

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
15th March 2011

Wyre Forest Forward – Terms of Reference

OPEN	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	Economic success shared by all
CORPORATE PLAN AIM:	A Well-Run and Responsive Council
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor J-P Campion
DIRECTOR:	Chief Executive
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APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 Wyre Forest Forward – draft terms of reference

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To agree the terms of reference for this fundamental review of the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 **The Cabinet is asked to AGREE the terms of reference for the Wyre Forest Forward review, set out in appendix 1.**

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 The financial strategy that was approved by Council on 23rd February referred to the intention to commission a fundamental review of the core purposes and functions of Wyre Forest District Council in response to the funding position over the coming period. By 2014-15, the Council needs to find recurring expenditure reductions of at least £1m from its net budget.

3.2 The central focus of the review is therefore to secure the future financial viability of the Council and sustainability of its services. General unallocated revenue reserves will have been exhausted by the middle of 2014 on current projections. By that time, the Council has to move to a position where its expenditure is aligned with its income.

3.3 The proposed terms of reference for the review are set out in appendix 1. They set out the purpose and outcomes sought from the review, the need for engagement with staff, members and public, as well as the suggested process and timeline.

4. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. The Council has endorsed the need for the review as part of the financial strategy for 2011/14.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The review seeks to address the most significant risk facing the council, namely putting its finances and services on a viable and sustainable footing in the medium term.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 No requirement for an impact assessment arises at this stage. Impact assessments will be required when proposals for changes are identified.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 There is a need to make early progress with the review if its work is to be completed by November.

8. CONSULTEES

- 8.1 Corporate Management Team.
8.2 Cabinet.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Financial Strategy 2011/2014 – paragraph 5.14

Terms of reference – Wyre Forest Forward

Purpose

To conduct a fundamental review of all aspects of the Council, using lean/systems thinking principles, in order to secure its financial viability and the sustainability of services.

Outputs

To secure consensus on the core purposes and functions of the Council and aspirations for the level of performance in these areas.

To identify what services for communities and businesses will be provided or supported by the Council in future.

To identify what further changes in service delivery methods will be required, including maximising use of self-service and on-line services.

To identify and influence the changes required in behaviour, culture and expectations on the part of members, staff and the public.

To produce a costed set of proposals that ensure that the Council's expenditure in 2014-15 does not exceed its income i.e. that reserves should not be used to sustain recurrent revenue expenditure from that point onwards.

Constraints and variables

The review will take account of:

- the financial envelope. Likely levels of Government funding, potential impact of local government finance review;
- legal requirements. This does not mean that the council will focus only on its statutory duties as there is often a choice about how such duties are performed and to what level. However the Council must continue to comply with legal requirements;
- implications of legislation and Government policy, such as the Big Society and localism.

Workstreams

The review is expected to focus on six work streams

Establishing what communities want

- using existing data to focus on the services that the public say they want
- using the prioritisation model to identify "the core offer"
- review corporate priorities/plan if necessary

Modern and efficient service delivery

- channel shift, on line, self-service
- ICT systems and support
- Minimising internal systems

The collaborative and commissioning model

- identify functions that should be externalised to private sector or not-for-profit bodies including staff mutuals or council-owned companies
- further shared services, including opportunities for WFDC to lead
- consider strategic partnership with a private or public sector partner

Members

- review of roles and responsibilities - community leadership role, effect of Big Society and localism
- review of committee structures, member/officer protocol
- further stages of review of constitution

Project and performance management

- focus on benchmarking, not our own internal targets
- project management tool
- programme management

People, communications, cultural and behavioural change

- getting the message across, externally and internally
- organisational development informed by training needs analysis

Seeking the views of others

The review needs to allow time for involvement by and consultation with:

- the public. This can include more focussed work with representatives of the public, such as the Citizens' Panel;
- local businesses
- all members
- staff
- partner organisations including town and parish councils.

The review should also seek external challenge of its work e.g. through a peer review or direct input from other organisations.

Timeline

To produce recommendations for implementation from April 2012 onwards. These will include decisions that will form part of the financial strategy for 2012/15, which will be adopted in February 2012. The review should therefore reach conclusions by November 2011.

Process

The review will be undertaken by the Cabinet and Corporate Management Team. Reports requiring formal decisions or recommendations to the Council will form part of the Cabinet agenda.

A broad integrated project team of staff will be established to feed into the work, in order to enable involvement across the organisation.