

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

THURSDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER 2011 (6.00 PM)

Present:

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), T Ingham (Vice-Chairman), J Baker, A J Buckley, N Gale, J Greener, I Hardiman, J A Hart, V Higgs, D J McCann, J W Parish, A M Sewell, N J Thomas, S J Williams and G C Yarranton.

Observers:

Councillors: M Ahmed, G W Ballinger, J-P Campion, N J Desmond, P Dyke, D R Godwin, P B Harrison, M J Hart, P V Hayward, H J Martin, C D Nicholls, F M Oborski, T L Onslow, J Phillips, K H Prosser, C Rogers, M A Salter and J A Shaw.

- OS.25** Due to the overwhelming attendance of members of the public for agenda item no. 11, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6.03pm and announced that the agenda item would be deferred to a special Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting to be held on 19th September 2011 at 6pm in the Civic Hall, Stourport-on-Severn. It was confirmed that the list of registered public speakers would be carried over to the next meeting and the date, time and venue of the special meeting would be advertised on the Council's website and in the local press. The Chairman advised that no decisions had been made about the sites and every Member of the public would have an opportunity to contribute through the public consultation process.

The Solicitor for Wyre Forest District Council advised that the meeting had been adjourned and asked if people not staying for other agenda items to leave the building.

The Leader of the Council left the meeting at this point, (6.10pm).
The meeting resumed at 6.26pm.

OS.26 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Holden and D R Sheppard.

OS.27 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor N J Thomas was appointed as a substitute for Councillor D R Sheppard.
Councillor G C Yarranton was appointed as a substitute for Councillor J Holden.

OS.28 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.29 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OS.30 Recommendations of the Recording Equipment, Blogging and Social Media Review Panel

The Chairman of the Review Panel, Co-opted Member Tavis Pitt, thanked Members who were on the Panel and also the Democratic Services Manager and Assistant Scrutiny Committee Officer for their help with the review.

Mr Pitt led Members through the report and advised research had been carried out with other local authorities who used blogging and social media and a poll had been carried out on the Council's webpage. The Chairman advised the Committee that an addendum to the recommendations listed on page 18 of the report had been circulated notifying the slight amendment to wording to point 5.1d and the addition of point 5.1g.

Councillor P Dyke came into the meeting at this point, (6.32pm).

Members agreed the use of social media such as facebook was a good way to keep in touch with people and recommendation 5.1d should be aligned to the Ethics and Standards policy. The Chairman thanked Mr Pitt for his involvement in the review panel.

Agreed:

Recommended to Cabinet:

- a. **The Council should record and broadcast its public meetings online following the move to the new Council Headquarters.**
- b. **Video / Audio Recording of meetings by the press and public should not be allowed.**
- c. **The use of Social Media by the press and public during meetings should be permitted.**
- d. **The use of Social Media by Councillors and Officers whilst in a meeting should be prohibited.**
- e. **The use of Social Media by the Council should be encouraged.**
- f. **The use of Social Media by Councillors outside of meetings should be encouraged and guidelines and training be provided.**
- g. **Worcestershire Leadership Group be encouraged to develop a county wide media protocol for Members.**

OS.31 Scrutiny Proposal Form

The Committee considered a scrutiny proposal form submitted by Councillor G C Yarranton regarding the bund at Puxton Marshes.

Agreed:

1. **The item be accepted onto the work programme and progressed by way of a review panel.**

2. The Democratic Services Officer to contact group leaders for nominations from Members to take part in the review.

OS.32 How Are We Doing? Priorities Performance Update

The Policy and Performance Officer led Members through the report. The Committee were advised that Members had been allocated Directorate business plans to monitor but no updates were given by individual Members.

The Leader of the Council came back to the meeting at this point, (6.37pm). A Member raised concerns over the update given for PRS PI09. Members had concerns relating to a property in Shakespeare Drive, Kidderminster as the update stated this had gone ahead. Members perceived that the Council's 'No Surprises Policy' had not been adhered to and Ward Members had not been notified. The Strategic Housing Services Manager confirmed that consultation would have been made at the time of purchase and when properties were ready to be let, Ward Members would be invited to view the property in question. The concerns raised by Members during the consultation period were duly noted and Members were satisfied that no children would occupy the Shakespeare Drive property.

The Policy and Performance Officer led Members through the Appendices of the report and the following points were raised:

- Page 26 – CAP BP11 CSP 09 – it was confirmed the application had been unsuccessful due to there being four times as many bids submitted as there was money available.
- In response to a Members question, it was confirmed that the principles of the previously held Performance Clinics would remain but applied in a different format. Proposals would be sent to the Corporate Management Team and any issues raised would be reported to Cabinet.
- Page 28 – Members asked for clarification on an item not being progressed due to 'capacity issues'.
- Page 29 – Members were concerned that the target had been missed for the number of telephone calls answered within 20 seconds, and asked if the section concerned received cover for maternity leave.
- Page 30 – It was confirmed that some indicators were only measured quarterly and not monthly due to the availability of data.

