

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
CABINET**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER  
9TH FEBRUARY 2016 (6.00PM)**

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**Present:**

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), J-P Campion, S J Chambers,  
N J Desmond, S E Fearn and I Hardiman.

**Observers:**

Councillors: A T Hingley and F M Oborski MBE.

**CAB.55 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**CAB.56 Declarations of Interests by Members**

No declarations of interest were made.

**CAB.57 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22nd December 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**CAB.58 Call Ins**

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

**CAB.59 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

**CAB.60 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader of the Council informed Members that the rescheduled date for the Worcestershire Devolution meeting is February 24<sup>th</sup> 2016. As this is the same date as Wyre Forest District Council's Budget Council meeting, the Leader would be unable to attend the rescheduled meeting but would update Members accordingly.

The Leader confirmed that Members of the Leaders Board had collectively agreed to sign up to the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme, to take 200 Syrian Refugees across the County, up to 50 of whom would be received in 2016. He advised that Members would be further updated at the Council meeting on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2016

**CAB.61 Agreements with Kidderminster Town Council**

A report was considered from the Chief Executive which sought formal approval of agreements with Kidderminster Town Council in respect of the Town Hall and provision of services by the District Council to the Town Council

Members were taken through the report and key issues of the agreement were highlighted. Kidderminster Town Council came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015, and assets including the Town Hall will be transferred to it on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. The reorganisation order provides the District Council with a 99 year lease of the Town Hall and it will continue to operate the assets and provide services on behalf of the Town Council.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Chief Executive and Council Officers for their hard work. Members agreed that this had been a great challenge and was an exciting opportunity.

**Decision:**

- 1 Wyre Forest District Council enters into the agreements with Kidderminster Town Council described in the summary in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 2 Delegated authority be given to the Solicitor to the Council, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer, to finalise the form of the agreements in accordance with the summary in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet and with the agreements to be signed as soon as possible in advance of 1 April 2016.**

**CAB.62 Results of Budget Consultation, Alternative Budgets and Recommendations from the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel**

A report was considered from the Chief Financial Officer which considered the results of the budget consultation exercise launched following the presentation of the Financial Strategy 2016/19 to Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2015, alternative budget proposals and recommendations from the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel from their meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The Cabinet Member for Resources led Members through the results of the consultation. A total of 375 respondents accessed the consultation which showed clear support for the proposals. It was noted that the question regarding the Community Leadership Fund may need to be rephrased in future consultations to explain that the Fund benefits projects within local wards.

The Cabinet Member for Resources explained that in his position as Chairman of the Cabinet Financial Strategy Review Panel he was happy to recommend the proposal to consider Fees and Charges as a separate work stream by the Panel in the next Municipal year. He further commented that there is one alternative budget proposal, as detailed in the report to Cabinet and its appendices.

**Decision:**

The Cabinet NOTED the recommendations of the Cabinet Financial Advisory Panel on:

- 1 The results of the budget consultation exercise and the alternative budget proposal as detailed within the report and appendices of the report to Cabinet.
- 2 The proposal that Fees and Charges be considered as a separate work stream by the Panel in the next Municipal year.

**CAB.63 Budget and Council Tax Setting 2016-19 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-19**

A report was considered from the Chief Financial Officer which updated Members on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-19 , made recommendations to Council on the proposed budget decision and considered the statutory duties placed on Local Authority Chief Financial Officers in relation to budget setting and monitoring.

The Cabinet Member for Resources led Members through a comprehensive report. He advised that Central Government had confirmed the final Local Government Finance Settlement which will be going forward to the Full Council meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016. It was emphasised that the 5% increase in fees and charges would not affect the use of public open spaces, which will continue to have a minimum charge of zero for fund raising and charity events.

In addition, the Cabinet Member for Resources explained that Councils now have the opportunity to put an efficiency strategy into place which gives Councils the flexibility to fund revenue transformation costs from Capital receipts. The wording of the recommendation was amended to reflect the draft Government guidance that had been issued.

**Decision:**

**Recommended to Council:**

**1.1 THREE YEAR BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2016-19**

- 1.1.1 **APPROVES** the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-19;
- 1.1.2 **APPROVES** the Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council’s Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2016-19 as shown in Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet;
- 1.1.3 **APPROVES** the fees and charges in line with this Strategy and the impact on the Council’s Revenue Budget for 2016-19, as shown in Appendix 4 of the report to Cabinet;

- 1.1.4 **APPROVES** the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as set out in Appendix 2, Parts 1 and 2 of the report to Cabinet;
- 1.1.5 **APPROVES** that any Final Accounts savings arising from 2015-19 over and above the target allowed for in the Council's Financial Strategy, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated by the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader;
- 1.1.6 **APPROVES** the Efficiency Strategy 2016-19 as set out in Appendix 6 of the report to Cabinet; with delegated authority to the Cabinet to insert and update a table with a detailed list of projects, the cost of each project, the estimated savings and actual savings delivered.
- 1.1.7 **APPROVES** that the Cabinet may assign up to £100k of capital receipts in each of the three years commencing in April 2016 for transformation costs that deliver efficiency savings; and **DELEGATES** to the Cabinet decisions on the allocation of funding for transformation projects from capital receipts.
- 1.1.8 The General Fund Revenue Budget be **APPROVED** including all updates from the position in December 2015 as set out in the report to Cabinet.

## 1.2 **COUNCIL TAX**

- 1.2.1 **SETS** the Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property at £205.36 for 2016-17 (£205.36 2015-16) which represents a freeze on Council Tax from 2015-16.
- 1.2.2 **ENDORSES** the provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2017-18 of £205.36 and £209.34 in 2018-19, being a freeze in 2017-18 and an increase of 1.94 % in 2018-19 over 2017-18.
- 1.2.3 **NOTES** the Chief Financial Officer's opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet in this report, as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report to Cabinet.

## 1.3 The Cabinet **APPROVED**:

- 1.3.1 Delegated authority is given to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Leader of the Council, to make any appropriate adjustments to the General Fund Revenue Budget recommended under paragraph 2.1.8 above, as a result of Central Government confirming the final Local Government Finance Settlement and associated Specific Grants for 2016-17.

- 1.3.2** The revised schedule of Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 4/1 of the report to Cabinet

**CAB.64 Budget Monitoring Third Quarter 2015/16**

A report was considered from the Chief Financial Officer which monitored the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, informs Members of the Housing Benefit Overpayment debt position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015, and the Sundry/Property debt position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

The Cabinet Member for Resources led Members through the report and highlighted that the projected outturn as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 is an under spend of £105,000. He emphasised that whilst this figure is to be welcomed, it is a provisional estimate and that the final position is dependent on Final Accounts at the Year End.

**Decision:**

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

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.35 pm