, Thursday 8th October, 2009 regarding Wyre Forest District Council Health Action Plan 2009/10

The Chairman of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee presented the Committee's recommendations regarding the Council Health Action Plan. Members were advised that there had been a degree of confusion when the item was presented as Members perceived that it was an action plan for the community. However there had been a good deal of interest in the item and it had been requested to have it as a work programme item in the future.

Decision : The recommendation as set out below be AGREED:

The Wyre Forest District Council Health Action Plan 2009/10 be adopted.

CAB.103 Car Park Management Agreement – Horsefair Triangle, Kidderminster

A report was considered from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that requested the Cabinet to agree to enter into a Car Park Management Agreement with Community Housing Group to enable the Council to enforce the limited stay car parking spaces created within the Horsefair Triangle, Kidderminster.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services informed the Cabinet that the land in question belonged to the Community Housing Group. Representations had been received from local traders concerning members of the public who worked in Kidderminster Town Centre and parked on car parking spaces within the Horsefair Triangle. The Community Housing Group had therefore approached the Council to see if they would be able to police the spaces by the Parking Enforcement Team. It was noted that parking on the spaces was free for up to 20 minutes and that the monitoring of these spaces by the Parking Enforcement Team would result in a better turnover of spaces and would keep the local traders happy.

Decision: Delegated authority be given to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services in consultation with the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services to enter into a Car Park Management Agreement with the Community Housing Group to enable the Council to enforce the provisions of the Wyre Forest District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2009 in respect of the car parking within the area known as the Horsefair Triangle, Kidderminster.

CAB.104 Recommendations from Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee, 15th October 2009 regarding: Recommendations from Mortgage Review Panel

The Chairman of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee presented the recommendations from the Mortgage Review Panel.

Agenda Item No. 3

The Cabinet were advised that the Mortgage Review Panel, under the Chairmanship of Councillor Prosser, had met on 3 occasions and that there had been all party support to the principle of providing local authority mortgages. However, in the present economic climate it was not perceived to be the right time to provide local authority mortgages. It had therefore been suggested that the matter be kept under review and reconsidered in 6 months time.

Decision: The recommendations as set out below be agreed:

- 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.**

The meeting closed at 18.30 pm.