

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

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

20TH DECEMBER 2011 (6.00 PM)

Present:

Councillors: J-P Campion, N J Desmond, M J Hart, T L Onslow and J Phillips.

Observers:

Councillors: H E Dyke, J Holden, F M Oborski, M A Salter and J A Shaw.

CAB.69 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.70 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.71 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22nd November 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.72 Call Ins

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

CAB.73 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.74 Leader's Announcements

The Leader of the Council informed Members that the new cemetery/crematorium was due for completion on 21st December 2011. A formal opening would be held in Spring 2012. The Director of Community and Partnership Services and her staff were thanked for all the work they had done to get the facility delivered and Members agreed that it would be an asset to the district and the Council.

CAB.75 Financial Strategy 2012-2015

A report was considered from the Director of Resources on the Financial Strategy 2012-2015.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Corporate Management Team for the work that had been done on the budget. There were difficult decisions to be made to bring expenditure in line with income. There were pressures on the budget as the Council were no longer receiving the interest it was a couple of years ago and a third of the grant funding had disappeared.

Members were advised that £1m would be allocated in the budget to support an economic and regeneration initiative in the district and this would involve engagement with partners in the private sector. A State of Area debate would also be held in the near future.

The administration were content that council tax would be frozen for 2012/13 in line with the government subsidising any freeze. However, future freezes in council tax may not happen.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the opportunity for scrutiny to look at the budget proposals and the submission of alternative budget proposals by the other political groups.

The Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted that the Council was entering into a challenging and difficult period, but the three year budget proposals built on previous decisions and gave the authority stability to move forward in the future. It was proposed that the budget proposals would include the development of Systems Thinking which would help the Council's performance and reduce the cost of processes.

Members were advised that investment would be made in leisure provision in the district such as reviewing the paddling pool provision and modernising the facilities.

Members acknowledged that the regeneration of the district was important for the area.

Decision:

Cabinet endorses and recommends for scrutiny:

- 1. The Council's updated Medium Term Finance Strategy.**
- 2. Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council's Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2012/15 (Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet).**
- 3. The level of net expenditure and resultant Council Tax for 2012/15 as per paragraph 8.1 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 4. Increases in fees and charges and the impact on the Council's Revenue Budget for 2012/15, as shown in Appendix 4 of the report to Cabinet.**

CAB.76 Capital Programme 2011/12 Onwards

A report was considered from the Director of Resources on the Capital Programme 2011/12 onwards.

Decision:

Cabinet endorses and recommends for scrutiny:

- 1. The Base Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 2. The updated disposal strategy, referred to separately in the Cabinet Agenda, which will deliver the Council's decision to dispose of surplus assets in order to generate new usable capital receipts for the funding of the New Headquarters where this is proven to be economically viable.**
- 3. The variations to the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule in accordance with the Council's Budget Process.**
- 4. The Director of Resources funds the Capital Programme including Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal by means of Capital Receipts, Grants or Prudential borrowing using delegated authority as appropriate.**
- 5. The Director of Resources funds short-term temporary borrowing pending the sale of assets, for New Headquarters funding, from Prudential Borrowing using delegated authority to determine the exact timing and source of such borrowing.**

CAB.77 Recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 1st December 2011 to recommend to Council

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Mid Year Review Report 2011/12

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee informed Members that the review panel had discussed matters in detail before recommending them to Cabinet. The training that had been carried out by Sector had been excellent and Members felt that they had received the opportunity to have an input into the training.

Recommended to Council: The Treasury Management Mid-year Review Report be approved.

CAB.78 Recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 1st December 2011

Kidderminster Carpet Museum Trust Request for Cashflow Support (2011)

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee informed Members that initially there had been concerns with the request from the Carpet Museum Trust but the Committee had agreed that they were happy to support the request. Members perceived that the training given by Sector on Treasury Management had been excellent and had given a broader understanding of the subject.

Decision: The request of Cashflow support up to £100,000 in line with the scheme approved by Council for the Carpet Museum Trust, contingent upon a third party being identified to resource the remaining £45,000 of cash flow support be supported.

CAB.79 Recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 1st December 2011

Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS)

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee informed Members that this item had been presented to the Treasury Management Review Panel where a robust discussion had been held. The Committee had been in favour of supporting the schemes and perceived it would help approximately 33 families to enable them to move onto the property ladder.

The Cabinet Member for Resources thanked Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the debate that had been held and thought that Sector had explained the scheme in detail at the review panel meeting.

Decision: Cabinet noted the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme and would hold their own debate on how to take the Scheme forward

CAB.80 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 paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB.81 Property Disposal

A report was considered from the Director of Legal and Corporate Services which provided an update in respect of Property Disposals in order to fund the capital programme, in particular the new HQ.

Members were informed the policy was adopted by Cabinet and Council two years ago but there was an update to the strategy that was now required.

In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed properties that were leased out were on a fully repairing lease.

Decision: The disposal of the property detailed in the Appendix of the report to Cabinet be progressed.

The meeting closed at 6.45pm.