

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2021 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), S E N Rook (Vice-Chairman), C J Barnett, S J Chambers, N J Desmond, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, S Griffiths, A L L'Huillier, S Miah and T L Onslow.

Observers

Councillors: H E Dyke, N Martin and C Rogers.

OS.31 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D R Sheppard.

OS.32 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor C J Barnett was a substitute for Councillor D R Sheppard.

OS.33 Declarations of Interests by Members

In respect of agenda item 8 - Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022 Councillor M Hart declared for transparency that he was a private landlord.

As recorded later in the minutes, Councillor S Miah declared in respect of agenda item 8 - Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022 that he was a Chair of a Homeless charity.

OS.34 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OS.35 How Are We Doing? Performance Update

The committee considered a report from the HR & Organisational Development Manager which updated members on the performance of the Council for quarter 1, from 1 April to 30 June 2021.

The HR & Organisational Development Manager presented the report and appendices which included an exception report for all Wyre Forest Forward (WFF) and risk actions that were approaching their due date or were overdue; a detailed report of performance of WFF actions that are not directly associated to a corporate

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plan priority; detailed reports of performance against the purposes of a 'safe, clean and green living environment' and 'supporting a successful local economy'; and a report on the Capital Projects.

The committee considered and fully scrutinised each page of the report and appendices in turn. The HR & Organisational Development Manager, Head of Community & Environment Services, Head of Strategic Growth and Delivery Manager, North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR), were able to provide members with verbal responses to their questions. A written response to any points where further clarification was sought would be circulated to members after the meeting.

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

OS.36 Future High Streets Fund

The committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place on the progress with the proposed delivery models for the commercial development sites which will be enabled through the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) works and on the future operation of the Former Magistrates' Court (FMC) building.

The Delivery Manager, NWEDR, presented the report and outlined the key issues.

The committee discussed the report and acknowledged the challenges surrounding economic regeneration. Members welcomed the news that the planning application for the FMC building had been submitted. The committee fully endorsed the proposal and direction of travel.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet that:

Cabinet AGREE to delegate to the Corporate Director: Economic prosperity & Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning & Capital Investments and the Corporate Director: Resources the appointment of Public Sector Plc (PSP Facilitating Ltd) to work in collaboration with the Council's officers to bring forward the business cases for the development sites at the Bullring and Worcester Street/Bromsgrove Street locations.

OS.37 Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021

The committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth which sought to recommend the adoption of the new Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy.

The Principal Strategic Housing Officer presented the report and outlined the key issues. Members were advised that the new document will align the policy with the Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy and the emerging Local Plan 2016 – 2036 policies and replaces the existing Wyre Forest District Council Local Connection Policy 2013.

The committee discussed the report and unanimously supported the

recommendation.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

To adopt the Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021.

OS.38 Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022

The committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth which sought to agree that the modified Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022 is publicly consulted on in advance of adoption and the preparations for a new strategy for 2022.

The Head of Strategic Growth presented the report and outlined the key issues. Members were advised that the current strategy had been amended to take into consideration the changes in dealing with homelessness, as a consequence of Covid 19.

Councillor S Miah made his declaration at this point. The committee discussed the report and unanimously supported the proposals.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet to:

- 1.1 Agree the proposed amendments to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2022 are publicly consulted on from 20 September for 6 weeks.**
- 1.2 delegate to the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic Services to determine the final form of amendments to the strategy following any changes arising as a consequence of the consultation and that the final amendments to the strategy no later than 31 December 2021.**
- 1.3 agree that the final amendments to the strategy determined in accordance with 1.2 above be adopted by the Council as soon as they are finalised.**

OS.39 Work Programme

The committee reviewed and noted the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year.

OS.40 Press Involvement

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

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.36pm.