

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

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

19TH JANUARY 2010 (6:00PM)

---

**Present:**

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

**Observers:**

Councillors: M Ahmed, G W Ballinger, H E Dyke, D J Millis, F M Oborski, and J A Shaw.

**CAB.151 Welcome**

The Leader welcomed Councillor Shaw, newly elected Member for Areley Kings to the Cabinet meeting.

**CAB.152 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**CAB.153 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor M J Hart declared a personal interest in agenda item number 7.2. relating to the (WETT) Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Business Case as he was due to vote on the matter at Worcestershire County Council Cabinet in due course.

**CAB.154 Minutes**

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

**CAB.155 Call-Ins**

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

**CAB.156 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

**CAB.157 Public Participation**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

**CAB.158 Leader's Announcements**

No announcements were made.

**CAB.159 Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Business Case (WETT)**

A report was considered from the Chief Executive that had been circulated to Members following the publication of the agenda which recommended to Council that a unified regulatory service for Worcestershire Councils be established.

The Leader informed Members that the proposals followed in the wake of the unitary debate and that for the Council and its services to remain status quo was not an option. The WETT proposals would assist in delivering some of the savings that a unitary model would have delivered. Although initially the proposals had focused on audit, property and regulatory services, the final business case had focused on regulatory services as it was considered this route would deliver substantial savings for the Council.

The Chairman of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee outlined the scrutiny process that had been undertaken into the WETT proposals. Cabinet was advised that Members had keenly participated in the meetings that had been held and subsequently considered that endorsing the WETT proposals was the way forward. However, further clarification had been requested on the proposed Service Level Agreement before the Council meeting to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2010. He commented that concern had also been expressed in the scrutiny process about the possibility of the Hub service deteriorating as a result of the WETT proposals. In particular there was concern that if some Hub staff were to be based at Worcester they might not be able to give the same high quality and level of service that Wyre Forest gave.

The Leader commented that some staff appeared to have reservations about the proposals and these should be recorded. However, he was confident that these reservations could be addressed. He understood why staff felt uncertain about the proposals and he wanted to send a message of reassurance to staff whilst the negotiations were in progress

The Director for Resources informed Members that the Business Case for WETT was based on all 6 District Councils and the County Council participating in the model. However, if one or more of the local Councils decided not to participate then it would be up to the other authorities to produce a new business case was unworkable.

**Decision:**

- 1. To include the WETT proposals for shared regulatory services as part of its final budget proposals that will be agreed at its meeting in February;**

2. **To delegate to the Leader of the Council the Cabinet's power to agree to appointments to joint committees under regulation 11(3B) of the Local Authorities (Arrangements for Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2000.**

**Recommended To Council:**

1. **A unified Regulatory Service for the seven principal councils in Worcestershire, hosted by Bromsgrove District Council, be established from 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2010 under the auspices of a Joint Committee.**
2. **Subject to the recommendation in paragraph 2.3 of the report to Cabinet being agreed and the unified Regulatory Service being centralised, relevant employees from the Council's Planning and Regulatory Services Directorate be transferred under the principles and procedures of TUPE to Bromsgrove District Council.**
3. **The Chief Executive be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of the Council's representative on the joint appointments committee that will handle the appointment of the Head of Shared Service, and to appoint the Member(s) on the joint committee that will oversee the shared service.**

**CAB.160 Sundry/Property Debt Position at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

A report was considered from the Director for Resources that informed Members of the Sundry/Property Debt Position as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 which also gave details of performance against targets.

The Cabinet Member for Resources informed Members that there had been a slight deterioration in the overall position since the matter was last reported to Cabinet in June 2009 and he highlighted the following:

- Debts as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 stood at £920,000 which showed a decrease of £163,918 as compared with the same period last year.
- The total number of debts outstanding was £445,845 which was an increase of £124,619 as compared with the same period last year.
- The value of debts over 6 months old was £68,527
- There was good news in that the total debts written off in the period was £914 compared with £2,926 in the same period last year.

The Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted the current economic downturn and commented that the Council had only had to write off 0.1% of debt raised was to be commended. He also applauded the fact that the Council had been successful in collecting approximately 85% of outstanding debts.

**Decision:**

- 1. The Sundry/Property debt level, age of debt and performance against targets, as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009, be noted.**
- 2. Review of payment methods for debtor accounts be noted**

**CAB.161 Budget Prioritisation Exercise – Recommendation from Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

The Chairman of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee presented the recommendation regarding the Budget Prioritisation Exercise. He commented that the Committee had taken a new approach in the way they scrutinised budgets and this strategy had appeared to work well.

The Cabinet Member for Resources informed Cabinet Members that the Prioritisation Model had assisted the scrutiny of the budget process and he welcomed the change and suggested that it be used in the future.

**Decision: The Cabinet endorsed the recommendation of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee that the results of the Budget Prioritisation Exercise undertaken by the Budget Review Panel be agreed**

**CAB.162 Efficiency Strategy : Recommendations from Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee 14<sup>th</sup> January 2010**

The Cabinet considered a recommendation which had been circulated to Members after circulation of the agenda regarding the Approach to Efficiency. The Chairman of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee presented the recommendation.

The Cabinet Member for Resources commented that the Council had an excellent record in striving to make efficiency savings wherever possible and he supported the work of the scrutiny committee in this connection.

**Decision: The Cabinet adopt the Approach to Efficiency document as recommended by the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee**

**CAB.163 Kidderminster Town Centre Strategy – Issues and Options Document**

A report was considered from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that asked the Cabinet to agree the Kidderminster Town Centre Strategy Issues and Options Document as a basis for consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration commented that the issues and options document would be sent to key stakeholders for comment and it was intended that the Kidderminster Town Centre Strategy would be published in the summer of 2010.

The Chairman of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee commented that this item had been considered at a recent meeting of the committee. She reported that there had been detailed and enthusiastic debate on the matter. The Committee considered that at present the Town Centre partnership was not fit for purpose and it needed to be reinvigorated.

The Leader echoed the comments of the Chairman of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. He highlighted the needs for towns to change and evolve and he considered that this would be achieved. He looked forward to reviving the Town Centre Partnership so it could deliver an effective service.

**Decision: The Kidderminster Town Centre Strategy Issues and Options Paper set out in Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet, be agreed as the basis for consultation with key stakeholders.**

**CAB.164 Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire – Emerging Preferred Options Consultation**

A report was considered from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that sought approval regarding the representations to be submitted on the Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire, Emerging Preferred Options Consultation, November 2010.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration informed Members of the Cabinet that the consultation had been considered at the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and the comments from that meeting had been fed into the report to Cabinet.

The Chairman of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee commented that the matter had been thoroughly scrutinised with many questions being asked. She also commended the presentation that had recently been given to Members on the Waste Strategy.

**Decision:**

- 1. The comments and representations, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet be agreed as the District Council's formal response to the Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire, Emerging Preferred Options Consultation (November 2009).**
- 2. That the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services be authorised to finalise the District Council's representations by 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010.**

**CAB.165 10:10 Campaign**

A report was considered from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that recommended to Council to sign up to the 10:10 Campaign relating to Climate Change.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services thanked Councillors Oborski and Dyke for taking a Motion to Council on the 10:10 Campaign. She commented that the campaign related to climate change and in particular asking individuals to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by 10% in 2010 and that Members and staff would be encouraged to act in an environmentally friendly manner.

Whilst acknowledging the various theories that existed with regard to climate change Members were mindful of the need to embrace the proposals of the 10:10 Campaign. The Leader commented that he was keen to take the initiative forward and commented that children were likely to be interested in it as it affected their future.

**Recommended To Council:**

- 1. That the Council signs up to the 10:10 Campaign relating to Climate Change based on being able to achieve a minimum 3% reduction.**
- 2. Urges all Council suppliers and partners to participate in the initiative.**
- 3. Urges all Members and Officers to sign up to the Campaign individually**

**CAB.166 Recommendation from Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee 14<sup>th</sup> January 2010 regarding Equality and Diversity Update**

The Cabinet considered a recommendation from the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee regarding equality and diversity which had been circulated to Members after the agenda had been distributed. The Chairman of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee commented that this item had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee. It was perceived that there had been little Member support on equality and diversity since the presentation that had been held at Sixways last year. However, he commented that the Council now had a new and enthusiastic officer who led on the subject and he anticipated that further training would be offered shortly

**Decision: The Cabinet approved the recommendations of the Waterhouse Report as recommended by the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee.**

The meeting ended at 6.35 pm.