

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

12TH NOVEMBER 2012 (6.00PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: J-P Campion, N J Desmond, I Hardiman, M J Hart and A T Hingley.

**Observers:**

Councillors G W Ballinger, H E Dyke, N Knowles, F M Oborski, C Rogers and J A Shaw.

**CAB.34 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**CAB.35 Declarations of Interests by Members**

No declarations of interest were made.

**CAB.36 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**CAB.37 Call Ins**

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

**CAB.38 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

**CAB.39 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**CAB.40 Leader's Announcements**

There were no Leader's Announcements.

**CAB.41 Council Tax Benefit Reform**

A report was considered from the Director of Resources regarding the Council Tax Benefit Reform and the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation outlined the report following a consultation exercise and the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Members welcomed the setting up of a hardship fund which would assist less fortunate residents in the area and felt it was unfortunate that the Council had to set up such a fund.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that a full debate on this matter had been held at the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012 meeting and she was pleased that the recommendations had been taken on board. However, it was important that Members were kept informed of how the system would operate.

In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed that if the hardship fund was introduced, it would save the Council approximately £20,794.

A Member asked if the Council would be lobbying the Government to protest about the shortfall that it was to receive. The Leader of the Council reported that it was Westminster that took the decision.

The Finance Team were thanked for their guidance in putting the scheme together.

**Decision:**

**Recommended to Council:**

- 1. The scheme as outlined in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.5 and paragraph 5.2 of the report to Cabinet, which includes a cap on the reduction in support that an individual might face in 2013-14 of 8.5%, be approved.**
- 2. The amount of money available for the Hardship Fund be reviewed on an annual basis, but during the first year, a review be undertaken after the first six months.**
- 3. From 2014-15 onwards support towards Council Tax liability for working age people be limited to 90%.**

**CAB.42 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid –year Review 2012/13**

A report was considered from the Director of Resources which provided Members with a mid-year review of the Council’s treasury management policies, practices and activities in accordance with the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice and the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation outlined the report. The Treasury Management Review Panel and Overview and Scrutiny Committee had discussed matters in detail before recommending them to Cabinet.

In response to a Member’s question, it was confirmed that the Treasury Management Review Panel had originally been set up following concerns from Members about not receiving information. A comprehensive training session had been held which was carried out by Sector, the Council’s Treasury Management Consultants and Members felt they had received the opportunity to have an input into the training.

Members were informed that the Council would unfortunately have to start borrowing money in the not too distant future.

Updates on the provision for the new leisure centre would be given at future Group Leaders meetings.

With regard to the Icelandic investments, the Council were confident of receiving majority of their investments. It was not possible to give an end date by which monies would be returned but the Council would continue to progress this.

**Decision:**

**Recommended to Council**

- 1. The Treasury Management Mid-year Review be approved.**
- 2. The updated Prudential Indicators in section 6 of the report to Cabinet be approved.**

**CAB.43 Provision of Splash Pads and Review of Paddling Pools**

A report was considered from the Director of Community Well-being & Environment which provided key issues and information for consideration by the Cabinet for the future provision of paddling pools/splash pads in the District and the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

The Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being presented the report and reported that the Council had allocated £300,000 which would go towards resolving issues with the paddling pools in the district. Officers were praised for their hard work to facilitate the necessary realignment of summertime play opportunities.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that a full debate had been held at the November 2012 meeting and Members thought that the decision for the paddling pool provision in Stourport-on-Severn should not be made until Stourport Town Council had been consulted.

Members requested that the paddling pool in St. Georges Park, Kidderminster be opened earlier than it was at present and it was confirmed that this would be considered.

**Decision:**

- 1. A splash pad at Brinton Park adjacent to play area be provided and demolish existing paddling pool.**
- 2. Following the Overview and Scrutiny recommendation on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012, Stourport Town Council be requested to consider the provision and maintenance of the current paddling pool at Stourport Riverside and the potential splash pad at Lickhill Park with the outcome of this consideration to be referred to the relevant Cabinet Member by the end of December 2012.**
- 3. Delegated authority be granted to the Cabinet Member for Well Being in consultation with the Directors of Resources and Director of Community Well Being & Environment to decide on the future provision and maintenance of water play facilities in Stourport.**
- 4. The current surface at St George's be repaired and the pump from Brinton Park to St George's be transferred to improve filtration and reduce revenue costs.**
- 5. The Northwood Lane paddling pool be retained and operate as normal.**
- 6. The Council continue to pursue an asset transfer or agreement to maintain in the future with any willing partner for the maintenance and operation of any of the District Council's paddling pools.**

The meeting closed at 7.04 pm.