WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN

27TH FEBRUARY 2008 (6.00PM)

PRESENT:

Councillors: Mrs R L Akathiotis, J Aston, J Baker, G W Ballinger, J-P Campion, S J M Clee, N J Desmond, Mrs H E Dyke, P Dyke, Mrs L Edginton, G H Eeles, Mrs J Fairbrother-Millis, B T Glass, Mrs J Greener, P B Harrison, M J Hart, Mrs P V Hayward, Mrs S M Hayward, M A W Hazlewood, Mrs A T Hingley, J Holden, Mrs L Hyde, W G Jones, M B Kelly, H J Martin, Miss M A Mason, Miss S C Meekings, D J Millis, C D Nicholls, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, M Price, M A Salter, M J Shellie, D R Sheppard, J C Simmonds, K J Stokes, J Thomas, N J Thomas, R Wheway, S J Williams and G C Yarranton.

C.73 PRAYERS

Prayers were said by the Reverend Alan Norkett of Saint Michael and All the Angels, Little Witley.

C.74 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

C.75 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The following interests were declared:

Councillors Mrs H E Dyke, Mrs F M Oborski, M J Shellie, J C Simmonds and S J Williams each declared a personal interest in agenda item nos. 5, Petition, Horsefair – Local Parking for Local Businesses and 6, Question 9, in view of being the Council's appointed representatives on the Community Housing Group, which was developing the site in question. Councillor Mrs Oborski's interest also related to being the Chairman of the Community Housing Group. (Minutes C.77(a) and C.78 refer.)

Councillors S J M Clee and Mrs J Greener declared personal Interests in agenda item no. 9c, Bewdley Museum Management Committee, Proposed Amendments to Constitution and Terms of Reference, in view of being the Council's appointed representatives on the Bewdley Museum Management Committee. Councillor Clee's interest also related to being the Management Committee Chairman. (Minute C.81 (vii) refers.)

Councillor SJ M Clee declared a personal interest in agenda item no. 18 b, Community Assets - Sale of land at Bewdley, in view of being the Council's representative on the Bewdley Development Trust. (Minutes C.91(b) and C.93 refer.)

Councillor Ms T L Onslow declared a personal interest in agenda item no. 9c, Recommendations from Cabinet, 21st February 2008, Benefits Service, Local Housing Allowance, Safeguard and Direct Payment Policy, in view of being a private landlord. (Minute C.81 c(i) refers.)

C.76 MINUTES

DECISION:

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C.77 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

a) Petition - Harriers Car Park / Park and Ride - Hoo Road, Kidderminster

In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council, Mrs A Jones presented a petition from mfg Solicitors in Kidderminster. The petition contained 96 signatures, urging the Council to retain the Kidderminster Park and Ride Scheme, which currently cost the Council £54,000 per year.

She gave a detailed explanation of the petitioners' views, highlighting concerns, such as, the extent of publicity for the service, signage, the availability of car parking spaces in Kidderminster and property matters. The Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services clarified misconceptions over the background to the proposed withdrawal of the service. He advised that the matter would be dealt with as part of the budget proposals at agenda item no. 10. (Minute C. 82 and Appendix 2 refer.)

b) Petition - Horsefair - Local Parking for Local Businesses

In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council, Mr S Sidhu, a local shopkeeper, presented a petition containing 173 signatures urging the reinstatement of parking on the Horsefair triangle, Kidderminster. Mr Sidhu also presented a statement, copies of which were circulated at the meeting, together with a map, to explain the petitioners' concerns.

Mr Sidhu drew attention to the serious impact on the viability of Horsefair shops and businesses caused by the fencing off of the Horsefair triangle, previously used as a car park by customers. He pointed out that the triangle was being used for storage purposes, in conjunction with work on a nearby site being developed by the Community Housing Group. He understood that the triangle was earmarked as a landscaped area.

DECISION:

The petition be referred to the next appropriate meeting of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

(It was also addressed under "Questions" at agenda item no. 6. (Minute C. 78 and Appendix 1 refer).

C.78 QUESTIONS

The Council received a report setting out a range of questions from Councillors B Glass, M B Kelly, H J Martin, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, D R Sheppard, and H J Stokes, directed at the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members. The questions and answers are set out in full in Appendix 1 (attached), except for the answers to exempt questions which are set out in full in an Appendix to the exempt minutes of this meeting.

C.79 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Council received a list of functions attended by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the Council's last meeting.

The Chairman made the following announcements:

Keith Bannister

The Chairman announced that Keith Bannister, Head of Financial Services was retiring in March 2008 and that this was his last Council meeting. He informed Members that, after working with Halesowen Council from 1965, Mr Bannister had joined Wyre Forest on 1st April 1970, as Principal Accountant, progressing to Head of Financial Services on 1st April 1985.

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Mr Bannister for his sound management of the Council's finances and service to the District.

Group Leaders and other members endorsed these sentiments. They commended his excellent work, professionalism, courtesy and even handed approach to all groups on the Council. They appreciated the fact that he was always prepared to take time to explain the intricacies of local government finance to them.

On behalf of all Council officers, the Chief Executive paid tribute to Mr Bannister's distinguished long service of 43 years in local government, including membership of the Corporate Management Team since 2000.

The Leader of the Council presented Mr Bannister with gifts as a token of the Council's appreciation for his hard work and wished him a long and happy retirement.

Mr Bannister thanked Members for their kind words and good wishes. This was his 22nd and last budget meeting and it had been a pleasure to work with Councillors and officers at Wyre Forest. He gave examples of some of the many projects that had reached fruition in that time. In conclusion, he invited Members to join him for a farewell drink in the Earl Baldwin Suite on 13th March 2008.

Councillors not Standing for Re-election

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked all those Councillors who were not standing for re-election for their services to the community and wished them well for the future.

Chairman's Last Meeting of Civic Year

This being the last Council meeting of the municipal year, the Chairman informed Members that it had been a pleasure to carry out his duties as Chairman of the Council.

C.80 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

- a) Jackie Roberts, the new Kidderminster Town Centre Manager would commence work on 3rd March 2008. He anticipated that the work of the Town Centre Manager, in conjunction with the Council's Regeneration Team, would elevate regeneration to the next level.
- b) Debenhams would shortly be opening a store in Kidderminster. It was very encouraging to have a new cornerstone retailer and others were likely to follow suit.
- c) The special meeting of the Planning (Development Control) Committee would be held on 4th March 2008, at the Sixth Form Centre, Stourport High School, to consider the planning application from Tesco to build a new store on the Carpets of Worth site in Stourport. A map, showing access to the venue, had been circulated separately to all Members.
- d) The Neighbourhood Manager of the Oldington and Foley Park Neighbourhood Network had recently walked around the Oldington and Foley Park estate with the Manager of the Community Housing Company and had noticed the improvement in the cleanliness of the estate. The Leader passed on his thanks to the Head of Property and Operational Services and the Street Scene Team.

C.81 POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK - MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE A DECISION BY COUNCIL

a) Recommendations from the Cabinet – 20th December 2007

i) Benefits Service - Discretionary Housing Payments Policy

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet that proposed the adoption of a Discretionary Housing Payments Policy.

It was noted that Discretionary Housing Payments were not payments of benefit, but were stand-alone payments made at the discretion of the local authority in cases where it considered that extra help was needed with housing costs. The

policy was proposed in order to ensure consistency and transparency in the process.

DECISION:

The Benefit Service – Discretionary Housing Payments Policy – December 2007, attached as Appendix 1 to the report to Cabinet on 20th December 2007, be approved.

ii) Risk Management Policy and Strategy - Update

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet that proposed the adoption of a revised Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy. The policy and strategy had been updated in line with best practice.

DECISION:

The updated Risk Management Policy–December 2007, attached as Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet and the Risk Management Strategy-December 2007, attached as Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet on 20th December 2007, be approved.

(iii) Revised Consultation Strategy 2008-2011

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet based on the recommendation of the Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee which sought approval for the revised Consultation Strategy 2008 - 2011. It was noted that the implementation of the revised strategy would enable the Council to strengthen and reinforce its relationships with local communities to support the development of services which met their needs.

