

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER
19TH SEPTEMBER 2018 (6PM)**

Present:

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), N J Desmond, I Hardiman, C Rogers, J D Smith and R J Vale.

Observers:

Councillors: H E Dyke and F M Oborski MBE.

CAB.26 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.27 Declarations of Interests by Members

Councillor M Hart declared an Other Disclosable Interest (ODI) in relation to agenda item number 7.3 – Cookley and Caunsall Neighbourhood Area Designation Application that he was a member of Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council and he would rely on the dispensation from the Ethics and Standards Committee.

Councillor M Hart declared in respect of agenda item 9.1 – Transfer of Spennells Changing Rooms to 9th Kidderminster (Spennells) Scout Group, that he was involved in the Scout Association but he was not a trustee of that particular Scout Group and therefore could determine the strategic decision.

CAB.28 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17th July 2018 and the minutes of the Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting held on 6th September 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.29 Call Ins

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

CAB.30 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no Items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.31 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

CAB.32 Worcestershire's Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness

A report was considered from the Head of Strategic Growth on the new Homelessness Strategy "Worcestershire's Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness 2018-2021" and provided an update on the responses to the strategy consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Well-being presented the report and moved the recommendation for approval of the Worcestershire wide strategy. He advised that, under the Homelessness Act 2002, there was a requirement for housing authorities to have a strategy in place to deal with homelessness. The current strategy was developed in 2017 as part of the County wide Housing Partnership Plan; however the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) which came into force in April 2018 placed additional responsibilities on the Council in tackling and preventing homelessness.

He said that the revised strategy, which was set out at appendix 1 of the report, included the new responsibilities of the Council and had been subject to public consultation from 24th April until 19th June 2018. He added that the strategy had been considered by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 6th September 2018, and recommended that the strategy be approved.

The Leader of the Council formally seconded the recommendation and said that, as a result of the statutory duties under the new act, this was a very sensible strategy document to have in place and one which should be endorsed.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee said that, during the debate at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a question was asked about rough sleepers as this was a concern that was raised in various places particularly on social media. She added that Members were advised by Officers that there were between four and five rough sleepers within the district. She added that one rough sleeper was one too many; however the information provided had helped to dispel some of the rumours that there were vast numbers of rough sleepers across the district. She said that Members were reassured by the strategy and that as much as possible had been done to help people who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Decision: In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 6th September 2018;

The new Homelessness Strategy "Worcestershire Strategic Direction for tackling Homelessness 2018 – 2021" be approved.

CAB.33 Capital Receipts From Right To Buy

A report was considered from the Chief Executive which sought agreement to arrangements under which Community Housing Group (CHG) and the Council share receipts from preserved right to buy cases for the period from April 2019.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Well-being presented the report. He explained that, despite the significant reduction in scale now, the Council were still entitled to receipts from the sale of any of its former council housing stock under the right to buy procedure if any tenant of the CHG chose to follow that process. He said that in 2013 the Council and the CHG agreed to a 50:50 split for a five year period.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Well-being added that the CHG budgets for 15 right to buy cases a year which generates approximately £300,000. It uses its share to provide new affordable housing units. This equates to approximately 6 homes for rent a year. He said that, as part of its budget in February 2018, the Council agreed to use its share of the receipts through the Evergreen Investment Fund to support new investment opportunities including residential developments. He said based on 15 units a year an additional circa £750,000 per year could be generated over the next five year period of the agreement. He added that the current arrangements had served the Council well over the last five years and recommended that the arrangements be renewed on the same basis for a further five years from April 2019.

The Leader of the Council supported the proposal. He acknowledged that the right to buy receipts had substantially reduced. However they continued to assist the Council in enabling investment in capital projects through the Evergreen Fund, which was positive as the Council was using its own money as opposed to having to borrow in order to invest. He added that there was no sensible reason why the current arrangements should not continue and urged the Cabinet to support the recommendation.

Decision: The receipts (net of cost of disposals) should be shared 50:50 with Community Housing Group for a period of five years from 1 April 2019.

CAB.34 Cookley and Caunsall Neighbourhood Area Designation Application

A report was considered from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place with sought approval for the designation of part of Wolverley and Cookley Parish as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of Neighbourhood Development Planning as shown on the map at appendix 1 of the report, in order that Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council could prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Well-being said he was very pleased to present the report as it was the first stage for part of the community in Wolverley and Cookley Parish to develop their own Neighbourhood Plan.

