

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

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

23RD FEBRUARY 2011 (6.00PM)

Present:

Councillors: M Ahmed, J Aston, J Baker, G Ballinger, A Buckley, J-P
Campion, S Clee, N Desmond, H Dyke, P Dyke, B Glass, D Godwin,
J Greener, P Harrison, M Hart, P Hayward, M Hazlewood, A Hingley, M Kelly,
H Martin, D Millis, F Oborski, T Onslow, J Phillips, M Price, K Prosser, M
Salter, D Sheppard, K Stokes, J Thomas, N Thomas, S Williams,
G Yarranton, R Bishop, N Gale, I Hardiman, T Ingham, D McCann, J Parish
and J Shaw.

C.70

Prayers

Prayers were said by Father Stephen Pimlott from St Wulstan and St
Thomas of Canterbury Roman Catholic Church, Vale Road Stourport.

C.71

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: J Holden, and
C D Nicholls.

C.72

Declaration of Interests

The following Members declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item number
12 Budget Proposals as they are members of the Community Housing Board:

Councillors J Aston, A Buckley, N Gale, J Greener, M Kelly and G Yarranton

Councillors H Dyke and P Dyke declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item
number 12 as Councillor P Dyke is employed by the Community Housing
Group.

Council was advised that all the above Members had been granted a
dispensation by the Ethics and Standards Committee for the Council meeting
on 23rd February 2011 to enable them to take part in the debate and vote on
matters relating to and including the Housing Company.

C.73

Minutes

**Decision: The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 1st
December 2010 and the Ordinary meeting held on 1st December 2010 be
confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

C.74

Public Participation

In accordance with the Council's scheme for public participation at meetings of Full Council, Mr M Wrench presented a petition which requested the Council to halt the single site project.

The Chairman thanked Mr Wrench for the petition and advised that the agenda contained a motion which asked the Council to confirm again its decision to go ahead with the single site. The Chairman felt that as this was the same issue as raised by the petition albeit from a different direction the debate about this item would form part of the discussion during agenda item 9 of the agenda.

C75.

Questions

The Council received a report setting out a range of questions from Councillors F Oborski and H Martin, directed at the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members.

Question 1 – From Councillor F Oborski to the Leader of the Council.

In view of the fact that Malvern Hills District Council are actively seeking to share senior officers (possibly including the post of Chief Executive) and are reported to be in discussions with other Councils, including Stratford on Avon District Council with who they don't share a boundary, would the Leader tell me:

- 1 What if any discussions he had already held with Malvern Hills DC?
- 2 Whether or not he feels we could offer to share any services or posts with Malvern Hills DC?

Reply from the Leader of the Council

I and other Leaders in Worcestershire continue to have ongoing discussions on how best to work together to meet challenges. I have had discussions with the Leader of Malvern Hills District Council regarding procurement and a few other back office activities. It has been reported in the press about Malvern and Stratford possibly working together and I have been surprised about the brevity of the reporting and raised my surprise at this with Malvern Hills District Council. We have a more mature relationship in Worcestershire and as part of the ongoing discussions would hold a debate where there is a need. We would do what we have done previously and bring the matter back to scrutiny and to the Council Chamber if a decision is required. The discussions have been broad but have not been specific.

Supplementary Question from Councillor F Oborski

If you are aware of a neighbouring District Council with an adjoining boundary is actively seeking to share a Chief Executive and other senior posts which it may be appropriate to share with Wyre Forest District Council; do you not agree that it would be more appropriate for that Council to share with Wyre Forest District Council rather than with an authority outside the county?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

I thank Mrs Oborski for her question but I cannot discuss individual cases. I take a similar attitude to that of Worcestershire County Council and will look at any such proposals when it is right to do so. There may be opportunities for sharing when we are part of a single site and we will look at this again. I can assure you that I am having discussions at the appropriate level. There are currently many challenges including the budget and the Chief Executive is concentrating 100% of his time on those issues.

Question 2 – from Councillor Howard Martin to the Leader of the Council.

In view of the government's decision to scrap plans to sell off the country's forests, brought about by overwhelming public opposition, will the Leader of the Council now follow the magnanimous example of the Prime Minister and admit that he, also, is wrong? Will the Leader therefore now bow to similarly universal local public opposition by scrapping the hugely unpopular plans to build new council offices?

Reply from the Leader of the Council

We receive leadership guidance from the current prime minister whereas his predecessors gave poor leadership.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Howard Martin

In light of the dissatisfaction on the proposals do you not care what the public think?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

I find it difficult to have lectures on the single site. There have been regular opportunities in the chamber and ten Corporate Resources scrutiny meetings to comment on the single site. You did not attend one scrutiny meeting last year and out of the eight this year you only attended four. If you care and want to be effective you have to turn up to meetings.

C.76

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:

The Charity Dinner which had been held on 11th February raised £1,449.50 and the total raised so far this year by the Chairman's Charity had been £1,558.62. Members were thanked for their contributions towards this.

Members were also thanked for their generous food contributions they had donated at Christmas on behalf of Franche Community Church.

Members were advised that Friday 25th February 2011 would be the 99th birthday of Honorary Alderman Elizabeth Mills and on behalf of the Council the Chairman wished her a very happy birthday and would be sending flowers.

Councillor D Millis was congratulated on his forthcoming marriage and the Chairman wished him and his bride every future happiness.

Members were informed that Councillors Stokes and Millis would not be standing in the forthcoming elections and he took the opportunity to thank them both for their work as Ward Councillors and their contribution to the work of the Council.

C.77 Leader's Announcements and Report

The Leader of the council advised Members that Wyre Forest District Council had played a full and influential part of the Worcestershire bid and it also intended to be part of the Birmingham LEP.

An update was given on the Council's Icelandic investments. Council was advised that £3.151m had been recovered against the £9m invested and there was £6m in UK backed banks. Moreover, Administrators continued their efforts to recover the Council's money; so far 53% of the investment had been returned and the Council was confident about the return of the remainder of its money. The Council had applied to the Icelandic Courts for 'preferred creditor status.' A further update would be given to Members at Annual Council in May 2011 and any development in advance of this would be shared with Group Leaders.

The Leader concluded by extending his congratulations to Honorary Alderman Mrs Mills on her forthcoming 99th birthday.

C.78 Motions Submitted Under Standing Orders

Council received motions that had been received in accordance with Standing Orders (Section 7, 4.1).

Motion from Councillor John Campion, Leader of the Council.

"Council expresses deep concern at any consideration by the Environment Agency not to deploy temporary flood barriers in Bewdley.

This Council believes that the Environment Agency should do all it reasonably can to ensure that properties in Bewdley are protected from the River Severn when it is in flood including the use of temporary barriers.

Council directs the Chief Executive to communicate concerns raised in this motion to the Environment Agency, the relevant Government Minister, Member of Parliament for Wyre Forest and the County Council."

The Leader introduced the motion and commented on the significant flood protection that had been provided in Bewdley. However, Members' attention was drawn to the fact that there was insufficient protection on the Wribbenhall side of Bewdley. Temporary barriers were available but these were only erected when the river was in flood and in the majority of times they had been erected had not protected properties entirely from flood water. The Leader was aware that the Environment Agency had considered not deploying the barriers. Whilst the barriers protected only 20 properties in total, the rest of the town appeared to be happy to accept any disruption that the temporary barriers caused.

During debate Members commented that the Environment Agency should be made aware that houses that were flooded were affected by raw sewerage. Moreover, Insurance companies were largely refusing to reinsure those who had been flooded. Thus if the barriers were not to be deployed they would have no insurance and no protection from flooding. Further, that the barriers presented access problems to residents but if walking routes could be kept open it would allow access to the primary and high schools. Residents would also need to access doctors surgeries, vets and banks.

Decision: The motion be agreed.

Motion from Councillor J-P Campion, Leader of the Council:

Council resolves to endorse the updated financial assumptions for the centralised office accommodation project prepared by the Council's statutory officers as presented to the Corporate Resources Scrutiny on 10th January earlier this month including the reconfirmed annual revenue savings of the project.

Council resolves to reconfirm its decision of 29th July 2009 relating to the centralised office accommodation project, including the delegation to Cabinet to take all further appropriate decisions to ensure completion of the project within budget allocations previously approved by Council on 18th July 2008.

Council resolves to progress the centralised office accommodation project and implement it by summer 2012 in order that the Council maximises the savings it had calculated from the project.

Council requests the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee to continue to consider an update from the Chief Executive on the centralised office accommodation project at its meetings.

The Leader of the Council introduced the motion and drew Members' attention to the report and presentation that updated the operational and financial business case of this authority moving to single site received by Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee. Further, the single site had been the subject of debate and scrutiny at Council on a number of occasions and it was necessary to give final reaffirmation to the project and a clear steer to the Chief Executive and his team that Council accepted and endorsed the business case as presented to scrutiny.

The Leader advised that should the motion be approved Council could be confident that single site would deliver savings and ensure the Council's resources were reorganised in terms of how the Council spent its money. Moreover, it was considered that the single site would enable the Council to be well placed to bid for hosting shared services and other partner operations as the Councils streamlined its services.

A lengthy and vigorous debate ensued on the motion and the merits and benefits of the Council building a single site headquarters were discussed at length. This concluded with an unsuccessful amendment by the Labour Group.

A named vote was held on the substantive motion:

For the Motion

Councillors M Ahmed, J Aston, J Baker, G W Ballinger, R Bishop, A J Buckley, J-P Champion, S J Clee, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Duke, N Gale, D R Godwin, J Greener, I Hardiman, P B Harrison, M J Hart, P V Hayward, M A Hazlewood, A T Hingley, T Ingham, D McCann, F M Oborski, T L Onslow, J Phillips, M Price, K Prosser, M A Salter, S J Williams and G C Yarranton.

Against the Motion

Councillors B T Glass, M B Kelly, H J Martin, D Millis, J Parish, J A Shaw, D R Sheppard, K J Stokes, J Thomas and N Thomas.

Decision: The motion be approved.

The Leader advised Members that the Council had struggled to explain to its constituents why it was so vital for future services that a single site was delivered quickly and the petition that had been received tonight was an example of this. The status quo was not an option and Council would redouble its efforts to articulate why it was moving to a single site.

Members were advised that documentation relating to the single site was available on the Council's website thus ensuring that the public were able to access the documents and understand why a new single headquarters was needed.

C.79

Urgent Motions Submitted Under Standing Orders (Section 7, 4.1)

No notices of motion were submitted under Standing Orders 7,4.1.

A comfort break was held at this point from 7.50 – 8 pm. Councillor J Parish left the meeting.

Recommendations from Cabinet**Recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting of 25th January 2011****Adoption of a new Corporate Plan**

The Council considered a report from the Corporate Development and Improvement Manager which set out the draft Corporate Plan for the period of 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2014.

The Leader thanked Councillor Martin for progressing this.

Councillor Howard Martin reciprocated and wished to formally thank the panel members and Corporate Development and Improvement Manager and Policy and Performance Officer for their hard work and contributions to the formulation of the new Corporate Plan.

Decision: The Corporate Plan (2011- 2014) be adopted.

Adoption of Shared Services Strategy:

The Council considered a report which provided an update on the Council's Transformation Programme, including the development of a new Shared Services Strategy for 2011 onwards.

Decision: The Shared Services Strategy (2011 onwards) be adopted.

(Councillor M B Kelly wished it to be recorded that he had voted against this decision)

Recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting of 25th January 2011**Self Management of the Council's Allotments**

The Council considered a report on the self management of the Council's allotments. The Cabinet Member for Community and Partnership Services wished to place on record her thanks to officers and allotment holders for their work on the project.

Decision: Delegated authority be given to the Director of Community and Partnership Services and the Director of Legal and Corporate Services to enter into Self Management agreements with the four Allotment Associations, i.e. West Kidderminster Allotment Society, Aggborough and Foley Park Allotment Association, The Comberton Community Allotments and FHC Community Allotment Association for a period of 15 years from 1st April 2011.

Wyre Forest Parking Review Phase 2

The Council considered a report on the Wyre Forest Parking Review Phase 2. The Leader of the Council commented that the recommendations did not reflect the amount of work that had been undertaken behind the scenes by the Review Panel. He commented that there had been wide consultation with members of the public who had had an opportunity to come to a scrutiny meeting and put their views forward. The proposals would be introduced as from 4th April 2011 and would introduce an element of free parking for everyone.

Decision: Wyre Forest District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2009 (Variation No. 2) Order 2010 be amended and consulted upon to accommodate the changes in recommendations 2.2 and 2.3 of the report to Cabinet as necessary, together with any further minor drafting amendments, which, in the opinion of the Director of Planning & Regulatory Services, are required and that Cabinet be given delegated authority to consider any representations made as a result of public consultation and to finalise the revisions to the Order.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and updated Prudential Indicators

The Council considered a report on Treasury Management Strategy Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and updated Prudential Indicators.

Decision:

- 1. To approve the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the period 1st January 2011 to 31st March 2011 and for the financial years 2011/2012 & 2012/2013.**
- 2. To approve the revised Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP included in Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet, to be effective from 1st April 2011.**

C.80

Budget Proposals 2011/2014

The Leader of the Council presented the administration's proposals for the budget. He thanked the Director of Resources and the Corporate Management Team for their support during the budget process. Members' attention was drawn to the significant pressure that the Council had experienced by having £2m removed from its grant over the next 3 years. Members were advised that this was a faster and deeper reduction than had been anticipated and the administration had expressed their concerns to the Government; concluding that the challenges facing the Council were significant.

The Cabinet Member for Resources stated that the budget set out a clear vision to steer the Council through the very difficult economic context. Moreover, if the Council wished to continue to deliver high quality services the status quo was not an option and there was a need to drive through further efficiencies and consider new ways of working, including working more closely with partners. The Cabinet Member concluded by stating the budget provided and clear and sensible vision for the Council.

A robust debate ensued on the budget proposals, during which Members of each of the political groups made their comments.

Decision:

1. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2010/11 ONWARDS

- 1.1 Approves the updated Base Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as presented to the Cabinet on 10th January 2011 and further updated to reflect Quarter 3 slippage, along with the Prudential Indicators and the revised approach to the Minimum Revenue Provision as detailed within the separate report to this meeting.**
- 1.2 Delegated authority continues to be given to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources, to fund appropriate elements of the Capital Programme by means of Prudential Borrowing.**
- 1.3 Delegates authority to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Cabinet, to determine the most financially prudent funding method for Capital Projects (Capital Receipts or Direct Revenue Funding) at the end of each Financial Year.**

2. INCOME SERVICE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Recommends Income Service Options and associated fees and charges as detailed in the Financial Strategy as presented to Cabinet on 10th January 2011, along with the amendments attached in Appendix 1, including the increased Car Parking Charges to be effective from 4th April 2011 (with the exception of Season Ticket increases).**
- 2.2 Recommends the proposals for fees and charges within the Council's Licensing and Health and Safety and Pollution Control functions for 2011/12 rise by the same percentage as all the other fee increases across the Council.**
- 2.3 Delegates to Cabinet approval of the introduction of new charges for Discretionary Services.**
- 2.4 Delegates approval of all of the Council's Planning Fees following the publication on new guidance to local authorities to the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration.**

3. THREE YEAR BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2011/14

- 3.1 The contents of the Reports of the Director of Resources on the Three Year Budget and Policy Framework 2011/2014 (pages 3-121) incorporating the Base Budget Variations**

(pages 23-24) be endorsed and in doing so approve the Revised Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2010/11.

- 3.2 Approves the inclusion of the Area Based Grant in relation to Homelessness of £109,270 for 2011/12 and 2012/13 along with corresponding expenditure for the function. Delegate's authority to the Director of Resources to incorporate any future such grant funding into the Base Budget.**
- 3.3 Approves the Council's policy relating to Working Balances, Reserves and Provisions and notes the amount of Reserves and Provisions available for use in the Budget process (page 10) as updated in paragraph 3.5 below.**
- 3.4 Approves that any Final Account savings arising from 2010/2014 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 Single Site project.**
- 3.5 The following General Fund Revenue Budget be recommended including Cabinet Proposals (Appendix 2) and Income Service Options and related amendments (Appendix 1):**

	Revised 2010/2011 £	2011/2012 £	2012/2013 £	2013/2014 £
Net Expenditure on Services (per Appendix 1 on Page 14 of the Financial Strategy Book) (*) and (**)	15,307,830	14,033,090	14,177,730	14,408,070
Less Cabinet Proposals - (Appendix 2)	-	(335,020)	(929,000)	(1,140,520)
Less Council Tax Grant		(173,290)	(173,290)	(173,290)
Plus One-off implementation costs		700,000		
Net Expenditure	15,307,830	14,224,780	13,075,440	13,094,260
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	9,700	(883,730)	(414,010)	(684,560)
Net Budget Requirement	15,317,530	13,341,050	12,661,430	12,409,700
Less Business Rate Grant, Government Grant and Collection Fund Surplus (Page 14)	**8,084,620	**6,294,330	**5,441,290	**5,121,200

Area Based Grant (**)	327,080	109,270	109,270	0
Council Tax Income	<u>£6,905,830</u>	<u>£6,937,450</u>	<u>£7,110,870</u>	<u>£7,288,500</u>
Wyre Forest District Council Tax Level assuming no change in 2011/12 then a 2.5% increase 2012/13 onwards.	<u>£197.62</u>	<u>£197.62</u>	<u>£202.56</u>	<u>£207.62</u>

(*) As amended in line with the Cabinet decision on 25th January 2011 in relation to Stourport Community Centre

(**) Settlement updated in line with the Final Local Government Financial Settlement on 31st January 2011 and 7th February 2011

(***) Includes additional approvals for 2011/12 and 2012/13 see paragraph 3.2

Government Grant Analysis*	2010/11	2011/12	Increase (decrease)	
	£	£	£	%
Revenue Support Grant	1,022,890	1,474,240	451,350	44.1
Business Rates	7,044,230	4,769,440	(2,274,790)	(32.3)
Collection Fund Surplus	17,500	50,650	33,150	189.4
Overall Totals	8,084,620	6,294,330	(1,790,290)	(22)

*For the years 2012/13 the split between the Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates is not known at this stage. The figure for 2013/14 is an estimated position

- Reserves available as part of the Three Year Financial Strategy:

Reserves Statement	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000
Reserves as at 1 April	*2,151	2,161	1,277	863
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	10	(884)	(414)	(685)
Reserves as at 31 March	2,161	1,277	863	178

* As updated to reflect additional approvals

4 COUNCIL TAX

4.1 Recommends a Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property of £197.62 for 2011/12 (£197.62 2010/11) no increase on Council Tax for 2011/12.

4.2 Recommends a provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2012/2013 of £202.56 and £207.62 in 2013/2014 an increase of 2.5% per annum over 2011/2012.

C.81 Council Tax 2011/2012

The Council considered a report to approve the formal resolution for setting the Council Tax for 2011/2012.

Decision:

1. To note that at its meeting on the 10th January 2011 the Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2011/2012 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) 35,105 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 1 for each Parish being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulations 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. To resolve that the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2011/2012 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
- (a) £63,683,652 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) £49,883,230 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) £13,800,422 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) £6,403,609 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, area based 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) £210.71 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) £459,372 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 1. (Total Parish precepts and special expenses)

- (g) £197.62 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 1 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 A 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 2 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)
3. To note that for the year 2011/2012 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:

