

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
CABINET**

**THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,  
KIDDERMINSTER  
TUESDAY 20TH JULY 2010 (6.00PM)**

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**Present:**

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

**Observers:**

Councillors: G W Ballinger, H E Dyke, F M Oborski, J Phillips, J A Shaw,  
J Thomas and G C Yarranton.

**CAB.16 Apologies for Absence**

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

**CAB.17 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**CAB.18 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 15th June 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**CAB.19 Call Ins**

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

**CAB.20 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

**CAB.21 Leader's Announcements**

There were no announcements from the Leader.

**CAB.22 Design Brief for Single Site Office Accommodation**

A report was considered from the Chief Executive that outlined the current proposals for the finalisation of the design brief.

The Leader reported that the Single Site project had made considerable progress and all decisions were being channelled through the Transformation Board.

**Decision:**

- 1. To note the current proposals for the finalisation of the design brief as set out in the report to Cabinet.**
- 2. To delegate the approval of the final Design Brief to the Corporate Management Team in agreement with the Leader of the Council.**

**CAB.23 Review of Human Resources Arrangements**

A report was considered from the Director of Resources that recommended to Council the proposal to transfer the current Human Resources Team to the County Council be approved and a contract agreed until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

The Cabinet Member for Resources advised that although the Human Resources team were hard working, it was too small a department and the proposal to move the team to Worcestershire County Council would increase resilience and Human Resources assistance would be received which the Council would not normally receive.

**Recommended to Council:**

**The proposal to transfer the current Human Resources team to the County Council be approved and a contract agreed until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.**

**CAB.24 Review of Staff Mileage Rates**

A report was considered from the Director of Resources that recommended to Council that current rates of car mileage payable to Officers be amended as from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010.

The Cabinet Member for Resources reported that as a result of the current financial constraints, difficult decisions may have to be made in the near future and by standardising staff mileage rates for all employees, it could help as part of the budget process. The Leader stated that everyone had to recognise that there would be hard times ahead. He thanked the Corporate Management Team, Human Resources staff and the Cabinet Member for Resources in leading this challenging process.

**Recommended to Council:**

- 1. A single rate of reimbursement of 40p per mile for all purposes should be introduced, with an additional allowance of 5p per mile for carrying a passenger from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 or as soon as possible thereafter.**
- 2. All existing essential car user allowances be removed from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 or as soon as possible thereafter.**
- 3. The Head of Paid Service be authorised to take all necessary steps, including further negotiation with unions and consultation with staff, to secure implementation of the changes outlined in this report.**

**CAB.25 Worcestershire Partnership – A Community Cohesion Strategy for All**

A report was considered from the Director of Community and Partnership Services which set out the development and implementation of the Worcestershire Partnership Community Cohesion Strategy and outlined key issues and learning for the Council.

**Decision:**

- 1. The Worcestershire Partnership Community Cohesion Strategy for All be endorsed;**
- 2. The proposed approach to the delivery of the Strategy be endorsed;**
- 3. The proposed Community Cohesion toolkit be promoted and utilised across all Council Directorates.**

**CAB.26 Annual Report 2009/10**

A report was considered from the Director of Community and Partnership Services that recommended to Council that the Annual Report be approved.

The Cabinet Member for Community & Partnership Services reported that in the current economic climate, the Council had delivered 174 affordable homes, 252 disabled adaptations and had assisted several residents with flooding issues. Kidderminster had also been ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the United Kingdom mystery shopping exercise.

The commitment made from staff over the past 12 months was recognised and it had contributed towards the progress made. The Chief Executive was asked to pass on the Cabinet's thanks to all staff.

It was noted that work on a new Corporate Plan was underway and it was hoped that this would have the same success.

**Recommended to Council:**

**The annual report 2009/10 be approved, with the good progress noted in achieving more affordable housing, new arrangements for collecting garden waste and recycling, the launch of the Rewyre prospectus for economic regeneration and the achievement of significant savings.**

**CAB.27 Wyre Forest Car Parking Review**

A report was considered from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that recommended to Council matters in connection with car parking provision within the district and proposed changes as a way forward for a number of site specific proposals.

The Cabinet Member for Housing & Environmental Services informed Members that the report set out recommendations to Council some of which would form part of the forthcoming budget process. There had to be equity, fairness and consistency on the Council parking policy across the district. There were a total of 26 car parks in the district and there were inconsistencies with charges and the Cabinet proposals aimed to remedy these differences. He thanked the Review Panel, which had been chaired by Councillor Phillips, for the considerable work that had been undertaken. All the recommendations from the Review Panel had been looked at and had been answered in the report. Out of the 8 recommendations made, Cabinet were proposing to recommend 5 of them onto Council. In relation to the 23 hour rule this was felt to be fair and sensible.

With reference to the Bewdley season tickets, these would be withdrawn but on a phased basis.

The Leader paid tribute to the Review Panel which had helped the Cabinet to come to a decision. There were many different arrangements for car park charges across the District and it was about recognising a fair deal for everyone.

The Chairman of the Review Panel said although he was disappointed that Cabinet would not be recommending to Council all of the panel's recommendations, he recognised the reasons why. He had been grateful for the opportunity to put recommendations forward. Members of the public had commented that there was an issue with security in Westbourne Street, Bewdley and for this reason, they had purchased a car park pass for Gardners Meadow instead.

It was confirmed that the date for the software update implementation date was October 2010 and not October 2011 as stated in the report.

In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed that the restricted car park pass cost £260 and the residents pass was £130.

It was confirmed that it was not Council policy to break even on car park charging. A substantial contribution to the Council's other activities was achieved.

The Cabinet Member replied that with regard to Westbourne Street car park, the issue about security would be looked into when the time came to remove the car park space to a possible area for commercial parking.

A member asked if it was fair to increase Value Added Tax (VAT) from January 2011 when many of the machines that will be converted may only bring in extra pence. The Cabinet Member responded that charges will come into force on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2011 and there would be a significant loss in revenue if the Council did not charge extra to allow for the change in VAT.

A Member perceived that Bewdley should not be any different to any other area in the Wyre Forest and the charging for car parks had to be consistent across the district.

The Director of Resources confirmed that all Council charges which were subject to VAT would be levied from 4<sup>th</sup> January 2011. It was suggested that the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee look at all the charges that needed to increase in line with VAT.

The Chief Executive pointed out that if adjustment because of the VAT increase were delayed to October 2011, it would affect 9 months income and the loss would be more substantial.

**Recommended to Council:**

**2.1 The Wyre Forest District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2009 be amended and consulted upon as required to accommodate the following changes:**

- **The car park at Vale Road, Stourport be made chargeable from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, depending on response to consultation, as set out in paragraph 4.2iv of this report and that Restricted Season Tickets be made available once the charge is introduced.**
- **The land at 8 & 8a Bridge Street, Stourport be included as a future pay & display car park to be charged for in the same way as Raven Street Car Park, Stourport.**
- **The land at Worcester Street, Kidderminster (Coronation Gardens) be included as a future pay & display car park to be charged as set out in paragraph 4.7 of this report.**
- **If there is not agreement reached with the Parish Council on the transfer of the land to them, then the car park at The Avenue, Blakedown be made chargeable from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, depending on response to consultation, as set out in paragraph 4.2i of this report.**
- **The Order be amended as appropriate to reflect Blue Badge holder dispensations.**
- **The exemption from the 23 hour maximum stay in any 24 hour period for a period not exceeding two months for holders of Full, Restricted and Resident Season Tickets.**
- **The removal of Westbourne Street car park as a public car park.**
- **Reference to 'Other Season Tickets' to be added to ensure consistency with the provisions of the Financial Strategy;**

**and that Cabinet be given delegated authority to consider any representations made as a result of public consultation on the above and to finalise the revisions to the Order.**

- 2.2 That the Director of Legal & Corporate Services be authorised to progress the lease of spaces at Westbourne Street car park, Bewdley in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Legal & Corporate Services and Cabinet Member for Housing & Environmental Services and to determine criteria for selection of lessees.**
- 2.3 That car park charges and season ticket prices be increased from January 2011 to reflect the increase in VAT from 17.5% to 20%.**
- 2.4 In response to the Community & Regeneration Committee recommendations:**
- i. That the maximum stay period of 23 hours in any 24 hour period be retained in the Car Park Order but that the Order be amended to exempt Full, Restricted and Residents' Season Ticket holders from having to meet this requirement for a period of no more than two months at one time.**
  - ii. That Resident Season Tickets be withdrawn on a phased basis, commencing in April 2011 with the withdrawal of the 12 month Season Ticket and in October 2011 with the withdrawal of the 6 month Season Ticket.**
  - iii. That from October 2011, Dog Lane and Gardners Meadow car parks be included in the list of car parks where a Restricted Season Ticket may be purchased.**
  - iv. That, until October 2011, the issue of new Residents' Season Tickets be limited to those streets set out in paragraph 4.4iii of this report only.**
  - v. That the Director of Planning & Regulatory Services investigates the introduction of tickets purchased from machines the previous evening to continue into the following day and 2 day tickets, subject to there being no software impediment or financial cost to the Council, and introduces them from October 2010.**

**DECIDED:**

- 2.5 To introduce a season ticket for specific events and to charge for the issue of passes for the use of car parks for non civic and non charitable requests for such, as set out in paragraph 8.3 of this report and to agree the criteria set out in Appendix 2 of this report for considering such requests.**
- 2.6 That the Committee Officer writes to Bewdley High School regarding the possibility of operating a Park & Ride facility from their car park.**

**CAB.28 Changes to the Local Authority Building Control Charges Regime**

A report was considered from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that informed Members of proposed changes in the method of setting fees for the Statutory Building Regulation function.

The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services advised that all Local Authorities had to introduce a new charging scheme for Building Control by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010. It was envisaged that it would not make a significant difference to how customers were charged.

