

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY 2015 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: E Davies (Chairman), P Dyke, J Greener, V Higgs, L Hyde, T L Onslow, J Phillips, M Price, M Rayner, C Rogers, A M Sewell and M J Wrench.

Observers

Councillors: G W Ballinger, H E Dyke, P B Harrison, M J Hart, A T Hingley, J A Shaw and P Wooldridge.

The Chairman welcomed Superintendent J Baker and Inspector E Williams from West Mercia Police to the meeting.

OS.63 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor F M Oborski.

OS.64 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor P Dyke was appointed as a substitute for Councillor F M Oborski.

OS.65 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.66 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor P B Harrison entered the meeting at this point, (6.01pm).

OS.67 Annual Crime and Disorder Review 2014/15

The Committee received an update report from the Community Safety and Partnerships Officer on the progress of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) during 2014/15.

The Community Safety and Partnerships Officer led Members through the report and advised that the Council had a statutory duty under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 to scrutinise the work of its local CSP.

The new Police Inspector for Wyre Forest, Edd Williams, introduced himself to the Committee and stated he was looking forward to working with partners and communities to tackle local issues.

Agenda Item No. 4

Councillor M J Hart left the meeting at this point, (6.23pm), and returned at 6.24pm.

Members discussed the report and appendices and concerns were raised over Worcestershire County Council's street lighting energy saving initiative. Superintendent Baker advised Members that research was being carried out into experiences of similar initiatives across the country and analysing crime data. Work continued around reducing the fear of crime.

Agreed: The progress made by the North Worcestershire CSP be noted.

OS.68 **How Are We Doing? Performance Update**

The Committee received an update report on the performance of the Council for quarter 3, from 1st October to 31st December 2014.

The Business Improvement Officer led Members through the report and appendices and highlighted the actions which appeared in the exception report. A Member commented on the positive feedback he had received about the customer service team at the depot. The Operational Services Manager assured Members that customer demand into the depot continued to be tracked and the team were able to deal with calls more effectively. The Council's policy on systems thinking principles would continue to be used when looking at processes and systems.

The Committee discussed refuse and recycling rates and the Operational Services Manager drew Members attention to the issues regarding the high contamination rates and the continued work required to reduce the levels.

Members welcomed the report from the Museum Development Officer on the success of Bewdley Museum for the 2013/14 season.

The Committee passed on their thanks to both the depot customer services team and Bewdley Museum team for their hard work.

Agreed: The progress in performance for quarter 3 be noted.

OS.69 **Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 – Recommendations from the Treasury Management Review Panel**

The Committee received a report from the Chief Financial Officer regarding the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits, the updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements, the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement and the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator.

Councillor T L Onslow left the meeting at this point, (7.16pm), and re-entered at 7.17pm.

The Chief Financial Officer led Members in-depth through the report and advised that the report had been fully scrutinised by the Treasury Management Review Panel at its meeting on 28th January 2015.

Agreed: Recommend to Council to:

1. **Approve the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2015/16 to 2017/18 included in Appendix 3. These will be revised for the February 2015 Council meeting, as per paragraph 7.3 of this report, following any changes to the Capital Programme brought about as part of the budget process.**
2. **Approve the updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016 (the associated Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix 3 and the detailed criteria is included in Section 10 and Appendix 5).**
3. **Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP included in Appendix 1.**
4. **Approve the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator included in Appendix 3.**

OS.70 Wyre Forest House – Update on Project and Achievement of Savings

The Committee received a report from the Chief Executive which provided an update on the project which included an achievement of savings, funding and the finalising of the project including dealing with items on the “snagging list” and provision of additional heating capacity.

The Committee were led through the report by the Chief Executive who advised that following the work undertaken by Alison Braithwaite and her team, the spare space in the building had now been let to tenants. This would generate additional income over £150,000 which would increase the financial benefit from Wyre Forest House even further.

Members were reminded the project was funded by capital receipts rather than borrowing and was still within the £10m budget which had been revised downwards from the original £10.5m.

A robust and lengthy debate ensued and several Members expressed concern over the issues surrounding the ground source heat pump and the cost of the temporary heating devices.

Councillor A M Sewell left the meeting at this point, (7.55pm) and Councillor M Price left at 8.00pm.

Due to the nature of several of the questions, Members were advised they would be answered once the Committee went into part 2 of the agenda.

Following a show of hands and upon the Chairman's casting vote, the Committee agreed to hold an additional meeting to fully scrutinise the issues relating to the heating system.

Agreed:

- **An additional Committee meeting to be held on Thursday 19th February 2015 to fully scrutinise the issues relating to the heating system.**

- Any further questions not covered or answered in this meeting to sent to the Committee and Member Services Officer by 12noon on Thursday 12th February 2015.

OS.71 Feedback from Cabinet

Agreed: The content of the Cabinet action list, following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on 16th December 2014 be noted.

OS.72 Work Programme

An updated version of the work programme was tabled at the meeting. The Chairman advised that if no further items were added, the April 2015 meeting may be cancelled.

Agreed: The work programme be noted.

OS.73 Press Involvement

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

OS.74 Exempt Information

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 2, 6 and 7 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

OS.75 New Leisure Centre Update

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

Members watched a short video of an artist’s impression of what the new leisure centre would look like, which included a virtual tour of the facilities.

The Cultural Services Manager led Members through the exempt report and advised that the planning application was scheduled to be considered by the Council’s Planning Committee on 10th March 2015.

Agreed: The update be noted.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.40pm.