

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 7TH DECEMBER 2017 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), J Baker, P Dyke, K Henderson, D Little, N Martin, S J Walker, H S Williams, S J Williams and R Wilson.

Observers

Councillors: M J Hart, N Knowles, J A Shaw, J D Smith and R J Vale.

OS.64 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: M Rayner (Vice-Chairman) and J R Desmond.

OS.64 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor J Baker was appointed as a substitute for Councillor J Desmond. Councillor N Martin was appointed as a substitute for Councillor M Rayner.

OS.65 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.66 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OS.67 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 2 (from 1st July to 30th September 2017).

The Business Improvement Officer presented the report and appendices which included an exception report for all of the Council's purposes, namely; People, Place, Housing, Planning, Business and Enabling and detailed reports on performance against the 'Business' and 'People' purposes. Members' attention was drawn to the key achievements / issues during the quarter which included an update on the success of Wyre Forest Leisure Centre which had been open for 12 months in July 2017, and during that period had received an average of over 39,000 visitors per month.

Agreed: The progress in performance for quarter 2 be noted.

OS.68 Depot 2020: Consideration of Call-In Request

The Committee received a report from the Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services Manager on the call in request for the Depot 2020 proposals.

On 2nd November 2017 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the proposals which included moving the customer services centre (Hub) from Kidderminster Town Hall to Green Street. The Committee supported the proposals and by way of a majority vote recommended to the Cabinet that “Option B be taken forward for investing in and improving the Green Street site”.

A call in notice was received following the Cabinet’s decision on 14th November 2017 to proceed with the scheme subject to capital funding. The Cabinet’s decision was in line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The reason for the call in was that *“Too little attention has been placed on the inaccessibility of Green St. compared to the Town Hall. There has been inadequate public consultation with those who will be worst affected”*. A copy of the call in form was attached as appendix 1 of the report.

The Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services Manager presented the report which aimed to address the issues raised. She advised Members that a small survey of all customers who had attended the HUB over a two week period in November 2017 had been undertaken to ascertain how they travelled to the HUB. In response to a Member question regarding the number of visits a customer may have to make to the HUB to resolve issues with their financial situation (revenues, benefits and welfare), she confirmed that the data held did not capture that level of detail, however by bringing the teams who deal with those queries together in one location, the service provided to the customers would be greatly improved.

A discussion ensued and in response to a Members question regarding the number of disabled parking bays which would be available, the Corporate Director: Community Well-being and Environment advised that customer parking would be available right outside the new location with a minimum of 2 disabled parking bays, however the exact number would not be known until the planning application stage of the process.

The Chairman expressed concern that the accessibility issues had not been fully considered and proposed as per the options set out at 4.1 b) of the report that the decision be deferred for (i) more detail of the rationale behind the decision of the re-location of the HUB be given to Members, and (ii) a full public consultation be held. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Walker.

Upon a show of hands 4 Members voted in favour of option 4.1 b), 6 Members voted in favour of reaffirming the decision made by the Committee on 2nd November 2017.

Agreed: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reaffirm the decision it made on 2nd November to support the proposals.

OS.69 Feedback from Cabinet

Agreed: The content of the Cabinet decision list following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on 14th November 2017.

OS.70 Work Programme

The Committee considered the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. As there were no items on the work programme for Members to consider at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on 4th January 2018, the Chairman proposed that the date be used for the first meeting of the review panel which would undertake an in-depth review of the effectiveness of Partners and Communities Together (PACT) schemes within the Wyre Forest district.

Members wishing to take part in the review were asked to notify the Principal Committee and Member Services Officer by Monday 18th December 2017. The Chairman advised that the first meeting of the Affordable Housing Review Panel would be held on 25th January 2018.

Agreed:

- **The work programme be noted.**
- **The first meeting of the PACT review panel be held on Thursday 4th January 2018 at 6pm, in the Stourport-on-Severn/Bewdley Room, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster.**

OS.71 Press Involvement

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

OS.72 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.73 Asset Exchange, Kidderminster

The Committee considered a confidential report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place which proposed an asset transfer in Kidderminster.

Members discussed the report and were in full agreement that if the proposed exchange took place, it would have a positive impact on the area.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

The proposed exchange of land be agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.50pm.