**Decision:**

- 1. That the Local Government Association Model Scheme be maintained as the basis of the Wyre Forest Building Control Scheme of Fees under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010; and**
- 2. That the Director of Planning & Regulatory Services (in consultation with the Director of Resources) be given delegated authority to vary the Wyre Forest District Council fee scales by up to plus or minus 10% if required to do so in order to balance the fee earning account.**

**CAB.29 An Economic Strategy for Worcestershire: 2010-2020**

A report was considered from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that asked the Cabinet to endorse the refreshed Economic Strategy for Worcestershire.

**Decision: An Economic Strategy for Worcestershire 2010-2020 be endorsed.**

**CAB.30 KTC – Coronation Gardens**

A report was considered from the Director of Legal and Corporate Services that recommended a way forward for the future of KTC3.

The Cabinet Member for Legal & Corporate Services reported that it had been regrettable that KTC3 had become a victim of the economic downturn and gave a brief history of the area. She reported that two options were open to the Council but the option that was being proposed would be the most beneficial for the community and would enhance the area.

The Leader gave thanks to the Cabinet Member and the Director of Legal & Corporate Services for the option that had been brought forward.

A member welcomed the creative way of upgrading the site but hoped that in terms of a press release, it would show what the Council could realistically achieve for the area.

It was confirmed that the car park spaces that would be generated in the area would be chargeable and be off street.

Members thanked the Cabinet Member for detailing the history of the site but stated that they thought that the area looked flat since the rose bushes had been removed. The Director of Community & Partnership Services noted these comments.

The Director of Legal & Corporate Services would circulate to Members further details of the proposed option.

**Decision: Option 1 as outlined in section 4 of the report to Cabinet be agreed.**

**CAB.31 Recommendations from Audit Committee, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

**Annual Report from the Section 151 Officer – 2009/2010**

**Decision: The report from the Section 151 Officer for 2009/2010 attached as Appendix 1 to the report to the Audit Committee be approved.**

**CAB.32 Recommendations from Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

**Review of Mortgage Review Panel Findings**

The Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Mortgage Review Panel. The Chairman of Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee informed Members that although it was an excellent idea to give local authority mortgages, the timing was not right in the present economic climate.

**Decision: That the Council does not proceed at this time to offer shared ownership mortgages in respect of Registered Social Landlord Properties.**

**CAB.33 Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

**Renewable Energy and Efficiency Review Panel recommendations**

The Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Renewable Energy and Efficient Review Panel. The Cabinet were advised that the Review Panel had been most enjoyable and there were lots of items to take forward as a Council.

Members were advised that the review panel had invited people from Property Services at the Community Housing Group, representatives from companies who produced energy efficiency boilers and Worcester Bosch, all of which had contributed to the meetings.

Thanks were given to the Assistant Scrutiny/Committee Officer for putting his ideas to the panel and for producing a good final report.



It was believed that the findings from the review were something on which the Council could take a lead.

The Leader informed Members that on recommendation 10 of the report, the word criteria should read guidance.

**Decision: To endorse the recommendations as set out in the report agreed at the Community & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010.**

### **Sustainability**

- 1. For the Sustainability Section to build upon their promotional work in the community with regard to awareness of fuel poverty, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and grants and support, by providing relevant literature and holding awareness raising sessions at locations which will target those most vulnerable to fuel poverty, such as at Surestart Children's Centres.**
- 2. To provide a breakdown to Members regarding areas of high fuel poverty and low uptake of grants and support, so that ward Members can promote energy efficiency, grants and support to those most in need whilst carrying out their ward duties.**
- 3. To promote sustainability across as many areas of the Council's business as possible, including an advertising campaign on the Council Refuse Fleet.**
- 4. To develop the Sustainability webpage to include the following:**
  - i) A section outlining renewable energy technologies and their practical applications and benefits.**
  - ii) To invite local residents and businesses who have adopted renewable energy technologies and/or high standards of energy efficiency to submit their experiences, in order to compile a showcase of best practice case studies.**
  - iii) Further information detailing available funding, support and grants for energy efficiency and renewable energy.**

### **Planning**

- 5. That the Local Development Framework (LDF) process encourages renewable energy and energy efficiency amongst new developments following the adoption of the Core Strategy, particularly within the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and Site Allocations and Policies Documents.**
- 6. To ensure that the Development Control process fully implements the Sustainable Development Standards Policy as set out in the Core Strategy, once adopted.**

7. **At the appropriate stage of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Process to review the Design Supplementary Planning Guidance and introduce additional validation requirements for planning applications, requiring details of plans for renewable energy and efficiency measures to be provided to enable an application to be validated. Failure to provide the requisite information would prevent the application from being considered.**
8. **To hold a promotional seminar (or series of), at an appropriate stage in the LDF process in order to outline to developers and architects the high energy efficiency and renewable energy standards which are encouraged within the district, and the required changes for lower carbon developments contained within national Building Regulations.**

#### **Landlord Accreditation Scheme**

9. **To include the following guidance for accreditation within the forthcoming Landlord Accreditation Scheme:**
  - i) **Properties must be of a decent standard of thermal efficiency.**
  - ii) **Tenants are given advice upon request, or signposted to an appropriate advisory agency, on how best to heat their accommodation and use hot water in an energy efficient way using the facilities provided, together with details of any available funding. The Scheme Operator will assist with the provision of such information.**

The meeting closed at 6.55 pm.