

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER
26TH MARCH 2013 (6.00PM)**

Present:

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

Observers:

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

CAB.77 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A T Hingley.

CAB.78 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.79 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19th February 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.80 Call Ins

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

CAB.81 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring attention.

CAB.82 Leader's Announcements

There were no Leader's announcements.

CAB.83 Budget Monitoring Third Quarter 2012/2013

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.

Members were informed that the report had been revised for the third quarter to assist Members in their understanding in how the Council were performing. More illustrations had been included. The Corporate Management Team and officers were thanked for their work.

Members noted the adverse amount of £90,000 for Development Control. It was explained that the number of planning applications received had reduced and it was perceived this was due the financial situation that the country found itself in.

Decision: The projected budget variations and comments outlined within the report to Cabinet and appendices 2 to 5 be noted.

CAB.84 Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy – Consultation Draft (January 2013)

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which asked for approval to submit comments (attached as appendix 2 of the report) to Worcestershire County Council on the latest consultation document and to consider the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14th March 2013.

Members were informed that a Member Working Group had been convened to enable further scrutiny of the recommendations. The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee also reported that she had sent a letter to Worcestershire County Council expressing the views of the Council. The Planning Policy Manager was thanked for her work.

Decision: Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place to submit representations, the principles of which are set out in Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet, to Worcestershire County Council following feedback from a working group of Members to ensure a response in the strongest possible terms.

CAB.85 Recommissioning the Home Improvement Agency

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which asked for Cabinet approval of the process and timetable for recommissioning of the Home Improvement Agency and to consider the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14th March 2013.

Decision:

- 1. The process and timetable, for recommissioning the Home Improvement Agency be agreed.**

2. **Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Director of Resources, officers leading on the procurement process and the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping to agree the evaluation model for the appointment of a new contractor to deliver the Home Improvement Agency Service and to award the contract to the successful tenderer.**

CAB.86 Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 14th March 2013

Housing Assistance Policy

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee informed Members that a robust debate had been held at the scrutiny meeting and questions had been asked on funding and vulnerable people.

Decision:

The Housing Assistance Policy be amended to incorporate the following amendments as detailed in paragraph 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 of the report to Overview and Scrutiny at its meeting on 14th March 2013.

- **To remove any reference to Kick-Start due to its closure, thus enabling the promotion of alternative provision.**
- **That loans are provided for essential repairs where the property owner has not been able to raise their own finance or they can be demonstrated to be on a low income with less than £150 a week available (following a financial assessment).**
- **Discretionary Adaptation Assistance would be payable, subject to conditions**

CAB.87 Recommendations from the Housing Review Panel 7th February 2013

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee informed Members that the Housing Review Panel had received a presentation which had been well received and there was a possibility that the presentation could be on the agenda of a future meeting of the Members Forum. The Panel were nearing the completion of their work in what had been, to date, a successful review panel.

Decision:

1. **An affordable housing SPD to include more detailed guidance around thresholds, on and off site contributions, size of units, design (including parking) and encouraging the use of modern methods of construction be developed and to refer the document to the Local Development Framework panel for consideration.**

- 2. To include, in standard planning conditions, the ability to claw back (contingent deferred obligations) and similar mechanisms (reassessment of S106 contributions) where the Council agree to a lesser S106 contribution due to economic viability but the scheme does not immediately get built out.**
- 3. The Registered Provider Partnership Agreement and the list of Registered Providers with whom the Council support new housing development in light of changing funding regimes and markets be reviewed.**
- 4. The establishment of a Joint Venture or Local Housing Company approach to delivering housing and developing a revenue funding stream for the Council be explored further.**

The meeting closed at 6.24 pm.