DECISION:

- The revised Consultation Strategy 2008 2011, as set out in Appendix A of the briefing paper to the Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 26th November 2007, be approved for implementation from 1st April 2008.
- 2. The three key projects, detailed in paragraph 3 of the briefing paper, to strengthen the Council's existing consultation methods, be endorsed.

iv) Draft Wyre Forest Matters Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2014

The Council considered the recommendations of the Cabinet based on the recommendation of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee regarding the draft Wyre Forest Matters Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2014. It was noted that the revised Sustainable Community Strategy would enable the Wyre Forest Matters Partnership to continue to build on its successful foundations and ensure that the key needs and priorities for the District were effectively addressed.

DECISION:

The draft Wyre Forest Matters Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2014, as detailed in Appendix A to the briefing paper to the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 5th December 2007, be approved.

b) Recommendations from the Cabinet – 24th January 2008

<u>Corporate Procurement Strategy - Update</u>

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet that sought approval for the updated Procurement Strategy, which had been reviewed in line with the National Procurement Strategy and linked to Council Objectives.

DECISION:

The updated Corporate Procurement Strategy, attached as Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet on 24th January 2008, be approved.

c) Recommendations from the Cabinet – 21st February 2008

i) Benefits Service – Local Housing Allowance - Safeguard And Direct Payment Policy

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet, which sought approval for the Benefits Service, Local Housing Allowance, Safeguard and Direct Payment Policy. The policy had been drawn up to ensure that it was clear to recipients of Housing Benefits payments and others in what circumstances payments could be made direct to landlords.

Concern was expressed over the new arrangements whereby Housing Benefit payments would normally be paid directly to tenants. It was felt that vulnerable people, facing competing financial demands, might have difficulty in keeping up with rent payments. Accordingly, landlords might be less inclined to let to recipients of Housing Benefit. It was hoped that the Local Government Association would continue to lobby for a review of the relevant regulations. The Leader commended the work of the Benefits officers and advised that they would do all that they could to alleviate the impact of the new arrangement.

DECISION:

The Benefits Service – Local Housing Allowance - Safeguard and Direct Payment Policy – February 2008, attached as Appendix 1 to the report to Cabinet on 21st February 2008, be approved.

ii) Scheme of Delegation to Officers – Amendment Regarding the Instituting of Form N322 in Routine Matters for the Recovery of Housing Benefit Overpayments

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet, which proposed

an amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers. This was to enable the Benefit Manager to authorise Court documents for the instituting of court proceedings for the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments.

Members noted that this delegation would improve the efficiency and speed of the recovery of benefit overpayments.

DECISION:

- 1. Authority be delegated to the Benefit Manager, in addition to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to authorise Court documents for the instituting of Court proceedings for the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments.
- 2. The Scheme of Delegation to Officers, contained in the Council's Constitution, be amended accordingly.

iii) Traffic Management Act 2004, Part VI

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet, which sought approval for the amendment of the Scheme of Delegation in relation to the management and enforcement of traffic regulations under the Traffic Management Act 2004 Part VI.

It was noted that Part VI of the Traffic Management Act 2004, and associated regulations, would come into operation on 31st March 2008. As a result, the Council's working practices regarding enforcement in relation to on-street and off-street parking needed to be amended accordingly.

DECISION:

- 1. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to amend and advertise the Wyre Forest District Council (off-Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2007 to comply with the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 2. The Head of Property and Operational Services be given delegated authority to continue to manage and implement the Scheme of Delegation relating to the Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement as approved by the Council and now amended by the requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- The Head of Human Resources make necessary amendments to contracts of employment to reflect the change of title from Parking Attendant to Civil Enforcement Officer.
- 4. The Cancellation and Informal Challenge Policy approved by the Council on 19th September 2007, relating to circumstances where a first stage appeal would be allowed under certain mitigating circumstances, be applied to the new legislation.

5. The Head of Property and Operational Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services, be given delegated powers to amend and update the Scheme of Delegation and the Cancellation and Informal Challenge Policy where operational circumstances prove that the Scheme or Policy do not cover matters provided for under the Traffic Management Act 2004.

iv) Proposed Local Nature Reserve At Moorhall Marsh

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet, which sought approval for Moorhall Marsh to be declared a nature reserve. The Council was also asked to endorse the management plan.

Members noted that Moorhall Marsh, which adjoined Stourport Riverside, was an area of significant biological value and the declaration of the nature reserve would have many benefits for both the Council and the local community.

DECISION:

Moorhall Marsh be declared a Local Nature Reserve and the Management Plan, as detailed in Appendix C of the report to the Cabinet on 21st February 2008, be endorsed.

v) Corporate Plan from 2008

The Council considered recommendations from the Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 18th February 2008, regarding Aims and Priorities to be included in the new Corporate Plan from 2008.

On behalf of the Council, the Leader of the Council thanked the Committee and the officers involved for their excellent work on the Aims and Priorities for the Corporate Plan. He advised that the Committee's recommendations would be incorporated into the budget process and the new Corporate Plan as detailed in Minute C. 82, decision 2.1 below.

vi) Mike Oborski No Barriers Award Scheme

The Council considered recommendations from the Cabinet, based on recommendations from the Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee, regarding the establishment of the Mike Oborski "No Barriers" Award Scheme. Members noted that the scheme would recognise local organisations which had provided significant access facilities or other benefits for people with disabilities.

DECISION:

The following be adopted as set out in Appendices A to D of the briefing

paper to the Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 18th February 2008:

- 1. The Mike Oborski "No Barriers" Award Panel Terms of Reference.
- 2. Award Panel membership.
- 3. Award Panel guidance document.
- 4. Nomination / Application Form.

vii) Bewdley Museum Management Committee Proposed Amendments to Constitution and Terms of Reference

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet which sought approval for some amendments to the Bewdley Museum Management Committee's Constitution. The Council's prior approval was needed before the Management Committee could make these changes, which were designed to update the Constitution and to ensure that the Committee continued to function effectively.

DECISION:

Approval be given to the amendments to the Bewdley Museum Management Committee Constitution and Terms of Reference outlined in the report to the Cabinet on 21st February 2008.

C.82 THE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2008/2011

The Council considered the proposed budget decision, recommended by the Cabinet at its meeting on 21st February 2008, together with the associated reports contained in the Financial Strategy 2008-2011 (cream budget book) circulated with the Cabinet agenda of 20th December 2007.

The Leader of the Council gave a detailed presentation of the budget proposals. He advised that they built on the progress made in recent years and provided services on a sound financial footing. He pointed out that the financial strategy now incorporated the Aims and Priorities recommended by the Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee. (Minute C. 81 (c)(v) above refers.)

He reported that the District Council's element of the Council Tax had been held again at 2.5%, whilst providing growth and an ambitious efficiency programme. When account had been taken of the precepts of Worcestershire County Council, West Mercia Police Authority and the Hereford and Worcester Combined Fire Authority, the overall increase would be 4.2%. Hence, the Council Tax increase for a band D property from April 2008 would be £4.59p.

He drew attention to the extensive consultation process in which Opposition Groups had been consulted throughout the budget process and the thorough scrutiny of the budget by the Budget Review Panel.

He was pleased to present a budget that provided financial stability and

affordable, high quality services.

A detailed debate ensued on the budget proposals. The debate encompassed unsuccessful amendments from the Independent Health Concern Group and the Labour Group.

At the conclusion of the debate, the motion as recorded in the decision below was the subject of a named vote in accordance with Standing Order C3 (4).

Members voting for the motion:

Councillors: Mrs R L Akathiotis, J Aston, J Baker, G W Ballinger, J-P Campion, S J M Clee, N J Desmond, Mrs H E Dyke, P Dyke, Mrs L Edginton, Mrs J Greener, P J Harrison, M J Hart, Mrs P V Hayward, Mrs S M Hayward, M A W Hazlewood, Mrs A T Hingley, J Holden, W G Jones, Miss M A Mason, Miss S C Meekings, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T Onslow, M Price, M A Salter, J C Simmonds, R Wheway, S J Williams and G Yarranton.

Members voting against the motion:

Councillors: Mrs L Hyde, M B Kelly and C D Nicholls.

Members abstaining from voting:

Councillors: G H Eeles, Mrs J Fairbrother-Millis, B T Glass, H J Martin, D Millis, M J Shellie, D R Sheppard, K J Stokes, J Thomas and N J Thomas.

DECISION:

1. COUNCIL TAX LEVY 2008/2011

- 1.1 Approval be given to a Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property of £188.10 for 2008/2009 (£183.51 2007/2008) an increase of 2.5% (£4.59 over 2007/2008).
- 1.2 Approval be given to a provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2009/2010 of £192.80 and £197.62 in 2010/2011 an increase of 2.5% per annum over 2008/2009.

(Page references in the following decisions relate to the Financial Strategy 2008 - 2011, as printed in the cream budget book circulated with the Cabinet agenda of 20^{th} December 2007.)

2. PRIORITIES FOR 2008/2011

2.1 Approval be given to Council Aims and Priorities for 2008/2011 following consultation with Members and employees at workshops, the Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee on the 5th and 18th February 2008 and with the Citizens' Panel as follows:-

Corporate Aims	A Better Quality of Life	A Vibrant Local Economy	A Sustainable Environment	A Well Run and Responsive Council
Priorities	More Affordable Housing	District-wide Regeneration	Reducing Waste to Landfill and Increasing Recycling	Improving Efficiency and Value for Money

3. THREE YEAR BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2008/2011 (pages 5-42)

- 3.1 The contents of the reports of the Head of Financial Services on the Three Year Budget and Policy Framework 2008/2011 (pages 5-42) and Base Budget Variations (pages 63-67) be endorsed and, in doing so, the Revised Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2007/2008 be approved.
- 3.2 It be noted that the format of the 2008/2011 Base Budget has been amended to reflect the Divisional changes brought about by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) Review.
- 3.3 The Council's policy relating to Working Balances, Reserves and Provisions be reaffirmed and the amount of Reserves and Provisions available for use in the Budget process be noted. (pages 28-29).
- 3.4 The Council's updated Finance Strategy be reaffirmed. (pages 30-36).
- 3.5 Any Final Account savings arising from 2007/2011 over and above the target allowed for in the Council's Finance Strategy, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated for the one-off costs of the Centralised Office Accommodation project.
- 3.6 The Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) Earmarked Reserve of £150,000 and the Employee and Pension Fund Reserve of £248,000 be transferred to General Reserves.
- 3.7 Authority be delegated to the Cabinet, in consultation with the Corporate Management Team, to allocate Area Based Grants, following the issue of guidance from the Communities and Local Government (CLG) and evidence in relation to the Stronger and Safer Communities Grant. (Agenda Item 7.1(d) of the Cabinet on 21st February 2008 refers).
- 3.8 Authority be delegated to the Cabinet, in consultation with the Corporate Management Team, to allocate the 2008 LABGI Grant for General Economic Regeneration purposes, including the proposal contained in Appendix 2 (Agenda Item 7.1(d) of the Cabinet on 21st February 2008 refers).
- 3.9 The following General Fund Revenue Budget be approved including Cabinet Proposals and Income Service Options identified in Appendices 2 and 3 (attached) :-

	Revised 2007/2008 £	2008/2009 £	2009/2010 £	2010/2011 £
Net Expenditure on Services (per Appendix 1 on Page 14 of the Financial Strategy Book)	14,693,990	15,325,180	15,431,760	16,032,110
Add Cabinet Proposals identified in Appendix 1	-	553,150	22,360	(39,500)
Net Expenditure	14,693,990	15,878,330	15,454,120	15,992,610
Contribution (from) Reserves	(621,900)	(1,429,710)	(742,230)	(1,027,280)
Net Budget Requirement	14,072,090	14,448,620	14,711,890	14,965,330
Less Business Rate Grant, Government Grant and Collection Fund Surplus (Page 14)	7,734,570	7,930,390	8,030,700	8,117,120
Council Tax Levy	£6,337,520	£6,518,230	£6,681,190	£6,848,210
Wyre Forest District Council Tax Level assuming 2.5% increase 2008/2009 onwards	<u>£183.51</u>	£188.10	£192.80	£197.62

4. **CONSULTATION STRATEGY** (pages 38-41)

- 4.1 The comments and views from the Consultation exercise be noted.
- 4.2 It be noted that the Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 18th February 2008 considered the Cabinet Proposals recommended on the 20th December 2007 and was satisfied that these proposals were measured, clear, focussed, achievable and based on sound financial and operational practices.
- 5. <u>CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/2009 ONWARDS</u> (pages 43-62)
- 5.1 Approval be given to the updated Base Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as presented to the Cabinet on 21st February 2008.
- 5.2 It be noted that the format of the 2008/2011 Capital Programme has been amended to reflect the Divisional changes (mainly relating to the transfer of Leisure Services to Community and Partnership Services) brought about by the CMT Review.

- 5.3 The availability of Capital Receipts and the ability to use Prudential Borrowing for new Capital Proposals be noted.
- 5.4 Approval be given to Capital Proposals and associated funding as identified in the schedule of proposed Cabinet Proposals see Appendix 2 (attached).
- 5.5 The Council's updated Capital Strategy be reaffirmed.
- 5.6 Authority continue to be delegated to the Head of Financial Services to fund the Vehicle, Equipment and System Renewal Schedule by means of Prudential Borrowing (repayments based on anticipated life of Vehicle, Equipment and Systems).
- 5.7 Authority be delegated to the Cabinet to progress and implement a new ICT Strategy, following consideration of the report of the Council's Consultants SOCITM and a detailed report of the Corporate Management Team, outlining a strategy for project implementation, project funding and future efficiency savings.
- 5.8 Authority be delegated to the Head of Financial Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to determine the most financially prudent funding method for Capital Projects (Capital Receipts or Direct Revenue Funding) at the end of each Financial Year.
- 6 BASE BUDGET VARIATIONS (pages 63-67)
- 6.1 The Budget Variations identified between Original and Revised Budgets 2007/2008 and between the Revised Budget 2007/2008 and the Original Budget for 2008/2009 be noted.
- 6.2 Heads of Service continue to monitor closely their Budgets and the Head of Financial Services continue to report to the Cabinet on a quarterly basis.
- 7. <u>COUNCIL TAX BASE</u> (pages 68-71)
- 7.1 Approval be given to a Council Tax base for Wyre Forest District of 34653 as detailed in the report on Calculation of Council Tax Base 2008/2009.
- 8. <u>EFFICIENCY TARGETS</u> (pages 72-77)
- 8.1 Approval be given to the identified estimated Annual Efficiency Savings contained within the Head of Financial Services report and it be noted that these savings have been incorporated into the Budget Strategy.
- 8.2 It be noted that the Council is required to achieve target cash releasing Revenue and Capital savings of approximately £690,000 each year for 2008/2011 in accordance with CSR07 requirements.
- 8.3 The Chief Executive/Corporate Management Team prepare a suitable Policy/Strategy to deliver the above efficiency savings.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT AND THE BUDGET PROCESS (pages 78-84)

- 9.1 The Budget Risk Management process identified in the Risk Management and Budget Report be endorsed and the Budgetary Response to identified risks, as detailed on the Budget Risk Matrix Appendix 1 of the report, be noted and endorsed and updated, as presented to Cabinet on 21st February 2008.
- 9.2 Ongoing Budget Risk be monitored quarterly as part of the Budget Monitoring process.

10. CABINET PROPOSALS/SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Approval be given to proposals and associated funding as identified in Appendix 2 (attached).

11. INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS

11.1 Approval be given to Income Service Options and associated fees and charges, as identified in Appendix 3 and detailed in Agenda Item 7.1(e) of the Cabinet agenda on 21st February 2008.

12. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 12.1 Following approval by Council on 28th February 2007 of a Shared Services Strategy approach, approval be given to the transfer of the Building Maintenance Section (11 employees) to the Community Housing Group by means of a Voluntary Transfer with effect from 1st April 2008, with a requirement to buy back the Council's Building Maintenance services for a period of 5 years. This arrangement will provide job security for the employees transferred and future efficiency savings for the Council to be taken into account in the Chief Executive's/CMT Policy/Strategy to deliver the CSR07 requirements (see decision 8.3).
- 12.2 Authority be delegated to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Property and Operational Services and Head of Financial Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to agree a suitable legal agreement.
- 12.3 It be noted that the Council is progressing a procurement agreement with the Community Housing Group in respect of stores purchases.
- 13. PRUDENTIAL SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE AND THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT 2008/2009
- 13.1 The updated Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2008/2009 to 2010/2011 be adopted.
- 13.2 Approval be given to the updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy 2008/2009 and associated Prudential Indicators.

- 13.3 Approval be given to the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP.
- 13.4 As part of Budget Monitoring, the Prudential Indicators be revisited following the approval of the Council's Budget Strategy as the indicators included within the report are based on current recommendations.

14. <u>SECTIONS 25-28 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003</u>

14.1 The Head of Financial Services' Opinion on the Budget Proposals recommended by the Cabinet on 21st February 2008 be noted.

C. 83 COUNCIL TAX 2008/2009

The Council considered a proposed formal resolution for setting the Council Tax 2008/2008. It was noted that this included the precepts of Worcestershire County Council, West Mercia Police Authority, the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority and parish precepts.

DECISION:

The base amount of Council Tax for properties in Band D, before adding Parish and other precepts, be made up as follows:-

	<u>2007/2008</u> (for comparison)	2008/2009
Wyre Forest District Council:	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Net Expenditure	184.87	189.59
<u>Less</u> Surplus on Collection Fund	1.36 -	1.49-
	183.51	188.10
Worcestershire County Council West Mercia Police Authority Hereford and Worcester Fire	943.80 157.66	984.77 165.45
and Rescue Authority	65.01 1,166.47	<u>68.21</u> 1,218.43
Base Band D Council Tax (excluding Parish Precepts)	1,349.98	1,406.53

Parish precepts be added to the total of £1,406.53 as follows:-

	Parish Charge £
The Charter Trustee Town of Kidderminster	4.20
The Parish/Town Council of:-	
Upper Arley	32.30
Bewdley	21.05
Broome	10.40
Chaddesley Corbett	30.09
Churchill and Blakedown	20.98
Kidderminster Foreign	16.01
Ribbesford	-
Rock	18.35
Rushock	20.27
Stone	6.02
Stourport on Severn	20.96
Wolverley and Cookley	20.50

- 2.1 It be noted that at its meeting on the 20th December 2007 the Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2008/2009 in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992:
 - (a) 34,653 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its council tax base for the year.
 - (b) The amounts set out in column 2 of Appendix 4 for each Parish being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.
- 2.2 The following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2008/2009 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
 - (a) £54,958,174 being the aggregate of the amounts, which the Council estimates for the items, set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act. (Gross expenditure including Parish precepts and special expenses)

- (b) £40,089,330 being the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act. (Income)
- (c) £14,868,844 being the amount by which the aggregate at (2.2)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (2.2)(b) above calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act as its budget requirement for the year. (Net budget)
- (d) £7,930,386 being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant, increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its collection fund to its general fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1998. (External support and collection fund surplus)
- (e) £200.23 being the amount at (2.2)(c) above less the amount at (2.2)(d) above all divided by the amount at (1)(a) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. (The amount to be funded by Council Tax)
- (f) £420,224 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act as set out in Column 1 of Appendix 4. (Total Parish precepts and special expenses)
- (g) £188.10 being the amount at (2.2)(e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (2.2)(f) above by the amount at (1)(a) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 43(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates. (Band D council tax for those areas with no Parish precepts or special expenses)
- (h) The amounts set out in Column 4 of Appendix 4 for each Parish being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (2)(g) to above the amount of the special item relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned in Appendix 4 divided in each case by the amount at (1)(b) above calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(Band D Council Tax including Parish precepts for each Parish)

- (i) The amounts set out in Appendix 5 for each Parish being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (2)(g) and (2)(h) above by the number which in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands. (Council tax including Parish precepts for each council tax band and Parish)
- 2.3 It be noted that for the year 2008/2009 the County Council, Police Authority and Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as shown below:

	Worcestershire County Council	West Mercia Police Authority	Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority
Band A	656,51	110.30	45.47
Band B	765.93	128.69	53.05
Band C	875.35	147.07	60.63
Band D	984.77	165.45	68.21
Band E	1,203.60	202.22	83.37
Band F	1,422.44	238.99	98.53
Band G	1,641.28	275.75	113.68
Band H	1,969.53	330.90	136.42

Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (2.1) and (2.3) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts shown in Appendix 6 as the amounts of council tax for the year 2008/2009 for each of the categories of dwellings.

- 3. Authorisation of Officers to collect and recover Council Tax and Business Rates:
 - Mr. D. Buckland, Head of Financial Services, Mrs. J. Hill, Financial Services Manager; Mrs. T. Southall, Accountancy Services Manager; Mr. S. Edmonds, Accountancy Services Manager; Mr. P.B. McGill, Principal Revenues Officer; Mrs. F. Johnson, Senior Revenues Officer, Mrs. L. Hall, Mrs. S. Clayphan and Mrs. V. Sloane, Revenue Team Leaders; Mrs C. S. Newlands, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; Mrs. M. Morgan,

Licensing and Litigation Solicitor; Mrs. J. Alexander, Planning, Property and Commercial Solicitor; Mrs. B.M. Vickers, Litigation Legal Executive, or any other person specifically authorised by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, appointed to the said offices under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, be hereby authorised:-

- (a) to demand, collect and recover any Council Tax or National Non-Domestic Rate made by the Council under the Local Government Finance Acts 1988 and 1992:
- (b) to demand, collect and recover any penalties under Schedules 3 and 4 to the Local Government Finance Acts 1988 and 1992;
- (c) under Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972 and all other powers enabling them to prosecute and to appear on behalf of the Council at the hearing of legal proceedings in connection with the demand, collection and recovery of any Council Tax, National Non-Domestic Rate, Community Charge and General Rates made by the Council and/or any penalties imposed under the Local Government Finance Acts 1988 and 1992; and
- (d) to make such amendments to the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rate as are authorised by the Local Government Finance Acts 1988 and 1992 and other legislation in force from time to time. Further, the Head of Financial Services, Financial Services Manager be authorised to impose penalties in accordance with Schedule 3 to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, with regard to the supply of information for Council Tax purposes.

C.84 MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. D1 (1)

No motions were received in accordance with Standing Order No. D1(1).

C.85 URGENT MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. D1 (7)

No motions were received in accordance with Standing Order No. D1(7).

C.86 REVIEW OF TWO POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

The Council considered a report from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which informed members of responses to a consultation exercise which had been carried out in accordance with Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006, to alter the boundaries of two polling districts within Wyre Forest.

DECISION:

The Polling Districts of Kidderminster Broadwaters No. 4 (BR-D) and Kidderminster Broadwaters No. 3 (BR-C) be altered in accordance with Appendix 1 of the report to the Council on 27th February 2007.

C.87 ROYAL GARDEN PARTIES

The Council considered nominations for attendance at one of the royal garden parties at Buckingham Palace in July 2008.

DECISION:

Councillors Miss M Mason and M Price and their partners be nominated to attend a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace in July 2008.

C.88 <u>INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF ETHICS AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE</u>

Following the expiry of Mr C J Brighton's term of office as an Independent Member of the Ethics and Standards Committee, and the required selection process, the Council considered reappointing Mr Brighton for a further four year term of office.

DECISION:

Mr C J Brighton be reappointed for a further four year term of office as an Independent Member of the Ethics and Standards Committee.

C.89 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

DECISION:

Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "exempt Information" as defined in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

C.90 <u>SUMMARY OF MINUTES</u>

The following proceedings were considered after the press and public had been excluded from the meeting. A summary of the minutes relating to these items has been made as 'Exempt Information' would be disclosed if the minutes were published in full.

C.91 POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK – MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE A DECISION BY COUNCIL

a) Recommendations from the Cabinet – 20th December 2007

i) Council Tax - Application for a Local Discount

The Council approved a recommendation from the Cabinet in relation to an application for a discount to reduce Council Tax payable by an individual Council Taxpayer. Authority was delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with Head of Financial Services, to determine such applications in future.

ii) District Cemetery - Provision of a Crematorium

The Council approved a recommendation from the Cabinet regarding arrangements for the provision of a crematorium.

b) Recommendations from the Cabinet – 21st February 2008

Community Assets – Sale of Land at Bewdley

The Council approved a recommendation from the Cabinet to sell the freehold interest of land at Bewdley.

The meeting ended at 8.55p.m.

