

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

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

18TH SEPTEMBER 2012 (6.00PM)

Present:

Councillors: J-P Champion, N J Desmond, I Hardiman, M J Hart and J Phillips.

Observers:

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

CAB.10 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.11 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.12 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19th June 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.13 Call Ins

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

CAB.14 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.15 Leader's Announcements

The Leader informed Members that the move to new HQ was now in the last stages and the Council would be operational from its new site on 1st October 2012. The last meeting in the Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn would be Council on Wednesday 26th September 2012.

Once the move had taken place, Members would be able to collect their post from the Members Lounge and they would need to ensure that their swipe cards were collected as no other means of access to the building would be allowed.

Members were advised that the Leader had reconvened a meeting of the Cabinet Review Group on 26th September 2012 where items on the agenda would include business rate relief and how the three towns in the District would be supported with free parking over the Christmas period.

CAB.16 Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS)

A report was considered from the Director of Resources on the detail in relation to the introduction of the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) as approved by Council on the 29th February 2012, and to consider the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 6th September 2012.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation announced he was pleased that the Council would be entering into the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) with Lloyds TSB Plc and it was hoped that this would assist first time buyers getting on the property ladder. The Treasury Management Review Panel and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were thanked for their input where the item had received majority support.

Although some Members had had reservations with the Scheme at the outset, following full scrutiny of the subject, they were now pleased that the Council were going ahead with the proposal and felt it would help towards more people in the community owning their own property.

Decision:

1. **The Council enters the LAMS scheme with Lloyds TSB Plc in accordance with the outline provided within the report to Cabinet, and approval be given for the following scheme detail:**
 - **A total indemnity value of £1,000,000;**
 - **A maximum loan size to an individual borrower of £150,000;**
 - **The qualifying post codes would be all postcodes falling within the District boundary.**

2. **The Council's Monitoring Officer to provide an Opinion Letter confirming that the Council has the power to enter into, observe and perform the terms and obligations required of it under the Scheme; and for the Council to indemnify the Monitoring Officer in respect of any personal liability that may be incurred by providing the Opinion Letter. Both the Opinion Letter and the Monitoring Officer's Indemnity Deed would be in the prescribed form as set out in Appendices B and C of the report to Cabinet.**

CAB.17 Budget Monitoring First Quarter 2012/13

A report was considered from the Director of Resources that outlined the monitoring of the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation advised Members that although there was a small overspend of £74,050 at the end of the first quarter, there were no undue worries as it was only the start of the year and Cabinet would continue to monitor the situation.

Decision: The projected budget variations and comments outlined within the report to Cabinet and appendices 2 to 9 be noted.

CAB.18 Annual Report on Treasury Management Service, Actual Prudential Indicators 2011/12 and Revision to the Investment Policy and Strategy Statement 2012/13

A report was considered from the Director of Resources which recommended to Council the treasury management activities for 2011/12, in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code) and to consider the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 6th September 2012.

Members were informed that this had received in-depth scrutiny and had been well received.

Recommended to Council:

- 1. The actual 2011/12 prudential and treasury indicators in the report to Cabinet be approved.**
- 2. The annual treasury management report for 2011/12 be noted.**
- 3. The revision to the Investment Policy and Strategy Statement 2012/13, set out in Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet be approved and to have immediate effect following Council approval.**

CAB.19 Business Rates - pooling

A report was considered from the Director of Resources which informed Members of the progress towards the decision on whether or not to join the Worcestershire business rates pool.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation informed Members that the Government intended to change the way how local government were funded for business rates in 2013 and the Cabinet needed to endorse how the Council would move forward. It was felt given the close proximity and the good working relationship with neighbouring authorities, it made sense to work with these authorities rather than join up with the Birmingham & Solihull LEP, although it was noted that Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council would not be involved with the Worcestershire pool.

Members agreed that to stay with the Worcestershire pool.

Decision:

1. **The principle of joining the Worcestershire business rates pool be endorsed.**
2. **Delegated authority be granted to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation, in consultation with the Director of Resources and Chief Executive, to confirm the decision on joining the Worcestershire business rates pool before 19th October 2012.**

CAB.20 Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 5th July 2012

a. Wyre Forest Affordable Warmth Action Plan.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee informed Members that the Committee had received a full and informative report and lots of questions had been asked and this had received full support by Members. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee were thanked for their input and it was noted that workshops had taken place and more would be held in Autumn 2012 where advice would be given to members of the public.