	<u>Worcestershire County Council</u>	<u>West Mercia Police Authority</u>	<u>Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority</u>
	£	£	£
Band A	692.71	119.15	49.10
Band B	808.16	139.00	57.28
Band C	923.61	158.86	65.46
Band D	1,039.06	178.72	73.64
Band E	1,269.97	218.44	90.01
Band F	1,500.87	258.15	106.38
Band G	1,731.77	297.87	122.74
Band H	2,078.13	357.44	147.28

4. To resolve that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (2)(i) and (3.3) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts shown in Appendix 3 as the amounts of council tax for the year 2011/2012 for each of the categories of dwellings.
5. **Authorisation of Officers to collect and recover Council Tax and Business Rates:**

Mr. D. Buckland, Director of Resources; Mrs. T. Southall, Financial Services Manager; Mrs. V. Upton, Revenues and Benefit Manager; Mrs. F. Johnson, Principal Revenues Officer; Mrs. S. Clayphan, Mrs. V. Sloane, and Mr. J. White Senior Revenue Officers; Mrs C. S. Newlands, Director of Legal and Corporate Services; Mrs. M. Morgan, Litigation Solicitor; Mrs. J. Alexander, Principal Solicitor; Mrs. S. Tallon, Contracts and Freedom of Information Solicitor; Miss. C. Beswick, Property and Licensing Solicitor, or any other person specifically authorised by the Director of Legal and Corporate 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.82 Recommendations from the Licensing and Environmental Committee
7th January 2011**

Policy for the Exhibition of Unclassified Films Licensing Act 2003

The Council considered a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that asked the Committee to approve the Policy for dealing with unclassified films.

Decision:

- 1. The Policy for dealing with unclassified films be approved.**
- 2. Delegated responsibility for the authorisation of films which have not already been classified by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) be given to the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services.**

C.83 Corporate Governance

The Council considered revisions to the Council's constitution following a programme of work undertaken by the Transformation Board, to appoint two members to an outside body and to amend the contract procedure rules.

A Member expressed concern about the proposal to move the date for questions and motions to be submitted. It was clarified that the reason for changing the current system was to give greater transparency to the press and public and to address how to deal with urgent questions.

Decision:

- 1. The amendments to the Council's Constitution as set out in Appendices A and B of the report to Council be approved.**
- 2. The amendments to the Contract Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix C of the report to Council to take effect on 1st April 2011 be approved.**
- 3. Councillors J Aston and K Prosser be appointed as the Council's representatives on The Wyre Forest GP Commissioning Consortia Advisory Group.**

C.84 Review of Polling Districts and Places

The Council considered a report which recommended the outcome of the consultation on a review of polling districts and places within Wyre Forest.

During debate Members made the commented that there was concern that some residents would not be able to physically access Holy Innocents Hall and it was not an area where voters were likely to apply for a postal vote. A Member spoke out against the closing of rural polling stations especially as there was little or no public transport in these areas.

Concern was expressed about moving the polling station from the Primary School in Tan Lane to St Wulstans Hall in view of a fatal accident that had occurred on the corner by St Wulstans Hall. Concern was also expressed about using the Community Centre in Lickhill Road instead of the Scout Headquarters as the distance was greater than the quoted ¼ mile. It was considered that many people were able to walk to the Scout Headquarters and there was not a lot of traffic.

Decision:

- 1. That the changes to the polling places as set out in paragraph 4.3 of the report to Council be made together with the inclusion of the Y Centre, Dowles Road, Kidderminster and the polling place at Stourport Primary School, Tan Lane Stourport to move to St Wulstans Church Hall**
- 2. To note that a further review of polling places will be undertaken later in 2011, in particular to address the issues mentioned in paragraph 3.4 of the report to Council.**

C.85 Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

The Council received a report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and considered the scheme of allowances to be paid to Members for the financial year 2011/2012.

Members were advised that if the current scheme of allowances would be extended until Annual Council when the allowances would be reviewed.

Decision:

- 1. To adopt the present scheme of allowances as the scheme to be operated for the financial year 2011-2012 until Annual Council 18th May 2011.**
- 2. At Annual Council in May 2011 to consider any amendments to the scheme in light of decisions at that meeting on the committee structure and any other relevant factors.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 21.26.