APPENDIX 1

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 27th FEBRUARY 2008

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

QUESTION TIME AT COUNCIL MEETINGS - STANDING ORDER A5

From Councillor M B Kelly

To the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity

1. This question contains exempt information and is printed with the answer in the Appendix to the exempt minutes of the 27th February 2008 meeting.

From Councillor Ms T L Onslow

To the Leader of the Council

2. Could the Leader kindly inform myself and Council on how many occasions the date, time or venue for Cabinet has been changed since May 2006 and at what notice?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

I am pleased to report that the dates, times and venues for Cabinet since May 2006 have not been changed.

Supplementary question from Councillor Ms T L Onslow

Could you also inform me how many times the Leader of the Opposition has attended Cabinet and influenced important decisions that have been taken?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

Unfortunately he has only attended once over the whole of the time when important decisions have been taken.

From Councillor HJ Martin.

To the Leader of the Council.

3. Can the Leader now formally confirm that Crossley Park is no longer an option for the "single site?"

Answer from the Leader of the Council

This Council decides policy. We currently have some excellent venues which we are considering before we feed into the decision-making process so that this Council can make an informed and accurate decision that will stand the test of time and scrutiny.

Supplementary Question from Councillor H J Martin

Can you say why you said in the press a few weeks ago that you had made a good start and Crossley Park was the better option and, if chosen, it would come to Council sooner rather than later?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

If you check the comments made in the press, I said that it was a good idea that Crossley Park should be considered. This is what policy is all about - ideas are worked up and taken through the scrutiny process, examined by Members and then they go through the decision-making process. It is important that we make decisions with the best information we have available, so that we are confident that any decisions that we make as a Council are the right ones.

To the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

4. In response to a question at last Full Council on decriminalised parking, the Cabinet Member said he believed that the introduction "had been broadly accepted by shop keepers and traders." Is he still of that opinion?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

Yes.

Supplementary Question from Councillor H J Martin

Could the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services find some way of making more car owners aware of the situation? This would support any action taken on the streets.

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

Many people have commented that, by and large, decriminalisation has been very successful throughout the District. Now that the parking restrictions in parking bays have also been enforced, it allows shoppers in the District to park in the town centres. This is excellent from a regeneration point of view as it boosts the economy compared to how it was without enforcement. People used to park in places all day and thus prevented the shoppers from accessing these spaces. However, since decriminalisation, these spaces have been freed up. By and large, but with a few grumbles, decriminalisation is supported and we will continue to ensure that the wardens do their job with understanding and compassion.

5. Can the Cabinet Member please inform me what plans are in place to make access to Bewdley Guildhall compliant with the current disability legislation?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

The Guildhall in Bewdley is equivalent to the Town Hall in Kidderminster and the Civic Centre in Stourport. I can give a full assurance that it will stay as part of the Council's portfolio of properties as it is an important building in the town. For those of you who are aware of it, it is at the top of some steps but, unfortunately, the steps are part of a very important listed building and to make it DDA compliant would be very expensive. We are aware of the importance of DDA. We did try to incorporate the Bewdley Hub as part of the museum entry, which would have included the use of a lift for DDA purposes, but this was not possible. We are committed to work with the Town Council who are the prime users of the space. We did try to negotiate moving the Town Council's office to a former meeting room and we are continuing to work with the Bewdley Development Trust to pump prime for DDA work to make the building accessible to the public. In relation to bringing public buildings up to DDA standard across the District, the Guildhall is further down the priority list in view of the relatively small number of users who would use the building. However it is still on the list to be done.

From Councillor B T Glass.

To the Leader of the Council

6. This question contains exempt information and is printed with the answer in the Appendix to the exempt minutes of the 27th February 2008 meeting.

From Councillor D R Sheppard.

To the Leader of the Council

7. Can the Leader please advise whether or not the issue of the taxi mix of "black cabs" and saloon cars has yet been agreed with the operators?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

Council policy is set in this chamber. We decided as 42 Members in 2005 that the taxi fleet in Wyre Forest was to be free of control and DDA accessible to all. It is current policy and we are coming to the end of the third year of that policy. In 2004, when the deregulation process was started, we only had four DDA taxis across the district. Now, in 2008, 36% are DDA complaint which does allow more choice for users. We need to monitor the policy, in discussion with the trade and in conjunction with relevant officers. If any changes are proposed, they will come back through the Licensing and Environmental Committee to Council.

Supplementary question from Councillor D R Sheppard

I am aware the taxi trade have recently submitted various documents to you about a mix of taxis. In particular, they are very concerned that only about ½% of call outs require London-style taxis. Is this being taken into account when completing a London-style fleet.?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

We set the standard for taxis. I make no apology for the standard being high for service users. A less able person still has the same right to hail a taxi as an able bodied person.

From Councillor Mrs F M Oborski

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity

8. I agree with your comments in the press last week about the news that Slingfield Mill is to be converted to give a Debenhams Store plus an hotel; but can he assure Council that this development will not have a deleterious effect on the plans for an hotel as part of KTC3?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity

I, like you, think it is fantastic news that Debenhams have submitted a planning application in this District and that an hotel is also to be included, but this is subject to planning consent. Each application is looked at on its merits.

Supplementary question from Councillor Mrs F M Oborski

If we do get an hotel, will you please give me some undertaking how parking for this facility will be achieved?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity

Weavers Wharf night-time economy promotes parking, so I do not see a problem.

To the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

9. Earlier this evening Council received a petition from Mr.S.Sidhu on behalf of The Horsefair Traders.

As a local County Councillor I have already received a copy of the petition which has been handed to the Managing Director of Wyre Forest Community Housing who are developing the site.

I am aware that the Housing Company are happy to amend their plans to incorporate the restoration of on street parking in "the triangle".

Would the Cabinet Member assure Council that the Property and Commercial Services Directorate will not unnecessarily obstruct the provision of this much needed short stay parking?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

I can give Councillor Mrs Oborski and this chamber a full assurance that in no way will the Property and Operational Services Division obstruct parking in the Horsfair triangle.

Supplementary question from Councillor Mrs F M Oborski

If we return to parking here will it require planning permission and if so, how quickly can it be restored? It will be a priority to restore it by the end of March.

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

You may or may not be aware that the parcel of land, shown as "A" on the plan circulated by the petitioner, is owned by Wyre Forest Community Housing and is not in our control. Technical and legal discussions took place when the land was conveyed to Wyre Forest Community Housing. Wyre Forest Community Housing has been in contact with our Head of Property and Operational Services at the beginning of this year in respect of parking in this triangle. We fully support regeneration of the Horsefair and have no difficulty with parking in this location. Wyre Forest Community Housing must progress this and the Head of Property and Operational Services has been in touch with the project manager and has given assistance and advice on how parking spaces are managed. In the first instance it was thought that the parking space would not be regulated, and members of the public could park on it every day. However, the key is regeneration and economic regeneration, so we suggest that it should be subject to traffic regulation orders so that there can be turnover of parking spaces.

10. Before its introduction Council was assured that "Decriminalisation of Car Parking" would mean proper regulation of traffic control orders in residential areas.

Articles in the local press, complaints from local traders, plus critical comments made by partner organisations at the recent Highways Partnership Forum, would seem to show that the new scheme is being operated in a far more insensitive manner than was the previous scheme operated by Traffic Wardens employed by West Mercia Police.

Will the Cabinet Member:

- a) Remind Officers of the need for the Wardens to use both sensitivity and common sense when dealing with breaches of traffic orders?
- b) Carry out a survey of members of this Council to establish which Residential Street Traffic Orders need attention from our Wardens?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

The answer to question (a) is yes.

The answer to question (b) is: I am happy to write to all Members and ask for local feedback.

Supplementary question from Councillor Mrs F M Oborski

Can you tell me why delivery vehicles to Woolwise in Black Horse Lane are being harassed and booked when the Council's own refuse trucks stay in the same place for some time and obstruct, but do not get booked by the warden?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

It would be inappropriate to refer to specific examples. In general terms Black Horse Lane Traffic Regulation Order prohibits loading and unloading. I have written to Nick Churchill to look at Traffic Regulation Orders in this location and to ask if he can install a loading bay for Woolwise and the Brasserie at the side of the road where there is on street parking. Obviously in terms of refuse vehicles, they are moving on and are emptying bins, whereas delivery drivers are carrying out different functions in terms of the legislation.

11. Can he please tell me what is the normal maximum delay between an untaxed vehicle abandoned on the highway being reported to the Council's abandoned vehicle desk and its ultimate removal?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

Our Environmental Protection Officer responds to all reported abandoned vehicles within 24 hours and has to instigate and take a judgement then as to whether or not they are actually abandoned. It depends on that as to how long it takes to have a vehicle removed. It can take 10 to 12 working days, depending on the infringement.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Mrs F M Oborski

I reported to the police five times that an 'N' registered Astra, whose tax had expired 12 months ago had spent six months at 120 Tennyson Way, Offmore Farm. It was also reported four times by a local resident. Would you agree it is rather embarrassing when police come to members and say they can't get it removed, can you?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Property and Operational Services

The difficulty in this case was that when the vehicle was inspected, it did have a registered keeper. It was insured and it was taxed although it was not displaying a valid tax disk. Therefore, it was a matter for the Police and DVLA, not the Council.

From Councillor K J Stokes.

To The Leader of Council.

12. "We are very badly done by in the north of the country. I really do think that, as I proceed south in my car, I get a smoother ride." This is a quote from the local press, from a Conservative Councillor, with regards to the state of the roads. With, currently, a Conservative administration in both Wyre Forest and at County Hall and six Conservative County Councillors also sitting on this Council, do you consider it to be true?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

I cannot comment on roads in the north of the country. I am also perplexed about this. I think you are referring to an article in a local newspaper two weeks ago, where Councillor Holden was quoted as referring to a version of this quote. If you refer to the current week's Shuttle, you will see a retraction which says that comments should have been attributed to the Leader of the Independent Health Concern Group on the Stourport Town Council.

Supplementary Question from Councillor K J Stokes

You cannot believe everything you read. Sometime ago when the Highways Partnership was scrutinised, the view was that the partnership was below par. When will Councillors be informed of action to be taken?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

The issue you refer to is a County matter. The Liaison Engineer is responsible. I have never been to a Highways Partnership Forum meeting in Wyre Forest but can inform you that the County Council is intending to suspend this forum and look at other ways of addressing highways issues in the County.

To The Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services

13. How many paintings of exhibition quality do we own and have stored? How many times have they been on public exhibition in the year 2007/08?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services

We have approximately 150 paintings exhibited and it is our policy to get as many paintings as possible on view. They are exhibited at Bewdley Museum, and Civic buildings such as Kidderminster Town Hall, Civic Centre, Stourport, Duke House, Kidderminster and New Street, Stourport. Furthermore, we have many paintings which are carpet related. If and when the Carpet Museum is up and running it is our intention that those paintings will be displayed there. If any members can think of any public areas their Wards where we could hang paintings, I would be happy to assist.

Supplementary Question from Councillor K J Stokes

The answer which I wished to obtain was how many times the pictures had been exhibited? I have come to the conclusion from what you have said that what we need is an Arts Centre. In previous consultations over this use for the Town Hall, people said that this was what they wanted and this is what they would enjoy. What priority will be giving to an Arts Centre which people want?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services

I refer you to the budget proposals.

APPENDIX 2 CABINET PROPOSALS 2008/09 ONWARDS

			C	CHANGES IN	N RESOURCE	S
	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION	KEY	2008/2009 £	2009/201 0 £	2010/2011 £	After 31/03/201 1 £
	PROPERTY & OPERATIONAL SERVICES					
R002	Summer Refuse Collection Service					
	Provide £20,000 resources in 2008/09 out of earmarked reserves	C	-	-	-	-
	to assist with the refuse collection service during the summer	R	-	-	-	-
	period.	M	-	-	-	-
R040	New Cemetery Site To provide resources to progress the development of the new Cemetery site in partnership with a private operator. Note 1: Funding of capital to be by means of borrowing unallocated Housing Capital Receipts followed by prudential borrowing when required. Note 2: In the event of a partnership option being unsuccessful, delegated authority to the Cabinet to determine a way forward, including revenue funding.	C R M	2,325,000 58,130 -	- 116,250 -	- 116,250 -	- 209,250 -
R160	Hanging Baskets The purchase, installation and maintenance of additional flower towers and hanging baskets in Worcester Street and Coventry Street Kidderminster. Business community be requested to contribute towards this scheme. Report to September Cabinet on success of partnership funding.	C R M	- 16,000 -	2,000	2,000	2,000

R185	Car Parking - Park and Ride					
K103	The termination of Park and Ride facility at Stadium Close,	C				
	The termination of Fark and Ride facility at Stadium Close,		54,000	54,000	-	54,000
	Kidderminster with effect from 1st April 2008.	R	CR	CR	54,000 CR	CR
	Reddenninster with effect from 1st April 2000.	M	-	- CR		-
R195	Bus Shelter Replacement	С	-	-	-	-
	Provide resources for bus shelter replacement in the Kidderminster	R	8,000	-	-	-
	area.	M	-	-	-	-
R200	Streetscene Cleansing Team					
	To supplement the work of the Streetscene Cleansing Team for a	C	-	-	-	-
	further year by providing additional resources in the form of 3	R	35,000	-	-	-
	cleansing operatives each for 6 months duration.	M	1.5	-	-	-
	COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES					
R085	Stourport Sports Centre					
	Stourport Sports Centre - refurbishment of the Wet and	C	-	-	-	-
	Dry Side Changing rooms - Capital costs to be shared equally	R	50,000	-	-	-
	with DC Leisure (Capital Programme).	M	-	-	-	-
R095	Brownwesthead Park Changing Rooms	C	-	-	-	-
	Provide resources for the refurbishment of existing sports facility	R	20,000	-	-	-
	(Capital Programme).	M	-	-	-	-
R160	Improvement To Paddling Pools					
	Commence programme to improve paddling pools to meet current	C	90,000	-	-	-
	Health and Safety guidelines. Delegated authority to Cabinet	R	3,380	4,500	4,500	4,500
	Member to determine programme of improvements.	M	-	-	-	-
R160	Habberley Playing Fields Changing Rooms					
	A complete rebuild of the Habberley Changing Rooms with view	C	-	-	-	-
	to raising standards up to the recently refurbished facility at White	R	250,000	-	-	-
	Wickets. Delegated authority to the Cabinet Member to agree	M	-	-	-	-
	most economic scheme (Capital Programme).					

R216	Kidderminster Arts Centre					
	Council continues to explore the delivery of an Arts Centre within	C	-	-	-	-
	Kidderminster Town Hall. Head of Community and Partnership	R	-	-	-	-
	Services to report to Cabinet on potential sources of capital	M	-	-	-	-
	funding and ongoing revenue sustainability.					
R715	Community Safety					
	Use £20,000 of saving on CCTV capital provision for Community	C	-	-	-	-
	Safety purposes. Delegated authority to Cabinet Member in	R	-	-	-	-
	consultation with Head of Community & Partnership Services	M	-	-	-	-
	to approve expenditure (Capital Programme).					
R720	Community Strategy					
	To continue to provide funding towards the delivery of high level	C	-	-	-	-
	strategic priorities as set out in both the District and County	R	50,000	-	-	-
	sustainable Community Strategies. Provide up to a £30,000 grant	M	-	-	-	-
	to fund a project coordinator for the Horsefair, Broadwaters and					
	Greenhill areas out of these monies (Note years 2 and 3 may be					
	funded from a Government reward grant). Delegated authority					
	for other expenditure to the Cabinet Member with responsibility					
	in consultation with the Head of Community and Partnership					
	Services.					
R720	Community Leadership Fund					
	Provide resources for an additional year to continue the Community	C	-	-	-	-
	Leadership Fund for use by Ward Councillors to assist with PACTS	R	42,000	-	-	-
	and Community Groups. Quarterly report to Corporate Service	M	-	-	-	-
	and Performance Scrutiny Committee on committed expenditure.					
R731	Grants to Voluntary Bodies					
	To provide funding for the continued support of the Citizens Advice	C	-	-	-	-
	Bureau for additional surgeries in Stourport and Bewdley for a three	R	5,000	5,000	5,000	-
	year period.	M	-	-	-	-

