

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 3RD JULY 2014 (6PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: E Davies (Chairman), J Phillips (Vice-Chairman), J Greener, P V Hayward, V Higgs, L Hyde, B McFarland, T L Onslow, M Price, M Rayner, C Rogers and M J W Wrench.

**Observers**

Councillors: N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P B Harrison, M J Hart, A T Hingley, M B Kelly and P W Wooldridge.

**OS.1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A M Sewell.

**OS.2 Appointment of Substitutes**

Councillor B McFarland was appointed as a substitute for Councillor A M Sewell.

**OS.3 Declarations of Interests by Members**

Councillor L Hyde declared an Other Disclosable Interest (ODI) in agenda item number 7 – Home Choice Plus Allocation Policy Review, as her daughter is employed by the Community Housing Group.

**OS.4 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 1st May 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

The Chairman announced a revised running order for the agenda in that item 13 would be taken before item 5.

**OS.5 Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference for the Committee were received.

**OS.6 New Leisure Centre Update**

The Committee received a report from the Cultural Services Manager which summarised the progress made on the project.

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The Cultural Services Manager led Members through the report and the following points were highlighted:

- Outline planning permission was granted on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014.
- The purchase of the site was completed on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014.
- Following clarification meetings involving Sport England and the Tenderers, the tender return date had been extended to 12<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

Members were also advised that a very positive meeting had been held with a representative from a local public transport provider, Rotala, who were working on a business plan to service the new leisure centre site. The Cultural Services Manager offered to meet with any newly elected Members who would like a briefing on the project.

#### **Agreed:**

- **The update be noted.**
- **Newly elected Members to contact the Cultural Services Manager if they required a briefing on the project.**

#### **OS.7 How Are We Doing? Performance Update (Q4)**

The Committee received an update report on the performance of the Council for quarter 4, from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

The Business Improvement Officer led Members through the report and Appendices. A Member requested an update on how the issues with the heating and cooling system and the car park were progressing as part of the outstanding Wyre Forest House action detailed in the exception report. The Business Improvement Officer agreed to obtain an update and circulate it to the Committee.

A Member raised concerns over the voluntary redundancies agreed for the Hub and the effect this may have on the customer service provided. A debate ensued and it was agreed for an update on the Hub to be added to the work programme.

#### **Agreed:**

- **The progress in performance for quarter 4 be noted.**
- **The Business Improvement Officer to obtain an update on the Wyre Forest House issues for circulation to the Committee.**
- **An update on the Hub to be added onto the work programme.**

#### **OS.8 Home Choice Plus Allocation Policy Review**

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager which outlined the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy following

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amendments made to the legislation governing allocations in the Localism Act 2011 and consultation with members of the public and stakeholders.

The Strategic Housing Services Manager led Members through the report and advised that in total 650 survey responses had been received, and generally were supportive of the changes to the policy particularly around local connection and housing need.

**Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:**

**That approval be given to the new 2014 allocations policy.**

#### **OS.9 Climate Change Update**

The Committee considered a report from the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer on the updated Wyre Forest Climate Change Strategy and the associated action plan for 2014/15.

**Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:**

**That the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2014-15 as set out at Appendix 1 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approved.**

#### **OS.10 Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services Task Group – Final Report**

The Committee received a report from the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services Scrutiny Task Group.

The Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor Rod Laight and Vice Chairman, Councillor Peter Tomlinson, gave a comprehensive presentation to Members which outlined the background information and membership of the group, and summarised the 12 recommendations made.

Councillor T L Onslow left the meeting at this point, (7.20pm).

A discussion around the presentation ensued and the Committee agreed further time was needed to consider the report and recommendations in more detail. The Committee and Member Services Officer was asked to arrange a date for a special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Agreed: The Committee and Member Services Officer to arrange a special Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration of the report and recommendations in more detail.**

#### **OS.11 Tracking Recommendations 2013-2014**

**Agreed: The Tracking Recommendations 2013-2014 be noted.**

**OS.12 Feedback from Cabinet**

**Agreed: The content of the Cabinet action list, following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014 be noted.**

**OS.13 Work Programme**

The Chairman asked Members to send any suggestions for the work programme to the Committee and Member Services Officer.

**OS.14 Press Involvement**

There were no future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.52pm.