He said that the Parish Council proposed to bring forward the Neighbourhood Plan for part of their parish under the Localism Act 2011. The Neighbourhood Plan would then allow the local community to help develop a blueprint for how they wished their local area to be developed in the future in order for it to eventually become part of the adopted Development plan for the area. He added that, for the Council to be able to use it in its decision making, the

Neighbourhood Plan would have to comply with the Council's own local plan which is currently under review.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Well-being said that the first stage in bringing the plan forward required the District Council to agree for the area to be designated. He informed Cabinet that the proposal had already undergone public consultation between June and August 2018 and all of the 19 responses received supported the proposal. He said that the Council welcomed local engagement in the planning process and had already seen local communities in Chaddesley Corbett and Churchill and Blakedown bring forward Neighbourhood Plans for their areas. He welcomed the opportunity to formally move the recommendation for approval.

The Leader of the Council seconded the recommendation. He said that he thought it was very interesting that part of the parish had no desire for a Neighbourhood Plan and another part had a strong desire. He said that the Parish Council were supportive in allowing the plan to go ahead in one clearly defined part of the Parish. He echoed the comments made by the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Well-being that the Neighbourhood Plan would need to comply with the District Council's Local Plan and not the other way around.

Decision: In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 6th September 2018;

Part of Wolverley and Cookley Parish that includes the areas of Cookley and Caunsall as shown on the map in appendix 1 of the report be designated as a Neighbourhood Area.

CAB.35 Budget Monitoring First Quarter 2018-19

A report was considered from the Corporate Director: Resources which provide an update on the Council's financial performance for the period ending 30th June 2018 and presented the current projected outturn position for the 2018-19 financial year. It also provided forecasts on revenue, the capital programme 2018-19 and the final capital outturn for 2017-18 against programme.

The Cabinet Member for Resources led Members through the report and commented that this was a straightforward report which projected a small overspend of £34,000 against a net budget of £11.9m. He said at this stage of the financial year he was not concerned as the Council had a strong track record of producing under spends and he was confident the figures would change as the authority progressed through the financial year. He drew Members' attention to the lower income from car parks and the impact on the homeless budget as a result of the changes to the Homelessness legislation.

The Leader of the Council seconded the proposal. He said that, as it was the report for quarter one, he expected the final figures for the year to be different. He added that the temporary free car parking at Weavers Wharf may have had an impact on the Council's car parks as many people may have opted to park there as opposed to where they would have normally parked.

Decision:

- 1.1 The projected budget variations and comments outlined within the report and appendices 2 to 6 be noted.**
- 1.2 The request for a supplementary estimate of £65k for additional costs of Homelessness detailed in paragraph 7.1 of the report from general reserves, be approved.**

CAB.36 Transfer of Spennells Changing Rooms to 9th Kidderminster (Spennells) Scout Group

A report was considered from the Corporate Director: Community Well-being and Environment which sought agreement to transfer the ownership of Spennells Changing Rooms and a parcel of land at Heronswood Play Area to 9th Kidderminster (Spennells) Scout Group.

The Leader of the Council presented the report. He said that since June 2017 he had been chairing meetings with representatives from the KD9 Scouts, Aggborough and Spennells Ward Members and Council Officers to try and transfer the facility to an organisation that would be able to have the commitment to make it a community facility. He formally moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

The Cabinet Member for Operational Services said she was very pleased to second the recommendations. She said that it was great that under the Localism Agenda the authority was able to facilitate the transfer of the redundant buildings, which had become an eyesore and blight on the area, to a worthwhile community group. She added that the facility would not only be for the exclusive use of the scout group; it would be available for use by the wider community.

The Ward Member for Aggborough and Spennells, Councillor H Dyke, said that she welcomed the report. She said that it had been a burning ambition of hers for many years for the changing rooms to be redeveloped for community use. She said that she had spoken to many local residents and had received lots of positive comments on the proposal.

Decision: In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 6th September 2018;

- 1.1 The Cabinet decided in principle to transfer Spennells Changing Rooms and a parcel of land to the 9th Kidderminster (Spennells) Scout Group for nil consideration.**
- 1.2 Delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director for Community Well Being and Environment and the Solicitor to the Council, in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Operational Services, to advertise the proposed transfer of land as shown on the attached plan as required by section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972;**

to consider any objections made as a result of the advertisement; and to take the final decision on disposal in the event of objections.

CAB.37 Exclusion of Press and Public

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 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB.38 Amendment to Capital Programme

A report was considered from the Corporate Director: Community Well-being and Environment which updated Members on progress with the Depot 2020 plans for investment and improvement and to agree to amend the capital programme in line with the tender outcome for the construction works.

The Leader of the Council presented the report and in order for the Council to move forward with the project, formally proposed the recommendations for approval.

The Cabinet Member for Operational Services spoke about the importance of the project and seconded the proposal.

Decision: In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 6th September 2018;

Recommend to Council that:

- 1.1 The Capital Programme be amended to accommodate the gross additional estimated costs associated with the overall project in light of tenders received;**
- 1.2 The amendment is that the gross capital cost of the project be increased as set out in para 4.4 of the exempt Cabinet report.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.44pm.