	HUMAN RESOURCES					
R430	Information Technology					
	To provide a contingency fund for IT purposes. Use to be	C	-	-	-	-
	delegated to the Cabinet Member in consultation with Head of	R	50,000	-	-	-
	Human Resources	M	-	-	-	-
	LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES					
R500	Electoral Administration Act	C	-	-	-	-
	To continue funding ongoing mandatory costs in relation to the	R	27,500	_	-	-
	Electoral Administration Act for 2008/09.	M	-	-	-	-
	PLANNING, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT					
R620	Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas					
	To provide match funding for the continuation of the partnership	C	-	-	-	-
	scheme in Conservation Areas (PSiCA). Recommendation from	R	-	24,000	-	-
	Cabinet 28/06/07.	M	-	-	-	-
R685	Decent Homes Officer	C	-	-	-	-
	Shortfall funding for the post of Decent Homes Officer on a fixed	R	4,250	4,250		
	two year contract from 1st April 2008 until March 2010.	M	-	_	-	-
R704	Economic Regeneration					
	To provide and maintain a working budget for the regeneration	C	-	_	-	-
	and urban design activities of the new Regeneration and	R	45,000	_	-	-
	Economic Prosperity Section for 2008/09 including £20,000	M	-	-	-	-
	to provide an operating budget for the work of the Town Centre					
	Manager and Economic Regeneration Section to specifically					
	address empty shops across the District. Quarterly report to					
	Corporate Service and Performance Scrutiny Committee on					
	activity.		_			

R705	General Economic Development					
	To increase the funds allocated to Bewdley Development Trust and	C	-	-	-	-
	Stourport Forward by £5,000 per annum to £10,000 per annum	R	10,000	10,000	-	
	each, for a two year period.	M	-	-	-	-
	CORPORATE PROPOSALS					
	Divisional Administrative Expenses					
	To further reduce divisional admin budgets by an additional 5%	C	-	-	-	-
			50,000	50,000		50,000
	as part of the Council's continued efficiency savings and incorporate	R	CR	CR	50,000 CR	CR
	into Base Budget. This builds on the 1% reduction in 2007/08.	M	-	-	-	-
	Income Service Options					
	An additional increase of 1% to reflect current inflation levels on	C	-	-	-	-
			17,110	39,640		63,250
	Income Service Options and associated fees and charges over and	R	CR	CR	63,250 CR	CR
	above those detailed in the Income Service Option Report.	M	-	-	-	-
		C	2,415,000	-	-	-
	GRAND TOTALS	R	553,150	22,360	39,500 CR	48,500
		M	1.5	-	-	-

KEY - Changes in Resources

C - Capital

R - Revenue

M - Man Power

APPENDIX 3

INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS 2008/2009

DIVISIONAL SUMMARY

		СНА	NGES IN RESO	URCES
DIVISION	KEY	2008/2009 £	2009/2010 £	2010/2011 £
PROPERTY AND OPERATIONAL	С	-	-	-
SERVICES	R	65,610 CR	89,090 CR	89,090 CR
See Appendix A	M	-	-	-
COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIP	C	-	-	-
SERVICES	R	980 CR	980 CR	980 CR
See Appendix B	M	-	-	-
	C	-	-	-
FINANCIAL SERVICES	R	4,440 CR	4,440 CR	4,440 CR
See Appendix C	M	-	-	-
	C	-	-	-
LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	R	-	-	-
See Appendix D	M	-	-	-
PLANNING, HEALTH &	C	-	-	-
ENVIRONMENT	R	5,980 CR	6,480 CR	6,040 CR
See Appendix E	M	-	-	-
	C	-	-	-
GRAND TOTAL	R	77,010 CR	100,990 CR	100,550 CR
	M	-		-

KEY - Changes in Resources

C - Capital

R - Revenue

M - Man Power

APPENDIX 3A

INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS 2008/2009

PROPERTY AND OPERATIONAL SERVICES

			CHANGES IN RESOURCES					
Cost Centre	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION	KEY	2008/09 £	2009/10 £	2010/11 £			
R234	Trade Waste	С	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% to put them in line	R	19,170 CR	19,170 CR	19,170 CR			
	with commercial rates (to accommodate landfill fees)	M	-	-	-			
R229	Garage	С	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	3,250 CR	3,250 CR	3,250 CR			
	Council policy	M	-	-	-			
R236	Grounds Maintenance	С	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	4,600 CR	4,600 CR	4,600 CR			
	Council policy	M	-	-	-			
R040	Cemeteries	С	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	3,380 CR	3,380 CR	3,380 CR			
	Council policy	M	_	-	-			
R095	Other Sports Facilities	С	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	1,340 CR	1,340 CR	1,340 CR			
	Council policy	M	_	-	-			
R160	Parks and Open spaces	С	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	1,370 CR	1,370 CR	1,370 CR			
	Council policy	M	_	-	- -			
	•	С	_	-	-			

R155	Allotments				
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	200 CR	200 CR	200 CR
	Council policy	M	-	-	-
R221	Civic Halls	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	2,930 CR	2,930 CR	2,930 CR
	Council policy	M	-	-	-
R225	Weighbridge	C	-	-	-
	To increase weighbridge charges by 4.5%	R	160 CR	160 CR	160 CR
		M	-	-	=
R250	Control of Rats and other Pests	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	850 CR	850 CR	850 CR
	Council policy	M	-	-	-
R255	Control of Dogs	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	90 CR	90 CR	90 CR
	Council policy	M	-	-	-
R185	<u>Car Parks</u>	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 4.5% (increase starts 1/10/08)	R	28,270 CR	51,750 CR	51,750 CR
		M	-	-	-
		C	-	-	-
			65,610	89,090	
	TOTALS	R	CR	CR	89,090 CR
		M	-	-	-

APPENDIX 3B

INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS 2008/2009

COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

			CHANGES IN RESOURCES					
Cost Centre	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION	KEY	2008/09 £	2009/10 £	2010/11 £			
R050	Play Leadership	С	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	830 CR	830 CR	830 CR			
	Council policy	M	-	-	-			
R145	Stourport Community Centre	С	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	30 CR	30 CR	30 CR			
	Council policy	M	-	-	-			
R163	Rangers Services	C	-	-	-			
	Increase charges by 4.5% in accordance with	R	120 CR	120 CR	120 CR			
	Council policy	M	-	-	-			
		C	-	-	-			
	TOTALS	R	980 CR	980 CR	980 CR			
		M	-	-	-			

INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS 2008/2009

APPENDIX 3C

FINANCIAL SERVICES

	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION		CHANGES IN RESOURCES				
Cost Centre			2008/2009 £	2009/2010 £	2010/2011 £		
R310	Council Tax/NNDR						
	To increase costs in respect of Council Tax & NNDR						
	Court Costs. Proposed costs are as follows:-						
	Summons Costs £35						
	Liability Order Costs $\underline{£20}$	С	-	-	-		
	£55	R	4,440 CR	4,440 CR	4,440 CR		
	Note: This is an increase of £5 on Summons costs only.	M	-	-	-		
	Costs have to reflect actual costs incurred and be						
	subsequently agreed with the Magistrates Court.						
	It is felt that the proposed costs can be justified.						
	Normally these costs are increased every two years.						
R330	Concessionary Travel - WFDC Scheme						
	To have no increase in the cost of a replacement card of		-	-	-		
	£5. However introduce a charge of £10 for any		-	-	-		
	subsequent replacement cards in any one financial year		-	-	-		
	in order to fully recover costs.						

