

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

26TH APRIL 2022 (5PM)

Present:

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), G W Ballinger (Vice-Chairman), N Martin, M Rayner and J W R Thomas.

Observers:

Councillors: A Coleman, R H Coleman, N Gale, I Hardiman, M J Hart, S Miah and F M Oborski MBE.

CAB.74 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.75 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.76 Adoption of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036

A report was considered from the Head of Strategic Growth following the Inspector's Report and to consider making a recommendation to Council about adoption of the plan.

The Leader of the Council presented the report and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to consider the Planning Inspector's report following the conclusion of the Local Plan review process that began in 2015. She said the Inspector's conclusion was that the plan was sound and legally compliant.

Councillor S Miah joined the meeting at 5.04pm.

The Leader advised that as a planning authority the Council must prepare a Local Plan that sets out the local planning policies for the area. She said Government Guidance required that Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and be consistent with national policy. She added the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that every local planning authority in England should seek to have a clear, up to date Local Plan in place.

She further explained that the Local Plan covered a range of matters including the number of new homes that are needed, where they should be located and the proposed location of new employment land.

The Leader drew members attention to a number of sections in the report that set out key milestones in the production of the Local Plan; the Examination in Public undertaken by the Independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of

the State; the need to make several main modifications; and the housing requirement figure that formed the basis for calculating housing land supply for the next 5 years.

The Leader outlined the public consultation approach taken by the Council for community engagement. She advised that the Planning Inspector was satisfied that the Council had exceeded the legal requirements to involve the community in the preparation of the plan.

In conclusion, she said that the Cabinet appreciated the passion of the people that had registered to speak at the Council meeting this evening, and that of the campaign groups around the district. However, she stressed that it was impossible for the Council to amend the plan by making changes to specific sites at this time. She explained that the Council was at a stage where the only choice the Council had was to adopt or not to adopt the plan.

She added that a decision not to adopt the plan would have serious implications for the district which included the Council becoming a Designated Authority which meant all major applications would need to be submitted directly to the Planning Inspectorate, bypassing local democratic decision-making process by the Council's Planning Committee. She added that this could lead to planning decisions being made for Wyre Forest by those who have no local knowledge or connection to the area.

The Leader formally moved the recommendations as set out in the report. The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded the proposals.

Decision: Cabinet:

1.1.1 Noted the Inspector's Report of 11th March 2022 at Appendix A;

1.1.2 Accepted the Schedule of Recommended Main Modifications in its entirety as set out in Appendix B for incorporation into the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-2036);

1.1.3 Recommend to Council that:

(a) it adopts the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-2036) as set out in Appendix C;

(b) it approves the adoption statement set out in Appendix D, which will be published and made available in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004;

(c) it delegates to the Head of Strategic Growth in consultation with the Leader of the Council any minor amendments, typographical and grammar corrections to the documents prior to publication.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.06pm.