

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

22ND OCTOBER 2013 (6.00 PM)

Present:

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

Observers:

Councillors: G W Ballinger, S J M Clee, M Price and J A Shaw.

CAB.27 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.28 Declarations of Interests by Members

Councillor M J Hart declared an interest in agenda item no. 9.2 - National Non Domestic Rate (NDR) Relief as he was a Trustee of the Scouts.

CAB.29 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17th September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.30 Call Ins

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

CAB.31 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.32 Leader's Announcements

There were no Leader's announcements.

CAB.33 Development of New Corporate Plan 2014/19

A report was considered from the Chief Executive which recommended to Council the draft Corporate Plan for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2019. The recommendations from the Strategic Review Committee meeting on 9th October 2013 were also considered

The Chairman of the Strategic Review Committee informed Members that Councillor E Davies had led the review group and the recommendations had been unanimously agreed. The Focus Groups had been led by Members and approximately 150 people and 41 local organisations had attended. There had also been approximately 630 responses to the consultation. The top four topics that the public has chosen had been fed into the two priorities. The review group and the Head of Transformation and Communications were thanked for their work.

The Leader of the Council stated that the proposed two priorities offered opportunities for people to contribute to, both in terms of finance and safer communities. Members were supportive of the proposed priorities.

Councillor G W Ballinger arrived at the meeting at this point, (6.05pm).

Decision: Recommend to Council: The draft Corporate Plan 2014/19, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet, be adopted.

CAB.34 Development of Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/19

A report was considered from the Chief Financial Officer which sought Cabinet's consideration of the workable options for the medium term financial strategy that had been developed by the Strategic Review Committee. The recommendations from the Strategic Review Committee meeting on 9th October 2013 were also considered.

The Chairman of the Strategic Review Committee informed Members that the panel had met 23 times over the Summer period and he thanked all Members who had played an active role. In addition, the Chief Executive, Head of Transformation and Communications, and the Chief Financial Officer had led work groups and they were also thanked. The recommendations from the Committee had been unanimously agreed and had identified the £2m savings required in 2016-17.

The Cabinet Member for Transformation and Resources thanked Members of the Strategic Review Committee for their detailed report and the work that had been done. The Council had taken a different stance in preparing the budget for the forthcoming year and all political groups had been involved in the process. The Cabinet would now prepare their report for the November meeting and the report would be used as part of that. It was a challenging period for the Council and services that were provided would be looked at when the recommendations were prepared in order to deliver the required savings.

The Leader of the Council acknowledged all the hard work that had been carried out to date with the financial strategy and stated that there had been some interesting debates. The Council now had difficult decisions to make and it was hoped that a good debate would be held at Council in November 2013.

Decision: The workable options for the medium term financial strategy be noted and it be agreed to bring forward its recommendations to Council at its meeting on 19th November 2013.

CAB.35 National Non Domestic Rate (NNDR) Relief

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which detailed responses to the consultation that had been undertaken and to agree to a new scheme of NNDR relief from 1st April 2014. The recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on 3rd October 2013 were also considered.

Members were informed that the new scheme would not affect the vast number of recipients. However, the most affected organisation would be The Community Housing Group as their rate relief would be reduced to zero.

Decision:

- 1. The operating principles for a new scheme of NNDR relief from 1st April 2014 as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report to Cabinet be agreed.**
- 2. The eligibility criteria for a new scheme of NNDR relief from 1st April 2014 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report to Cabinet be agreed.**
- 3. Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation to decide whether to include or exclude leisure centres from the scheme once the negotiations on the new leisure centre are completed.**

CAB.36 Revised Local Development Scheme (2013-16)

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which recommended to Council proposals for the revision of the Local Development Scheme (Project Plan), which will guide the future production of the District's Local Plans. To also consider the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 3rd October 2013.

Members were informed that to ensure plans were kept up to date, there would be a challenging work schedule for officers to adhere to. Members were also pleased with the process that had been followed.

Decision:

Recommend to Council:

- 1. The Proposed Draft Revised Local Development Scheme (2013-16) be endorsed and published as a basis for the future production of the District's Local Plans.**
- 2. Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to undertake any necessary formatting amendments to the Draft Revised Local Development Scheme prior to its publication.**

CAB.37 Recommendations from Committees

Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 3rd October 2013

(a) Community Infrastructure Levy

Decision: The progression of a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule be postponed and the position be reviewed again later in 2014.

(b) Wyre Forest Health Action Plan Update

Decision: The Wyre Forest Health Action Plan 2013/14, as attached at Appendix 2 to the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be approved.

CAB.38 New Leisure Centre for Wyre Forest

A report was considered from the Director of Wellbeing and Environment which updated Cabinet on the New Leisure Centre for Wyre Forest.

Members discussed the exempt report in detail. A briefing session had also been held which Members had found helpful. In response to a point raised by a Member, the Leader of the Council suggested a Member group be convened to look at some of the concerns raised. The meeting was adjourned at 7.06pm and reconvened at 7.10pm.

Councillor J Shaw left the meeting at 7.08pm.

Decision:

- 1. Negotiations to acquire the former site cannot be progressed due to it being uneconomically viable to proceed. This decision will protect the Council's interest and follows extensive due diligence processes**
- 2. The Director for Wellbeing & Environment and the Director for Economic Prosperity and Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing & Environment be authorised to enter into negotiations for the acquisition of the preferred site for the new leisure centre identified in the exempt report and to acquire the site in accordance with the business case appended to the exempt report to Cabinet.**
- 3. The evaluation model to be used in the Invitation to Tender be approved subject to any minor variations as may be deemed appropriate by the Director for Wellbeing & Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member (CWE).**

4. **Delegated authority be granted to the Director for Wellbeing & Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member (CWE) to award the contract for the Design, Build, Operate and Maintain of the new leisure centre in accordance with the evaluation model, with due regard to the caveats/conditions outlined in 7.10 of the report to Cabinet.**
5. **Cabinet notes that despite extensive efforts a CAT has not been possible for Stourport Sports Centre to date and no application will now be considered as we move to contract stage. No further interest in a CAT will be considered.**
6. **Account will be taken of the revised business plan and consequent revisions to the capital programme and revenue budget, as part of its recommendations to Council on the medium term financial strategy. This will encompass changes to funding arrangements, including a potential grant and also consideration of the creation of a revenue reserve.**
7. **Delegated authority be granted to the Director for Wellbeing & Environment in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer to continue to actively pursue opportunities to drive down the overall revenue costs of this project, including maximising external funding, and cost reductions through the competitive tender process.**

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm.