

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER 2017 (6.00PM)

Present:

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), M Rayner (Vice-Chairman), J R Desmond, P Dyke, K Henderson, D Little, S J Walker, H S Williams, S J Williams and R Wilson.

Observers

Councillors: M J Hart, N Knowles, F M Oborski MBE, C Rogers and J A Shaw.

OS.27 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

OS.28 Appointment of Substitutes

No substitutes were appointed.

OS.29 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.30 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OS.31 How Are We Doing? Performance Update

The Committee received a report from the Business Improvement Officer which updated Members on the performance of the Council for quarter 1 (from 1st April to 30th June 2017).

Members were led through the report and considered each page of the appendices in turn. In relation to WFF 17/18 16 Crown House/Kidderminster Western Gateway, the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place assured Members that the authority continued to have discussions on the future of Crown House with its tenant, Telereal Trillium, to achieve a positive outcome which was mutually beneficial to both parties.

Agreed: The progress in performance for quarter 1 be noted.

OS.32 Annual Report on Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators 2016/17

The Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director: Resources which provided a review of the treasury management activities for 2016/17, in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).

The Corporate Director: Resources led Members through the report and advised that this would be the first of 3 statutory reports which would be presented to the Committee during the municipal year. She added that the Council's Treasury Management Consultants, Capita, had provided a comprehensive Member training session on 4th September which was followed by a detailed scrutiny of the report by the Treasury Management Review Panel. The Corporate Director: Resources was pleased to advise that the authority was performing in accordance with its Treasury Management Service Strategy.

The Chairman of the Review Panel, Councillor F M Oborski, encouraged every Member of the Council to attend the training and she thanked the Corporate Director: Resources, and her team for the excellent job they do in this service area.

Agreed: Recommend to Council to:

- 1. Approve the actual 2016/17 prudential and treasury indicators.**
- 2. Note the annual treasury management report for 2016/17.**

OS.33 Wyre Forest Health and Wellbeing Plan Update

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the work undertaken to improve health and wellbeing in Wyre Forest. The Head of Strategic Growth led Members through the report and advised that the Council worked closely with the Public Health team at Worcestershire County Council to ensure that it made a positive contribution towards improving the health of the residents within the Wyre Forest district.

The Committee reviewed the projects undertaken over the past year and endorsed the new plan for 2017/21. Members welcomed the continuation of the annual Showcase Event for Older People, which provides a wealth of advice and information from a variety of organisations about the services they provide.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

The Wyre Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Health Action Plan 2017/21, as set out at Appendix 2 of the report, be approved.

OS.34 Climate Change Update

The Committee received a report from the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer which provided an update on the implementation of the Wyre Forest Climate Change Action Plan 2016/17, and sought endorsement of the updated plan for 2017/18.

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The Head of Strategic Growth led Members through the report and highlighted the four key themes, namely; Warmer, healthier homes; Building a low carbon economy; Transport and infrastructure; Healthy and resilient communities, which the Worcestershire Climate Change Strategy focuses on.

Members reviewed the work undertaken by the Health and Sustainability Team in conjunction with Partners over the past year and commended the positive use of social media in promoting projects such as the Wyre Forest Repair Cafe.

Members endorsed the new action plan for 2017/18 and hoped it would have a positive impact on the district.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

The Climate Change Action Plan 2017/18, as set out at Appendix 2 of the report, be approved.

Councillor P Dyke left the meeting at this point, (7.05pm).

OS.35 Open Space, Playing Pitch and Sports Built Facilities Strategies

The Committee considered a report from the Spatial Planning Manager which presented the Open Space, Playing Pitch and Sports Built Facilities Strategies which will form part of the evidence base to inform the Council's emerging Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The Spatial Planning Manager led Members through the report and advised that the documents conformed with recent Sport England guidance.

Members welcomed the documents which provided an up-to-date assessment of the current and future provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities that should be provided across the district.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

The Open Space, Playing Pitch and Built Facilities Strategies be approved.

OS.36 Compulsory Acquisition of Land & Properties & Empty Property Strategy

The Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place which set out the additional powers that the Council could use to compel land and property owners to make better use of their under-utilised or vacant assets.

Councillor S Walker left the meeting at this point (7.19pm), and returned at 7.21pm.

Councillor M J Hart left the meeting at 7.21pm.

The Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place led Members through the report and outlined the powers which the authority currently had and those proposed by the Government, following the publication in February 2017 of its White

Paper: Fixing our Broken Housing Market, which encouraged local authorities across the country to find creative ways to increase the number of houses available to buy or rent.

A discussion ensued and Members welcomed the proposals and agreed that the more tools the authority had to expedite the process of reducing the number of empty properties within the district by bringing them back into use should be supported.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

The principle of utilising more fully the powers to force the acquisition and sale of vacant land and properties, and the adoption of the updated Empty Property Strategy, be supported.

OS.37 Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

The Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director: Community Well-being and Environment which set out the results of a public consultation exercise undertaken over a 10 week period commencing on 19 June 2017 about the proposed introduction of a new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in the district.

The Corporate Director: Community Well-being and Environment, led Members through the report and a summary of the 927 consultation responses received.

Members supported the introduction of a PSPO as dog fouling was an emotive issue and any powers that the authority had to tackle issues of community concern should be used. In light of the responses received relating to the number of dogs one person may have under their control at a time, Members requested that further consideration be given to this matter.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

- 1. In response to the positive support for measures to control dogs, a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) is made in the Wyre Forest District, under powers contained within the Anti –Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, commencing 1 October 2017 for a period of 3 years on the basis set out in the report.**
- 2. The fixed penalty amount shall be £100 for each notice issued.**
- 3. Further consideration be given to limiting the number of dogs one person may have under their control at a time.**

OS.38 Feedback from Cabinet

Agreed: The content of the Cabinet decision list following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on 11th July 2017 be noted.

OS.39 Work Programme

The Committee considered the work programme for the current municipal year. The Chairman advised that following a scrutiny proposal form submitted by Councillor Knowles relating to the write-off of outstanding debts, Officers had been invited to attend the next Committee meeting to explain the procedure to Members.

Agreed: The work programme be noted.

OS.40 Press Involvement

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

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.05pm.