Agreed:

- 1. The progress to date for Priorities and Performance Indicators be noted.**
- 2. The Policy and Performance Officer to seek clarification on the issues raised and notify the Members of the Committee accordingly.**

OS.33 Land Drainage Shared Service

The Strategic Housing Services Manager led Members through the report which outlined the proposal for creating a Land Drainage Shared Service with Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council which would be hosted by Wyre Forest District Council.

Members welcomed the proposal and the extra resilience it would give to the

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excellent service currently provided by Wyre Forest District Council. However concerns were expressed over the lack of Member involvement on the Shared Service Board. In response to Members questions, the Strategic Housing Services Manager was asked to provide clarification on the following points:

- What were the changes to legislation relating to cesspits and septic tanks which would come into effect in October 2011.
- Would the Shared Service continue to provide the same style of management of people? A previous issue regarding relating to unadopted roads and sewers had been dealt with appropriately and Members had concerns that the service provided would diminish.

Agreed:

- 1. Wyre Forest District Council develops a shared Land Drainage Service subject to agreement from Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council and the responsible Cabinet Member for Wyre Forest District Council is appointed onto the Client Management Group.**
- 2. The Strategic Housing Services Manager to obtain clarification regarding the changes coming into effect in October 2011 and circulate to Members of the Committee.**

OS.34

Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework: Churchfields Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document

The Committee considered a report from the Principal Forward Planning Officer that sought Members views on the responses to representations received and the recommended amendments arising from consultation to the Draft Supplementary Planning Document.

The Regeneration Officer led Members through the report. Members thanked the Forward Planning Team for putting together such a robust document which reflected comments from local companies and members of the public. A summary of the points made were:

- The Churchfields Masterplan document had not been presented to the Local Development Framework Review Panel as it had been agreed that only development plans would be presented to that panel.
- Members were disappointed that the issues raised from a meeting with the Horsefair, Broadwaters and Greenhill Partnership have not been reflected in the document.
- Transport and traffic congestion was a complex issue. It was noted no detailed traffic surveys would be undertaken, however as the plan developed this area would be looked at.

Councillor T Onslow left the meeting at this point, (7.24pm).

Agreed:

Recommended to Cabinet to recommend to Council:

- 1. The representations received and officer comments set out at Appendix 2**

of the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approved by Cabinet and Council for publication.

- 2. The Churchfields Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document as amended by the recommended changes set out in Appendix 3 to the Overview and Scrutiny Report be adopted as the “Churchfields Masterplan” Supplementary Planning Document, in accordance with Section 23 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.**
- 3. The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services be given delegated authority to determine the final format and presentation of the papers.**

OS.35 Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework (LDF): Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPDs – Preferred Options Papers Consultation Responses

The Principal Forward Planning Officer led Members through the report which provided an overview of the responses to the Site Allocations and Policies PDP Preferred Options Paper and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD Preferred Options Paper.

It was confirmed that positive comments had been received from Parish Councils and the Wild Life Trust regarding the document. Key comments from the Local Development Review Panel held on 5th September 2011 were:

- Rural buildings which were worthy of retention should be considered.
- Cross boundary issues and impact on Wyre Forest District in relation to development by neighbouring authorities at Clows Top - proposal to respond to South Worcestershire Core Strategy.
- Promotion of public art - consideration to be given to S106 funding in site allocations.

Agreed:

Recommended to Cabinet:

The representations received and officer comments set out in Appendices 1-3 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approved by Cabinet for publication.

Councillors H J Martin, M Ahmed and P V Hayward left at this point, (7.50pm).

OS.36 Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework (LDF) Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

This agenda item was deferred to a Special Overview and Scrutiny Meeting to be held on Monday 19th September 2011, at 6pm in the Civic Hall, Stourport-on-Severn.

OS.37 Recommendations from the Treasury Management Review Panel

The Committee considered the recommendations from the meeting of the Treasury Management Review Panel held on 8th September 2011.

Agreed:

Recommended to Cabinet:

- 1. The actual 2010/11 prudential and treasury indicators in the report be approved.**
- 2. The annual treasury management report for 2010/11 be noted.**

OS.38 Feedback from Cabinet

Agreed: The content of the Cabinet action list, following consideration of the recommendations from 19th July 2011 be noted.

OS.39 Work Programme

Agreed: The work programme be noted.

OS.40 Press Involvement

There were no items that required press involvement.

The Chairman advised Members that any information circulated to members of the public must be factually correct, members of the public must not be mis-informed, and only registered speakers were allowed to speak at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

There being no further business, meeting ended at 7.53pm.