

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

MONDAY, 20 DECEMBER 2021 (6.30PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), A Coleman, P Dyke, A L L'Huillier and D Ross.

**Observers**

Councillors: R H Coleman, C Edginton-White, C Rogers and S E N Rook.

(Councillors: R H Coleman, C Rogers and S E N Rook attended remotely).

**OSSC.01 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor N J Desmond.

**OSSC.02 Appointment of Substitutes**

Councillor D Ross was appointed as a substitute for Councillor N J Desmond.

**OSSC.03 Declarations of Interests by Members**

No declarations of interest were made.

**OSSC.04 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.**

**OSSC.05 Acquisition of Property in Kidderminster**

The Sub-committee considered a draft of a confidential Cabinet report from the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedR) which sought the Cabinet's agreement to proceed with an acquisition of property in Kidderminster in order to deliver the project that is being funded from the Government's £17.9m Levelling Up Fund (LUF) grant.

The Head of NWedR presented the report. He gave a comprehensive and thorough explanation of the proposal. He highlighted the risk analysis and outlined the mitigating measures being put in place. The Head of NWedR explained that the proposal was a key element of the LUF bid.

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

The Financial Services Manager gave an explanation of the potential financial implications of the proposal. She explained that full financial due diligence would be undertaken prior to any decision being made to proceed with the acquisition or not.

The Sub-committee fully scrutinised the report and took the opportunity to question the Head of NWedR on several issues where further clarification was needed. Notwithstanding the potential benefits of the proposal, concerns were raised about the number of risks that remain to be addressed.

Upon a show of hands, the proposal to support the recommendations as set out in the confidential report was taken. As the vote was tied, the Chairman used his casting vote and voted against the proposals, which were therefore defeated.

As a result of the concerns raised, a proposal to recommend not to proceed with the acquisition as this stage was moved and seconded. Upon a show of hands, the vote was tied. The Chairman used his casting vote and voted in favour of the recommendation, which was therefore carried.

**Agreed: The Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee recommend to the Leader not to proceed with the acquisition at this stage.**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.38pm.