D220					
R330	Concessionary Travel - Dial-A-Ride Scheme				
	To consider, following consultation with users, an increase				
	from 50p to £1 in the charge to users for a single journey.	C	-	-	-
	The additional income, estimated to be in the region of	R	-	-	-
	£10,000 p.a., to be retained by Dial-A-Ride to assist in	M	-	-	-
	continuity of the service. Delegated authority to the				
	Leader				
	of the Council to progress following the results of				
	consultation.				
R335	Corporate Costs - Bank Charges				
	Maintain existing policy of full cost recovery of bank	C	-	-	-
	charges in respect of credit card transactions for	R	-	-	-
	those services where there is no provision to include	M	-	-	-
	in charge levied (1.75%)				
		C	-	-	-
	TOTALS	R	4,440 CR	4,440 CR	4,440 CR
		M	<u> </u>	-	

APPENDIX 3D

INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS 2008/2009

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

			CHANG	ES IN RESOU	JRCES
Cost Centre	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION	KEY	2008/200 9 £	2009/2010 £	2010/1 1 £
R500	Elections and Electoral Registration	С	_	_	_
	To maintain the sale of edited and full Electoral	R	-	-	_
	Registers at statutory levels - last increased 2002/03.	M	ı	-	-
R510	Land Charges	C	-	-	-
	Owing to external market competition to propose no	R	-	-	-
	increase to basic and other Land Charge fees.	M	-	-	-
R515	Legal & Democratic Services Administration	C	-	-	-
	To raise charges for the supply of minutes and	R	-	-	-
	agendas to outside bodies/companies in line with	M	-	-	-
	inflation.				
		C	-	-	-
	TOTALS	R	-	-	-
		M	_	_	-

APPENDIX 3E

INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS 2008/2009

PLANNING, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

			CHANG	URCES	
Cost Centre	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION	KEY	2008/2009 £	2009/2010 £	2010/2011 £
R605	Development Control	С			
				e determine	•
	To maintain Planning Application fees at statutory	R	(Governmen	t
	levels (last increased 2005/06)	M			
R605	<u>Development Control</u>	C	-	-	-
	To increase the charge for Planning Enquiries in line	R	40 CR	40 CR	30 CR
	with inflation	M	-	-	-
R625	Building Control	C	-	-	-
	To increase the charge for Building Control enquiries	R	10 CR	10 CR	10 CR
	in line with inflation	M	-	-	-
R625	Building Control	C	-	-	-
	To propose no increase to Building Control charges.	R	-	-	-
		M C	-	-	-
R625	Building Control		-	-	-
	To review the charges for the Sale of Documents.	R	500 CR	500 CR	500 CR
	To propose an increase in line with inflation	M	-	-	-
R630	Planning, Health & Environment Administration	C	1 000	1 000	1 000
	To review the charges for the Sale of Documents.	R	1,000 CR	1,000 CR	1,000 CR
	To propose an increase in line with inflation	M	- CR	- CK	- CK
R640	Food & Health & Safety	C	_	_	_
KU40	To increase charges in line with inflation	R	_	_	_
	To increase charges in fine with inflation	M	_	_	_
R645	Pollution Control	111			
1045	To maintain LAPC and LAPPC charges at statutory	C			
	To maintain 2111 o and 21111 o charges at successi		To b	e determine	ed by
	level (revised annually - notification not received yet	R		Governmen	•
	for 2008/09)	M			
R645	Pollution Control				
	To maintain water sampling fees at statutory	C	-	-	-
	levels (last increased 2004/05). To increase other		30 CR	30 CR	30 CR
	charges in line with inflation.		-	-	-
R655	Hackney Carriage/Private Hire	С	-	-	-
			3,250	3,720	3,250
	To increase fees in line with inflation to ensure the	R	CR	CR	CR
	activity remains self financing.	M	-	-	-

R660	General Licensing & Registration	С	-	-	-
	To increase charges in line with inflation	R	590 CR	590 CR	590 CR
	-	M	-	-	-
R660	Gambling Act 2005	С	-	-	-
	To increase premises licence fees in line with inflation	R	590 CR	620 CR	660 CR
		M	-	-	-
R660	Gambling Act 2005	C	-	-	-
			To be determined by		
	To charge permit fees as determined by Government,	R	Government		
	as set in 2007/08	M	-	-	-
R665	Licensing Act 2003	C			
			To b	e determine	ed by
	To charge fees as determined by Government,	R	(Governmen	t
	as set in 2005/06	M			
		C	-	-	-
			5,980	6,480	6,040
	TOTALS	R	CR	CR	CR
		M	-	-	-

COUNCIL TAX SPECIAL ITEMS 2008/2009

Column Number <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u>

- Parts of the Council's Area	Special Item (Parish Precept) £	Tax Base	Council Tax for Special Item (Parish Precept)	Total Basic Council Tax (District plus Parish) £
The Charter Trustees Town of Kidderminster	75,500	17,969	4.20	192.30
The Parish/Town Council of:				
Upper Arley	10,563	327	32.30	220.40
Bewdley	77,775	3,694	21.05	209.15
Broome	1,800	173	10.40	198.50
Chaddesley Corbett	21,783	724	30.09	218.19
Churchill & Blakedown	15,652	746	20.98	209.08
Kidderminster Foreign	6,163	385	16.01	204.11
Rock	22,200	1,210	18.35	206.45
Rushock	1,500	74	20.27	208.37
Stone	1,536	255	6.02	194.12
Stourport-on-Severn	149,627	7,138	20.96	209.06
Wolverley & Cookley	36,125	1,762	20.50	208.60
TOTAL	£420,224			

APPENDIX 4

VALUATION BANDS 2008/2009

APPENDIX 5

(Council Tax Including Parish Precepts)

Part of the Council's Area	A £	B £	- C	D £	£	F £	G £	£ H
The Charter Trustees Town of Kidderminster	128.20	149.57	170.93	192.30	235.03	277.77	320.50	384.60
The Parish/Town Council of:								
Upper Arley	146.93	171.42	195.91	220.40	269.38	318.36	367.33	440.80
Bewdley	139.43	162.67	185.91	209.15	255.63	302.11	348.58	418.30
Broome	132.33	154.39	176.44	198.50	242.61	286.72	330.83	397.00
Chaddesley Corbett	145.46	169.70	193.95	218.19	266.68	315.16	363.65	436.38
Churchill & Blakedown	139.39	162.62	185.85	209.08	255.54	302.00	348.47	418.16
Kidderminster Foreign	136.07	158.75	181.43	204.11	249.47	294.83	340.18	408.22
Ribbesford	125.40	146.30	167.20	188.10	229.90	271.70	313.50	376.20
Rock	137.63	160.57	183.51	206.45	252.33	298.21	344.08	412.90
Rushock	138.91	162.07	185.22	208.37	254.67	300.98	347.28	416.74
Stone	129.41	150.98	172.55	194.12	237.26	280.40	323.53	388.24
Stourport-on-Severn	139.37	162.60	185.83	209.06	255.52	301.98	348.43	418.12
Wolverley & Cookley	139.07	162.24	185.42	208.60	254.96	301.31	347.67	417.20

VALUATION BANDS 2008/2009 (Total Council Tax Payable)

APPENDIX 6

Parts of the Council's Area	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
The Charter Trustees Town of Kidderminster	940.48	1,097.24	1,253.98	1,410.73	1,724.22	2,037.73	2,351.21	2,821.45
The Parish/Town Council of:								
Upper Arley	959.21	1,119.09	1,278.96	1,438.83	1,758.57	2,078.32	2,398.04	2,877.65
Bewdley	951.71	1,110.34	1,268.96	1,427.58	1,744.82	2,062.07	2,379.29	2,855.15
Broome	944.61	1,102.06	1,259.49	1,416.93	1,731.80	2,046.68	2,361.54	2,833.85
Chaddesley Corbett	957.74	1,117.37	1,277.00	1,436.62	1,755.87	2,075.12	2,394.36	2,873.23
Churchill & Blakedown	951.67	1,110.29	1,268.90	1,427.51	1,744.73	2,061.96	2,379.18	2,855.01
Kidderminster Foreign	948.35	1,106.42	1,264.48	1,422.54	1,738.66	2,054.79	2,370.89	2,845.07
Ribbesford	937.68	1,093.97	1,250.25	1,406.53	1,719.09	2,031.66	2,344.21	2,813.05
Rock	949.91	1,108.24	1,266.56	1,424.88	1,741.52	2,058.17	2,374.79	2,849.75
Rushock	951.19	1,109.74	1,268.27	1,426.80	1,743.86	2,060.94	2,377.99	2,853.59
Stone	941.69	1,098.65	1,255.60	1,412.55	1,726.45	2,040.36	2,354.24	2,825.09
Stourport-on-Severn	951.65	1,110.27	1,268.88	1,427.49	1,744.71	2,061.94	2,379.14	2,854.97
Wolverley & Cookley	951.35	1,109.91	1,268.47	1,427.03	1,744.15	2,061.27	2,378.38	2,854.05