

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,

KIDDERMINSTER

22ND DECEMBER 2009 (6:00PM)

Present:

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

Observers:

Councillors: H E Dyke, M J Kelly, H J Martin, D J Millis and F M Oborski.

CAB.131 Minute's Silence

A minute's silence was held as a mark of respect for the late John Simmonds (an Honorary Alderman, former Member and past Chairman of the Council).

CAB.132 Welcome to new Chief Executive

The Leader welcomed Ian Miller, the Council's new chief Executive to his first meeting of Cabinet.

CAB. 133 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB. 134 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB. 135 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 24th November 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB. 136 Call Ins

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

CAB. 137 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items that required urgent attention.

CAB. 138 Public Participation

No members of the public had registered to speak.

CAB.139 Leader's Announcements

Members were advised that a public memorial service would be held rather than a Civic Funeral for the late John Simmonds. The Memorial Service would be held in January 2010 and details would be circulated to all Members shortly. Members noted that the administration had sent formal condolences to Mrs Simmonds and her family.

The Leader wished to thank Chief Officers, Scrutiny Chairmen and Group Leaders for all the hard work they had undertaken during 2009. He commented that it had been a challenging year for the Council and he hoped that everyone would have an enjoyable Christmas and a Happy New Year.

CAB. 140 Revised Redundancy Policy

A report was considered from the Chief Executive regarding the Council's Redundancy policy in respect of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 .

The Leader advised that following the redundancies that were made last year, it was necessary to review the policy and to consider the practicalities and the affordability of future redundancy packages. It was also necessary to bring the Council's policy in line with other authorities in the County. It was acknowledged that redundancy was a very emotive subject for staff whose jobs were at risk and therefore a period of consultation would be held before the Policy was considered by Council in February 2010.

The Chief Executive was asked to comment on the responses to the policy from the unions. Members were advised that two responses had been received from UNISON and the GMB unions. Both were opposed to the proposed changes.

The Leader informed Members that of the 31 staff who had taken redundancy in March 2009, over half of those staff were in bands C to G and the rest were on higher pay scales. Members were advised that it had been clarified that this year although the Council would be able to capitalise redundancy costs it would not be possible to capitalise discretionary payments. He assured Members that there would be a full debate on the policy at the February 2010 meeting of Council.

A Member asked for clarification as to whether PILON (Payment in Lieu of Notice) was an express or an implied term in the contracts of employment of staff. The Chief Executive agreed to clarify this matter.

Decision:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

1. **Consideration be given to the comments received by the Trade Unions and Employees on the proposed policy changes to the discretionary lump sum payment and PILON in cases of termination of employment.**
2. **Subject to the outcome of paragraph 2.1. if the report to Cabinet that both the discretionary lump sum payment and PILON are no longer paid and the Council's Redundancy Policy in respect of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 be revised to reflect these changes.**
3. **The revised Redundancy Policy be adopted and will come into effect from 1st June 2010; providing a three months' notice period to all employees.**

CAB.141 Three Year Budget and Policy Framework 2010/2013

The Cabinet considered the Council's three year budget and Policy Framework for 2010/2013.

The Leader advised Members that the Budget Book which contained all the financial reports had been shared with Group Leaders and Members of staff during the afternoon. (Copies of the budget book were circulated round the table to those Members who had not already received a copy).

Members were advised that it was necessary to reprofile the budget in order to achieve a sustainable budget where there would be no call on reserves in the first of the three years it covered. The administration was aiming to achieve a result whereby there would be no call on reserves at all but this would take some time to achieve. There were pressures on the budget as a result of the fall in interest rates and the lower levels of grant that would be received from the Government. It was estimated that there was currently a one million pound shortfall on the incremental budget.

Members were advised that it had been assumed that there would be a reduction in Government Grant to the Council of 10% in year 2 and 5% in year 3. The administration acknowledged the extent of the recession and the need to be prudent. It was not its intention to damage the level of front line services but it was necessary to be as efficient as possible in order to continue the range of cultural and leisure services that the Council currently provided. There would be a small increase in the Council Tax base.

The Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted that it had been necessary to rein in spending due to the current economic climate. He commented that striving for efficiency and smarter working was necessary if the Council was to be successful in maintaining front line services and jobs. The administration had therefore concentrated on back room savings such as reducing the print and design facility, a reduction in the Community and Partnership Services Management Team and reduction in the amount of training offered to staff. It had also been proposed that Members would have a pay freeze for the next 3 years.

Decision: Cabinet endorses and recommends for scrutiny:

- 1. The Council's updated Medium Term Finance Strategy as set out in Appendix 5 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 2. Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council's Revenue Budgets for 2010/2013 as set out in Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 3. The level of net expenditure and resultant Council Tax for 2010/2013 as per paragraph 3.9 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 4. Income Service Options, including appropriate revision of fees and charges and the impact on the Council's Revenue Budget for 2010/2013 as show in the separate report contained within the financial strategy.**
- 5. The Council's policy relating to Working Balances, Reserves and Provisions as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report to Cabinet and not the availability of Resources and Provision outlined in paragraph 7 and Appendix 4.**
- 6. The efficiency targets as detailed in a separate report to the meeting of the Cabinet (paragraph 18 refers).**
- 7. Priorities for 2010/2013 as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report to Cabinet.**

CAB.142 Capital Programme 2010/2011 Onwards

Decision: Cabinet endorses and recommends for scrutiny:

- 1. The Capital Strategy, Base Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report to Cabinet be approved.**
- 2. The variations to the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule in accordance with the Council's Budget Process be approved.**

3. The Director of Resources funds the Vehicle, Equipment and system Renewal Schedule by means of Prudential Borrowing (repayments based on anticipated life of Vehicle, Equipment or Systems).
4. The Cabinet notes that the Council has agreed to dispose of surplus assets in order to generate new usable capital receipts for the Single Site Project where this is proven to be economically viable in accordance with the Property Rationalisation Strategy.

CAB.143 Base Budget Variations

Decision: The Cabinet takes account of the Budget Variations in arriving at their Financial Strategy 2010/2013.

CAB.144 Calculation of the Council Tax Base 2010/2011

Decision: That pursuant to the report of the Director of Resources and in accordance with the above Act and the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the Council Tax base for Wyre Forest District for the financial year 2010/2011 shall be:

Parish	Tax Base
Upper Arley	339
Bewdley	3736
Broome	175
Chaddesley Corbett	732
Churchill and Blakedown	756
Town of Kidderminster	18093
Kidderminster Foreign	394
Ribbesford	202
Rock	1212
Rushock	71
Stone	257
Stourport-on-Severn	7189
Wolverley and Cookley	1789

Tax Base for Wyre Forest District : 34945

(Note : The Tax Base for 2009/2010 was 34816)

CAB.145 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR 2007) Efficiency Gains 2009/2010 – 2012/2013

Decision: The Cabinet endorses and recommends for Scrutiny:

1. The 2009/2010 estimated total net value of ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains.

2. It be noted that a separate report will be taken to a future meeting detailing the Proposed Efficiency Strategy to achieve the future efficiency targets required under CSR07 and assist with the Council's financial position.

CAB.146 Risk Management and the Budget Process

Decision: The Cabinet endorses the Budget Risk management process and consider the contents of this report in arriving at the Budget Strategy for 2010/2013.

CAB.147 Income Service Options 2010/2013

Decision: The Cabinet endorses and recommends for scrutiny: The approval of increases in fees and charges and consequential income outlined in the attached Income Service Options.

CAB.148 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 paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB.149 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.

CAB.150 Minutes

The Exempt Minutes of the Cabinet held on 24th November 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 6.50 pm.