The Director of Economic Prosperity and Place would obtain the attendance figures for the sessions that had been held in 2011 and inform Members.

Decision: The Affordable Warmth Action Plan 2012/13, as attached at Appendix 2 of the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5th July 2012, be approved.

b. Wyre Forest Climate Change Action Plan.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that Members had received a full report which had proved to be a difficult subject to comprehend.

Decision: The Climate Change Action Plan 2012/13, as attached at Appendix 2 of the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5th July 2012, be approved.

CAB.21 Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 8th August 2012

a. Recommendations from the Housing Review Panel (31st July 2012).

Members were informed that the Housing Review Panel had held 3 meetings which had included meetings with The Community Housing Group and representatives from the Tenants Federation and Tenants Consultative Committees. Full debates had ensued during the meetings which had culminated in the proposed recommendations.

Members were happy to take on board the recommendations and the Panel were thanked for their work to date.

- 1. Community Housing Group to make available a Job Description and Person Specification together with eligibility criteria (as set out at 2 above) to any tenant wishing to consider nomination for election to the Tenant Services Committee.**
- 2. Community Housing group be requested to ensure that there is a uniformed geographic representation of tenants on the Tenant Services Committee from across the Wyre Forest District.**
- 3. A representative from both the Tenants Federation and Central Tenant Forum be involved to oversee the election and appointment process and to act as a scrutiny role throughout the proceedings.**
- 4. Prior to the elections taking place, the Community Housing Group to run 'taster' sessions for any Tenants considering nomination to enable them to gain an understanding of the role and what would be expected of them on the Tenant Services Committee. The sessions could also involve shadowing existing Tenant Board Members if appropriate.**
- 5. Following the election the successful appointees to the Tenant Services Committee to receive training from the Community Housing Group prior to them first taking up their Board role, to enable them to effectively take up their role from September 2013.**

CAB.22 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 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB.23 Leisure Centre Site Acquisition

A report was considered from the Director of Community Well-Being and Environment that asked for Cabinet approval to purchase land for the new Leisure Centre and to consider the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 6th September 2012.

Members were informed that the location of the new leisure centre had received a full debate through the Sports and Leisure Centre Review Panel and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and agreed that the chosen site was the most suitable although it had not received majority support. It was noted that accessibility to the site was important and this would form part of the planning application when submitted.

Decision: The land be purchased as a suitable site subject to satisfactory checks on legal title, service enquiries, ground investigations and the grant of outline planning consent and that this site is purchased at a price agreed by Cabinet which has been accepted by the site owners and is within the allocated budget.

CAB.24 Exchange of Land

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place on land transfers in Bewdley.

Members were taken through the report and agreed that the project would benefit the people of Bewdley and consultations with the public would be carried out.

Decision:

- 1. Subject to 2 to 4 below, the exchange of land outlined in the report and appendices to Cabinet be approved and delegated authority be granted to the Directors of Economic Prosperity & Place and Community Assets & Localism in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Members for Environmental Services and Place Shaping to undertake the necessary work and complete all necessary documentation to facilitate the exchange.**
- 2. Delegated responsibility be granted to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place to make the necessary arrangements with the other party to undertake public consultation on the proposed land exchange and its consequences and in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Members for Environmental Services and Place Shaping to consider the outcome of such consultation.**
- 3. Delegated responsibility be granted to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place, Community Well-being & Environment and Community Assets & Localism, in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Members for Environmental Services and Place Shaping, to facilitate any necessary work to ensure that planning permissions are in place as required for the respective development before any land exchange takes place and to procure and implement the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of a new car park**

4. **Approval be given to the transfer of the land at less than best value at a net projected loss of asset value of £208k, taking into account the foregone capital receipt and to the transitional and ongoing loss of car park income as outlined in the report to Cabinet which will be reflected in the new base budget; and the expenditure of up to the £250k earmark reserve to demolish the existing buildings, to construct the new car park on the site of the buildings including any ancillary public realm improvements associated with the new car park layout, any other disbursements resulting from the exchange of land and the construction of additional car parking spaces elsewhere in the Town.**

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm.