

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER
12TH JULY 2016 (6:00PM)**

Present:

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), S J Chambers, N J Desmond, S E Fearn, I Hardiman and T L Onslow.

Observers:

Councillors: F M Oborski MBE and J A Shaw.

CAB.14 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.15 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.16 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14th June 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.17 Call Ins

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

CAB.18 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.19 Leader's Announcements

The Leader of the Council made reference to the recent opening of the new Wyre Forest Leisure Centre. He was pleased with coverage received from a number of media outlets and commented that favourable feedback had also been received on social media. The Leader added that the building was a state of the art facility, which the District should be proud of.

The Leader announced that two Syrian refugee families were due to arrive in Kidderminster at the end of July 2016.

CAB.20 Housing Assistance Policy

A report was considered from the Strategic Housing Services Manager, which asked to agree the policy that will be used to determine how the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding from Central Government will be spent.

The Cabinet Member for Health, Well-being and Housing led the Cabinet through the report and explained that the report outlines new allocations for DFGs and the proposals for its spend, that support both the Council's legal duties and the requirements to meet the DFG Metrics.

She explained that the increase in the DFG from £557,000 to £1.02 million would be assumed until 2019/2020. This would serve to release pressure on the system and thus benefit people on lower priority levels who were awaiting assistance.

The Cabinet Member for Health, Well-being and Housing further added that one of the proposals was to provide an Occupational Therapist position that would enable the assessment of needs and further expedite the processing of applications.

The Leader of the Council noted the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He welcomed the opportunity to have an Occupational Therapist, which would ensure a smooth through put of the applications to be determined particularly as the amount of DFG money through the better care fund had substantially increased

Decision:

In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, July 7th 2016:

- 1 The Housing Assistance Policy be approved.**
- 2 The split of funding between the various projects to be delegated to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing.**

CAB.21 Bewdley Medical Centre – Demolition and Redevelopment

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place, which asked to agree the exchange of land as part of the Bewdley Medical Centre (BMC) currently occupied by the GP Surgery with the land currently occupied by the library.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration led the Cabinet through the report and advised that it concerned the second land swap

surrounding Bewdley Medical Centre, the first involving Dog Lane car park, where the new medical centre now stands, with the old medical centre in Load Street. The scheme followed lengthy negotiations with Matrix.

She noted that in the 2011/12 financial year, a reserve of £250,000 was allocated for demolishing the redundant medical centre and providing new car parking to replace that which had been lost at Dog Lane. During the construction period residents had raised concerns regarding the reduced number of parking spaces. These concerns were noted and £126,000 of the original reserve was used to create more parking spaces to mitigate the loss.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration added that as part of the Medical Centre Development, Worcestershire County Council had agreed to relocate the library into the new building to create a multi use community hub. Whilst she noted that the future of Bewdley Fire Station had not yet been determined, the report seeks the comprehensive development of the whole of the area, as opposed to reviewing the buildings separately. This would provide the best option possible for the future, the best use of the area and the best design for residents. She noted that Worcestershire County Council, who owns the library, is supportive of this approach, rather than a piecemeal approach.

She added that this project makes good use of Wyre Forest District Council finances and resources and would improve the area and facilities for local residents.

The Leader of the Council noted that there has been a lot of disruption to Bewdley with regards to car parking whilst the development had taken place and that the District Council had done all it could to mitigate such disruption by the creation of additional spaces at Gardeners Meadow and Dog Lane. He added that the Council is committed to the project from an Economic Regeneration and Public Realm Enhancement perspective.

Decision:

Subject to the completion of an indemnity agreement with Worcestershire County Council, the grant of planning permission and the conclusion of the procedures relating to the asset of community value referred to in the report to Cabinet:

- 1 Agreed to the exchange of land between the Council and Worcestershire County Council of the Bewdley Library and part of the land of Bewdley Medical Centre occupied by the GP Practice and fronting Dog Lane and to delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place authority, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and Solicitor to the Council, to complete all necessary documentation to effect the exchange.**

- 2 To delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place authority to negotiate and agree with Worcestershire County Council any consequential valuation of the land subject to exchange and, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration, to agree to make or receive any payment of capital value arising as a result of any difference in valuation between the 2 pieces of land.
- 3 To delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place authority to include the new car park within the Wyre Forest (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2016 and advertise accordingly.

Recommended to Council

That the Capital programme is amended to accommodate the gross additional costs of £167,250 associated with the overall project, for which funding is already available or will be secured as set out in section 5 of the report to Cabinet.

CAB.22 Kidderminster Eastern Gateway Development Framework

A report was considered from the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration which sought to report the final version of the Kidderminster Eastern Gateway Development Framework.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration led the Cabinet through the report and advised that the Kidderminster Eastern Gateway (KEG) area comprised of a number of inter related sites, including the public surface level car park at Bromsgrove Street, a medical centre, Youth House, the former Magistrates Court and the former Glades Leisure Centre site.

The administration set aside financial provision in 2015 and 2016/17 to develop the strategy and instructed a team of consultants from Savills to devise a framework for the whole area, who developed three potential options for the site. Land is divided into deliverable and marketable parcels that are not mutually dependent.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration explained the three options and advised that a consultation period had taken place to include members of the public, Councillors and land owners. Savills recommended option 3, a mixed use option, which would deliver a mix of retail and leisure uses alongside residential and community uses.

The Leader of the Council endorsed the proposals and added that a great deal of work had been carried out and that the Cabinet was wholeheartedly united in its vision to redevelop and regenerate that area of Kidderminster and support Option 3 for mixed use.

Other members present also spoke in favour of Option 3 and supported the development framework.

Decision:

In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, July 7th 2016:

Decision:

- 1 That the Kidderminster Eastern Gateway Development Framework (as set out at Appendix 1 to the report to Cabinet), be approved as a suitable framework to bring forward the comprehensive regeneration of the site.**

- 2 The proposed Vision and Preferred Option for the KEG as set out in the Development Framework, namely Option 3 (mixed use); be approved.**

- 3 To commission an options appraisal from the Director for Economic Prosperity and Place on the demolition of The Glades and to bring forward a report to Cabinet on (1) the most cost effective way forward in the light of that appraisal and (2) recommending any adjustment to the Capital Programme.**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.37 pm